

BAHÁ'Í HOLY PLACES IN HAIFA AND THE WESTERN GALILEE

Nomination for Inscription on the World Heritage List

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State Party	Israel
State, Province or Region	Haifa and Northern Districts ¹
Name of Property	Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee
Type of Nomination	Serial, comprising twenty-six significant buildings, monuments and sites at eleven distinct locations
Geographical Coordinates	Easting 684000-696300 - Northing 3632000-3652700
Textual Description of the Property Boundaries	See Serial Nomination Table in Section 1(c) below and Site Maps A through I
Justification: Statement of Outstanding Universal Value	This nomination covers an ensemble of unquestionably authentic buildings, monuments and sites including the resting places of the Prophets Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, which are the most sacred Shrines of the Bahá'í Faith, as well as the administrative seat and pilgrimage center of a worldwide community of over five million believers. These properties are directly and tangibly associated with the historical development and contemporary efflorescence of the Bahá'í religion and bear a unique testimony to the ethical and cultural values that characterize its contribution to world culture in the modern age.
Criteria under which the Property is Nominated	Criteria (iii) and (vi)
Name and Contact Information of Official Local Institution/Agency	Bahá'í World Centre P.O. Box 155, Haifa 31001, Israel Tel: (972) 4 835 8358 Fax: (972) 4 831 3399 E-mail: secretariat@bwc.org Web site: http://www.bahai.org

¹ These districts are planning jurisdictions determined by the Ministry of the Interior, not administrative subdivisions.

1. Identification of the Properties

a. Country – Israel

b. State, Province or Region – Haifa and Northern Districts

c. Name of Property – Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee

Serial Nomination Table						
Site No.	Site Name	Municipality	Coordinates (center-point)	Core Area (ha)	Buffer Zone (ha)	Site Map
1.	Bahjí	Acre	Easting: 695551 Northing: 3646979	12.9	67.9	A
2.	North Slope of Mount Carmel	Haifa	Easting: 686046 Northing: 3632482	25.2	31.3	B
3.	Ri v́n Gardens	Acre	Easting: 695440 Northing: 3643916	9.3	56.1	C
4.	Mansion of Mazra'ih	Mateh Asher and Al-Mazra	Easting: 696194 Northing: 3651834	4.7	25.3	D
5.	Place of Revelation of the "Tablet of Carmel"	Haifa	Easting: 684888 Northing: 3633323	3.6	20.1	E
6.	Persian Quarter	Haifa	Easting: 686418 Northing: 3632865	3.0	4.1	F
7.	Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery	Haifa	Easting: 684552 Northing: 3634096	0.55	3.1	G
8.	Junayn Garden	Nahariya	Easting: 695758 Northing: 3652615	0.81	4.8	H
9.	House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá	Acre	Easting: 693362 Northing: 3644733	0.79	25.1	I
10.	Prison	Acre	Easting: 693462 Northing: 3644725	0.07		
11.	House of 'Abbúd	Acre	Easting: 693298 Northing: 3644462	0.06		

d. Geographical Coordinates – See Serial Nomination Table above.

e. Maps and Plans

- (i) The individual sites included in the nomination are covered by Site Maps A through I, as shown in the Serial Nomination Table above. These maps are attached hereto immediately after the signature page, and particulars concerning each map are provided below:

Map Particulars Table				
Map	Title	Scale	Source	Date
A	Bahjí	1:5263	Ofek Aerial Photography Ltd.	May 2003
B	North Slope of Mount Carmel	1:2500	Ofek Aerial Photography Ltd.	December 2001
C	Ri ván Gardens	1:5263	Ofek Aerial Photography Ltd.	October 2002
D	Mansion of Mazra'ih	1:3333	Ofek Aerial Photography Ltd.	December 2001
E	Place of Revelation of the "Tablet of Carmel"	1:2857	Municipality of Haifa (GIS Center)	November 2000
F	Persian Quarter	1:1388	Municipality of Haifa	January 2001
G	Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery	1:1785	Municipality of Haifa	November 2000
H	Junayn Garden	1:3225	Ofek Aerial Photography Ltd.	May 2003
I	Old Acre Sites	1:1190	Ofek Aerial Photography Ltd.	October 2002

- (ii) Two locater maps are provided below and on the following page:

LOCATER MAP 1: Israel and Neighboring Countries



Map reproduced courtesy of the Israel Science and Technology Center: <http://www.science.co.il/>

LOCATER MAP 2: Northern Coast of Israel



f. Area of Property and Proposed Buffer Zone – See Serial Nomination Table above, and Site Maps A to I.

2. Justification for Inscription

a. Criteria and Justification for Inscription Thereunder

The properties included in this nomination collectively and individually fulfill the following criteria:

- Criterion (iii): These properties constitute a unique testimony to the religious beliefs and cultural values of the Founders of the Bahá'í Faith, their early disciples and its contemporary worldwide following. As such, they represent a priceless resource for the study of one of the world's monotheistic religions and the physical, historical and cultural context in which it developed.
- Criterion (vi): The properties covered by the nomination have been directly and tangibly associated with the lives of the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith and the efflorescence of that religion from 31 August 1868 until the present day. The works that were composed and the events that transpired on these grounds and within these walls have shaped the content of the belief system as well as the geographical spread and institutional development of the religion, and they will continue to influence its future course for centuries to come.

b. Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

For ease of exposition, the above-mentioned criteria will be discussed in this section in inverse numerical order.

Association with Events, Ideas, Beliefs and Works (criterion vi)

The Bahá'í Faith originated in 1844 with the declaration of its Prophet-Herald, the Báb, in the city of Shíráz, Iran.² The rapid spread of the new creed was met by savage persecution, which led to the execution of the Báb in 1850 and the banishment of its Prophet-Founder, Bahá'u'lláh, in 1853. After fifteen years of successive exiles, ever further from His native land, Bahá'u'lláh was consigned by a *firman* of the Ottoman Sulṭán to Acre in 1868. There He spent the remaining 24 years of His life and composed many of the works that constitute the scriptures of the Bahá'í religion, including some of the most important ones.

During this period, Bahá'u'lláh took the initial steps to establish the spiritual and administrative center of the religion permanently in the Haifa-Acre area, where it has functioned and developed without interruption until the present day. His successors at the head of the community lived and worked in this setting, which witnessed the crucial transition from hereditary leadership to institutionalized governance that accompanied the religion's spread, first to Western Europe and North America, and then to the rest of the world, definitively transcending its Middle Eastern roots.

The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Acre is the point to which all Bahá'í believers, wherever they reside, turn their faces and direct their thoughts while praying. Thus for Bahá'ís, it holds a position comparable to that of the Temple remains in Jerusalem for Jews or the Kaaba in Mecca for Muslims. The Mausoleum of the Báb in Haifa constitutes the religion's second most sacred shrine. The concentration of holy places in this small area makes it the principal focus of pilgrimage for the followers of the Bahá'í Faith, who aspire to pray at the Shrines of

² A concise summary of the origins, doctrines, central figures and historical development of the Bahá'í Faith appears in Appendix I, Chapter 1.

Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb and to visit the other buildings and sites included in this nomination, in order to strengthen the bonds that connect them with the founding figures of their religion and to deepen their religious understanding and identity.

Buildings included in the nomination constitute the central seat of governance of the worldwide community. A body called the Universal House of Justice, elected every five years by the members of the 183 national governing bodies, exercises legislative, judicial and executive powers in accordance with the instructions of Bahá'u'lláh, which have been codified into a formal Constitution. Together with its subordinate institutions and executive departments, the Universal House of Justice is in constant communication with the national bodies around the world, as well as with a network of advisers and specialized agencies. Its voluminous correspondence includes answers to questions and concerns raised by individuals, as well as messages addressing the believers collectively. This institution acts as custodian of the physical heritage, organizes the Bahá'í pilgrimage program and directs the external relations of the community at the international level.

Other holy sites covered by this nomination include:

- The part of the Acre Citadel where Bahá'u'lláh was incarcerated upon His arrival in Acre and where His younger son fell to his death in an incident that Bahá'u'lláh likened to Abraham's intended sacrifice of His son;
- The room where Bahá'u'lláh composed the book that defined the distinct legal structure of His religion and which He called His "Most Holy Book";
- The site on Mount Carmel associated with His composition of the work which has been recognized as the "charter of the world administrative centre" of the religion;
- Two places where Bahá'u'lláh conversed with the British orientalist Edward Granville Brown of Cambridge University during the latter's visit in 1890;
- The room where Bahá'u'lláh passed away on 29 May 1892;
- The places where 'Abdu'l-Bahá met with the first pilgrims from Europe and North America and provided the explanations that, once compiled, translated and published, became one of the main texts from which the early Western believers learned about the religion;
- The burial sites of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and other members of Bahá'u'lláh's immediate family, as well as many other important figures in the early history of the religion;
- A cemetery where the abrupt change in the orientation of graves reflects an historic decision made in 1929 to manifest openly the break with Islamic rites and practices;
- The hall where the international governing body was first elected in 1963, completing the transition from hereditary leadership to institutionalized governance.

The above examples represent a sampling that is far from exhaustive. A more complete picture may be obtained by reading the narrative description in Appendix I.

The birth, consolidation and spread of an independent monotheistic religion in any age is an historical and cultural event of capital importance. The occurrence of such an event in modern times, and in the full light of history, has yielded an unprecedented abundance of authentic scripture and other contemporary documentation including accounts, commentaries and even polemics from a variety of sources and contrasting points of view. The physical

heritage covered by this nomination is complemented by unique and extensive collections of artifacts and audio-visual archives housed for the most part on location. Such an abundance of authentic research material, rare in the field of religious studies, will, in due course, assist scholars to enrich our understanding of the phenomenon of religion generally.

Testimony to a Coherent System of Values and Beliefs (criterion iii)

The voluminous writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb (some 30,000 documents) and the interpretive works of their appointed successors, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, (another 70,000 documents) define a coherent body of doctrine completed by a system of values and beliefs, which forms the distinctive content of the Bahá'í religion.³ Bahá'ís believe that this body of thought, which deals with subjects ranging from mysticism and theology to philosophy, economics and political science, will serve as the basis of a new civilization identified with the unification and “coming of age” of the human race.

Considered as a whole, the properties covered by this nomination testify to the existence of this body of thought, its historical roots and the physical and cultural context that shaped its development. More importantly, they testify to its ability to survive and thrive despite the savage persecution that greeted the religion's birth, the early threats of schism from within, determined doctrinal opposition from diverse quarters, and the materialism and indifference of modern secular society.

The investment of scarce resources in the preservation and beautification of the properties, and particularly in gardening, as well as the extensive use of color and light in architectural and landscape designs, are expressive not only of the love and devotion of Bahá'ís for their religion, but also of their optimistic and forward-looking worldview. As an example, the extraordinary development of the Shrine of the Báb and its surrounding terraces, with their nighttime illumination, are seen, by some Bahá'ís at least, as evidence that love and beauty can in time overcome prejudice and hatred. In this perspective, the aesthetic triumph achieved through the devoted labors and sacrificial contributions of Bahá'ís all over the world, for the enjoyment of visitors from every background, can be seen as the perfect response to the bigotry that motivated the harsh imprisonment of the Báb, when He was denied even a candle to read by, His execution by a firing squad in Tabriz in 1850, and the subsequent attempt to deny Him even so much as a decent burial.

The location of these properties bears testimony to the Bahá'í teachings on peaceful coexistence and political neutrality, as well as a unique conjunction of religious, historical and geo-political factors. The starting point is the arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in Acre in 1868, at a time when the entire region was under the control of the Sultanate in Istanbul. Although He came involuntarily, as a prisoner and an exile, His subsequent statements and actions showed that He saw His banishment to the Holy Land as an act of destiny and the fulfillment of scriptural prophecy. Bahá'u'lláh forbade His followers to spread His religion in the area, and subsequent developments led to the departure of most of the descendants of those who had accompanied or followed Him into exile and the expulsion of others, including the remnants of His family, from the community. As a result, the spiritual and administrative center of the religion evolved over time into a purely international entity unsupported and unencumbered

³ A brief outline of the doctrine of the Bahá'í religion is provided in Appendix I, Section 1.2. More comprehensive summaries of Bahá'í thought may be found in Moojan Momen, *The Bahá'í Faith, A Short Introduction*. Oxford: One World, 1997; Peter Smith, *The Bahá'í Religion, A Short Introduction to its History and Teachings*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1988; and William S. Hatcher and J. Douglas Martin, *The Bahá'í Faith: The Emerging Global Religion*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984.

by a local community. Since the beginning of the British Mandate in 1918, this center has benefited from the stability provided by a secular legal system including provisions protecting minority rights. Its present legal foundation is a mutually respectful contractual relationship entered into with the Government of Israel in 1987. Bahá'ís are not permitted to settle in the country, and new converts from among the population are not accepted. The center is currently staffed by volunteers from over 75 countries, who are invited for this specific purpose and leave the country when their period of service is completed. Despite the prevailing turbulence in the Middle East, the center exists in a generally harmonious, balanced and mutually beneficial relationship with the surrounding communities.

Particular components or aspects of the physical heritage also bear testimony to specific values and beliefs identified with the Bahá'í Faith. The following examples are offered for illustrative purposes and without any claim to exhaustivity:

- The properties include over 40 hectares of gardens in eight different locations. While some of the landscaping simply aims to recreate historic conditions, and aesthetic values take precedence over explicit religious symbolism, gardens clearly play a distinct role in relation to the sacred character of the sites, which is expressed through their design. Holy places are approached on foot, through a zone of quiet serenity, which helps the visitor to prepare him or herself for the experience. The formality of the landscape design and the level of maintenance reflect the proximity to the Holy Place and the degree of its sacredness. In this respect, the geometry of the gardens surrounding the resting places of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb is particularly communicative. These elements reflect not only the sense of reverence Bahá'ís feel for their Holy Places but also their values and beliefs regarding the relationship between aesthetics and the human spirit, and the meaning and importance of the quest for excellence in this world.
- The architecture of the buildings, the landscape design and even the choice of indoor and outdoor furniture and ornaments reflect an unconventional blend of diverse styles and art forms from various cultures. This mirrors the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural composition of the worldwide Bahá'í community. It also bears testimony to the characteristic Bahá'í approach to universality, which sees the richness and complementarity of diversity as a source of harmony in human relations, as in the arts and in the divine creation itself. Viewed in this light, what might at first glance appear to be a penchant for eclecticism may be understood as the emergence of a new style that transcends cultural barriers.
- A particular characteristic of the properties on the north slope of Mount Carmel is the interplay between reverent respect for the sacred and attention to the more mundane concerns of day-to-day administration. The buildings that house the international governing institutions of the community are built around the resting places of the family of Bahá'u'lláh, three of whom were women who played roles of distinction in the history of the Faith, and in close proximity to the second most sacred Shrine, that of the Báb. The Holy Places are managed in a systematic and professional manner, and the staff of the Bahá'í World Centre may be seen going about their business without clerical garb or signs of special status. These observable facts testify to a distinctive Bahá'í understanding of the role and governance of organized religion and a new approach to reconciling the rational, practical and democratic aspects of modernity with the eternal core values that give religion its unique capacity to realize the virtues that are latent in each individual human being.

- Bahá'ís believe that a religion is best understood in its social and historical context, and that there is no contradiction between deep conviction, on the one hand, and sincere respect for others and their beliefs, values and heritage, on the other. This attitude is reflected in the special relationships that have developed between certain of the Bahá'í Holy Places and their immediate surroundings. Without going into excessive detail:
 - The rooms where Bahá'u'lláh and His family were incarcerated for two years after their arrival in Acre in August 1868 are located in a fortress built by the Ottomans on top of Crusader remains and which was later used by the British mandatory authorities to imprison Jewish resistance figures in the 1920s and 1940s, as well as leaders of the Arab uprising in the 1930s. This Bahá'í Holy Place is now located over the restored Crusader Halls and within a national museum commemorating the events of the mandatory period. As a result of a creative compromise, the interior of the place has been restored to its condition at the end of the Ottoman period, while the exterior reflects the situation in 1947.
 - In Haifa, the terraced gardens surrounding the Shrine of the Báb fill an urban function comparable to that of Central Park in Manhattan. The concept of a monumental staircase leading up to the Shrine from the German Templar Colony dates from the early part of the twentieth century when the slopes were largely barren. The city developed in parallel with the project, and the gardens now border on neighborhoods populated mainly by Arabs and Russian immigrants in between the hotel district on the crest of Mount Carmel and the restored homes built by the Christian Templars at its foot. The story of this undertaking reflects more than a century of peaceful and constructive interaction and highlights the role of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, a highly respected figure in the history of the Haifa, for whom one of its streets is named.
 - The Mansion of Mazra'ih is located on a narrow-waisted strip of land between a Jewish Kibbutz and a growing Muslim Arab village on the southern outskirts of Nahariya. In response to the developmental pressures from all sides, the Bahá'í World Centre has proposed to convert an ancient *khan* into a visitors' center, restore sections of the Ottoman aqueduct and develop hiking paths in the agricultural area. Thus the green open space between the two settlements, which is an essential element of the character of the Holy Place, will be preserved and given a new role as a recreational area and tourist attraction with economic spin-offs for both communities.
 - The national and municipal authorities put forward a plan for a new housing development in the marshy area surrounding the Riván Garden. Since this plan would involve re-engineering the environment to reclaim swampland for building and to control seasonal flooding from the river, it posed an existential threat to the Holy Place, as well as raising concerns as to how the urbanization of the area would impact its historic rural character and quiet atmosphere. Protracted negotiations eventually yielded an understanding under which the Bahá'í World Centre will undertake improvements to adapt the site to serve as a unique urban park, conferring a special character on the surrounding neighborhood and making its housing more readily marketable. In return, the development will provide retaining walls and drainage solutions for the garden and adopt a stadium-style

urban design with low-rise housing near the site and gradually increasing building heights further away.

c. Comparative Analysis

The issue of relevant comparisons under criteria (iii) and (vi) will be considered first within the framework of the Bahá'í Faith, which is the principal source of significance of these properties, and then in the broader context.

Comparisons within the Bahá'í Framework

There exist, at various locations in Iran, Iraq and Turkey, other buildings and sites which are sacred to Bahá'ís because of their associations with the ministry of the Báb and significant events that occurred prior to the arrival of Bahá'u'lláh in the Holy Land in 1868. Most of these, however, are not in the hands of Bahá'ís, have not been adequately preserved and/or are not accessible to visitation by believers from other countries. A notable exception is the house in Edirne, Turkey occupied by Bahá'u'lláh from 1864 to 1868, which has been acquired by the Bahá'í community and meticulously restored.

A number of buildings and sites in Europe and North America associated with the travels of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1911-1913 are owned and preserved by the national Bahá'í communities of the countries where they are located. Shoghi Effendi's tomb in the New Southgate Cemetery in London, England, is surrounded by the graves of a number of other distinguished believers. Bahá'í houses of worship, each of which serves the Bahá'í communities of a continental area, are located in Wilmette, Illinois, United States of America; Sydney, Australia; Frankfurt, Germany; Kampala, Uganda; Panama City, Panama; New Delhi, India; and Apia, Western Samoa. Another is being planned for Santiago, Chile.

At the level of particular properties, comparisons could thus be made between certain of those covered by the present nomination and others that are not included (e.g. the houses occupied by Bahá'u'lláh in Acre and the one in Edirne, or the resting place of Amatu'l-Bahá Rú íyyih Kh ánum in Haifa and that of Shoghi Effendi in London). Such an analysis would, however, overlook the outstanding significance flowing from the combined effect of twenty-six significant buildings and sites concentrated in one area. The ensemble testifies to a pivotal period of history and the dynamism of a living, evolving community in a way that no isolated property could ever duplicate. The fact that all these properties are under the control of institutions committed to their preservation and to making them accessible to believers and the general public further amplifies that testimony.

In addition, it should be recalled that other components of the nomination are clearly unique by definition, in the sense that there can be no comparison within the context of the Bahá'í religion. These would include:

- The tombs of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the three most important figures in the religion;
- The rooms where Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away;
- The locations where the “Most Holy Book”, the “Tablet of Carmel” and other major scriptural works were revealed; and
- The world administrative seat of the community.

Comparisons within a Broader Context

Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, was inscribed on the World Heritage List under criteria (iii) and (vi), exclusively on the basis of its religious significance. Wartburg Castle in Germany is listed under the same criteria as the place of exile where Martin Luther translated the New Testament into German. A number of important sites of major historical and cultural significance, such as Auschwitz concentration camp, the Hiroshima memorial, Ile du Gorée, Independence Hall and Robben Island, have been inscribed under criterion (vi) alone.

In contrast, most of the religious buildings inscribed on the World Heritage List have been recognized under criteria that refer to their architectural qualities. To capture the true significance of these structures, however, one cannot ignore the religious inspiration of their designers and builders, the religious functions they serve now and/or served in the past, or the pious awe in which they are held by believers. An obvious example is the Vatican City, the world administrative seat of the Roman Catholic Church and the burial place of Saint Peter the Apostle. Other listed properties whose significance appears to be connected with religious values and/or the history of religion include scores of places of worship and religious study (cathedrals, basilicas, churches, mosques, temples, monasteries, convents and abbeys) and a scattering of memorial sites (monuments, cemeteries and shrines), the vast majority of which are connected with the various branches of Christianity. The rich cultural heritage of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam appear to be represented by about half a dozen sites each, while other world religions are entirely absent or only indirectly reflected in sites protected primarily for other reasons.

Some of the sites that are most important to the worldwide Jewish and Christian communities are simply included in the listing of the Old City of Jerusalem, while the Kaaba at Mecca is not yet listed. In contrast, the World Heritage List does include an early Christian cemetery in Hungary and Franciscan missions associated with the evangelization of the native peoples of Argentina and Mexico.

d. Authenticity/Integrity

In view of the extensive documentation available and the relatively short period of time elapsed since the period of historical significance of these properties, their authenticity and integrity pose no major problems. Many of the properties have been in the continuous possession of the Bahá'í institutions, while others were re-acquired and restored during the lifetime of individuals who could guide the restoration effort with personal recollections of their condition at the relevant historical period. In addition, archival holdings include an extensive collection of historical documentation, such as period photographs, a sampling of which may be seen in Appendix I. When necessary for the purposes of restoration work, this private collection has been supplemented by acquisitions from the public archives of the various powers that governed or occupied the area in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The building conservation policies of the Bahá'í World Centre emphasize preventative maintenance, repair rather than replacement, and absolutely minimal intervention using qualified workers and traditional techniques and materials whenever possible to reduce the adverse effect on the authentic building fabric.

The grounds surrounding a number of the Holy Places have been landscaped and improved in a way that reflects the present role of these sites as focal points of pilgrimage, rather than their historical appearance. This is particularly evident in the formal gardens that frame the

resting places of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb. For similar reasons, the significant buildings are kept in a better state of maintenance than they were at the historically relevant period.

Visitor facilities and other service buildings are generally located at a distance from the historical structures and built in a style that blends into the atmosphere of the place rather than competing for the attention of the visitor. In some cases, structures or parts thereof that are not authentic or are of lesser religious significance receive a lower level of conservation treatment, meaning that they may be repaired or rebuilt as necessary using modern materials and adapted to current needs, as long as their external appearance is consonant with the stylistic integrity of the complex of which they form a part.

This subject is dealt with in greater detail in Appendix II - Heritage Management Plan, Sections 7 and 8.

3. Description

a. Description of Properties⁴

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
1.	Bahjí			
	1.1 Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh	This Ottoman-style mansion has plastered stone walls, balconies on three sides and a red tile roof with a clerestory over the central hall of the upper floor. The original single-story structure was erected in 1821 by 'Abdu'lláh Páshá for his mother. The second story was added by 'Údí Khammár after he acquired the property in 1868.	Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, moved to the mansion at Bahjí in September 1879 and passed away in the room at the southeast corner of the upper floor on 29 May 1892. A number of His best-known works were composed during His twelve-year stay in the mansion, which also witnessed His first meeting with the British orientalist Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge University.	I - 3.6

⁴ The information provided in this table concerning the significance of each site feature will be more easily assimilated after reading Appendix I, which begins with a brief summary of the origins and doctrines of the Bahá'í Faith, placing it in historical context and introducing its central figures. By way of additional background, Appendix I also includes an historical overview of Haifa, Acre and the Western Galilee during the period of Ottoman rule, which identifies the other persons connected with the properties. Chapters 3 to 6 of the document combine a detailed description and photographic documentation of each of the properties with a narrative account, in chronological order, of the events with which the properties are associated.

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
	1.2 Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh	One of the outbuildings of the mansion initially used as a dwelling, the shrine comprises several rooms on one level grouped around an interior garden. It is built in the same style as the mansion and dates from the same period. In 1892, upon the interment of the remains of Bahá'u'lláh in the northwestern corner room, the building became a mausoleum in His honor.	This building is the final resting place of Bahá'u'lláh. It is the spot toward which the Bahá'ís of the world turn their faces and direct their thoughts in prayer, and is the primary focus of Bahá'í pilgrimage. Its significance is thus comparable to that of the Temple remains in Jerusalem for Jews or the Kaaba at Mecca for Muslims.	I - 3.8
	1.3 Outbuildings	The site includes two significant outbuildings of the same vintage as the mansion. The Pilgrim House is part of the same structure as the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, while the Tea House is located near the southern entrance to the site.	'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, the son and great grandson of Bahá'u'lláh and His appointed successors at the head of the community, used the Pilgrim House and Tea House during the time after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.	I - 3.8
	1.4 Gardens	The central group of buildings (the shrine, the mansion and the Pilgrim House) is surrounded by a wide circle of geometrically laid-out formal gardens enclosed by a circumferential walking path. The quadrant facing the shrine is the oldest and most intensively developed section.	The gardens serve as a setting and an approach to the heart of the sacred site. The quadrant facing the shrine, known as the Sacred Precincts (<i>aram-i-Aqdas</i>), was laid out by Shoghi Effendi. The circumferential walking path is used by believers to circumambulate the shrine at a respectful distance.	I - 3.8

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
2.	North Slope of Mount Carmel			
	2.1 Shrine of the Báb	<p>The initial one-story stone structure of six rooms was built between 1899 and 1909. Three rooms were subsequently added on the south side, completing the square, which was then embellished with a superstructure comprising a colonnade, clerestory, drum and dome covered with gilded ceramic tiles. Canadian Architect William Sutherland Maxwell designed the ornamental superstructure under the guidance of Shoghi Effendi. Construction began in 1948 and was completed in 1953</p>	<p>The precise location of the shrine was chosen by Bahá'u'lláh during a visit to Haifa in 1891. After purchasing the property, 'Abdu'l-Bahá laid the cornerstone, oversaw the construction of the first stage and personally placed the wooden casket containing the sacred remains of the Báb in a marble sarcophagus located in a vault under the floor of what is now the central room. When he passed away in 1921, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was buried in the center room of the northern façade. The Shrine of the Báb is the second most sacred spot on earth for Bahá'ís, after the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.</p>	I - 3.7.1, 4.2, 5.2
	2.2 Terraced Gardens	<p>The kilometer-long series of nineteen terraces with a vertical rise of 225 meters is designed to frame the Shrine of the Báb and to serve as a ceremonial approach. The geometry of the terraces suggests concentric circles or waves emanating from the shrine, and the style of the gardens themselves blends a diversity of elements into a coherent whole. Designed by Architect Fariborz Sahba, the terraced gardens were constructed between 1990 and 2001.</p>	<p>'Abdu'l-Bahá articulated the concept of the terraces as early as 1910 and began the long process of acquiring the necessary land. An initial stairway from the German Colony to the shrine was constructed by Shoghi Effendi in the 1930s. The number of terraces calls to mind the initial nucleus of the religion formed by the Báb and His eighteen disciples, whom He referred to as "Letters of the Living".</p>	I - 6.4

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
	2.3 Arc Path and Monument Gardens	These intimate gardens are nestled in a natural hollow in the mountainside, accentuated by the arc-shaped path and stately administrative buildings that surround and overlook them. At the heart of the gardens, in three small clearings, connected by paths and stairways, stand four marble monuments erected between 1932 and 1939 to mark the resting places of the wife, son and daughter of Bahá'u'lláh and the wife of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.	Acting in furtherance of instructions given by Bahá'u'lláh during His 1891 visit to Haifa, Shoghi Effendi selected the location for the administrative complex and laid out the arc-shaped central path along which the necessary edifices would subsequently be erected. He also arranged for the interment of the members of Bahá'u'lláh's family and the design and erection of their memorials.	I - 5.3.1
	2.4 International Archives Building	This Greek neoclassical building, surrounded by columns topped with Ionic capitals, stands at the western end of the arc-shaped path. Constructed from 1954 to 1957, it was the first edifice of the administrative complex.	Shoghi Effendi supervised its design and construction, stipulating that this building would fix the style for the other buildings to be erected later. It houses a precious collection of original manuscripts and sacred relics.	I - 5.3.2
	2.5 Seat of the Universal House of Justice	This imposing edifice in the Greek neoclassical style with a Corinthian colonnade was designed by Architect Husayn Amanat and constructed from 1975 to 1983. It occupies the dominant position at the apex of the arc-shaped path.	This building serves as the office of the elected international governing body instituted by Bahá'u'lláh in His writings, the Universal House of Justice.	I - 6.1

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
	2.6 Centre for the Study of the Texts	This neoclassical building is built into the slope of the mountain and features a circular colonnade evocative of a pavilion in the garden. usayn Amánat provided the design, and construction was completed in 1999.	The primary function of the Centre for the Study of the Texts is to house a center of scholarly research and a library.	I - 6.2
	2.7 International Teaching Centre Building	Similar in style and concept to the Centre for the Study of the Texts, this building was also designed by usayn Amánat and completed in 2000.	This building is the seat of an institution that coordinates a worldwide network of counsellors to the elected institutions that govern the Bahá'í community. In addition to administrative offices and facilities, it contains an auditorium, a cafeteria and underground parking.	I - 6.3
	2.8 Haifa Pilgrim House	A modest oriental-style stone building erected in 1909 as a hostel for Bahá'í pilgrims.	'Abdu'l-Bahá authorized one of the believers to erect this building, which lodged pilgrims from the Orient for 60 years until 1969. It is now used as a place for the believers to prepare themselves for their visit to the Shrine of the Báb.	I - 4.3
	2.9 Tent Land	A small garden surrounded by cypress trees.	Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent at this site during His visit to Haifa in 1890.	I - 3.7.3

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
3.	Ri ván Gardens	The focal point of this site is a unique Persian garden with a fountain and elaborately carved wooden benches situated on what was once a small island in the Na'mayn River. Other site features include two modest houses, citrus and pomegranate orchards and fields cultivated by Bahá'ís since the late 19 th century, an ancient flour mill and several other significant antiquities from the late Ottoman period.	The garden was rented and prepared for Bahá'u'lláh by His followers in 1875, when He was still a prisoner within the walls of Old Acre. From 1877 onwards, He was a frequent visitor, spending the night in the house on the island and occasionally pitching His tent near the large pool in the part of the property known as the Firdaws Garden. He was very fond of the spot and referred to it in His writings.	I - 3.4
4.	Mansion of Mazra'ih	Built in the early 19 th century as a summer home for 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, the mansion is located on a ridge next to the aqueduct which brought water to Acre from the Kabrí Springs and commands a beautiful view towards the Galilee hills. The site also includes an agricultural area that is still farmed in the traditional way.	The mansion served as Bahá'u'lláh's residence from June 1877 to September 1879 and is associated with the end of His nine-year confinement within the walls of Old Acre.	I - 3.3

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
5.	Place of Revelation of the “Tablet of Carmel”	This is an open space on the western shoulder of Mount Carmel, between the two Carmelite Monasteries, with a panoramic view of the Mediterranean coast from Caesarea to Rosh Hanikra. The center of the site is marked with a small formal garden and an obelisk, which was erected in 1971.	Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent at this location during His last visit to Haifa in the summer of 1891 and composed the “Tablet of Carmel”, which is referred to as “the charter of the [Bahá'í] world administrative center”. The land was purchased by Shoghi Effendi, who also commissioned the design and fabrication of the obelisk.	I - 3.7.2
6.	Persian Quarter			
	6.1 Residence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (7 Haparsim Street)	An oriental-style residence built of stone and completed in 1908, it is located in a walled compound with gardens, a well and a number of ancillary buildings.	‘Abdu’l-Bahá commissioned its design and construction around 1900, resided there continuously from 1913 onward and passed away within its walls in 1921. Shoghi Effendi also occupied the house, and it remained the official residence of the head of the community until his passing in 1957. His widow, Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih <u>Khán</u> um, remained in residence until she died in January 2000. The funeral of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the first election of the Universal House of Justice and many other historic gatherings took place in its central hall.	I - 4.4.1

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
	6.2 Old Western Pilgrim House (4 Haparsim Street)	This modest oriental-style home in a walled compound was completed around 1910. It was re-acquired in 1994 and restored to its configuration in 1920.	This building served as a pilgrim hostel for the Western believers from 1913 until 1929. It forms the setting for a number of early accounts of Westerners' encounters with and impressions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi.	I - 4.4.2
	6.3 10 Haparsim Street	Designed as a pilgrim hostel by an American believer, Architect Mason Remey, under the supervision of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, this building combines a typical oriental floor plan with round rooms at each end of a large central hall, marble columns, inlaid floors and "art deco" fixtures and finishing touches. It was constructed between 1919 and 1929, during which time, work was suspended for several years due to a shortage of funds.	Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent at the site during one of His sojourns in Haifa. After completion of the building, Shoghi Effendi regularly dined with the Western pilgrims in the northernmost room on the lower level. From 1951 until 1983, it served as the seat of the International Bahá'í Council and then the Universal House of Justice. It currently houses the Bahá'í International Community Secretariat.	I - 5.1
	6.4 11 Haparsim Street	This oriental-style stone building was built around the same time as the residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Acquired in 1986, the exterior was restored to its historical appearance while the interior was rehabilitated for residential use.	Erected by the brother of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's wife, this house was also occasionally used to accommodate pilgrims from oriental countries.	I - 4.4.3

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
	6.5 Resting Place of Amatu'l-Bahá Rú íyyih Kh ánum	This is a green park in the heart of the Persian Quarter with a single grave at its center point. The marble monument was designed by Architect usayn Amánat and erected in May 2001.	Two house lots centrally located among the Bahá'í buildings on Haparsim Street were purchased by Shoghi Effendi and converted into a garden. Upon her passing, Rú íyyih Kh ánum was laid to rest in the center of this garden.	I - 6.5
7.	Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery	This is a walled cemetery with a central alley of tall palm trees.	The land was purchased on the instructions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the earliest recorded burial, in August 1911, was that of the first cousin of the Báb. Since then many historic figures have been laid to rest here, including Hands of the Cause of God, members of the Universal House of Justice and other distinguished believers who passed away in the Haifa-Acre area.	I - 4.5
8.	Junayn Garden	This modest farmhouse, surrounded by an orchard, is typical of the agricultural dwellings of the late 19 th century. Restoration work is in progress.	Located near the Mansion of Mazra'ih, this farm was owned by some believers who had followed Bahá'u'lláh into exile. He was fond of the place and visited it frequently.	I - 3.5

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
9.	House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá	A grand residence in the Ottoman style, constructed around a central courtyard and within a walled compound, this house was built about 1810 by 'Alí Páshá, the father of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, on top of earlier structures including part of the Crusader fortifications of Old Acre. Having housed the Public Health Department in later years, it was acquired in 1975 and underwent extensive restoration to its configuration at the beginning of the 20 th century.	In October 1896, 'Abdu'l-Bahá rented the south-wing of this complex, which he used as his residence until he left on his travels to the West in 1911. Shoghi Effendi was born in one of the upper rooms in 1897 and later had his own room in the north wing. The first Western pilgrims met with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in this house during the winter of 1898-99. The casket containing the remains of the Báb arrived at the house in 1899 and was kept in an upper room for a further ten years until the remains could be safely interred in the mausoleum in Haifa.	I - 4.1

Property Description Table				
Site No.	Site Name Site Features	Description and History	Significance	Ref. in Appendices
10.	Prison	The northwest tower of the <i>kishle</i> (barracks) was constructed by the Ottomans on Crusader foundations, probably about 1797. The outer walls facing the sea show signs of damage attributable to the maritime bombardment that occurred in 1840. The barracks were used as a prison during the British Mandate and constitute a memorial site to the Jewish underground fighters who were imprisoned and executed there. A restoration project carried out jointly by the Government of Israel and the Bahá'í institutions restored the interior of the tower to its condition at the end of the Ottoman period and the exterior to its appearance in 1947.	Bahá'u'lláh, His family and some 70 of His followers were imprisoned in the barracks from 31 August 1868 to 4 November 1870. From here, He dispatched historic messages to Napoleon III and Pope Pius IX, and composed a number of other major works. On 23 June 1870, Bahá'u'lláh's younger son, Mírzá Mihdí, died from injuries sustained when he fell through a skylight on the roof, an event which Bahá'u'lláh compared to Abraham's intended sacrifice of His son, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the martyrdom of the Imám usayn.	I - 3.1
11.	House of 'Abbúd (including the House of 'Údí Khammár)	This building, located on the western edge of the Old City of Acre, combines two Ottoman-style urban residences, which belonged in the late 19 th century to Ilyás 'Abbúd and 'Údí Khammár, both wealthy Christian merchants, who died in 1878 and 1879, respectively. The upper rooms of the home of Ilyás 'Abbúd overlook the Mediterranean Sea, while that of 'Údí Khammár fronts on Genoa Square.	Bahá'u'lláh occupied this house from September 1871 to June 1877, and in 1873, He revealed the <i>Kitáb-i-Aqdas</i> , the Book of Laws of the Bahá'í religion, in the room at the southeast corner of the upper floor. 'Abdu'l-Bahá was married here in 1872 and stayed on when Bahá'u'lláh moved to the Mansion of Mazra'ih. Bahá'u'lláh's wife, Ásíyih Khánúm, passed away in this house in 1886.	I - 3.2

b. History and Development

As noted in the Property Description Table above, this nomination includes Ottoman structures, mostly from the nineteenth century, which were occupied by the central figures of the Bahá'í Faith, together with twentieth-century buildings and monuments located in Haifa, which were erected by them and their successors at the head of the community. Most of the subsequent alterations made to properties while out of the ownership of the Bahá'í community have been reversed as part of a process of restoration to the period of historical significance. Certain landscape features date from the initial period of significance, but the planting of formal gardens generally constituted a later stage of development intended to enhance the setting and emphasize the significance of the sacred structures.

Details concerning the history and development of individual properties may be found in Appendix I - Historical Description and Documentation.

4. State of Conservation of the Properties

4.I. Present State of Conservation

The Bahá'í World Centre manages all the buildings, monuments and sites covered by this nomination on behalf of the Bahá'í communities around the world, which provide all the necessary funding in the form of donations.

These properties serve as the spiritual and administrative center of the Bahá'í religion and are the central focus of an ongoing program of pilgrimage visits. This constant and active use is, however, modulated in accordance with the condition and capacity of particular structures in order to preserve them for future generations.

The central figures of the Bahá'í Faith left explicit instructions regarding the care of holy sites that are in accord with the principles and guidelines currently accepted in the field of conservation. The maintenance of the properties in conformity with professional conservation standards is a matter of the highest priority in the allocation of financial and staff resources.

Consequently, while the task of conservation is unending and perfection unattainable, it is safe to say that the present physical condition of the properties is excellent. In addition, the Bahá'í World Centre has made a determined and largely successful effort to defend the properties against adverse environmental impacts through negotiations, town-planning processes and, when necessary, legal action.

4.II. Factors Affecting the Properties

a. Development Pressures

The coastal area of northern Israel from Haifa to Nahariya is undergoing a process of urbanization, generating pressures to build highways, industrial zones, shopping centers and high-rise housing, which may, in certain instances, constitute environmental threats to particular properties included in this nomination.

The primary tool for dealing with these threats is the right granted to any interested party under the Planning and Building Law both to initiate town-planning schemes and to object to those put forward by others. In cases where developmental and conservation interests are in conflict, it is often helpful that these properties are officially recognized as “holy places”

under legislation that protects the sacred sites of all religions. This legislation provides a basis for legal action where the statutory town planning processes do not yield a satisfactory result.

b. Environmental Pressures

A concentration of heavy industry in the area between Haifa and Acre, most of it dating from the early to middle decades of the twentieth century, poses serious problems of air pollution. The combination of airborne industrial pollutants with the saline humidity of the seacoast causes an abnormally rapid rate of deterioration of exposed building materials.

The dominant external building material on these sites is local sandstone, which is a soft and porous stone. Airborne industrial pollutants form a soot-like layer on the surface of the stone. This not only creates a soiled appearance, but more importantly, the highly acidic material eats into the outer layers of the stone, leaving a rough surface that retains toxic moisture, accelerating the deterioration process. Over time, this process can entirely destroy ornate stone details and eventually cause solid stone blocks to crumble. Although the marble and granite used in some of the buildings are harder and smoother, they are not exempt from the corrosive effect of the pollutants.

Pollution also accelerates the process of corrosion of iron and steel elements, such as handrails, window bars and lighting fixtures. This not only causes deterioration in the metal but also may damage stonework through rust discoloration or actual physical cracking, caused by metallic elements set into the stone expanding as they corrode.

Where it is consistent with the historical appearance of the buildings, the application of lime rendering to external surfaces prevents the pollutants from reaching the stones. In cases where the stone cannot be covered with plaster, experience indicates that periodic cleaning of exposed stone surfaces by gentle spraying of filtered water can prevent the build-up of dangerous toxins and retard the physical deterioration of the stones, while also improving the appearance of the buildings. Furthermore, sealing all open joints in the building envelope helps to prevent deterioration caused by toxic moisture penetrating the interior of the walls.

Water pollution and the increasing salinity of the coastal aquifer make some of the regular water sources unsuitable for use in irrigation of the gardens. This problem is being addressed by mixing water from different sources, and in some cases, by the installation of water-treatment systems based on reverse-osmosis.

Issues of acoustic protection are treated through the legal and town-planning processes referred to in paragraph 4.II.a above. In certain cases, drainage issues have also required special attention in the light of the global trend toward more extreme weather conditions.

c. Natural Disasters and Risk Preparedness

The risk of destructive earthquakes is considered relatively high due to the proximity of a major geological fault line. Buildings are monitored regularly for structural weaknesses and earthquake risk is considered, among other factors, in all restoration plans. Reinforcement of foundations is the most obvious way to reduce earthquake risk, but this is itself a delicate and risky undertaking in an old building. These measures have been taken in a few cases, but only when it was indispensable to remedy a clearly established and potentially dangerous weakness in the structure.

Fire and safety regulations are adhered to in all the buildings, and fire alarms have been installed. The properties are covered by comprehensive insurance policies, and detailed documentation is maintained in case reconstruction should become necessary as a result of damage caused by earthquakes or other factors such as terrorism, civil disorder or armed conflict.

d. Visitor/Tourism Pressures

The Bahá'í World Centre does not actively promote public visits to the properties, charge any entry fee, or offer any goods or services for sale or rent at any of the sites. It does, however, see itself as trustee of the physical heritage comprising the Bahá'í Holy Places, with an obligation to provide public access to the extent compatible with the conservation of the properties.

The main attractions are the Shrines of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and their surrounding gardens, which are open to the public seven days a week. They currently draw between 600,000 and 750,000 entries annually between them in what constitutes an exceptionally slack period for tourism due to the security situation in the Middle East and the worldwide economic downturn.

During the first six months following the opening of the terraced gardens in Haifa in June 2001, the number of visitors averaged over 130,000 per month, which is equivalent to an annual flow of over 1.5 million, at this site alone. The crowd management system involved designating three areas for impromptu visits, each with its own entrance, while instituting guided group tours following two different routes starting from additional dedicated entry points. In the first two years, nearly 400,000 visitors were accommodated on approximately 10,000 one-hour tours, all without charge. While this system is relatively costly to operate, it has been successful in assuring a high level of visitor satisfaction and safety, while minimizing vandalism and other damage to the premises. It is also flexible enough to allow rapid adjustment to changes in the level of demand.

A sign setting out the “conditions of entry” in Arabic, English and Hebrew is posted at entrances used by the public. Public visitors may enter the inner court of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh during certain hours without prior arrangement. A similar arrangement was in place at the Shrine of the Báb, but when the visitor flow outgrew the physical constraints of the space, the itinerary was changed to route visitors past the open doorway, providing an opportunity to view the interior without entering.

e. Number of Inhabitants within Properties and Buffer Zones

As of 2003, the estimated number of residents was as follows:

Core areas	50	(caretakers and other staff only)
Buffer zones	12,450	(estimated)
Total	12,500	(estimated)

5. Management

a. Ownership

See Property Management Table below.

Property Management Table						
Site No.	Site Name	Owner-ship	Legal Status	Registration as Holy Place	Town Planning Schemes	Annual Public Visitors/ Facilities
1.	Bahjí	BWC ⁵	Private	11 October 1976	11622/G 849/G	50,000 to 110,000 - VC ⁶
2.	North Slope of Mount Carmel	BWC	Private	11 October 1976	422/HF 1642/HF 1815/HF	500,000 to 750,000 – VC & tours ⁷
3.	Ri ván Gardens	BWC	Private	8 June 1994	10334/G	Occasional groups
4.	Mansion of Mazra'ih	BWC	Private	11 October 1976	9409/G 13161/G	Occasional groups
5.	Place of Revelation of the “Tablet of Carmel”	BWC	Private	11 October 1976	963/HF	Business only
6.	Persian Quarter	BWC ⁸	Private	11 October 1976	1796/HF	Business only
7.	Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery	BWC	Private	11 October 1976	1068/HF	Business only
8.	Junayn Garden	BWC	Private	1 March 1977	21/GBM	Closed for restoration
9.	House of ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá	BWC	Private	11 October 1976	10895/G	Occasional groups
10.	Prison	State of Israel ⁹	Public	11 October 1976	10895/G	Closed for restoration
11.	House of ‘Abbúd	BWC	Private	11 October 1976	10895/G	Occasional groups

b. Legal Status

See Property Management Table above.

⁵ The Bahá'í World Centre through one of the not-for-profit associations that serve as holding companies.

⁶ Visitors' Centre.

⁷ Shrine of the Báb and terraced gardens only.

⁸ Lots are owned by the Bahá'í World Centre except for 9 Haparsim Street and the public roads included in the core area, which are owned by the Municipality of Haifa.

⁹ Subject to the possessory and pilgrimage rights of the Bahá'í community and the provisions of an agreement dated 25 March 1999, which are summarized in Appendix II, Section 2.7.

c. Protective Measures and Means of Implementing Them

In addition to the usual range of legislation applicable to heritage sites in general, the properties covered by this nomination benefit from additional protection due to their character as holy places. The network of protective measures includes the following:

- The provisions of the Palestine Order in Council (1922) regarding the autonomy of recognized religious communities with regard to internal matters, including the management of sacred sites;
- The Law for the Protection of Holy Places (1967);
- The International Agreement between the Bahá'í International Community and the Government of Israel (1987);
- The provisions of the Planning and Building Law (1965) and particular town-planning schemes approved in conformity therewith;
- The legal rights deriving from ownership, long-term occupation and specific contractual arrangements.

None of these measures are self-implementing, but they provide a range of options that are used in an ongoing proactive effort to protect these properties from the many pressures and threats that surround them. Additional information regarding the way in which these instruments are used is provided in Appendix II, Sections 2 and 3.

The attached Site Maps A through I designate an uneven band of territory around each site as a buffer zone. These zones have been determined on a case-by-case basis in the light of the degree of sensitivity of the particular Holy Place, the character of its surroundings, the topography, the nature of the anticipated threats, and other relevant factors. In doing so, we have sought to define the areas which need to be watched owing to the fact that unfavorable developments of the ordinary sort (tall buildings, noisy activities, glaring lights, etc.) occurring there could have a serious adverse impact on the particular Holy Place. Clearly, this concern with ordinary threats from the immediate surroundings must be complemented by the monitoring of a much larger area with regard to more serious and unusual threats, such as polluting industry, waste disposal facilities and major transport infrastructures.

Having defined the buffer zones in terms of the protection needed by the Holy Places, we have divided them into “A” and “B” zones, where necessary, according to our assessment of the adequacy of the measures in place. An “A” buffer is one where a reasonably satisfactory level of protection is provided by ownership, contract, and/or a town-planning scheme. With regard to the efficacy of town-planning schemes, it has proven necessary to look beyond the question of legal validity. Enterprising developers can and frequently do obtain waivers or exemptions from the requirements of legally valid schemes that are regarded as obsolete. At the same time, the planning authorities often give practical effect to schemes that reflect current policies and standards, even if they are still in the approval process.

In the coming months, attention will be devoted to improving the situation in the “B” areas. Where the problem arises from the obsolescence of the schemes in effect, we will ask the local planning authorities to issue policy statements committing themselves not to grant waivers that would adversely affect the Bahá'í sites. We will also ask to be involved in consultations on the re-planning of these areas and those where there is no scheme in effect at all. In the meantime, we will exercise the rights of objection granted to us under the Planning

and Building Law, as may be necessary to resist unfavorable developments that could be seriously harmful to the Bahá'í Holy Places.

In terms of physical protection, all the properties are surrounded by fencing with gates. Outside the designated areas and hours of public visitation, entry is restricted to authorized staff with keys or access cards. Twenty-four resident caretakers and a patrolling force of 110 guards assure around-the-clock protection. All facilities have intrusion and fire alarms, and extensive use is made of motorized cameras whose feed is digitally recorded and monitored at a security dispatch center, which coordinates the response to incoming alerts.

d. Existing Plans Related to the Municipality and Region in which the Proposed Property is Located

The Combined National Scheme for Building, Development and Conservation (known as “TAMA 35”) designates Bahjí, the North Slope of Mount Carmel, Riván Gardens, the Place of Revelation of the “Tablet of Carmel”, Junayn Garden and the entire Old City of Acre as “urban complexes for preservation” and the Mansion of Mazra‘ih as a “rural complex for preservation”. According to the scheme instructions, this designation recognizes sites whose historic or architectural value requires that their integrity be protected. The task of defining boundaries and buffer zones and laying down conservation guidelines is left to local preservation schemes. This scheme is in the final stages of consideration before the statutory approval process.

A comprehensive regional scheme for the Haifa metropolitan area, known as “TAMAM 6”, is expected to receive statutory approval in the near future. This scheme grants recognition and protection to the most significant Bahá'í sites in Haifa on essentially the same terms as TAMA 35. A new outline scheme for the entire city of Acre is also in the early stages of preparation. The professional team commissioned to do the work includes a leading conservation architect and planner, and we have every reason to believe that it will give due consideration to the importance of the Bahá'í sites within the municipal borders.

Details regarding the influence of local town-planning schemes on each specific site are to be found in Appendix II, Section 3.

e. Property Management Plan or Documented Management System and Statement of Objectives

The central authority of the worldwide Bahá'í community is the Universal House of Justice, a collegial body composed of nine members elected for five-year terms. The Universal House of Justice meets and functions continuously in its Seat on Mount Carmel, and all nine members must reside in Haifa on a full-time basis during their term of office. The protection and conservation of the Bahá'í Holy Places is one of the primary concerns of the Universal House of Justice, and all activities related to this subject are carried out under its close supervision. The properties are managed, on a day-to-day basis, in the name of the Bahá'í World Centre.

The foundation underlying all management policies and decisions is a belief in the unique historical and religious importance of these properties for generations yet unborn and a sense of sacred responsibility to preserve them in trust for the worldwide Bahá'í community and humanity as a whole.

Basic principles concerning the importance of Holy Places and the manner in which they should be preserved derive from the sacred writings of the Bahá'í Faith. In letters addressed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to relatives of the Báb who were responsible for carrying out repairs to the latter's House in Shíráz in about 1903, we find the following instructions:

The restoration of the blessed house is a most pressing duty, which cannot suffer a moment's delay. The house must, however, preserve its original design. Nor should the slightest change or modification be permitted.... The state of the house, as regards the disposition of its rooms, its walls, its dimensions and architecture, should not be altered in the least.

The aim is not to embellish, but to preserve the precise state and condition prevailing in that blessed abode at the time when the exalted Beauty, the Primal Point—may my soul be a sacrifice for His sake—was dwelling therein. Nor should the house be altered in any of its general or particular characteristics. This, indeed, is that which is required; otherwise, were gem-encrusted bricks of gold and silver to be layered one upon another, yet would they fail to render it justice. Bear ever in mind that the purpose is to preserve the original design from alteration, and that the same holdeth true for the ornamentation, doors, and other dependencies.¹⁰

Starting with the undertaking referred to in the above correspondence, the Bahá'í community has acquired over a hundred years of experience with conservation work. The first major restoration project in the Haifa-Acre area was carried out seventy-five years ago under the direction of Shoghi Effendi. Drawing on this accumulated experience, enriched by a continuous process of consultation with specialists in a wide range of disciplines from Israel and all over the world, the Bahá'í World Centre has developed and continues to develop policies regarding the conservation of the Bahá'í Holy Places for future generations.

Since the cultural values inherent in the Bahá'í Holy Places include historical associations related to different periods and to processes of change over time, as well as a contemporary testimony to a living belief system, there can be no simple standard of authenticity, applicable in all circumstances. There will be cases, such as the house of the Báb in Shíráz, where accurate representation of the condition of a place at a specific time in the past must be the paramount objective. In other instances, it may be essential to conserve traces of several different periods and/or evidence of changes that were introduced. There will also be situations in which further development of the sites may be required in order to maintain the authenticity of their testimony to the belief system as it evolves in inter-action with a changing environment.

The management approach is characterized by the following fundamental principles and objectives:

- The key to preserving the authenticity of historic structures lies in minimizing the loss to the original building fabric. Thus, only works indispensable for the conservation of a building should be carried out, and repair should always be preferred over restoration. Worn parts should only be replaced when all repair options have been exhausted. Regular maintenance is the most effective and economical form of conservation over the long term.

¹⁰ Extracted from two letters preserved in the manuscript collection at the Bahá'í World Centre. The translation from the Persian was prepared by the Research Department of the Bahá'í World Centre.

- All buildings within a heritage site form an integral part of its character and atmosphere. Consequently, any new construction should be in stylistic harmony with the historical structures so as to blend into the atmosphere of the place, rather than compete for the attention of the visitor. The distinction between authentic and new or rebuilt structures should be carefully documented, and staff should be knowledgeable enough to clear up any confusion that might arise in the minds of the visitors.
- Attention must be given to the integration of each heritage site in its surroundings. No matter how valuable a site may be or what technical means are mobilized, effective protection can best be assured in the long run only with the understanding and goodwill of the people who live and work nearby. Consequently, the objective must be to achieve a balance in which the site provides benefits to its surroundings that compensate for the demands it makes and the constraints it imposes. In this context, it is helpful to think of buffer zones as “zones of interaction” and to examine the reciprocal influences with a view to finding synergistic or mutually beneficial solutions.
- Public access should be provided to the extent compatible with the conservation of the properties. No entry fee will be charged and no goods or services will be offered for sale or rent at any of the sites. Visitors will be requested to show the respect due to a holy place by their dress and deportment while on the sites.
- The Bahá'í World Centre will not actively promote public visits to the sites, and every effort will be made to ensure that the treatment of the properties in the public media, and any promotion by others, meets standards of dignity in accord with social norms for places held sacred by the followers of any religion.

The complete Heritage Management Plan for the Bahá'í Holy Places is at Appendix II.

f. Sources and Levels of Finance

The maintenance and operating costs for the properties and all capital expenditures are funded exclusively by voluntary donations from the worldwide Bahá'í community. No grants, subsidies or donations of any kind are accepted from governments, foundations or other sources outside the Bahá'í community. Furthermore, no entry fees are charged and no commercial activities are permitted at the sites.

As stated in paragraph 4.I above, the Bahá'í institutions accord the maintenance of these properties high priority in the allocation of financial and staff resources. As an indication, during the twelve-month period from May 2002 to April 2003, approximately U.S. \$4.5 million was spent on maintenance of buildings and grounds, security and crowd management, restoration works and property insurance.

g. Sources of Expertise and Training in Conservation and Management Techniques

To the extent possible, key staff positions such as building conservators, landscape architects, horticulturalists, master craftsmen, and cleaning, maintenance and security supervisors are filled with qualified professionals. Such staff keep abreast of the latest developments in their fields by reading academic and industry publications, attending conferences and undertaking courses offered in Israel and overseas. The less-skilled volunteers and local workers who support this core team receive systematic on-the-job training.

In addition, qualified and experienced consultants are contracted as necessary to provide advice and, if needed, to undertake specific tasks. For example, in the recent past, specialists have been employed in the fields of stone and plaster conservation, structural engineering and hydrology. Research and documentation are an essential part of all conservation projects.

Staff levels are outlined in paragraph 5.j below. Additional information regarding the sources of expertise and training in conservation and management techniques may be found in Appendix II, Section 10.

h. Visitor Facilities and Statistics

Visitor Statistics and Description of the Constituencies Served

The properties serve a broad range of visitors, who come with quite different needs and expectations. An initial distinction may be made between Bahá'ís, the primary focus of whose visit is spiritual, and the general public, most of whom are mainly interested in the aesthetic experience of the gardens.

- **Bahá'í Pilgrims and Visitors:** Pilgrimage is a religious duty incumbent upon believers who are able to make the journey. It currently consists of an organized nine-day program of guided visits to the nominated properties and related activities. The scheduling is centralized by the Bahá'í institutions in Haifa, which form participants into groups of about 200 and assign them to one of approximately 20 starting dates spaced at two-week intervals throughout the nine-month pilgrimage season. At present, there is a waiting list of approximately six years, and steps are being taken to gradually increase the size of the groups and provide for the further expansion of the program to meet anticipated demand without sacrificing the quality of the experience. In addition to participants in the pilgrimage program, members of the Bahá'í community may visit the Haifa-Acre area for periods of up to four days after obtaining permission to do so. These short-term visits generally focus on the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb and certain readily accessible sites, plus an optional bi-weekly guided tour of the administrative complex on Mount Carmel. There is a trend toward larger groups of visitors from particular countries or locations (especially in Europe and the Far East) and visits timed to coincide with the celebration of Bahá'í Holy Days.
- **The General Public:** As stated above, the nominated properties currently attract between 600,000 and 750,000 visitors annually, mostly to the Shrines of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and their surrounding gardens. Public visitors can be broken down into the following categories, each of which has distinct needs and expectations:
 - *Overseas Tourists:* The majority of overseas tourists consists of participants in commercial package tours, which are affected by economic conditions and perceptions of risk. A brief stop at one of the Holy Places is part of the itinerary of most tours of northern Israel. In addition to the aesthetic experience, many tourists express a desire for information about the properties and the religious values they represent.
 - *Internal Tourists:* Touring within the country on holidays, vacation periods and weekends is part of Israeli culture. Individuals and family groups use private vehicles or public transport, while larger groups hire busses, with or without guides. Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of the Arab and Druze

minorities are well represented in the visitor mix. As with the overseas tourists, the gardens and the views are the principal attraction, but there is also an element of curiosity about the cultural significance of the properties.

- *Local Residents:* The Bahá'í Holy Places are favored by local residents as places within which to stroll and enjoy the fresh air and aesthetic properties of the gardens. Although there are no recreational facilities as such and the range of permissible activities is limited, the properties thus fulfill some of the functions of public parks.
- *Learning Groups:* This category includes study tours and other organized groups whose primary purpose is learning. They may be organized by universities, schools, professional associations, voluntary organizations or simply among friends. These groups represent a challenge because of their insistence on an interactive learning experience with in-depth explanations, while the specific focus of their interest may range across a broad spectrum.
- **Participants in Special Events:** Special arrangements are required to accommodate thousands of visitors in a short period of time in connection with large events of various kinds. One to two thousand delegates representing over 180 national Bahá'í communities gather every five years in the Haifa-Acre area to elect the members of the Universal House of Justice. The working sessions are generally held in nearby convention facilities, but the program includes visits to the Holy Places and ceremonial events on-site. The inauguration of the terraced gardens in 2001 was attended by some 3,500 people including 2,800 Bahá'ís from overseas and 700 invited guests, mostly from Israel. A convention on agricultural technology hosted by the Municipality of Haifa in 1999 attracted several thousand participants, of whom some 250 took an optional tour of the Bahá'í gardens.

Visitor Facilities and Crowd Management Systems

The complexity of this constituency requires careful attention to the planning of facilities and the management of visitor flows. Since arrangements differ according to the particular location, they will be described on a site-by-site basis.

The Shrine and Terraces in Haifa

The gardens surrounding the Shrine of the Báb have been open to the public seven days a week without charge for many decades and drew from 200,000 to 250,000 visitors a year in the 1980s and 1990s. The Shrine itself and its immediate precincts are closed to the public from noon on to allow for maintenance and devotional use by the Bahá'í pilgrims, visitors and staff.

A public opinion survey, commissioned in 2001 as the terraced gardens neared completion, indicated a high degree of awareness of the project and a pent-up demand that could have led to a rush of millions of visitors, causing serious problems of congestion and safety. To deal with this situation, a sophisticated crowd management system was devised and implemented, while the local media warned the public against trying to visit immediately after the opening. The crowd management system involved offering guided group tours on two different routes, each starting from a dedicated entry point. Dozens of part-time guides, many of them students, were recruited and trained with the assistance of the Beit Hagefen Arab Jewish Cultural Center, while ongoing supervision was provided by two licensed tour guides. Due to

the heavy initial demand, advance bookings were required and a call-in reservation service was established. In addition, three areas of the gardens, each with its own entrance, were designated for impromptu visits. The on-site visitors' center, which houses an historical exhibit and an auditorium equipped for audio-visual presentations, is used primarily to host "learning groups", whose visits are generally coordinated in advance. Arrangements for parking and shuttle service were handled by the Municipality and the Haifa Tourist Board.

During the first six months after the opening of the terraced gardens, the flow averaged over 130,000 visitors per month, with about 20% of the visitors electing to take the guided tours. The visitor flow slowed to around 50,000 per month in the second semester and then stabilized at about 10,000 per week, with occasional peaks of 25,000 to 35,000 per week during holiday periods. In the first two years, nearly 400,000 visitors were accommodated on approximately 10,000 one-hour tours, all without charge.

The Shrine and Gardens at Bahjí

The gardens at Bahjí are open to the public daily during fixed hours, and visitors may move about quite freely, with only minimal restrictions as to itineraries and areas to be visited. The inner court of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh is open to public visitation during the morning hours four days a week without prior arrangements. The rest of the time, this area is reserved for Bahá'í pilgrims, visitors and staff.

As recently as 1999, this site drew about 110,000 visitors annually. The numbers have declined, partly because of factors affecting tourism generally and partly because of the construction work on the new Visitors' Centre, which required the public to use an alternative entrance gate that lacked convenient parking facilities. The new public entrance adjacent to the Visitors' Centre was opened in October 2004, with a temporary parking lot. The Municipality of Acre plans to upgrade the access road and parking arrangements during 2005. The disruptive effect of these works may keep the flow of visitors at reduced levels for most of the year, but it can be expected to pick up again after the project is completed.

The Mansion of Mazra'ih and Ri ván Gardens

Neither of these sites is presently open to the general public for lack of adequate facilities, but plans have been prepared to develop both in such a way as to make it possible to open at least the grounds to public visitation.

The plan for Mazra'ih calls for the rehabilitation of an ancient *khan* to serve as a visitors' center and the construction of a promenade along a restored segment of an Ottoman aqueduct with a panoramic view of the Galilee Hills, as well as walking paths through an agricultural area cultivated in the traditional way. The proposed visitors' center at this site will offer facilities for exhibits, lectures, discussions and audio-visual presentations, making it an appropriate venue for receiving "learning groups".

The development plan for the Ri ván Gardens will involve the restoration of the historic water system that created an island and operated a flourmill. The water system and the mill and other ancient structures will be complemented by landscape features that will make the site a varied and interesting as well as an agreeable place to visit. Since the construction of a residential neighborhood surrounding the site will

transform it into an urban park, it is assumed that the majority of the visitors will be local residents.

Public Access to Other Sites

Except for the room of Bahá'u'lláh, the Prison will be open to public visitation during the opening hours of the Museum of Heroism operated by the Ministry of Defense.

Special visits to the other sites are arranged when there is a particular interest or need. For example, groups of academics, professionals and government officials have on various occasions toured the House of 'Abbúd and the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá.

The Bahá'í Pilgrimage Program

The nine-day Bahá'í pilgrimage program includes visits to nearly all the nominated properties. The pilgrims are divided into groups of 30 to 50, primarily on the basis of language, each of which is assigned a chartered bus and a Bahá'í guide. In order to respect the spiritual nature of these visits and reduce wear and tear on the properties, these groups are split into sub-groups of 10 to 25 for visits to certain Holy Places where space is limited. Given the number of sites to be visited and the logistical constraints, the scheduling is highly complex.

i. Policies and Programs Related to the Presentation and Promotion of the Properties

Beyond encouraging Bahá'ís to make a pilgrimage, the Bahá'í institutions do not engage in any promotion of the properties as tourist attractions or otherwise. Commercial enterprises, such as hotels, restaurants and tour operators, frequently refer to the properties in their advertising, as do trade associations and national and municipal agencies whose role includes the promotion of tourism generally.

Pursuant to a special arrangement, the Beit Hagefen Arab Jewish Cultural Center, an agency of the Municipality of Haifa, offers tours of the Bahá'í gardens as part of a program of cultural and educational tourism designed to promote mutual understanding among the ethnic and religious communities in Israel.

j. Staffing Levels

The staff of the Bahá'í World Centre is composed of approximately 700 Bahá'í volunteers from about 75 countries, who serve without salary for varying periods of time, and some 200 local employees. The permanent staff involved with the conservation and maintenance of the properties includes one architect trained in building conservation, three other architects and engineers, an objects conservator, a works department composed of 40 tradesmen, and two gardens crews with a combined complement of 150 workers. A guard force of 110 and twenty-four resident caretakers are responsible for the physical protection of the properties.

6. Monitoring

a. Key Indicators for Measuring the State of Conservation

Because of the cultural significance of the properties included in this nomination, the success of the conservation effort will be measured first and foremost by the disasters that are averted, the threats removed and the errors avoided, and secondarily by the qualities of

authenticity which are passed on to future generations. It is difficult to devise indicators that will reflect these factors, especially given the physical diversity of the properties. The indicators listed in the following table may, however, be useful in identifying significant trends or developments that call for an appropriate response.

Indicators	Periodicity	Base Value	Repository
Number of structures subject to stability concerns	Annual	2	Bahá'í World Centre (BWC)
Exterior noise levels	Every 5 years	53 dB(A)	BWC
Salinity level of well water	Annual	Cl - 300 mg/l	BWC
Average supply price of water for irrigation	Annual	\$0.325/m ³	BWC
Expenditures for chemical products used in gardens	Annual	\$50,000	BWC
Number of Bahá'í pilgrims & visitors	Annual	10,000	BWC
Number of public visitors	Annual	600,000	BWC

b. Administrative Arrangements for Monitoring Properties

The Bahá'í World Centre will compile the necessary information and calculate the values of the above indicators on an annual basis, except for the exterior noise levels, which will be tested at each major site once in every five years.

c. Results of Previous Reporting Exercises

At present, the condition of each of the properties is monitored on an ongoing basis by the resident custodians and the other staff charged with their maintenance and protection. This system generates only internal reports, which are followed up with condition assessments and conservation surveys, as warranted. Further information on the process of systematization of monitoring and maintenance at the level of individual structures may be found in Section 9.2 of the Heritage Management Plan (Appendix II).

7. Documentation

a. Photographs, Slides, and Other Audiovisual Materials

Appendix III is a set of three digital video discs (DVD's), as follows:

- An audio-visual presentation of the present nomination, which provides a fifteen-minute introduction and overview;
- A film entitled "Mountain of the Lord: Welcome to the Bahá'í World Centre", which is used in orienting interested groups of public visitors;
- A film entitled "The Pilgrimage", which is a virtual tour of the Bahá'í Holy Places in Israel primarily for Bahá'í audiences, with commentary by the widow of the late head of the Faith.

Property Documentation Table			
Site No.	Name	References in Appendix I	Photographs in Appendix I
1.	Bahjí	3.6, 3.8	Frontispiece, pp. 27-31, 34-37
2.	North Slope of Mount Carmel	3.7.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1-6.4	pp. 32, 42-43, 50-66
3.	Ri ván Gardens	3.4	pp. 24-26
4.	Mansion of Mazra'ih	3.3	pp. 22-23
5.	Place of Revelation of the "Tablet of Carmel"	3.7.2	p. 32
6.	Persian Quarter	3.7.4, 4.4, 5.1, 6.5	pp. 33, 44-48, 66
7.	Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery	4.5	pp. 48-49
8.	Junayn Garden	3.5	
9.	House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá	4.1	pp. 38-41
10.	Prison	3.1	pp. 16-18
11.	House of 'Abbúd	3.2	pp. 19-21

A selection of slides in 35mm format is included to fulfill the requirement, but for practical purposes, the photographs provided in digital format are to be preferred.

b. Copies of Property Management Plans or Documented Managements Systems and Extracts of Other Plans Relevant to the Properties

The Heritage Management Plan is at Appendix II.

c. Form and Date of Most Recent Records of Property

Within the Bahá'í World Centre, the Office of Legal Affairs holds the originals of all agreements affecting the properties, together with Land Registry extracts and other documentation related to their ownership and recognition under the Law for the Protection of Holy Places. The relevant town-planning schemes are kept by the Office of Israel Affairs, while records regarding the history and physical condition of the properties are maintained by the Department of Holy Places.

d. Address where Inventory, Records and Archives Are Held

Bahá'í World Centre
P.O. Box 155
Haifa 31001
Israel

e. Bibliography

A bibliography comprising more than 200 titles appears at the end of Appendix I. It includes a selection of works composed at the sites, literary and inspired works that refer to them, historical sources, anecdotal literature concerning events at the sites and early visits to them, pictorial and artistic works, technical and trade literature, children's literature, guidebooks, tourist brochures and travel periodicals.

Listed below are a few of the most significant published works dealing with the properties and the historical events with which they are associated.

Bagdadi, Zia M. *Treasures of the East*, pp. 75-91. Chicago: Bagdadi, 1929.

Balyuzi, H. M. *'Abdu'l-Bahá*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1971.

———. *Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory*. Oxford: George Ronald, 1980.

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Rabbani, Rú íyyih. *The Priceless Pearl*. London: Bahá'í Publishing, 2000.

Ruhe, David S. *Door of Hope*. 2d rev. ed. Oxford: George Ronald, 2001.

Sharon, Moshe. *Corpus inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae*, Vol. 1. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1997.

Taherzadeh, Adib. *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*. Vol. 3. Oxford: George Ronald, 1983.

———. *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*. Vol. 4. Oxford: George Ronald, 1987.

8. Contact Information

a. Preparer

Bahá'í International Community Secretariat
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Tel: (972) 4 835 8194
Fax: (972) 4 831 3357
Email: bics@bwc.org

b. Official Local Institution/Agency

Bahá'í World Centre
P.O. Box 155, Haifa 31001, Israel
Tel: (972) 4 835 8358
Fax: (972) 4 831 3399
Email: secretariat@bwc.org

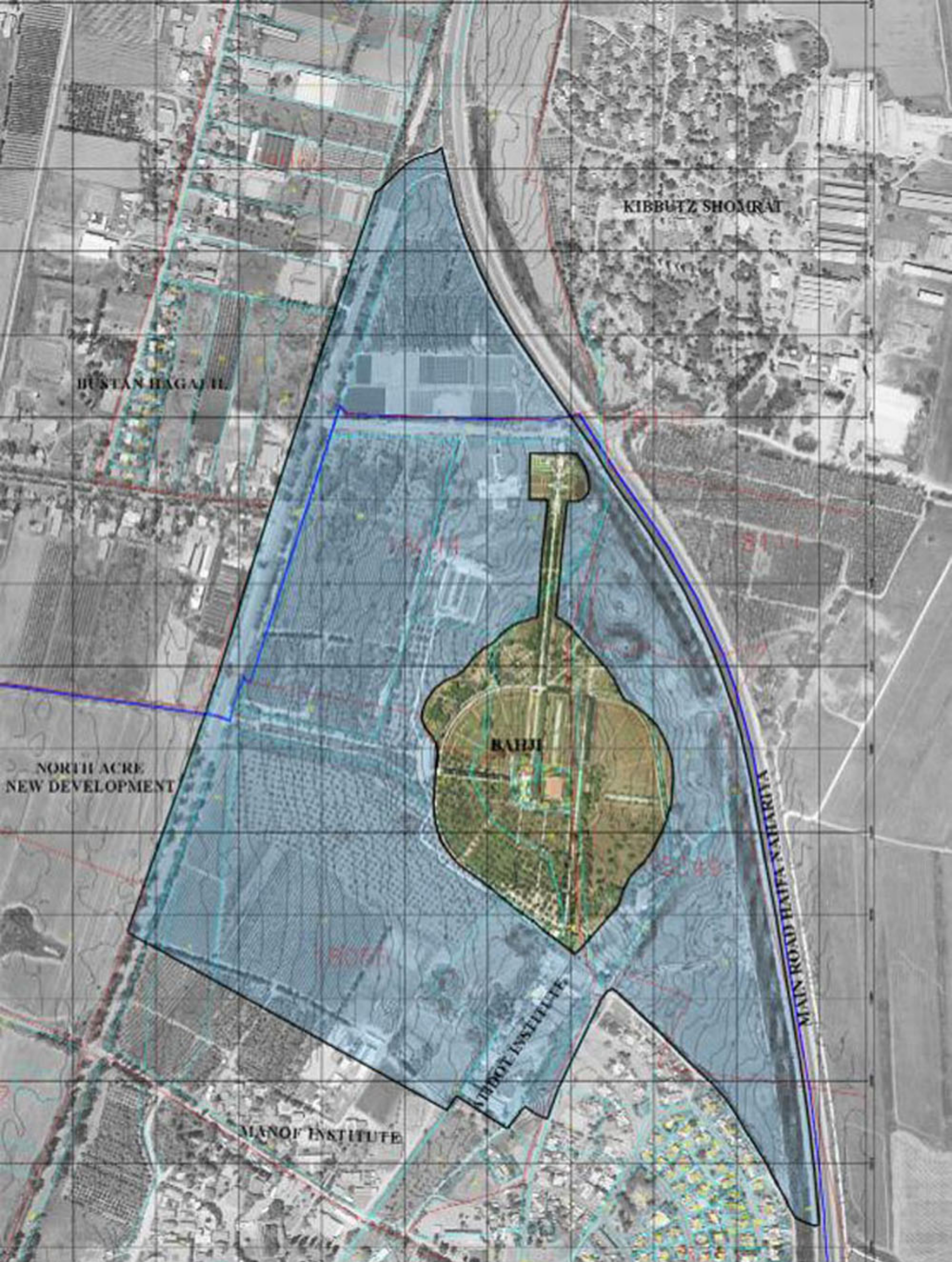
c. Other Local Institutions

Municipality of Acre P.O. Box 2007, Acre 24100 Tel: (972) 4 995 6000 Fax: (972) 4 995 6161	Municipality of Haifa P.O. Box 4811, Haifa 31047 Tel: (972) 4 835 6356 Fax: (972) 4 835 6020
Old Acre Development Company P.O. Box 1088 Old Acre 24110 Tel: (972) 4 991 2171 Fax: (972) 4 991 9418	Haifa Tourist Board 48 Ben-Gurion Avenue Haifa 35663 Tel: (972) 4 855 8111 Fax: (972) 4 853 5610

d. Official Web Site

<http://www.bahai.org>

9. Signature on Behalf of the State Party



A

BAHJI

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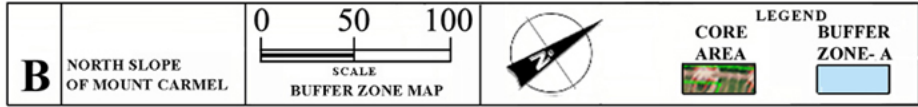
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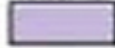
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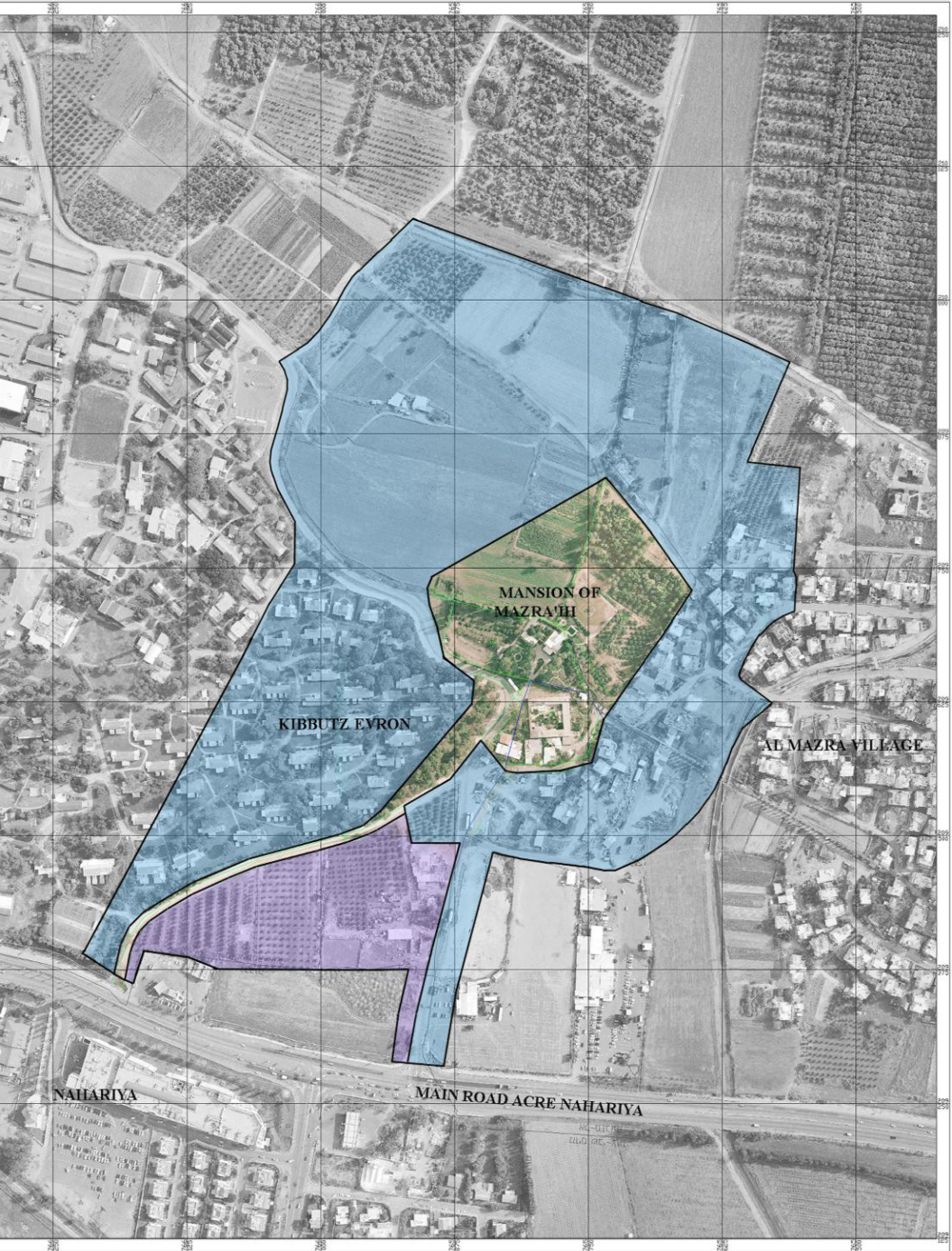


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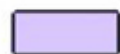
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CARMELETTE
MONASTERY

MOUNT CARMEL SLOPES

MOUNT CARMEL SLOPES

STELLA MARIS RD.

"PLACE OF
REVELATION"

FRENCH CARMEL
NEIGHBORHOOD

DAVID MARCUS ST.

UCHERNHOYSKI ST.

E

PLACE OF REVELATION
OF THE
"TABLET OF CARMEL"

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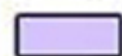
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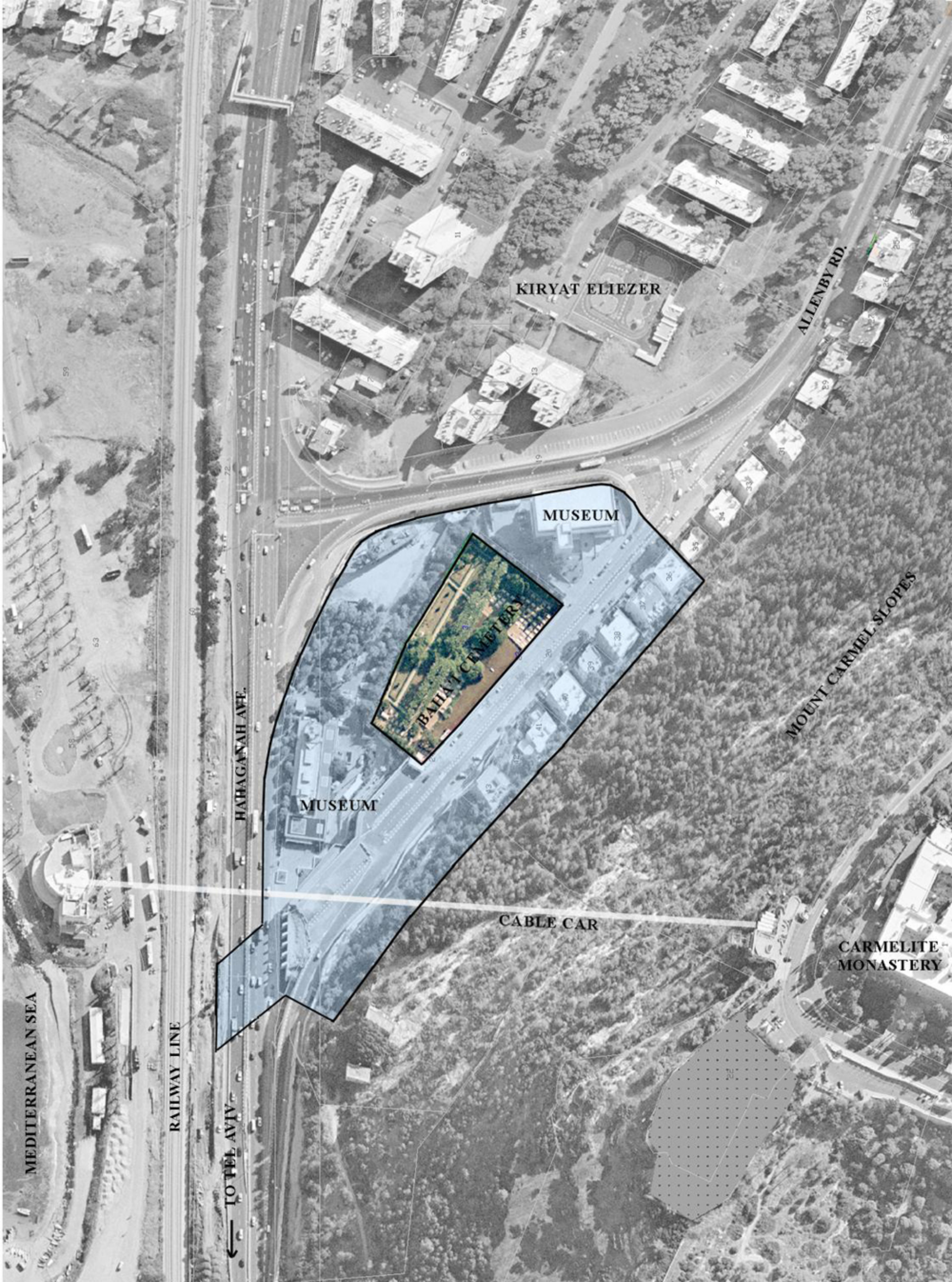
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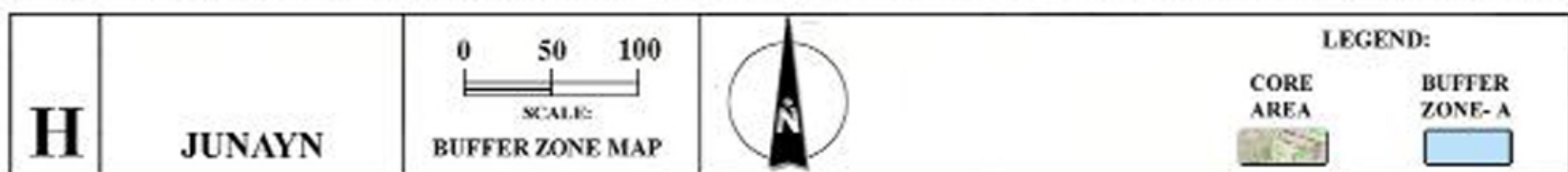
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BAHA'I CEMETERIES

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MUSEUM





I

OLD ACRE SITES

1. The Prison
2. House of 'Abbūd
3. House of 'Ahdu'llāh Pāshā

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LOCATOR MAP

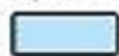


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Historical Description and Documentation

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CHAPTER 1

Bahá'í Religion: A Brief Summary



Overview I.1

The roots of the Bahá'í religion can be traced to the Shí'ah branch of Islám in the middle years of the nineteenth century. The religion's rapid spread among young Muslim theologians, the merchant class and the general public in the 1840s and 50s may be explained in part by its claim to fulfill the messianic expectations then current in that milieu. At a relatively early stage, however, it gained significant numbers of adherents among the Jewish and Zoroastrian minorities in Írán and later attracted a smaller number of Levantine Christians. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, an important connection was made with messianic expectations in Protestant Christianity, as exemplified by the Millerites. This linkage facilitated its acceptance in North America, which became the principal base for its spread to the rest of the world during the twentieth century.

Although it was initially treated as an Islamic heresy, the teachings of the Bahá'í religion soon placed it entirely outside the framework of its mother religion. Symbolic actions such as the discarding of the veil by a woman who had assumed a leading role in the faith were accompanied by explicit claims to a fresh revelation from God and unequivocal acts of theocratic legislation establishing an independent system of religious law clearly different from that of the Qur'án.

Contemporary aerial view of Bahjí, showing the last residence and tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet founder of the Bahá'í religion. This site fills a function similar to that of the Temple remains in Jerusalem for Jews and the Kaaba at Mecca for Muslims.

As it stands today, the Bahá'í religion is completely independent of Islám, their relationship being comparable to that between Christianity and Judaism. Having also transcended its original Levantine cultural matrix and acquired a following of about five million, with a geographic and ethnic distribution approximating that of the general population of the planet, it has won recognition as a world religion unlimited by any particular ethnic, regional or cultural identity.

Doctrine I.2

Bahá'í theology is based on the axiom that the extraordinarily complex and sophisticated system we call "creation" could not have come into existence or continued to function in the absence of a power and an intelligence vastly superior to that possessed by humans. Bahá'ís see that creative power and intelligence as being concentrated in a Being, necessarily beyond our capacity to define or fully understand, Who is the source and object of all religions, notwithstanding all differences in name, concept and description.

In order to preserve the independence and free will of each individual, Bahá'ís believe that the Divine Being chooses to communicate with humanity indirectly through prophets or messengers, who although human in all physical respects, are transformed to serve as unobstructed channels and "manifestations" of the Divine. Such manifestations, including Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus Christ and Muḥammad, have appeared, periodically throughout history and in various parts of the world, as teachers in a vast scheme for the spiritual education of humankind.



Bahá'í belief distinguishes between the basic moral and spiritual principles that are common to all religions, on the one hand, and secondary teachings and laws, which are adapted to the needs of the time and place of appearance of each prophet or messenger, on the other. It follows that, aside from the universal common core, religious truth is not seen as absolute, but rather relative to circumstances and the capacity and needs of the society being addressed. This understanding enables followers of the Bahá'í religion to respect the beliefs and heritage of others and to embrace the scientific and egalitarian values of the modern world without abandoning a fundamentally spiritual approach to life and its challenges.

The life of a human being in this physical world is understood as a training process, the purpose of which is to realize the capacities with which our Creator has endowed us. The qualities of character and spirit thus acquired will be the means of progress in an eternal afterlife that is purely non-material. These attributes are developed through social interactions and continuous efforts to achieve excellence in constructive fields of human endeavor (e.g. arts, crafts, professions, personal comportment, service to others, family life). Prayer, meditation and consultation with others guide and reinforce individual and collective action, while ascetic practices and monastic retreat from the world are seen as counter-productive.

Central Figures I.3

THE BÁB I.3.1

Siyyid 'Alí-Muḥammad was born in Shíráz, Írán, in 1819 into a family descended from the Prophet Muḥammad and the Imám Ḥusayn. Orphaned in infancy, He was raised by a maternal uncle and received the meager education common to the merchant class

The world's religious symbols as displayed on a pylon of the Bahá'í House of Worship located in Wilmette, Illinois reflect acceptance of all major religions.



before joining the family business at the age of about fifteen.¹ During a pilgrimage to the Shí'ah shrines in 'Iráq in 1841, He attended gatherings of a messianic sect known as the Shaykhís, without becoming a member.² On 22 May 1844, in an apparently chance encounter with one of the leaders of the sect, who became His first disciple, He declared Himself as the messianic figure for whom they were searching and took the title of "the Báb" (Gate). A central aspect of the Báb's message was the imminent arrival of a second and greater messenger referred to as "He whom God shall make manifest". After seventeen more disciples, including one woman, had independently found their way to Him and accepted His claim, He instructed them to disperse and spread His message. Within months, His followers numbered in the thousands and the Shí'ah clerical establishment embarked on a campaign of brutal repression of what they saw as a dangerous heresy. Returning from a pilgrimage to Mecca during which He announced His claim to be the promised Qá'im (The Twelfth Imám), the Báb was met by public acclaim and clerical opposition in Shíráz and Isfáhán. The powerful governor of the latter city offered Him protection but

A vegetable farming project initiated by the Bahá'í community of Erdenbulgan, Mongolia.

passed away a few months later. Muḥammad Sháh instructed that the Báb be brought to his presence in Ṭihrán, but the Grand Vizir arranged instead for Him to be imprisoned in isolated fortresses in the mountains of northwestern Írán. Muḥammad Sháh died in 1848, and his successor, Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh, was too weak to restrain the clergy, who redoubled their efforts to repress the Bábí movement through violent persecution, obtaining in many cases the active support of the civil authorities. Following massacres of the Báb's followers in many parts of Írán, the new Grand Vizir ordered Him to be executed publicly by a firing squad in Tabríz in July 1850.³ The inexplicable failure of the first attempt to carry out this order confirmed the Báb's supernatural powers, while the success of the second made Him a martyr. An attempt to prevent His remains from receiving a decent burial was frustrated by His followers, who succeeded in removing them from the field where they had been unceremoniously dumped literally under the noses of the soldiers who had been detailed to guard them.



Exiles of Bahá'u'lláh

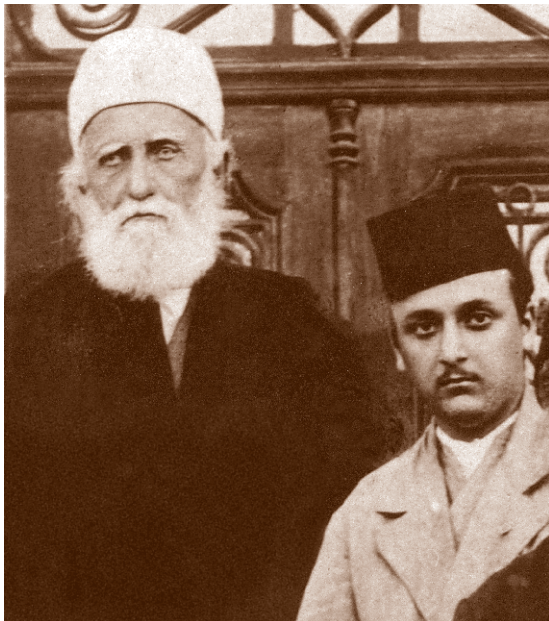
BAHÁ'U'LLÁH I.3.2

Mírzá Ḥusayn-‘Alí was born in Ṭihrán in 1817 into a family of the political class, which claimed descent from Zoroaster and the kings of the Sasanian dynasty. One of the leading followers of the Báb, He was known as “Jináb-i-Bahá”, or “Bahá’u’lláh” (Glory of God). In the wave of persecution that followed the execution of the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh was stripped of all His possessions and incarcerated in an underground prison in Ṭihrán, where He experienced His first divine revelation. After some months, He was liberated and banished to Baghdád,

where He assumed leadership of the surviving followers of the Báb. Upon being summoned to Istanbul by the Ottoman Grand Vizier in 1863, Bahá’u’lláh gathered the believers in a garden outside Baghdád and announced that He was “He whom God shall make manifest”. After a few months in Istanbul and nearly five years in Edirne, a *firmán* (decree) of Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Azíz condemned Bahá’u’lláh to perpetual banishment in Acre, then a remote outpost of the Ottoman Empire, where He arrived in August 1868 and lived until His passing in May 1892. Bahá’u’lláh’s quarter-century sojourn in the Holy Land was marked by a

COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY

Historical Benchmarks	Birth of <u>Shaykh</u> Aḥmad-I-Aḥsá’í, founder of <u>Shaykhism</u>	American Revolution	French Revolution	Birth of Charles Darwin	Birth of Bahá’u’lláh	Birth of Karl Marx	Birth of the Báb	Declaration of the Báb; birth of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Events Related to Bahá’í History								
YEARS (C.E.)	1753	1776	1789	1809	1817	1818	1819	1844



Bahá'u'lláh's successors at the head of the Bahá'í community: His son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and His great-grandson, Shoghi Effendi.

voluminous outflow of written works as well as many significant events, some of which will be referred to below.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ I.3.3

'Abbás Effendí, the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh, was born in Tíhrán in 1844 and accompanied his father throughout His exiles. Before His passing, Bahá'u'lláh designated 'Abbás Effendí to succeed Him as head of the community, with authority to explain and interpret His teachings and resolve differences among His followers. Adopting the title “'Abdu'l-Bahá” (Servant of Bahá), 'Abbás Effendí brought the remains of the Báb from

Írán and interred them on Mount Carmel, established the administrative center of the community in Haifa, and spread the new religion to the West, all in accordance with his father's instructions. He passed away in Haifa in 1921.

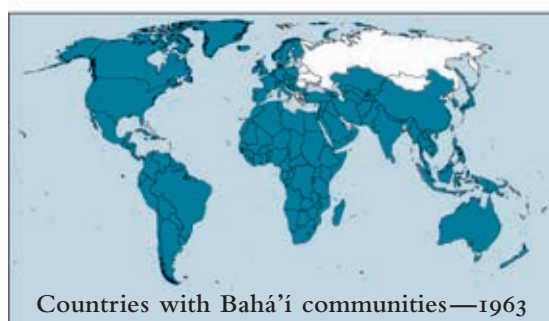
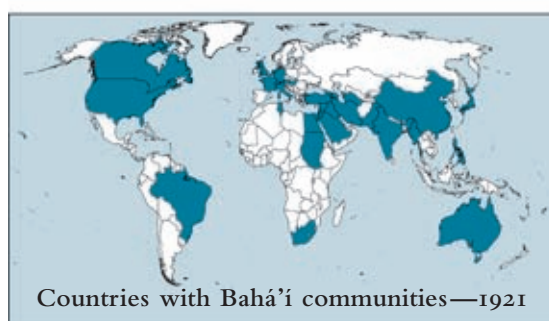
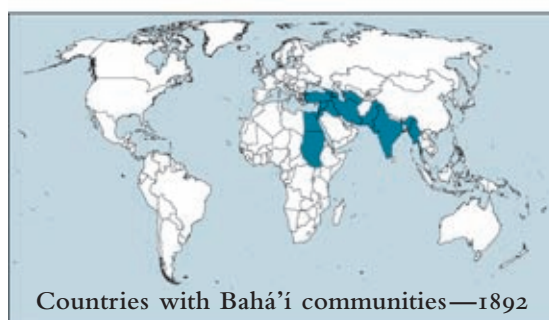
SHOGHI EFFENDI I.3.4

The eldest grandson of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and a relative of the Báb, Shoghi Rabbani was born in Acre in 1897 and studied at the Syrian Protestant College in Beirut and Oxford University. At the age of 24, he succeeded 'Abdu'l-Bahá pursuant to the latter's will. His fruitful thirty-six year ministry witnessed the worldwide spread of the Bahá'í religion, the development of its institutional structure and the consolidation of its world center in Haifa and Acre. He passed away in 1957 during a visit to London.

Institutional Development and Worldwide Spread I.4

Issues of leadership succession and the transition to a permanent institutional structure are of great importance in the formative period of religious movements, and Bahá'u'lláh chose to address them explicitly in His writings. He not only formalized the powers conferred on His designated successor and forbade the establishment of any form of clergy, but also outlined the structure of the elected institutions that would provide a permanent system of governance for the community, making these arrangements an integral part of His religious teachings,

Death of Muḥammad Sháh and ascension of Násiri'd-Dín Sháh	Execution of the Báb	Banishment of Bahá'u'lláh from Iran and His arrival in Baghdád	Birth of Sigmund Freud	Ascension of Sulṭán 'Abdu'l-Azíz	Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád and His arrival in Istanbul	Assassination of Abraham Lincoln	Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in Acre	
1848	1850	1853	1856	1861	1863	1865	1868	



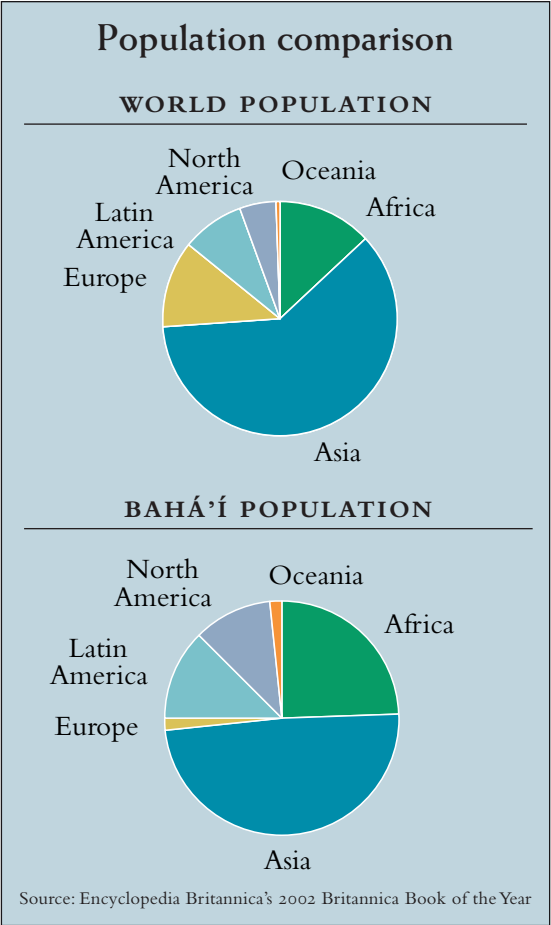
invested with the full authority of scripture. Exercising the interpretative powers granted to them, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá fleshed out the details while Shoghi Effendi guided the community through the initial stages of practical implementation.

In parallel with the migration from personal to institutional governance, the period after the passing of Bahá’u’lláh witnessed the transformation of an obscure religious movement in the Middle East into a recognized world religion, largely as a result of its successful implantation in the West. Following a period of consolidation of the community in North America, which lasted until 1937, Shoghi Effendi initiated a systematic campaign for its extension to Central and South America. This campaign was broadened to include the European continent at the end of the Second World War, followed by Africa and the rest of the world in the early 1950s.

Despite the succession arrangements described above, the passing of Bahá’u’lláh and that of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had each precipitated a crisis leading to the rebellion and expulsion of prominent believers, including members of the family of the Prophet. The ultimate test, however, came in 1957 when Shoghi Effendi died unexpectedly at the age of 60, without appointing a successor or leaving a will. Under his leadership, the religion had achieved a global spread, with at least a minimal representation in some 251 countries and dependent territories, and elected institutions had begun to function at the local and national levels. Although initial steps had been taken toward the establishment of the international governing body,

COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY

Birth of Mahatma Ghandi	Death of Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Azíz and ascension of Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd	Bahá’u’lláh moves to Mazra‘ih	Bahá’u’lláh moves to Bahjí	Passing of Bahá’u’lláh	Assassination of Náṣiri’d-Dín Sháh	Birth of Shoghi Effendi	Young Turks’ Revolt
1869	1876	1877	1879	1892	1896	1897	1908



Bahá'ís come from all national, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

which Bahá'u'lláh had called the “Universal House of Justice”, Shoghi Effendi had not yet called for its election, apparently feeling that the national bodies, whose members would serve as electors, were insufficiently mature and too few in number to represent the diversity of the community. The vacuum was filled by a group of 27 deputies who had been appointed by Shoghi Effendi and to whom he had referred to as the “Chief

Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's Embryonic World Commonwealth”.⁴ They led the community based on detailed plans left by Shoghi Effendi for the period up to 1963, consolidated the 26 existing national bodies and brought another 30 into being, arranged for the Universal House of Justice to be elected in 1963 and immediately delivered all the assets and affairs of the religion into its hands.

The remains of the Báb are buried in the shrine on Mount Carmel	'Abdu'l-Bahá travels to Europe and North America	First World War	Declaration of the Turkish Republic by Ataturk	Second World War	Establishment of the State of Israel	Passing of Shoghi Effendi	First election of the Universal House of Justice
1909	1911-1913	1914-1917	Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 1921	1939-1945	1948	1957	1963



CHAPTER 2

Haifa, Acre and the Western Galilee in the Late Ottoman Period^s

When the Egyptian Mamelukes drove the Crusaders out of the Holy Land at the end of the 13th century, they took especial care to demolish the splendid city of Acre, which had served as the invaders' capital and last redoubt. They also razed the much smaller and historically less significant coastal town of Haifa as a precaution against the possible return of

the Europeans. For the rest of their rule, the Mamelukes kept the seacoast barren and built up inland centers like Jerusalem, Tiberias and Safed. Thus Acre and Haifa were still deserted ruins when the Ottoman Turks overthrew the Mamelukes in 1516. Acre, once one of the major poles of the eastern Mediterranean, was a ghost town whose ruins had filled with stagnant water emitting such a putrid stench that the place was virtually uninhabitable.

The resettlement and reconstruction of these two localities and the surrounding area occurred gradually over the next three centuries, at the initiative of non-Turkish rulers nominally subservient to the Sublime Porte, but who were primarily concerned with the expansion and consolidation of their

View of the walls of Acre from the north, with Mount Carmel in the background.

Artist and date unknown. (left)

View of the fortifications of Acre from the east. Etching by David Roberts, 1845. (below)



domains at the expense of other local warlords and as a protection against the central power of Istanbul. The dominant figures of this period were:

■ Fakhri'd-Dín, a Druze Emir whose family had ruled southern Lebanon under the Mamelukes. He took advantage of a period of relative weakness in Istanbul at the end of the sixteenth century to expand his territory and create alliances with European powers. The Turks appointed him governor of northern Palestine in 1618 but had him executed in 1635. Despite the turbulence of his rule, Fakhri'd-Dín attracted European merchants and missionaries to Acre and rebuilt the economy of the area, based on exports of cotton and olive oil. At the end of his rule, the population of Acre was estimated at over a thousand, comprising a mixture of Muslims, Christians and Jews.

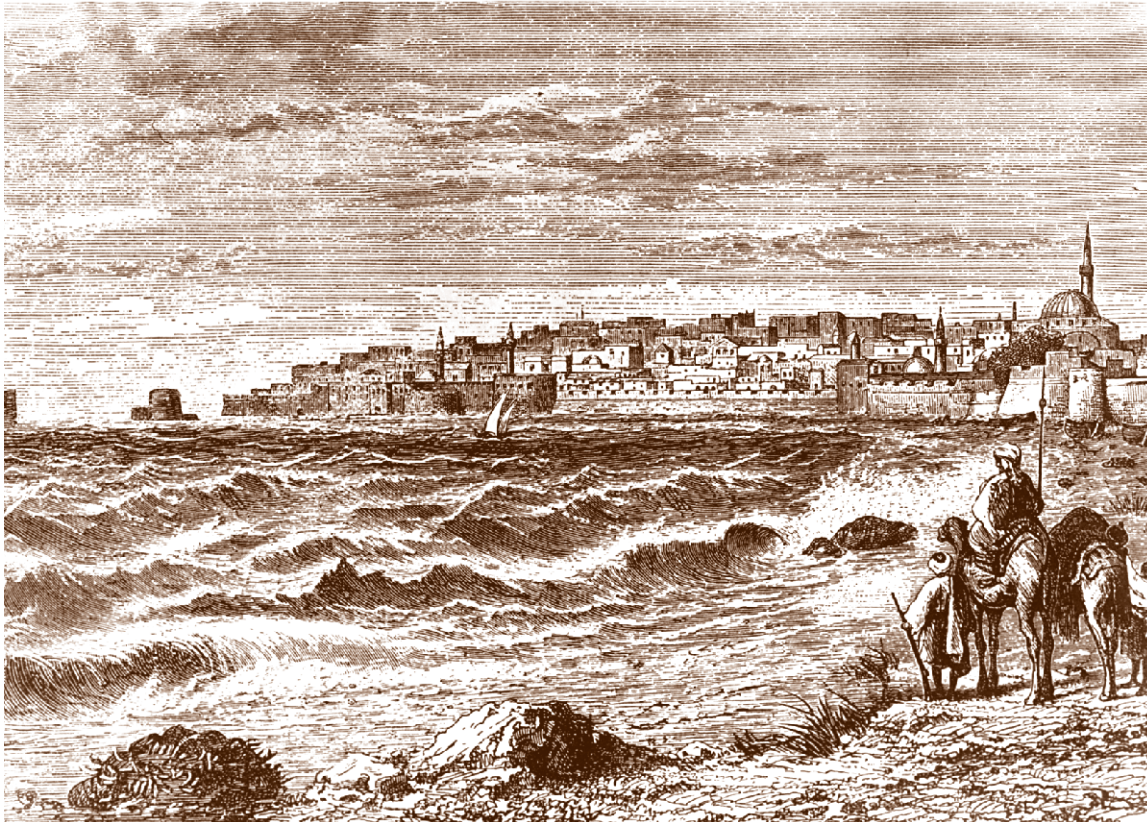
■ Dahir al-Umar, a Bedouin warlord, took control over the eastern Galilee and made Tiberias his capital in the 1730s. Under pres-

sure from the Turkish army in Damascus, he extended his domain westward and in 1749 transferred his headquarters to Acre, which he set about rebuilding and fortifying. As the reconstruction of Acre's harbor raised engineering difficulties beyond his capacities, Dahir al-Umar also gave orders to rebuild Haifa as a regional port. By the 1770s, Acre was once again the most important city in Palestine. Dahir al-Umar's growing power and his alliances with other dangerous elements alarmed the Sublime Porte, which finally brought him down in a major sea and land offensive in 1775.

■ The Bosnian mercenary, Ahmad Páshá, who earned his sobriquet "al-Jazzár" (the Butcher) as commander of the ground forces that defeated Dahir al-Umar, ruled the area from his victory until his death in 1804. He improved the fortifications of Acre and built most of the monumental structures that dominate the Old City's skyline today. His successful defense of the city against Napoleon's siege in 1799 again brought Acre to the attention of the world, this time as an impregnable stronghold and the strategic key to the Levant.

View of Haifa and Mount Carmel from the North. Painting by J.D. Woodward, 1882.





Engraving of Old Acre during the Ottoman period, as viewed from the South. Artist and date unknown.

■ The Mameluke Sulaymán Páshá, known as “Al-Adil” (the Righteous), pursued the development of Acre and its surroundings during his period as governor from 1804 until his death in 1819. One of his achievements was the construction of the aqueduct, which replaced an earlier one built by al-Jazzár but partially destroyed during Napoleon’s siege.

■ ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá, who succeeded Sulaymán at the age of 19, was the son of the latter’s treasurer, ‘Álî Páshá, and also his son-in-law. He is reputed to have been conceited, ambitious, acquisitive and intolerant. One of his first acts was to put to death his able Jewish minister, Haim Farhí, who had been a trusted financial adviser to both his predecessors, on suspicion of complicity with his Turkish overlords. This displeased the Sulţán, but through the intervention of ‘Abdu’lláh’s fellow Mameluke, Muḥammad-‘Álî Páshá, the Viceroy of Egypt, ‘Abdu’lláh was pardoned and confirmed in his position. He set about improving the exten-

sive properties in and around Acre that he and his wife had inherited from their respective fathers and constructed a mansion in Haifa, at the western tip of Mount Carmel.

After some years, ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá had a falling out with Muḥammad-‘Álî Páshá, who then mounted an expeditionary force with support from the French. The commander of this force, Muḥammad-‘Álî Páshá’s stepson, Ibráhîm Páshá, established his headquarters in Haifa and laid siege to Acre. In 1832, after seven months of pounding by the Egyptian artillery, the walls were breached, the city fell and ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá was taken off to confinement in Egypt. This victory, having put the Ottoman Empire under threat of conquest by the Egyptians with French backing, forced the other European powers to intervene to arrange a cease-fire, which prevented Ibráhîm Páshá from pursuing his advantage northwards but left him in control of the area. Eight years later, in 1840, a combined British-Austrian war fleet shelled Acre in a bid to restore Turkish rule. A fortuitous direct hit on the Egyptian ammunition depot leveled an entire quarter of the City and caused thousands of casualties, including most of the



Two wealthy Christian merchants of 19th century Acre, Illyas 'Abbūd (left) and 'Udī Khammār (right).

garrison. In the ensuing outcry, Russia and Prussia sided with the British, the Austrians and the Turks; Ibrāhīm Pāshā accepted defeat and retreated to Egypt, allowing the Turks to regain control of the area.

The destruction wreaked by the successive bombardments of 1832 and 1840 was not as catastrophic as that suffered by Acre in 1291, but it is said that hardly a building in the city escaped damage. Subsequent Ottoman governors repaired the walls and the badly damaged citadel, but they lacked the resources and initiative required to revitalize the city, which stagnated as a backwater of the decaying Ottoman Empire. It is significant that not until 1910 was it deemed necessary to breach the walls to create a proper vehicular entrance to Acre. There was no railroad service until 1913, when a spur was built from Haifa, which had been chosen as the Mediterranean terminus of the Hījāz line inaugurated in 1905.

Although the rulers and most of the population of Acre during the Ottoman period were Muslim, it also harbored a significant number of Christians of the Greek Orthodox,

Maronite, Melchite and other denominations. The Greek Orthodox Church of St. George, first mentioned in a visitor's report from 1631, was renovated by Fakhrī'd-Dīn and again in 1845. During the time of Dahir al-Umar, this community was reinforced by a large influx of refugees from Cyprus, and in the late nineteenth century it claimed some 1,700 members. Among the patrons of the Church during this period were 'Udī Khammār and Ilyās 'Abbūd, two wealthy merchants who owned back-to-back houses, one facing the sea front and the other Genoa Square, where the Church is located. Their families had stayed in Acre while many others left for Haifa, Tyre or Beirut, and despite the generally depressed condition of the city, 'Udī Khammār's affairs apparently prospered to the point where he could afford to purchase the Bahjī estate from the Jamāl brothers, who had acquired it from the heirs of 'Abdu'llāh Pāshā, and to transform it into a stately palace, where he lived in comfort and elegance from 1871 until his death in an epidemic eight years later.

During the nineteenth century, the star of Haifa was gradually rising amidst a host of other changes affecting the Middle East. During their brief period of rule, the Egyptians opened the door to European missionary activity, a move that the Turks



Old Acre from the south. Photograph by Clarence Welsh, 1921.

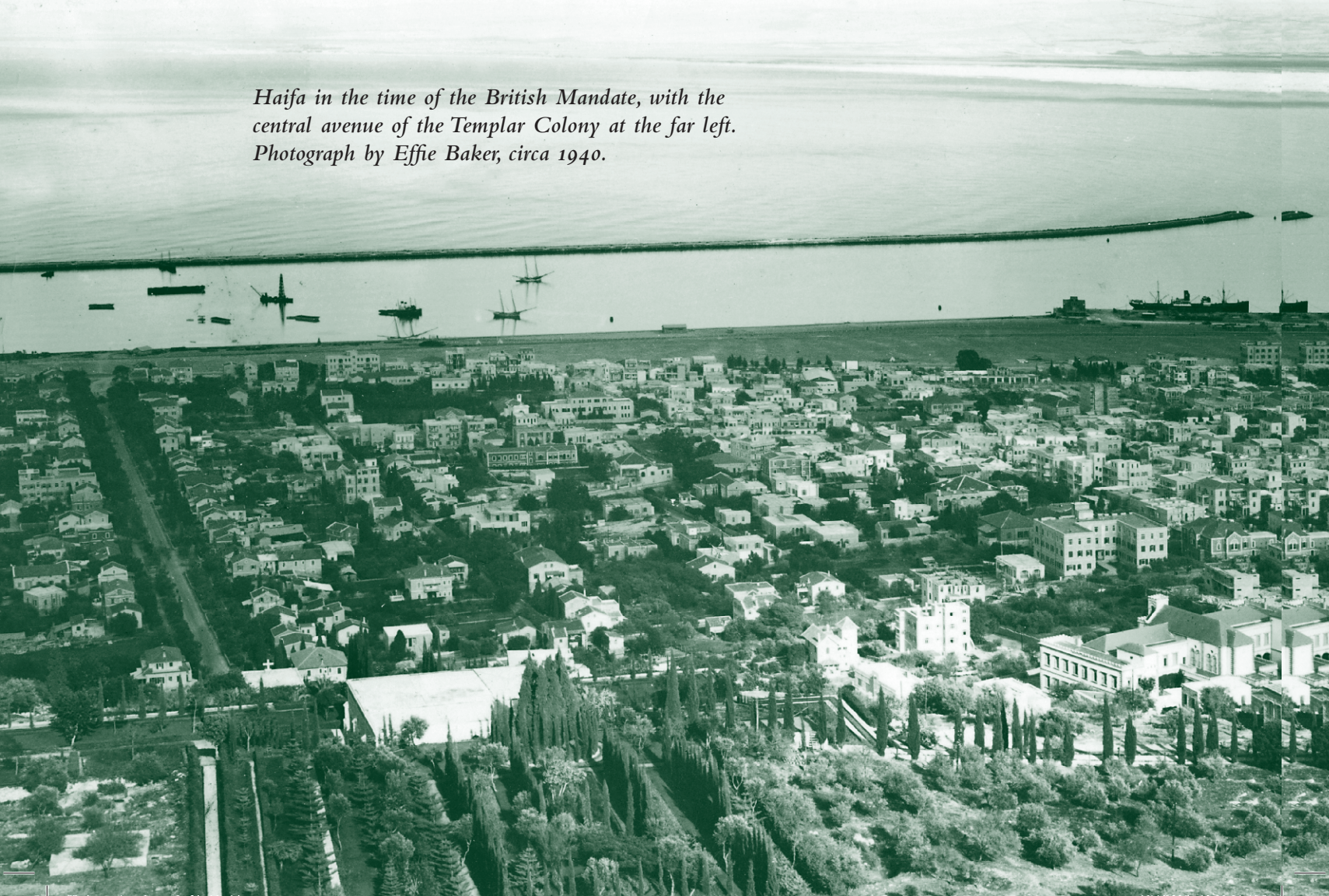
were in no position to reverse when they regained control thanks to European intervention. This opportunity coincided with an upsurge of Christian interest in the Holy Land fueled by a combination of missionary zeal and speculations concerning the imminent return of Christ. An Anglican bishopric was established in Jerusalem in 1842, the Syrian Protestant College⁶ in Beirut in 1866, and colonies of German Templars in Haifa

and Jaffa in the late 1860s. European shipping companies initiated regular steamship services to the eastern Mediterranean, connecting Haifa with the outside world and reinforcing its dominance in relation to the hinterland. From the early 1880s, successive waves of Jewish immigration brought tens of thousands of new residents from Europe and other parts of the world. Haifa was transformed by these forces, taking on the character of a dynamic and growing cosmopolitan hub, while Acre stagnated within its walls, only marginally affected by the winds of change.

*View of the German Templar Colony in Haifa.
Engraving by J. Shumacher, May 1877.*



*Haifa in the time of the British Mandate, with the
central avenue of the Templar Colony at the far left.
Photograph by Effie Baker, circa 1940.*







CHAPTER 3

Sojourn of Bahá'u'lláh in Acre and Vicinity



Prison ^{3.1}

In the searing summer heat of 31 August 1868, the steamship carrying Bahá'u'lláh and approximately seventy family members and followers⁷ arrived in Haifa, where the group waited several hours ashore for their onward passage across the bay to Acre. The eldest surviving daughter of Bahá'u'lláh, Bahíyyih Khánum, described their arrival:

We were put into a sailing boat. There being no wind, and no shelter from the burning rays of the sun, we spent eight hours of positive misery, and at last we reached 'Akká, the end of our journey... All the townspeople had assembled to see the arrival of the prisoners. Having been told that we were infidels, criminals, and sowers of sedition, the attitude of the crowd was threatening. Their yelling of curses and execrations filled us with fresh misery. We were terrified of the unknown! We knew not what the fate of our party, the friends and ourselves would be.⁸

The quarters used to imprison the group were part of the Ottoman Citadel constructed in stages during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on top of the hospice of the Hospitallers of St. John, one of the few Crusader structures that had survived the Mameluke destruction of 1291.⁹ Bahá'u'lláh and members of His family were incarcerated in the upper floor of the northwest tower of the complex, which forms part of the *kishle* (barracks) and was probably constructed in about 1797. The architecture suggests that the

upper floor was built as lodgings for a high-ranking military commander, possibly Aḥmad Páshá, who ruled Acre from 1775 to 1804.¹⁰ Bahá'u'lláh slept in a room in the southwest corner of the building, while the other six rooms of the inner quarters were occupied by members of His household. The outer part of the apartment included an enclosed veranda with a skylight overlooking the courtyard of the barracks, a room for receiving visitors, a kitchen, latrines and a sort of mezzanine. At the time of Bahá'u'lláh's occupancy, however, the premises were unfurnished and in an advanced state of decay, the ceiling timbers having rotted to the point where there was a steady rain of dust in the rooms below.¹¹

In the late nineteenth century, the city of Acre of was in full decline, filthy, humid and flea-infested, and it served as a repository for many of the worst criminals of the Ottoman Empire.¹² Whatever the stipulated term, banishment to Acre was generally the equivalent of the death sentence because of the appalling conditions. This fact is strikingly demonstrated by the documented case of eighty-six Bulgarian prisoners who arrived in 1878; a third of them died within one month despite the provision of medical facilities by the local British Consular Agent, a privilege not afforded to other prisoners.¹³ All but two of the Bahá'í exiles fell ill soon after their arrival, but surprisingly only three died.¹⁴ On the night of their arrival, they were deprived of food and water, and thereafter were given loaves of black, salty bread and access to a pool of brackish water. After some time, a few of the Bahá'í prisoners were permitted to go to the market and to fetch clean water from a well outside the city walls.¹⁵

The *firmán* of Sulṭán 'Abdu'l-'Azíz, read in the al-Jazzár Mosque as a warning to the

*Section of the Acre Citadel where
Bahá'u'lláh was incarcerated upon
His arrival in 1868.*



Interior view of the room occupied by Bahá'u'lláh in the Acre citadel. Photograph by Clarence Welsh, circa 1921.

population, condemned the exiles to perpetual banishment, stipulated their strict incarceration and forbade any association with them.¹⁶ Efforts to obtain the release of Bahá'u'lláh and His companions through diplomatic channels, by Mr. Joseph Gobineau, a French diplomat, Count von Prokesch-Osten, the Austrian Ambassador in Istanbul, and Reverend Leon Rosenberg, a Christian missionary in Edirne, were unavailing.¹⁷

Several pilgrims from the East undertook the journey to Acre in the hope of an audience with Bahá'u'lláh, some covering the entire distance by foot from Írán, only to be refused admission to the city. Instead, they would stand outside the second moat to the north in the hope of catching a glimpse of Him through one of the windows of the tower.¹⁸ Other pilgrims were able to make their way into the city but were unable to gain access to the Citadel.¹⁹

During His two years, two months and five days in the Prison, Bahá'u'lláh maintained His correspondence with believers and composed some of His best-known works. He completed the *Súriy-i-Haykal*²⁰ (Tablet of the Temple), boldly proclaiming His divine mission to the rulers of the East and West, including Queen Victoria, Napoleon III, Czar Alexander II, Pope Pius IX, and Náṣiri'd-Dín Sháh. Also penned during this time were the *Lawḥ-i-Ra'ís* rebuking 'Álī Páshá, the Grand

Vizir of Turkey, who had brought about his exile to Acre, and the *Lawḥ-i-Fu'ád*, in which Bahá'u'lláh foretold the downfall of 'Álī Páshá and the overthrow of the Sulṭán.²¹

On 22 June 1870, tragedy struck at the heart of the family of Bahá'u'lláh. His twenty-two year-old son, Mírzá Mihdí, known as the "Purest Branch", was pacing the roof of the building, reciting passages from his father's writings, when he fell through the skylight onto a wooden crate which pierced his ribs. His dying wish was that the gates of the prison be opened so that the pilgrims could visit their Lord.²² Bahá'u'lláh associated His son's death with Abraham's intended sacrifice of His son, the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the martyrdom of the Imám Ḥusayn. "I have, O my Lord, offered up that which Thou hast given Me, that Thy servants may be quickened, and all that dwell on earth be united," He wrote.²³

In early November 1870, four months after the death of Mírzá Mihdí, the barracks were needed to house increasing numbers of Turkish troops in the region, prompting the release of the exiles to house arrest under close surveillance within the walls of the city. Most of Bahá'u'lláh's followers were lodged at the *Khán al-'Umdán*, while He and His family stayed in a succession of houses in Christian and Muslim neighborhoods in the southern part of the city.²⁴

House of 'Abbúd ^{3.2}

Finally in September 1871, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was able to rent a home recently vacated by 'Údí Khammár, ending ten months of itinerancy. The building, currently known as the House of 'Abbúd, was at that time two distinct apartments; that of 'Údí Khammár, located on the eastern side facing Genoa Square and St. George's Church, was separated by a partition from that of Ilyás 'Abbúd on the western side facing the sea. 'Údí Khammár's apartment was the smaller of the two, and conditions were so cramped that at one time no less than thirteen persons were accommodated in a single room.²⁵

Bahá'u'lláh occupied a room in the south-east corner, where He composed, in early 1873, the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (Most Holy Book), in which He laid down the legal and institutional framework of the Bahá'í religion.²⁶ During His stay at the House of 'Abbúd, Bahá'u'lláh wrote many other important works, including the *Lawh-i-Qad Iẖtaraqa'l-Mukhlis̱* (Fire Tablet), a dialogue in rhyming verse between the Prophet and His Creator, the *Lawh-i-Ru'yá* (Tablet of Vision), a highly mystical piece regarding the spiritual world, and the *Lawh-i-Hikmat*, (Tablet of Wisdom).²⁷ The latter work provides philosophical explanations of the influence of the Word of God, the cause and origin of creation, and the workings of nature. In this Tablet, Bahá'u'lláh also addresses the need for the spiritualization of the human race, calling on the peoples of the world to acquire moral virtues and work towards the betterment of humankind.

No sooner had the intense hostility of the local authorities and population begun to abate than it was suddenly revived by the death of three dissidents at the hands of some believers infuriated by their machinations and provocations. Bahá'u'lláh unhesitatingly condemned an act that was in flagrant violation of His teachings, which require His followers to eschew all violence and retaliation, even against evildoers. Although the offenders admitted their guilt, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá were arrested, detained for three days and interrogated, while twenty-five other



House of 'Abbúd, photographs from 1905 (above) and 1990. (below) While staying in this house, Bahá'u'lláh composed the book which gave a legal structure to the religion and which He called His "Most Holy Book".





View of the House of 'Abbúd from Genoa Square, showing the section that originally belonged to 'Údi Khammár. The Most Holy Book was composed in the room located in the upper left corner in early 1870. Photo circa 1921.

believers innocent of any offence were confined for six months. After this incident, the animosity of the population was so intense that even the children of the believers were pursued and pelted with stones whenever they ventured outside their homes.²⁸

With the passage of time, however, the population became aware of the true nature of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings, largely through 'Abdu'l-Bahá's tireless endeavors to promote understanding and goodwill, and some of the most hostile local officials were replaced, resulting in a gradual improvement in the situation. For the first time, it became possible for pilgrims to enter the city and reach the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, despite the imperial *firman*, which remained nominally in force.²⁹ The new governor, Aḥmad Big Tawfīq, sent his son to 'Abdu'l-Bahá for instruction and sought an audience with Bahá'u'lláh, during which he respectfully asked if he could be of service to his prisoner. In response, Bahá'u'lláh suggested that he repair the aqueduct built by Sulaymán Páshá in order to deliver clean water to the city.³⁰

By the summer of 1872, the occupant of the adjoining apartment, Ilyás 'Abbúd, who had anxiously reinforced the partition between the two dwellings following the murder of the dissidents, was sufficiently reassured to offer 'Abdu'l-Bahá the use of a room in his apartment and permit the opening of a connecting door. This arrangement enabled 'Abdu'l-Bahá to proceed with his marriage to Munírih Khánum, which had been held in abeyance for over five months due to a lack of living quarters.³¹ Munírih Khánum bore

nine children in this home, five of whom died in childhood; the four surviving children were daughters.³²

When 'Abbúd subsequently fell ill and wished to leave the city, he offered to rent his home to the Holy Family. Additional passages were opened at the ground and upper levels to join the two homes. Bahá'u'lláh moved to a room at the front of the building His former room being occupied by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.³³

When Bahá'u'lláh moved to the Mansion of Mazra'ih and subsequently to Bahjí, His wife, Ásíyih Khánum, remained at the House of 'Abbúd, along with their daughter, Bahíyyih Khánum, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his wife and children.³⁴ The family members visited Bahá'u'lláh at His residences, and He returned from time to time to stay at the House of 'Abbúd.³⁵ He was at Ásíyih Khánum's bedside when she passed away in 1886.³⁶

The carefully restored building comprising these two dwellings is considered one of the finest examples of local architecture, and its gleaming white exterior can be seen across the bay from Haifa on a clear day. The upper balcony is framed with graceful arches and simple columns, while the remainder of the house exterior has traditional shuttered windows. An exposed staircase leading to the upper floor dominates the inner courtyard. At the upper level, each part of the house features an interior courtyard open to the elements. The apartment of Ilyás 'Abbúd to the west includes a grand reception room with a high ceiling and clerestory windows, as well as the room of Bahá'u'lláh, surrounded on three sides by a narrow balcony facing the sea.

Interior staircase at the House of 'Abbúd.

Mansion of Mazra'ih ^{3.3}

This is a scenic and historic site between Acre and Nahariya located on the route of the Ottoman aqueduct that connected Acre to the Kabrí Springs and supplied water to farms along the way. The principal building, once the summer home of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá,³⁷ served as Bahá'u'lláh's residence from 1877 to 1879, following His nine-year confinement within the walls of Old Acre. Today it retains much of its original pastoral charm, surrounded by gardens and orchards and offering scenic views to the Galilee hills.

Built in the Ottoman fashion with straight walls, shuttered windows, high ceilings, and a flat roof, the simple two-story home is arranged with living quarters on the upper floor and rooms for receiving visitors at the ground level. Bahá'u'lláh's bedroom is located in the northwest corner of the upper floor, with a view to the Mediterranean Sea on one side and the hills of the Galilee on the other. The site also includes a walled courtyard adjacent to the house, two holding pools connected to the aqueduct, an ancient farm building and an agricultural area that is still farmed in the traditional way characteristic of the period when Bahá'u'lláh resided there.

From His youth, Bahá'u'lláh was fond of nature and gardens.³⁸ One day, while still living in the prison-city, He was heard to remark: "I have not gazed on verdure for nine years.

The country is the world of the soul, the city is the world of bodies." 'Abdu'l-Bahá later recounted that, when He heard of this, He immediately began making arrangements for His Father to leave the city. He approached the owner of the Mansion of Mazra'ih who, despite his opposition to the Bahá'ís, agreed to rent the residence. Repairs were undertaken to the building and garden, and a bath was built. When all had been arranged, three times 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked Bahá'u'lláh to leave the city for the mansion, but each time Bahá'u'lláh simply replied "I am a prisoner". Only after the patient and persistent entreaties of the Muftí of Acre did Bahá'u'lláh finally relent and agree to leave the city.³⁹ Thus, in early June 1877, Bahá'u'lláh was driven to the mansion by carriage. Such was the changed attitude of the authorities that the prisoners were permitted to leave the city without interference.

The pilgrims, who continued to flow to the Holy Land from the East, were now able to meet Bahá'u'lláh in an atmosphere of freedom and dignity. He usually received them in a large reception room on the ground floor of the mansion. During this time, the believers in Írán were suffering from savage persecution, eliciting numerous letters of comfort and guidance penned or dictated by Bahá'u'lláh during His sojourn at Mazra'ih and delivered by trusted couriers, who traveled constantly between Írán and the Holy Land.⁴⁰



Ground floor reception room at Mazra'ih, where Bahá'u'lláh received visitors. (left) The Mansion of Mazra'ih viewed from the east. (opposite)



Riḍván Gardens ^{3.4}

The focal point of this site is a historically unique Persian garden, featuring a fountain and a seating area with special tiling and carved wooden benches, located on what was once a small island in the Na‘mayn River. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá rented it in 1875 and began preparing it for his father’s use while the latter was still a prisoner within the walls of Old Acre. The local believers transported quantities of soil to build up flowerbeds, while the pilgrims from Írán and neighboring countries brought shrubs, trees and flowering plants. During the long overland voyages, some watered the plants at the expense of their own thirst, while others kept them fresh by transporting them in watermelons.⁴¹ The site also includes two adjacent parcels, known as the Firdaws and ‘Alí-Ashraf gardens, which were purchased in 1881, together with the Riḍván Garden itself, and which have been cultivated by Bahá’ís continually since that time.

Bahá’u’lláh probably first visited the garden in June 1877, during the period when He was transferring His residence to the Mansion of Mazra‘ih.⁴² He became a frequent visitor, usually in the spring, summer and early autumn seasons,⁴³ and would sometimes stay overnight or even spend several days, sleeping in the modest house on the island. On other occasions, He pitched His tent near the large pool in the Firdaws Garden. Bahá’u’lláh called the place Riḍván, meaning “Paradise” — the same name He had given the garden where He had announced His claim to be a Manifestation of God in Baghdád — and also referred to it as “Our Verdant Isle” and the “New Jerusalem”.⁴⁴

While mainly a place of rest and relief from the oppressive summer heat where the believers would gather in the presence of Bahá’u’lláh, a number of His works contain specific references to the place, indicating that they were composed there or inspired by its scenery. In the tablet of *Ṭarázát* (Ornaments), He states that He was sitting in the Garden of Riḍván enjoying “its streams flowing, and its trees luxuriant, and the sunlight playing in their midst”, when the “manifestation of



Heart of the Persian garden, especially prepared for Bahá’u’lláh and where his followers gathered in His presence. Bahá’u’lláh referred to this garden often in His writings, calling it “Our Verdant Isle” and the “New Jerusalem”.

trustworthiness” appeared standing on a pillar of light and called aloud, saying: “I am the supreme instrument for the prosperity of the world, and the horizon of assurance unto all beings”.⁴⁵

The spot was also known to those outside the community, as testified by the following description from the pen of Laurence



Oliphant, a well-known British traveler and author who visited unannounced on 7 November 1883:

This island, which is about two hundred yards long by scarcely a hundred wide, is all laid out in flower-beds and planted with ornamental shrubs and with fruit-trees. Coming upon it suddenly it is like a scene in fairy land. In the centre is a plashing fountain from which the water is conveyed to all parts of the garden. The flower-beds are all bordered with neat edges on stonework, and are sunk below the irrigating channels. Over a marble bed the waters from the fountain come rippling down in



Historical photograph of the house where Bahá'u'lláh often spent the night, showing one branch of the river that surrounded the island. Circa 1900.

a broad stream to a bower of bliss, where two immense and venerable mulberry-trees cast an impenetrable shade over a platform with seats along the entire length of one side, protected by a balustrade projecting over the waters of the Belus [Na'mayn], which here runs in a clear stream, fourteen or fifteen feet wide and two or three feet deep, over a pebbly bottom, where fish of considerable size, and evidently preserved are darting fearlessly about, or coming up to the steps to be fed. The stream is fringed

with weeping willows, and the spot, with its wealth of water, its thick shade, and air fragrant with jasmine and orange blossoms, forms an ideal retreat from the heats of summer.⁴⁶

Accounts left by the believers who attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván testify to the joyful atmosphere of those gatherings.⁴⁷ One of the early Western pilgrims, Margaret Randall, who visited in November 1919 at the age of 12, recalled that the water for the fountain in the central portion of the garden was supplied by a pump operated by a donkey.⁴⁸ A public works project during the British mandate diverted the river away from the area, but planning is underway to recreate the island by means of a circulating water system.

Junayn Garden 3.5

This small farm, located within the current boundaries of Nahariya, is a short distance from the Mansion of Mazra'ih. During the time of Bahá'u'lláh, it was owned by some of the Bahá'ís. He was fond of the place and visited it often, staying in the modest farmhouse.⁴⁹

The noted British orientalist of Cambridge University, Edward Granville Browne, who came to the Holy Land to meet Bahá'u'lláh in 1890, recalled a visit to Junayn during which he observed the Prophet "walking round the garden surrounded by a perfect court of Bábís [meaning Bahá'ís]".⁵⁰

A young Persian visiting the following year wrote of the pilgrims' excitement at the prospect of visiting Junayn with Bahá'u'lláh. That day Bahá'u'lláh rode a donkey, with one of the taller gentlemen of the party holding a parasol to shield Him from the sun, while the believers followed on foot.⁵¹ In March 1892, just two months before the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, twenty to thirty believers gathered at Junayn Garden to celebrate Naw-Rúz, the Bahá'í New Year, in His presence.⁵²

The Bahá'í World Centre has recently completed the acquisition of this site, and its restoration is in progress.



To irrigate the garden and operate this fountain river water was lifted to a raised tank by an animal-driven pump. The water from the fountain ran back to the river through the channel between the benches.

Mansion of Bahjí ^{3.6}

The original single-story dwelling was built around 1821 for the mother of ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá, who was himself living in the large mansion just to the south which had belonged to his predecessor and father-in-law, Sulaymán Páshá. After ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá’s defeat and exile in 1832, both properties were purchased by a family of Christian merchants, Jirjis and Iskandar Jamál, who sold Bahjí to ‘Údí Khammár in 1868. During the ensuing three years, ‘Údí Khammár spent what must have been a considerable sum transforming the building into a palace with spacious living quarters on the upper floor. Upon completion of the renovation, an Arabic inscription was placed above the doorway to the mansion presaging its future glory: “Greetings and salutations rest upon this mansion which increaseth in splendor through the passage of time. Manifold wonders and marvels are found therein, and pens are baffled in attempting to describe them.”⁵³ ‘Údí Khammár moved his family into the mansion in 1871, but passed away during an epidemic in 1879, his vision unrealized. His heirs hastily abandoned the place to escape the plague and were more than pleased to rent it to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. This

enabled Bahá’u’lláh to transfer His residence from the Mansion of Mazra’ih in September 1879 and to spend the last twelve years of His life in comfort and dignity.⁵⁴

An outstanding example of Ottoman architecture, the mansion has been carefully restored and is maintained in peak condition. The ground floor is composed of spacious rooms with high ceilings, surrounded on the north, west and south sides by an arcade and a walled garden. The upper floor is reached through a door on the east side of the building which opens to an interior staircase. After passing through a short corridor, the view of the upper area opens to a large central hall paved with marble and flooded with light from a clerestory supported by eight marble columns, in the manner of an inner courtyard. Shoghi Effendi furnished this area with displays of documentation, artifacts and models illustrating the community’s achievements and opened it to the public as a museum in 1929. Spacious rooms branch out from

The room occupied by Bahá’u’lláh at the Mansion of Bahjí, where He passed away in 1892. One of His interviews with Professor Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge University also took place here in 1890.





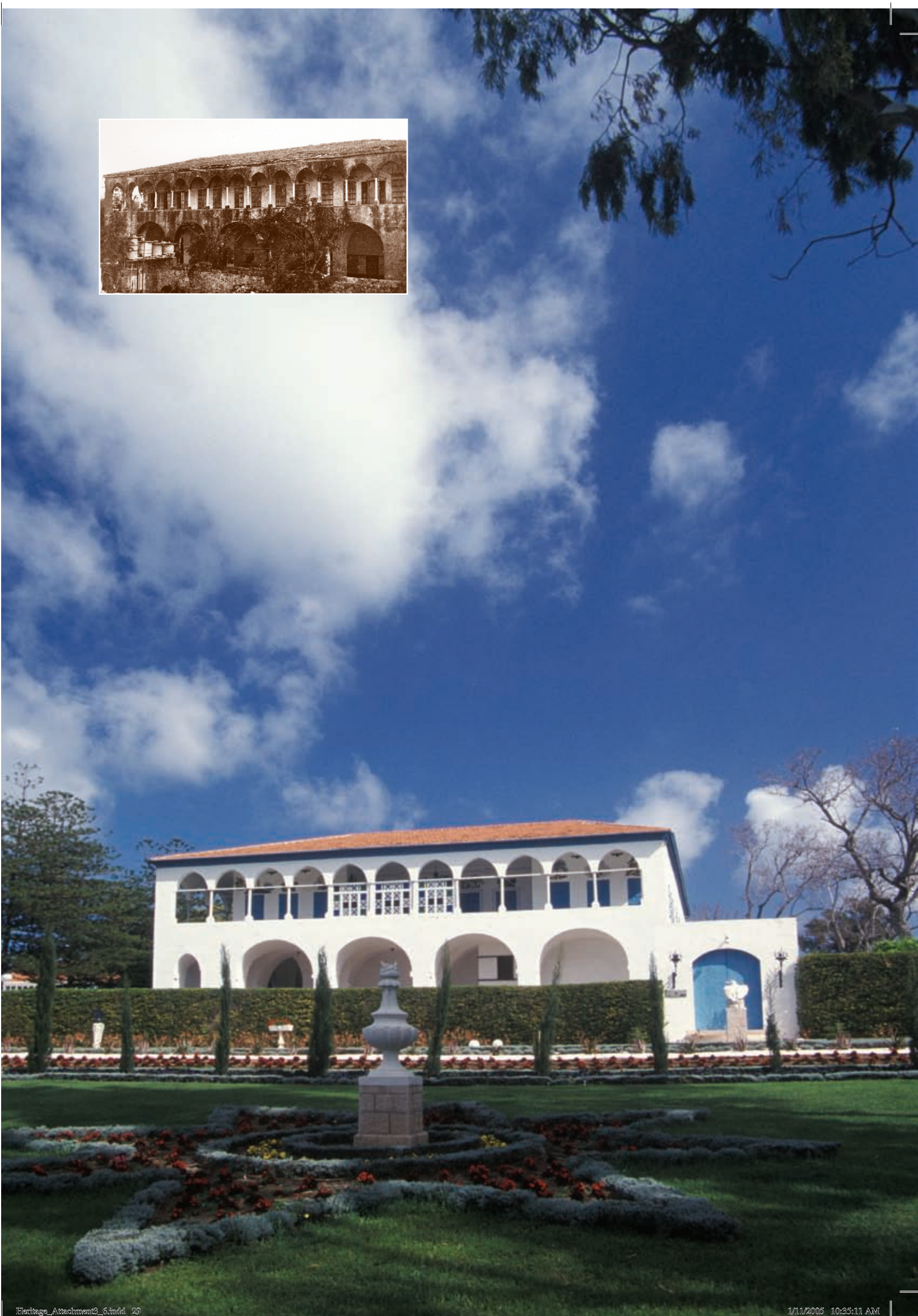
View of the balcony on the upper floor of the Mansion at Bahjí, with restored fresco paintings.

the hall, including the room occupied by Bahá'u'lláh in the southeast corner. A large balcony which runs above the arcade is decorated with striking wall frescoes and offers views to the Mediterranean Sea and Mount Carmel. Slender marble columns around the balcony support the outer edge of the roof, while a sitting area with a marble fountain is screened with stained glass panels.⁵⁵

It has been estimated that, during His forty-year ministry, Bahá'u'lláh authored some fifteen thousand documents, which if published in book form, would fill about one hundred volumes.⁵⁶ The period of His residence at Bahjí was particularly fruitful, witnessing an outpouring of works encouraging the believers, elucidating His teachings and principles, and explaining the framework for the future world administration of the community. Among the major works written during this time were the *Tajalliyát* (Effulgences), *Ishráqát* (Splendors), *Bishárát* (Glad-Tidings), *Ṭarázát* (Ornaments), *Lawḥ-i-Dunyá* (Tablet of the World) and the

Kalimát-i-Firdawsíyyih (Words of Paradise).⁵⁷ This latter Tablet, written approximately two years before Bahá'u'lláh's passing, counsels the believers to work for unity and concord among the peoples of the world, asserts the importance of justice in all things, disapproves of asceticism or secluded living, and confers on the Universal House of Justice the power to enact laws relating to issues not covered in the Holy Writings. In the last year of His earthly life, Bahá'u'lláh penned the *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, a lengthy letter to *Shaykh* Muḥammad-Báqir, a leading *mujtahid* in Iṣfáhán, who had assisted his father, stigmatized by Bahá'u'lláh as “the Wolf”, in persecuting the Bahá'ís, once even volunteering to kill them with his own hands, and who continued in this pattern during his own leadership. In this epistle, Bahá'u'lláh appeals to the *Shaykh* to realize the error of his ways and turn to God for forgiveness. He also recapitulates the principal elements of His religious message and answers the calumnies

The current view (opposite) is the southern façade of the Mansion of Bahjí. The historical view (inset) is a photograph of the Mansion before restoration, circa 1929.





The central hall of the upper floor of the Mansion with its clerestory, before restoration.

leveled against the believers.⁵⁸ Among the last works revealed by Bahá'u'lláh was His will and testament, the *Kitáb-i-Ahd* (Book of the Covenant)⁵⁹, written, signed and sealed in His own hand, in which He designates 'Abdu'l-Bahá as His successor at the head of the community.⁶⁰

In addition to His written work, Bahá'u'lláh focused His attention on meetings with the believers and pilgrims, preferring to let 'Abdu'l-Bahá deal on His behalf with those outside this circle. Thus Bahá'í pilgrims from the East continued to be received at Bahjí, in an atmosphere of great joy,⁶¹ while many local notables who sought His presence were turned away. After being afforded an opportunity to observe Bahá'u'lláh from a distance during one of His regular evening walks in 1891, the well-known Druze author, Amír Amín Arslan, wrote:

His appearance struck my imagination in such a way that I cannot better repre-



The central hall of the Mansion after restoration and in its current use as a museum.

sent it than by evoking the image of God the Father, commanding, in his majesty, the elements of nature, in the middle of clouds.⁶²

Professor Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge University sought permission before coming to the Holy Land and was granted several interviews during his stay in April 1890. His journal records a vivid account of his first encounter with Bahá'u'lláh in His room at Bahjí:

My conductor paused for a moment while I removed my shoes. Then, with a quick movement of the hand, he withdrew, and, as I passed, replaced the curtain; and I found myself in a large apartment, along



the upper end of which ran a low divan, while on the side opposite to the door were placed two or three chairs. Though I dimly suspected whither I was going and whom I was to behold (for no distinct intimation had been given to me), a second or two elapsed ere, with a throb of wonder and awe, I became definitely conscious that the room was not untenanted. In the corner where the divan met the wall sat a wondrous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt head-dress of the kind called *táj* by dervishes (but of unusual height and make), round the base of which was wound a small white turban. The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow; while the deep lines on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet-black hair and beard flowing down in indistinguishable luxuriance almost to

the waist seemed to belie. No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain!⁶³

Over subsequent days, Browne was in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh several more times for twenty minutes to half an hour each time. Of the interview on 17 April 1890, Browne wrote: "He again insisted very strongly on the necessity of unity and concord amongst the nations, and spoke of the *Sulh-i-Akbar* [The Great Peace] which will come soon... There must be one language and one writing. The former may be either one of those existing, or one invented for the purpose by a conference of *savants* of all countries. All nations must bind themselves to combine and put down any nation which attempts to disturb the general peace."⁶⁴

Sites in Haifa Visited by Bahá'u'lláh ^{3.7}

Although still subject to the Sultán's *firmán* and therefore nominally a prisoner, Bahá'u'lláh was able to move around freely in the latter years of His life, visiting Haifa and Mount Carmel, among other places. In addition to His brief stop in the port of Haifa on His initial journey to Acre, Bahá'u'lláh is known to have visited the town on three other occasions: August 1883, April 1890, and finally in the summer of 1891 for about three months.⁶⁵ The sites described below are associated with these visits.

SHRINE OF THE BÁB AND ITS SURROUNDINGS ^{3.7.1}

During His final stay in Haifa, Bahá'u'lláh stood by a circle of cypress trees halfway up the barren north slope of Mount Carmel and pointed out to 'Abdu'l-Bahá a spot on the axis of the main avenue of the German Templar Colony where a fitting mausoleum should be erected to receive the remains of His forerunner, the Báb.⁶⁶ The circle of trees has been preserved and stands just behind the Shrine of the Báb (see Section 4.2 below).

View of Mt. Carmel, circa 1909. The circle of cypress trees marks the place where Bahá'u'lláh stood in 1891, when He chose the site for the Shrine of the Báb.



PLACE OF REVELATION OF THE TABLET OF CARMEL ^{3.7.2}

Also during the summer of 1891, Bahá'u'lláh pitched His tent on the shoulder of Mount Carmel, between the Stella Maris and Carmelite Monasteries and there composed aloud the "Tablet of Carmel". This brief work takes the form of a dialogue which begins with



Obelisk marking the place of revelation of the Tablet of Carmel.

“the voices of all created things” calling out to the mountain, saying “Haste thee, O Carmel! For lo, the light of the Countenance of God, the Ruler of the Kingdom of Names and Fashioner of the heavens hath been lifted upon thee.”⁶⁷ Because of the allusions made in the course of the ensuing exchange to the future establishment of the international institutions of the Bahá’í religion on Mount Carmel, this work was described by Shoghi Effendi as the charter of the world administrative center.

Shoghi Effendi purchased this sacred plot in 1955 and commissioned the design and fabrication of a travertine obelisk that was erected in 1971.⁶⁸ It is intended that a house of worship will be built on this site at some future time.

TENT LAND ON HAGEFEN STREET 3.7.3

This is a small decorative garden marking a site in the midst of Haifa’s German Templer Colony where the tent of Bahá’u’lláh was raised during one of His visits to Haifa. On that occasion, He fell ill and was cared for in the adjacent house (now 15 Hagefen Street), which is identified by the German inscription over its door “*Der Herr ist nahe*” (the Lord is nigh).

This is one of a number of interest-

ing linkages with this Christian messianic movement, which find expression in the present architectural connection between the terraces of the Shrine of the Báb and the restored German Colony. The leader of the Haifa community of Templers, Georg David Hardegg, exchanged correspondence with Bahá’u’lláh while He was living in the House of ‘Údí Khammár.⁶⁹ The article Hardegg published in the Templers’ magazine, *Süddeutsche Warte*, following a meeting with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on 2 June 1871, may well be the first substantial account of the Bahá’í religion to appear in print. So impressed was Hardegg with this interview that his article concludes with an appeal to the Kaiser to intervene with the Ottoman authorities to temper their hostility towards the new religion.⁷⁰

10 HAPARSIM STREET 3.7.4

This is another location, at the eastern edge of the German Templer Colony, where Bahá’u’lláh’s tent was pitched during one of His visits to Haifa. In part because of this association with the Prophet, it was later selected as the site of a building that was to play a significant role in the early administrative development of the Bahá’í community (see Section 5.1 below).

Garden at the site where Bahá’u’lláh’s tent was pitched.



Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh ^{3.8}

During His last days, Bahá'u'lláh called the believers to His bedside in Bahjí where He stressed the importance of maintaining the unity of the community.⁷¹ Shortly thereafter, on 29 May 1892, eight hours after sunset, Bahá'u'lláh passed away in His seventy-fifth year. The news was telegraphed to Sulṭán 'Abdu'l Ḥamíd, who authorized the interment of His earthly remains within the precincts of the mansion. Shortly after sunset on that same day, He was laid to rest in a room at the northwestern corner of the row of dwellings to the west of the mansion.⁷²

This resting place constitutes the most holy place on the face of the globe for Bahá'ís, and the central focus of pilgrimage, its significance being comparable to that of Temple remains in Jerusalem for Jews or the Kaaba at Mecca for Muslims. Bahá'í believers the world over turn their hearts and faces toward this most sacred spot during the recitation of

their daily obligatory prayers and aspire to make a pilgrimage there at least once in their lifetime. The tomb is open for public visitation during regular hours.

Bahá'u'lláh's will and testament, in which He clearly passed the mantle of leadership to His eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was read on the morning of the ninth day after His passing in the presence of nine witnesses, and again later that same day in the holy tomb, in the presence of a large number of believers.⁷³ Nonetheless, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's half-brothers, Mírzá Muḥammad-'Alí and Mírzá Badí'u'lláh, who were living in the mansion, rose up in rebellion. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá came to visit his father's tomb and to tend the small garden he had planted around it, he was obliged to use small outbuildings known subsequently as the Pilgrim House and Tea House. The dissidents, for their part, neglected the mansion, allowing it to fall into a piteous state of disrepair.⁷⁴

Shortly after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing in 1921, his half-brothers forcibly seized the keys of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, claiming that custodianship should have passed to them as the nearest surviving relatives of Bahá'u'lláh. The British mandatory authorities, however, recognized Shoghi Effendi as the rightful

Approach and entrance to the tomb of Bahá'u'lláh.





head of the community and restored the keys of the Shrine to him. Shoghi Effendi undertook the restoration of the mansion after he gained possession of it in 1929, but the landscaping of the grounds could not be undertaken until the 1950s, when the land around Bahjí was acquired through an exchange of lands with the governmental authorities, who had taken over the rights of the dissident group through a combination of confiscation and expropriation.

The extensive formal gardens surrounding the shrine and the mansion are today a place of tranquility and beauty characterized by a meditative atmosphere and a capacity to lift the spirit. Attracting native birds and fauna as well as public visitors, the gardens radiate from the central hub formed by the shrine and mansion. The radial paths are covered with crushed red roof tiles, bordered with rows of santolina and floral plantings. In contrast, the main approach arriving from the north is laid with smooth, white pebbles from the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The geometrical lines are accented by rows of cypress and araucaria trees, while at the detail level, the gardens are embellished with gilded wrought-iron gates, sculpted hedges and bushes, urns, lamps, and star-shaped floral plantings com-

The remains of Bahá'u'lláh are buried in a vault under the floor of the corner room shown above.

plemented with rye grass during the cooler months. Part of the property is covered with an olive grove dating back at least a century, which continues to be harvested in the traditional way. Some of the inspiration for the garden design may have come from Shoghi Effendi's visits to the Babbacombe Downs in Torquay, England, while he was studying at Oxford University.⁷⁵

In addition to the Pilgrim House and the Tea House, both small structures built in a simple Ottoman-style with whitewashed walls and blue shutters, significant outbuildings include a small, square building just outside the ring of formal gardens, where Shoghi Effendi stored his plans and from whose roof he supervised the landscaping work. More recently, a gatehouse and visitors' center, echoing the architectural style of the historic buildings, have been constructed near the public entrance to the property. In the more distant future, it is anticipated that the tomb of Bahá'u'lláh will be embellished with a monumental superstructure.





View of the gardens surrounding the last residence and tomb of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí. The garden design was determined by the Prophet's great grandson and reflects the importance of the site as the place to which Bahá'ís turn in prayer.

CHAPTER 4

Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá



House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá ^{4.1}

For four years following his father's passing, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his family continued to live in the House of 'Abbúd. As his daughters reached marriageable age, more space was needed, and in October 1896, he rented the south wing of the mansion of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, adjacent to the Citadel in the northwest corner of the city, the lease later being extended to include the north wing as well.⁷⁶

This residential complex, easily the largest and most impressive in Acre, had been constructed about 1810 by 'Alí Páshá Chazindar, the treasurer of Sulaymán Páshá and father of 'Abdu'lláh.⁷⁷ When 'Abdu'lláh Páshá succeeded Sulaymán in 1819, he made it his Governorate. After his passing, it was left to an Islamic trust (*wakf*) and was later occupied by the British and Israeli Departments of Public Health. The Bahá'í community acquired the complex in 1975 in a dilapidated condition and carried out a comprehensive and meticulous restoration with the assistance of an elderly woman who had served as a maid in the household of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The main buildings of the complex form a hollow square from whose central courtyard separate exterior staircases rise to the upper level of the northern and southern wings, respectively. This central structure is surrounded on the remaining three sides by a large outer courtyard bounded by other buildings, including a stable block, joined by a high stone wall.

The south wing served as the private quarters of the household, with rooms grouped around a central living space. The north wing is designed for social functions and features a grand reception hall, with an elevated

platform reflecting the hierarchical structure of Ottoman society. This hall looks out on a large enclosed balcony through three-meter-high glass windows reminiscent of Versailles. This part of the mansion is built on top of a section of the original Crusader city wall and includes structures that transformed the eastern end of the inner moat into a private courtyard and provided the Páshá with direct access to the Citadel.

In March 1897, a few months after 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his family moved into the south wing of this mansion, his first grandson and future successor at the head of the community, Shoghi Effendi, was born in one of its rooms.⁷⁸ We learn from a biography of Shoghi Effendi, written by his widow, that during his childhood it was the custom of the family to rise at dawn and spend the first hour of the day reciting prayers and taking breakfast in the room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

The children sat on the floor, their legs folded under them, their arms folded across their breasts in great respect; when asked they would chant for 'Abdu'l-Bahá; there was no shouting or unseemly conduct. Breakfast consisted of tea, brewed on the bubbling Russian brass samovar and served in little crystal glasses, very hot and very sweet, pure wheat bread and goat's milk cheese.⁷⁹

It was here that 'Abdu'l-Bahá received the first groups of Bahá'í pilgrims from the West starting in 1898. They were accommodated in

Sitting room in the south wing of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá, where 'Abdu'l-Bahá met with early Western pilgrims from 1898 onwards.



a suite of rooms at the southwestern corner of the building, which included a sparsely furnished bedroom, a Western-style dining room and a parlor whose walls had been covered with wood paneling to combat the humidity. Many of these visitors took photographs, kept diaries or published accounts of their experiences, which provide a wealth of information about this period in the history



of the religion.⁸⁰ Among other things, they describe ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s arduous daily routine of correspondence, meetings with other religious leaders, city officials and ordinary citizens, visits to the sick and the distribution of alms to the needy of Acre. The content of his conversations with individual pilgrims and talks to groups of them, generally with the assistance of a translator, feature prominently in these accounts. A full-length book entitled *Some Answered Questions* was compiled from his responses to questions posed by an American woman in the course of successive visits from 1904 to 1906, mostly during meals taken in the small dining room referred to above.⁸¹ Since the issues addressed in this work reflect the Christian and general cultural background of the questioner, it became one of the main sources from which early Western believers learned about the teachings of their faith.

As a first step in the implementation of the instructions of Bahá’u’lláh concerning the interment of the remains of the Báb, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá instructed that they be brought out of Írán and delivered to this house, where they arrived on 31 January 1899 and remained for ten years until the completion of the mausoleum on Mount Carmel. Much of this time, they were kept in a room in the southeastern corner of the building which served as the chamber of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s trusted sister, Bahíyyih Khánum, who remained single and devoted herself to the service of the head of the Faith.⁸² In a tablet to her, Bahá’u’lláh wrote: “Verily, We have elevated thee to the rank of one of the most distinguished among thy sex, and granted thee, in My court, a sta-

tion such as none other woman hath surpassed.”⁸³

Although ‘Abdu’l-Bahá enjoyed relative freedom during this time and was held in high regard by the majority of the population, including most of the notables and officials, dissident elements, including his half-brother, who opposed his leadership, were continually engaged in intrigues and the spreading of malicious rumors

and false accusations. In 1901, as a result of these machinations, Sulṭán ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamíd ordered that the *firmán* confining Bahá’u’lláh and his followers within the city walls be once again strictly enforced.⁸⁴ At least two commissions of inquiry (in 1904 and 1905, and possibly a third in 1907) were dispatched from Istanbul to investigate the allegations against him,⁸⁵ and his life appeared in real danger, as attested in passages of his will.⁸⁶ He took steps to reduce the flow of pilgrims, suspending it altogether for a time, but continued his voluminous correspondence with believers all over the world and pressed onward with several significant undertakings, including the construction of the Shrine of the Báb in Haifa and the first Bahá’í house of worship in ‘Ishqábád, Russia (presently Ashgabat, Turkmenistan), amid preparations for the laying of a foundation stone for a house of worship in North America. During the same period, he arranged for initial translations of his father’s writings into western languages and penned his will and testament.⁸⁷

The end of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s forty-year confinement in Old Acre came suddenly in 1908 when the Young Turks rebelled against the Sulṭán’s rule and all religious and political prisoners were set free.⁸⁸ He nevertheless continued to reside in the House of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Páshá until August 1910, when he departed on his journeys to Egypt, Europe and North America, which lasted until 1913.

The inner courtyard of the house of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Páshá, showing the stairs to the south wing where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá resided with His family.



Shrine of the Báb 4.2

Having brought the remains of the Báb to the Holy Land, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá set about the arduous task of purchasing the land and erecting a stone building of six rooms for His mausoleum at the exact location selected by Bahá’u’lláh. “Every stone of that building, every stone of the road leading to it, I have with infinite tears and at tremendous cost, raised and placed in position,” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá is recorded as having remarked repeatedly.⁸⁹ In preparation for the re-interment of these sacred remains, the Bahá’ís of Burma sent a marble sarcophagus with inscriptions in the hand of the well-known Bahá’í calligrapher, Mishkín-Qalam. It arrived in Haifa by sea and was dragged from the pier up the slope of the mountain with the help of wooden rollers.⁹⁰ In an emotional ceremony, witnessed and described by Shoghi Effendi, the Báb’s remains were finally laid to rest:

On...the first Naw-Rúz which He celebrated after His release from His confinement [21 March 1909], ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had the marble sarcophagus transported with great labor to the vault prepared for it, and in the evening, by the light of a single lamp, He laid within it, with His own hands — in the presence of believers from the East

and from the West and in circumstances at once solemn and moving — the wooden casket containing the sacred remains of the Báb and His companion. When all was finished, and the earthly remains of the Martyr-Prophet of Shíráz were, at long last, safely deposited for their everlasting rest in the bosom of God’s holy mountain, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who had cast aside His turban, removed His shoes and thrown off His cloak, bent low over the still open sarcophagus, His silver hair waving about His head and His face transfigured and luminous, rested His forehead on the border of the wooden casket, and, sobbing aloud, wept with such a weeping that all those who were present wept with Him. That night He could not sleep, so overwhelmed was He with emotion.⁹¹

Twelve years later, in November 1921, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was himself to be laid to rest under the floor of one of the three northern rooms of that building, which was to be completed and embellished by Shoghi Effendi (see Sections 4.4.1 and 5.2 below).

Initial structure of the Shrine of the Báb erected by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Photograph circa 1909.



Haifa Pilgrim House ^{4.3}

After the interment of the remains of the Báb, a believer from ‘Ishqábád, Mírzá Ja‘far Raḥmání, offered to build a hostel for pilgrims in the vicinity of His Shrine. This fine stone building in the local style comprises a central hall, where the pilgrims gathered, surrounded by rooms where they slept. The Persian inscription above the door was composed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in honor of the donor, whose portrait hangs on the wall inside. Pilgrims from the East were accommodated in this building, while those from the West stayed in buildings close to the residence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Shoghi Effendi continued ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s custom of meeting with the Eastern pilgrims here and accompanying them on their visits to the Shrine of the Báb.

Since 1969, when the increasing numbers of pilgrims were asked to arrange their own accommodations, the Haifa Pilgrim House has served as a place for the believers to assemble and prepare themselves before visiting the Shrine. Until 2000, it also served as the central hub of the pilgrimage program, where arriving pilgrims registered and were formed into groups and where they gathered in the evenings to hear talks by the Hands of the Cause and members of the Universal House of Justice.

It was while seated next to a window in this building that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá articulated his vision of the future of the Haifa-Acre area:

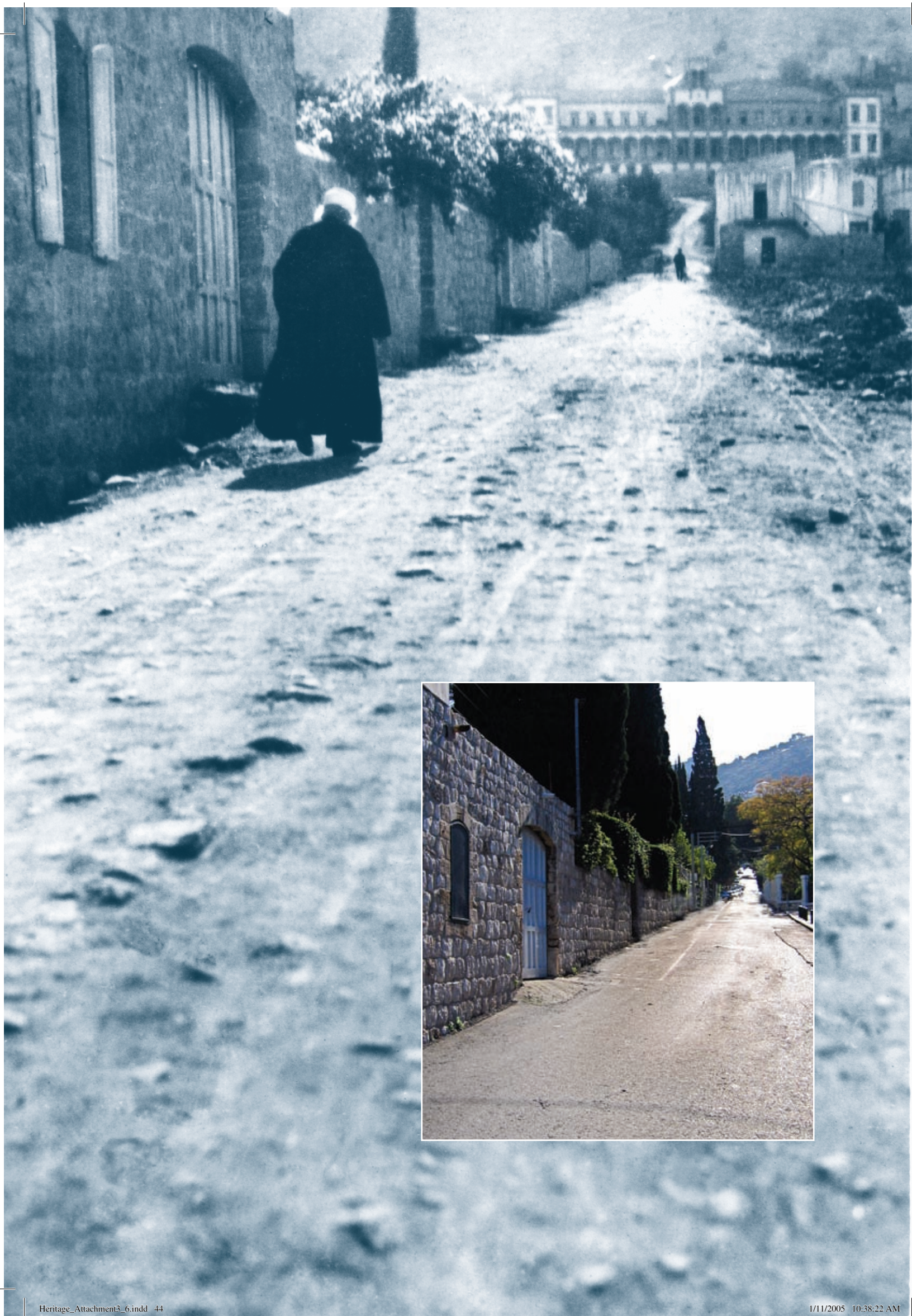
The view from the pilgrim home is very attractive, especially as it faces the blessed Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh. In the future the distance between ‘Akká and Haifa will be built up, and the two cities will join and clasp hands, becoming the two terminal sections of one mighty metropolis. As I look over this scene, I see so clearly that it will become one of the first emporiums of the world. This great semicircular bay will be transformed into the finest harbor, wherein the ships of all nations will seek shelter and refuge. The great vessels of all people will come to this port, bringing on their decks thousands and thousands



Haifa Pilgrim House, viewed from the north. (top)

Main hall of the Pilgrim House. (above)

of men and women from every part of the globe. The mountain and the plain will be dotted with the most modern buildings and palaces. Industries will be established and various institutions of philanthropic nature will be founded. The flowers of civilization and culture from all nations will be brought here to blend their fragrances together and blaze the way for the brotherhood of man. Wonderful gardens, orchards, groves and parks will be laid out on all sides. At night the great city will be lighted with electricity. The entire harbor from ‘Akká to Haifa will be one path of illumination. Powerful searchlights will be placed on both sides of Mount Carmel to guide the steamers. Mount Carmel itself, from top to bottom, will be submerged in a sea of lights. A person standing on the summit of Mount Carmel, and the passengers of the steamers coming to it, will look upon the most sublime and majestic spectacle of the whole world.⁹²





Persian Quarter 4.4

In furtherance of his father's instructions regarding the erection of the Shrine of the Báb and the establishment of the administrative center of the Bahá'í religion in Haifa, 'Abdu'l-Bahá took steps to transfer his residence from Acre to Haifa around the turn of the century. He purchased land between the German Templer Colony and the Christian Arab settlement in Wadi Nisnas on both sides of a lane later named "*Rehov Haparsim*" (Street of the Persians) in honor of its residents. The buildings erected on these plots are well-maintained examples of local architecture set in walled gardens, giving the area a distinctly traditional character.

RESIDENCE OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ (7 HAPARSIM STREET) 4.4.1

This building, erected during the same period as the mausoleum of the Báb, housed the members of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's family including his sister Bahíyyih Khánum and grandson Shoghi Effendi, from August 1910 onwards. It served as the official residence of the head of the community from December 1913, when 'Abdu'l-Bahá returned from his inter-

'Abdu'l-Bahá returning to his home on the Street of the Persians. (left)
Inset: same scene as it appears today.

Aerial view of the Persian Quarter showing its relation to the German colony (main avenue and red roofs on the right side of picture). The Street of the Persians can be seen in the center, with two geometrically laid-out gardens.

national travels, until the passing of Shoghi Effendi in 1957.⁹³

The home, designed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá or under his supervision,⁹⁴ is in the Oriental style, with a large central hall, high ceilings, shuttered windows and basement rooms to make use of the sloping land. It was built of local stone and completed in 1908. Surrounded by extensive gardens, the property includes a large cistern, a well, a stable and a small dwelling.

It was in this residence that King Faisal of Syria, who later became king of 'Iráq, General Sir Edmund Allenby and President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi of Israel, as well as many other notables, came to pay their respects to the head of the Bahá'í religion.⁹⁵ 'Abdu'l-Bahá occasionally received the pilgrims here, a practice which continued during the time of Shoghi Effendi.⁹⁶ 'Abdu'l-Bahá was fond of his garden and the devoted Japanese believer who tended it, and he spent much time in his room above the stables, where he attended to his correspondence and occasionally received visitors.⁹⁷



Residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, circa 1930 and today. The second floor apartment occupied by Shoghi Effendi was added in two stages, in 1923 and at the time of his marriage in 1937.

Talks given by 'Abdu'l-Bahá at his home in Haifa in the latter half of 1915, in which he recounted the lives of early believers, were published as a book entitled *Memorials of the Faithful*.⁹⁸ In 1916 and 1917, he wrote important messages to the believers in North America, known as the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, in which he called on them to spread the religion to the rest of the world.⁹⁹

During the years preceding the First World War, 'Abdu'l-Bahá had instructed Bahá'ís living near the Sea of Galilee to grow and store quantities of grain, which he brought to Haifa and distributed to the local population when wartime conditions brought them close to starvation. As the British army

invaded Palestine in 1918, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was threatened with crucifixion by the Ottoman Commander, Jamál Páshá.¹⁰⁰ Upon his rapid capture of Haifa, General Allenby reported that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was out of danger, and the British Government later conferred on him a knighthood for his humanitarian services.¹⁰¹

'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away on 29 November 1921, at the age of seventy-seven. No less than ten thousand mourners, including the British High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, and other government officials and leaders of the Muslim, Christian, Jewish and Druze communities thronged to his funeral in an overwhelming show of respect and affection, the likes of which the country had never seen.¹⁰² The funeral cortege left from this house, carrying his coffin aloft to its resting place on Mount Carmel in a room adjacent to the one where the remains of the Báb had been interred. In less than three decades since the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, the awareness of the Bahá'í religion had grown to such an extent that the news of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing was widely reported in the international press.¹⁰³

'Abdu'l-Bahá's will and testament, appointing Shoghi Effendi as the head of the community and "Guardian" of the Faith, was read to the believers in the central hall of this building, the same place where, forty-two years later, the first election of the world governing body, the Universal House of Justice, was to be held.¹⁰⁴ Since Shoghi Effendi did not wish to occupy the room of his grandfather, additional rooms were added on the roof of the main building in the early 1920s to serve as his quarters.

The room adjacent to that of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was occupied by his sister, Bahíyyih Khánum, from 1910 until her passing in 1932.¹⁰⁵ During Shoghi Effendi's absences from the Holy Land, he entrusted her with the affairs of the community, and after her passing, he called her the "outstanding heroine of the Bahá'í Dispensation," and compared her station with that of Sarah, the Virgin Mary and Fátimih in other religions.¹⁰⁶ It was in this room that, in a simple ceremony on 24 March 1937, Shoghi Effendi married a young Canadian believer, Mary Maxwell, on whom he conferred the title "Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum".¹⁰⁷



After his passing in 1957, she continued to reside in the building until her own death in 2000.

OLD WESTERN PILGRIM HOUSE
(4 HAPARSIM STREET) 4.4.2¹⁰⁸

This modest stone house, located across the street from the residence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, was used to lodge Western pilgrims from about 1913 until the completion of the building at 10 Haparsim Street in 1929. It was owned by one of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s sons-in-law,¹⁰⁹ who had placed it at his disposal. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá normally visited the house at least once a day to talk with the pilgrims as they took their meals around a table in the central hall.¹¹⁰ Many of the outstanding early Western believers stayed in this home, including Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum and her mother, May Maxwell, when they came on pilgrimage before the former’s marriage to Shoghi Effendi.

An American pilgrim, Genevieve Coy, who arrived on pilgrimage in September 1920, wrote: “To waken in the Pilgrim House in Haifa is a very, very happy expe-



Old Western Pilgrim House, past and present. Historical photograph, circa 1925.

rience! From our west windows we could catch a glimpse of the Tomb of the Báb, and how eagerly we looked up at it...”¹¹¹ Coy recounted an unexpected visit from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá early in the morning when he entered “like a ray of light and life”. He later told the pilgrims: “Your food and rooms are very simple here, but your purpose in coming here makes them seem good to you. When a man is *good*, all things about him are good. When a man is bad, all things about him are bad. It is necessary that man be very good.”¹¹²



Front view of 11 Haparsim Street.

The building subsequently passed out of the control of the community, but it was re-acquired in 1994 and restored on the basis of period photographs and the recollections of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum.

11 HAPARSIM STREET 4.4.3

Of the same vintage as the residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, this house is similar in style, but much more modest in its dimensions. Built by 'Abdu'l-Bahá's brother-in-law, Siyyid Yahyá Unsí, it was sometimes used to accommodate Eastern pilgrims and was frequently visited by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to meet the family and the pilgrims.¹¹³ It has been restored and adapted in non-structural ways for use as a residence of one of the members of the Universal House of Justice.

At the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the parcels on which stand the three houses on the east side of the Street of the Persians formed a single compound protected by the same perimeter wall.¹¹⁴ The middle property (9 Haparsim Street), which belonged to the husband of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's third daughter, Rúhā Khánum,

is not part of the World Heritage nomination because it is not currently owned by the Bahá'í community.

Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery 4.5

This historic cemetery is located at the foot of Mount Carmel, at its western end where it juts out into the Mediterranean Sea, almost directly below the lower Cave of Elijah. The 2.4 hectare plot was purchased on the instructions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the first recorded burial is that of a cousin of the Báb in 1911. Bahá'í law requires that a body be buried within one hour's journey of the place of death, so believers who have died in the Haifa-Acre area have been buried here since that time.

The cemetery features the gravesites of many outstanding figures associated with the history of the Bahá'í religion, including eight Hands of the Cause and several members of the Universal House of Justice. Among the Hands of the Cause buried here are Tarázu'lláh Samandarí, who was present at Bahá'u'lláh's final meeting with the pilgrims before the latter's passing in 1892,¹¹⁵ and Dr. John Esslemont, a Scottish physician

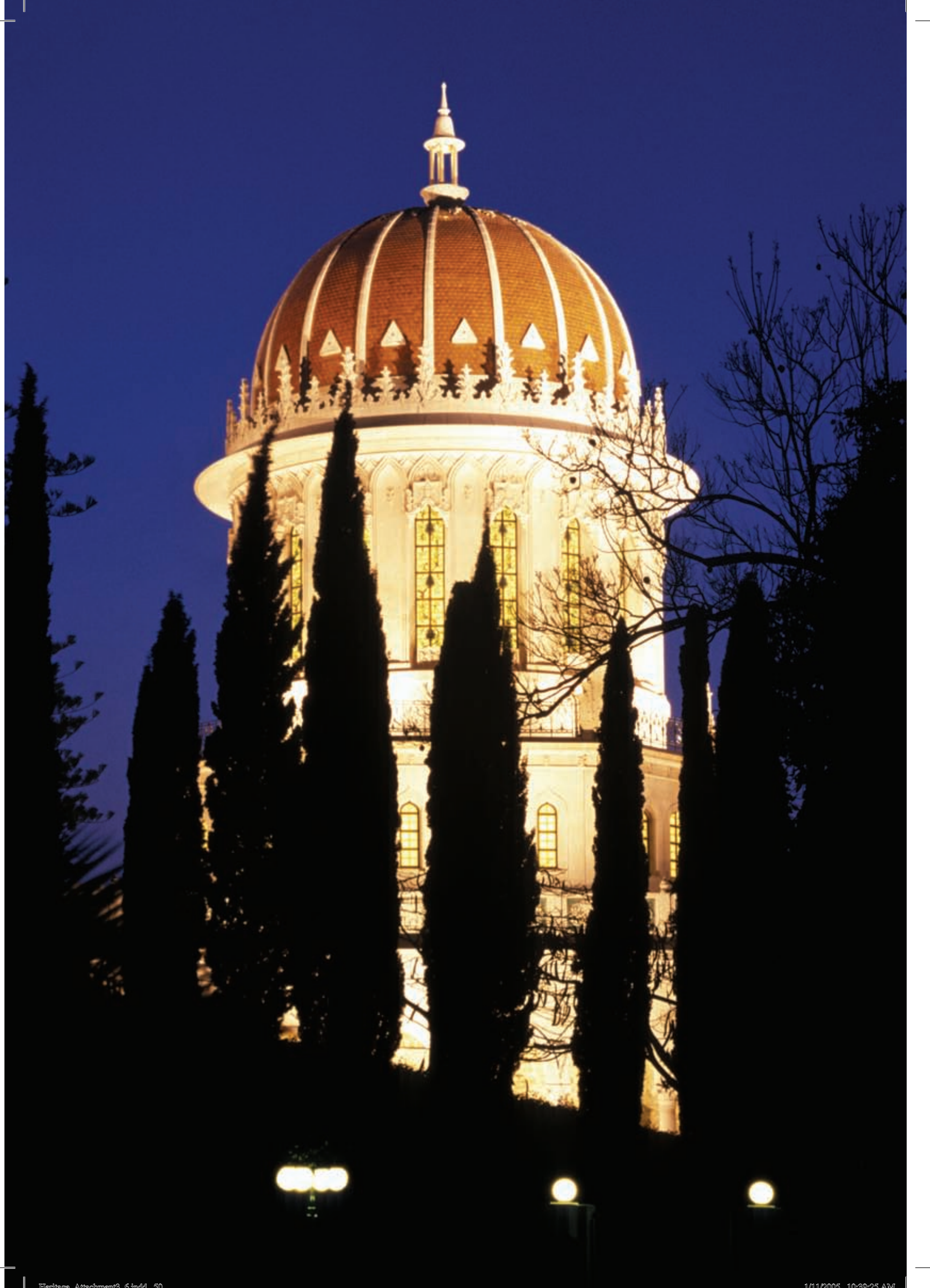
who wrote one of the most widely used textbooks on the Bahá'í Faith entitled *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, which has been published in 60 languages and multiple editions since it first appeared in 1923.

Carefully planned and maintained landscaping provides an atmosphere of quiet dignity. The cemetery is surrounded by cypress trees and bisected by a central pathway framed by tall palms. The earlier graves are generally oriented towards Mecca, in accordance with the local practice at that time.

Following a historic decision by a Muslim court of appeals in Egypt, in 1925, declaring the Bahá'í Faith to be an independent religion and not a sect of Islám, Shoghi Effendi changed this practice and had subsequent graves oriented towards the *Qiblah* (point of adoration) of the Bahá'í religion, the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí.¹¹⁶

Views of the Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery taken from the Mount Carmel ridge in 1957 and 2003.





Ministry of Shoghi Effendi



10 Haparsim Street 5.1

After the end of the First World War, it became apparent that the building at 10 Haparsim Street would soon be too small to house the growing flow of pilgrims from the West. One of the Persian believers offered a plot on which Bahá'u'lláh's tent had been pitched during one of His visits to Haifa (see Section 3.7.4), and in 1919, an American couple, William and Ruth Randall, offered to finance the construction of a new pilgrim house.¹¹⁷ The design for the building was prepared under the supervision of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and construction began. The Randalls encountered financial difficulties, however, and work was suspended until another American believer, Amelia Collins, offered to fund its completion in the mid-1920s.

The original design follows the local style of architecture, using mostly local materials and construction techniques, but it has some unusual features such as marble floors and columns, while the finishing details reflect the influence of the "art deco" style that was in vogue at the time. Set into a gentle slope, the main floor is comprised of rooms, originally used as sleeping quarters, connected to a large central hallway running the length of the building.¹¹⁸ The lower level is below ground level at the southern end, but includes a secondary entrance and naturally lighted rooms at the northern end.

The mausoleum of the Báb is the second most sacred shrine of the Bahá'í religion. Since the completion of the superstructure in 1953, it has become Haifa's most widely recognized landmark.

During the period when it served as a pilgrim hostel, Shoghi Effendi customarily dined with the Western pilgrims every evening in the northern-most room of the lower floor. In 1951, its use was extended to include the offices of the International Bahá'í Council, an advisory body appointed by Shoghi Effendi and the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice. When the Universal House of Justice was elected in 1963, it occupied the building until the completion of its permanent seat on Mount Carmel in 1983. This building then served as the office of the International Teaching Centre, an administrative institution that supports the work of the Universal House of Justice. When that institution moved to its own building in the administrative complex on Mount Carmel in 2000, 10 Haparsim became the office of the Bahá'í International Community Secretariat.

Throughout its different periods of use, the building has been adapted in non-structural ways, while preserving the original architectural elements.

Superstructure of the Shrine of the Báb 5.2

Not long after Shoghi Effendi became head of the community, he personally supervised the addition of three rooms to the building erected by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, converting it into a symmetrical square with nine rooms. In these added rooms, Shoghi Effendi established the first international archives to store the original manuscripts, relics, personal objects, photographs and portraits associated with the Báb, Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.¹¹⁹

In the early 1940s, Shoghi Effendi asked his father-in-law, the distinguished Canadian



architect, William Sutherland Maxwell, to design a befitting superstructure for the Shrine of the Báb. A model reflecting his design, which consists of a colonnade surmounted by a drum, a clerestory and a dome covered in gilded ceramic tiles, was unveiled in May 1944, on the centenary of the Báb's declaration of His prophetic mission.¹²⁰ Despite the after-effects of the Second World War and the turmoil sweeping the region, construction was completed in October 1953.

Rose Baveno granite columns crowned with marble Corinthian capitals form the colonnade surrounding the original stone building. The columns are linked by arabesque ogee arches, while the four corners feature concave panels decorated with a floral border capped with a calligraphic design. The clerestory rests on a marble octagon surmounted by a wrought-iron balustrade with a slender minaret-like spire at each corner. The eighteen stained-glass windows of the clerestory symbolize the Báb's first disciples. The dome is covered with gold-plated ceramic tiles and is topped by a small lantern and marble finial.¹²¹ The building's extraor-

The Shrine has been open to the public seven days a week since the 1950s and is a favored place to visit for local residents and tourists from all over the world, as well as Bahá'ís.

dinary location and harmonious blend of Eastern and Western styles have made it a familiar landmark and one of the most popular tourist sites in the country.

The gardens created by Shoghi Effendi around the Shrine of the Báb pioneered the style he would later use in Bahjí, and they have served as a model for all subsequent landscape developments. Design elements include crushed red tile pathways bordered by clipped hedges of varying heights and star-shaped floral plantings, while the main approach to the Shrine is set off with smooth white pebbles. Garden ornaments including urns and statues of eagles, peacocks and flowers on pedestals complete the design.

Anticipating the future construction of the terraces above and below the Shrine, Shoghi Effendi also built a narrow central



stairway from the German Colony at the foot of the mountain to the Shrine, including a pedestrian bridge over ‘Abbas Street (named after ‘Abdu’l-Bahá), which bisects the property.¹²²

Administrative Complex 5.3

The choice of Mount Carmel as the seat of the administrative institutions of the Bahá’í religion was stipulated by Bahá’u’lláh Himself in the “Tablet of Carmel” (see Section 3.7.2). The precise site near the Shrine of the Báb was selected by Shoghi Effendi, who developed the Monument Gardens as a resting place for eminent members of the Holy Family. Subsequently, he laid out an arc-shaped path centered on those monuments as the future axis for the administrative complex. In his messages to the worldwide Bahá’í community, Shoghi Effendi described the functions of each of the component buildings and instructed that they should be built in a style of architecture that would harmonize with the classic Greek style he used for the International Archives Building.¹²³ Four of the five buildings he described have been

erected (see sections 5.3.2, 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 below), and the fifth, an International Library, will be built in the future.

MONUMENT GARDENS 5.3.1

These intimate terraced gardens are nestled in a natural hollow in the mountain-side, accentuated by the arc-shaped path and stately administrative buildings that surround and overlook it. At the heart of the gardens, in three small, geometrically-shaped clearings, connected by paths and stairways, stand four marble monuments marking the resting places of the wife, son and daughter of Bahá’u’lláh and the wife of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

The largest of these monuments is the resting place of Bahíyyih Khánum, a daughter of Bahá’u’lláh upon whom He had conferred the highest station among women and who was buried here when she passed away in 1932.¹²⁴ Six years later, when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s

Aerial view of the site of the future administrative complex taken in the 1960s, showing the arc-shaped path, the Monument Gardens and the International Archives Building.





wife of forty-eight years, Munírih Khánum, passed on, her body was laid to rest nearby and another marble monument was erected in her honor.

Late the following year (1939), Shoghi Effendi reunited the faithful members of the Holy Family and realized the cherished wish of Bahíyyih Khánum to be buried near her mother by transferring the remains of Ásíyih Khánum and those of her son, Mírzá Mihdí, to Mount Carmel. With his own hands, Shoghi Effendi painstakingly exhumed the remains from their graves outside the city walls of Acre and transported them to Haifa, where they lay in state until their final interment on Mount Carmel.¹²⁵ Their resting places, located side by side, are marked by identical Italian marble monuments. The transfer was not without drama because of the opposition of a dissident group led by the younger half-brother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Mírzá Badí‘u’lláh, but the Haifa District Commissioner, as recorded in his fortnightly report ending 15 December 1939, recognized Shoghi Effendi as the head of the Bahá’í community, supported in his endeavors by the worldwide community of

Resting place of the daughter of Bahá’u’lláh, circa 1932. (above)

Monuments marking the resting places of the wife of Bahá’u’lláh and their younger son, whose death in the Acre Citadel was likened to Abraham’s intended sacrifice of Ishmael. (below)





believers, and authorized the exhumation and reinterment.¹²⁵ At the project's successful completion, Shoghi Effendi had created, within an intimate garden setting, a spiritual focus for the administrative complex destined to emerge.

INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVES BUILDING 5.3.2

The first of the monumental administrative buildings was designed and constructed under the guidance of Shoghi Effendi from 1953 to 1957. This project, destined to be the last of Shoghi Effendi's fruitful ministry, was launched shortly after completion

of the superstructure of the Shrine of the Báb in order to provide a more fitting repository for the manuscripts and artifacts hitherto stored in rooms that formed part of the Shrine. This collection includes the original manuscripts of many of the sacred writings, portraits of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, personal objects associated with the central figures of the Faith, and irreplaceable mementos and historical artifacts from the early years of the Bahá'í religion. Most of the items are displayed in closed cabinets, which are opened for short periods of time during the scheduled visits that constitute a significant element of Bahá'í pilgrimage.

Designed to the proportions of the



The International Archives building, shown here with the dome of the Shrine of the Báb in the background, was completed in 1957. The choice of classical Greek architecture was intended by Shoghi Effendi to set a pattern for the other buildings of the administrative complex to be built in later years.

Parthenon, this classical building is made of Chiampo limestone extracted and carved in Italy. A staircase, almost as wide as the building, ascends from the ground level to that of the podium, which is surrounded by fifty columns. The opposite side of the building features a large window comprising sixty-five panels of stained glass within its hand-wrought frame.¹²⁷ Not captive to any architectural form, Shoghi Effendi had the column capitals changed from Doric to Ionic and installed narrow balconies on both sides of the interior hall to increase the available display space.¹²⁸ In a creative adaptation of the traditional roofing style, he chose ceramic roof tiles glazed a brilliant green, the hue of

the traditional copper roofing.¹²⁹ This green tile was later adopted for all the other buildings of the administrative complex. Shoghi Effendi also landscaped the surrounding area while the building was under construction so that upon completion, it stood within mature gardens.¹³⁰

Shoghi Effendi lived to see the completion of the construction, but died suddenly in November 1957 at the age of sixty during a trip to London to purchase furniture. The furnishing of the building and arrangement of the exhibits was carried out by his widow, Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, according to the wishes and intentions he had expressed to her.

CHAPTER 6

Subsequent Developments



Seat of the Universal House of Justice 6.1

The second monumental edifice of the administrative complex was designed by Ḥusayn Amánat, a Persian-born Canadian architect, in the classical Greek style to harmonize with the International Archives Building. Construction took eight years, from 1975 to 1983, and required extensive excavation of the mountain face, which was then stabilized with a terraced retaining wall.

The five-and one-half story building is surrounded by an arcade of fifty-eight marble columns topped with Corinthian capitals and crowned with a white marble cupola rising above the green-tile roof. While the buildings on each side of it actually offer

substantially more floor space, the Seat of the Universal House of Justice is the dominant structure of the administrative complex, reflecting its role as the permanent seat of the supreme governing body of the Bahá'í religion. Its precision construction and marble covering are designed to last for hundreds of years, while the interior follows a simple, open design adaptable to the changing needs of the times.

The Seat of the Universal House of Justice under construction. Photograph taken in 1979. (below)

The completed building, as currently seen from the colonnade of the Centre for the Study of the Texts. (right)







At the heart of the building is the council chamber where the nine elected members of the Universal House of Justice deliberate. The upper floors offer individual offices for the members as well as space for support staff and functions such as filing and a reference library, while the ground floor concourse area is designed for ceremonial occasions and is used by the Universal House of Justice to welcome pilgrim groups and important dignitaries, and to host special events including the commemoration of Holy Days.¹³¹

Centre for the Study of the Texts 6.2

An outstanding characteristic of this edifice and the International Teaching Centre Building, both designed by Ḥusayn Amánat in the classical style, is the way in which they are fitted into the slope of the mountain, appearing as pavilions in the garden, while offering substantial working space to meet the needs of the international administration of the Bahá'í community.

The primary function of the Centre for the Study of the Texts, completed in 1999, is to house a center of scholarly research and

The Centre for the Study of the Texts at night.

a library. At this time, research is primarily focused on the Sacred Writings and subsidiary texts to meet the needs of the Universal House of Justice, but the scholars associated with the Centre are also involved in the preparation of translations, compilations and commentaries to be published for the use of the community as a whole. The building also includes an archival storage facility with an underground connection to the adjacent International Archives Building. As an indication of the scale of activity, the archival collection includes more than 26,000 authenticated documents from the pen of 'Abdu'l-Bahá alone.¹³²

The façade of this building features a portico consisting of a circular entablature resting on a colonnade of marble columns topped with capitals in the Ionic style. In the center of the colonnade is a fountain 2.4 meters in diameter carved from a single block of marble and set in a sunken garden, separated only by glass walls from the reference room of the library situated on the lower level. The lack

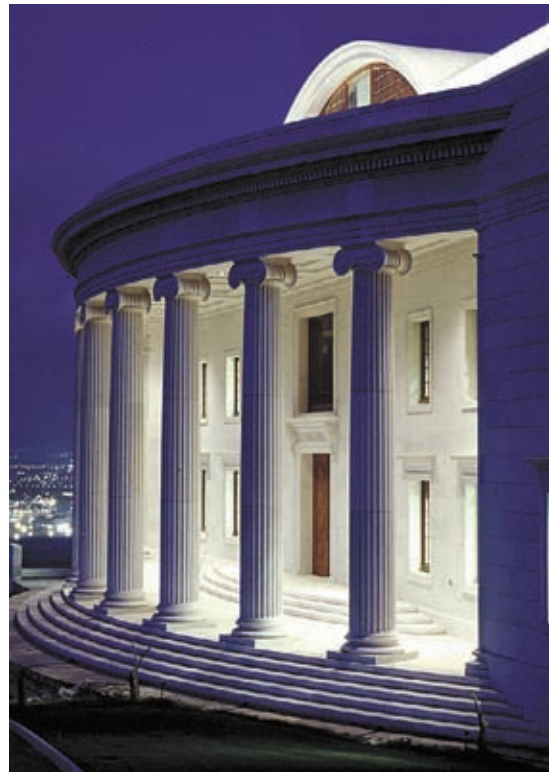
of other external façades is offset by the liberal use of light wells and internal courtyards, which draw natural light into the structure.

International Teaching Centre Building ^{6.3}

This building is the seat of the International Teaching Centre, an institution established by the Universal House of Justice in 1973 and composed of nine members appointed for five-year terms. Its principal function is to coordinate a worldwide network of counselors, who act as advisers to the elected institutions at the local and national levels.

Constructed during the same period as the Centre for the Study of the Texts, it was inaugurated in 2000. At 19,000 square meters spread over nine floors, this is the largest building of the administrative complex. The International Teaching Centre occupies the top four floors, while the lower five house other administrative offices and facilities serving the entire staff, including an auditorium, a cafeteria and underground parking.

Built into the steep slope of the mountain, only the three upper floors of the building are visible from most directions, although all nine are exposed on the north elevation,



The most recent addition to the administrative complex is the International Teaching Centre Building, inaugurated in 2000. Set into the steep slope of the mountain, this building has nine levels, all of which are reached by natural light.



which faces downhill and brings natural light into all levels. Marble columns with Ionic capitals grace the portico which fronts on the arc-shaped path. The entrance foyer features an atrium with a skylight in the form of half a nine-pointed star, admitting natural light that is refracted through a glass prism adorned with a calligraphic symbol. The top floor comprises a reference library under an arched roof with glass walls on both sides. Directly under the library is the council chamber of the International Teaching Centre. Simply decorated with natural wood trim and contemporary furnishings, the interior offers a dignified but functional working space.

Terraced Gardens ^{6.4}

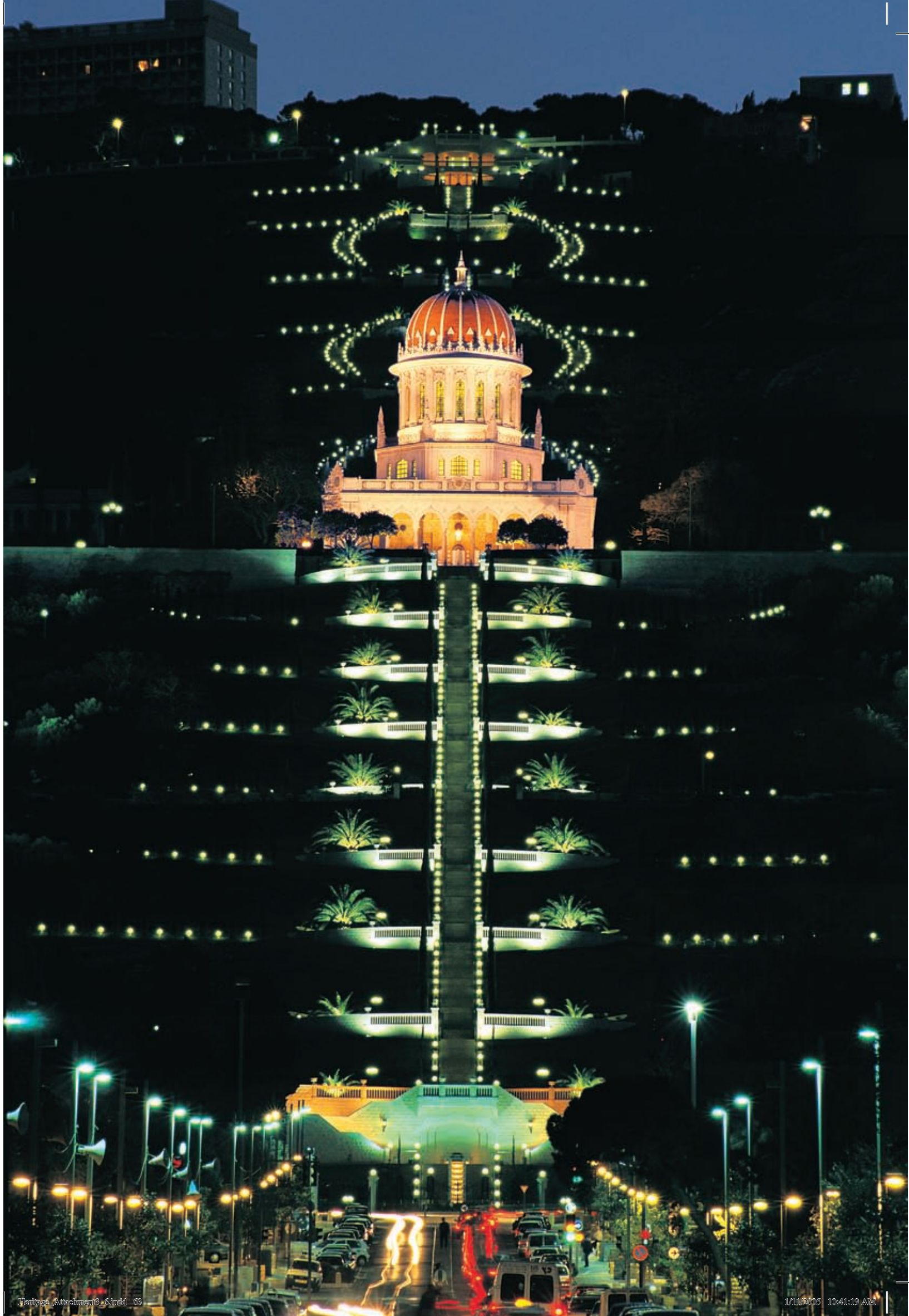
One of the believers noted down the gist of the words spoken by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1910, when Mount Carmel was a barren wilderness of stone and brambles: “Ere long this mountain will become habitable. Many fine buildings will be built on it. The Shrine of the Báb will be constructed in the most exquisite fashion and will appear with the utmost beauty

and magnificence. Terraces will be built from the bottom of the mountain to the top. Nine terraces from the bottom to the Shrine and nine terraces from the Shrine to the summit. Gardens with colorful flowers will be laid down on all these terraces. A single street lined with flower beds will link the seafront to the Shrine.”¹³³

The concept articulated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was the foundation for the design prepared by Fariborz Sahba, a Persian-born Canadian architect, for a unique monument of landscape architecture to serve as a setting for and approach to the mausoleum containing the remains of the Báb. The number of the terraces brings to mind the Báb’s first group of eighteen disciples, whom He called the “Letters of the Living”, and their geometry surrounds and embraces the central edifice of the Shrine in a way that suggests nine

The initial stairs from the German Templar Colony to the Shrine of the Báb. Photograph circa 1952. (below) The Shrine of the Báb and its terraces as currently seen from the German Colony at night. (right)







Partial view of the lower terraces. (above) Water is a major design element used throughout the terraces. Photograph at right shows a fountain on the upper terraces.





concentric circles emanating from it like ripples in a pond.

The central path of the terraces is set about with formal gardens and ornaments, while fountains and channels of running water provide a visual and auditory complement, creating a serene and reflective atmosphere. Aside from certain common elements, each terrace is unique in its paving, ornamentation and plantings, reflecting the essential Bahá'í belief in unity in diversity. Light is another integral feature of the design, and the Shrine and terraces are brightly lit each night to commemorate the time when the Báb was imprisoned and denied access to even a candle.¹³⁴

Construction of the terraces began in 1990, and they were inaugurated in May

Inauguration of the terraces in May 2001. (left)

View of the Shrine of the Báb from the lower terraces. (below)



2001. At the time, the Universal House of Justice stated: “The beauty and magnificence of the Gardens and Terraces...are symbolic of the transformation which is destined to occur both within the hearts of the world’s people and in the physical environment of the planet.”¹³⁵

Approximately one million visitors were drawn to the terraced gardens in the first year after the public opening. According to the former Mayor of Haifa, Amram Mitzna: “The gorgeous gardens, the cool and crystal clear fountains, the delicately curved balustrades, and the perfume of the spectacular flowers intoxicate the visitor. The chiseled and sculptured work coordinates with the colorful plants, creating beauty, harmony and tranquility.”¹³⁶

The monument marking the grave of the widow of Shoghi Effendi was designed by Ḥusayn Amánat.

Resting Place of Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum ^{6.5}

In about 1952, Shoghi Effendi purchased two house lots across the street from the House of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to serve as a green park in the heart of the Persian Quarter. The garden was developed during his lifetime, and when his widow, Amatu’l-Bahá Rúḥíyyih Khánum, passed away in January 2000, it was decided to inter her remains in its center, in recognition of her unique role as the Guardian’s helpmate, a Hand of the Cause and a leading figure during the critical inter-regnum between Shoghi Effendi’s passing and the election of the Universal House of Justice. An oval monument, incorporating a perforated marble panel evocative of Persian lace, was designed by Ḥusayn Amánat and erected in 2001.



Notes



- ¹ H.M. Balyuzi, *The Báb* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1973), p. 39.
- ² *Ibid.*, pp. 41–2.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 152.
- ⁴ Four such deputies had been appointed by Bahá'u'lláh, who had honored them with the title of “Hands of the Cause of God”. The power to appoint others was specifically conferred on Shoghi Effendi by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in his will.
- ⁵ This summary draws heavily on Bernhard Dichter, *Akko: Sites from the Turkish Period* (Haifa: Gottlieb Schumacher Institute for Research of the Christian Activities in 19th Century Palestine, University of Haifa, 2000), especially pp. 16–8 and 130–1; and David S. Ruhe, *Door of Hope: The Bahá'í Faith in the Holy Land* (Oxford: George Ronald, 2001), especially pp. 13–21 and 204–7.
- ⁶ The Syrian Protestant College was re-chartered as the American University of Beirut in 1920.
- ⁷ Adib Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1983), vol. 3, p. 11. For a list of the exiles see H.M. Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1980), pp. 277–9.
- ⁸ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 22 [with attribution to Lady Blomfield, *The Chosen Highway* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1967), p. 66].
- ⁹ Dichter, *Akko*, pp. 50–1.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* Efforts to determine the stages of construction of the Citadel have encountered problems with the identification of the various parts of the complex referred to in the historical sources. Dichter states that the *kishle* was added after the Turks regained control of Acre in 1840, but in this case, the northwest tower must have been part of a pre-existing structure, since its outer walls facing the sea show signs of damage attributable to the maritime bombardment that occurred in 1840, *ibid.*, pp. 50–1. See also Nomination of the Old City of Acre for the World Heritage List, September 2000, p. 22.
- ¹¹ According to Bahíyyih Randall-Winckler, in collaboration with M.R. Garis, *William Henry Randall, Disciple of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Oxford: One World, 1996), pp. 149 and 170 respectively, Bahá'u'lláh was without bed or chair this whole time, and the Greatest Holy Leaf recounted how the exiles had no furniture, only a few rugs.
- ¹² Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1970), pp. 185–6.
- ¹³ Moojan Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions 1844–1944, Some Contemporary Western Accounts* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1981), pp. 202–4.
- ¹⁴ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 19–20.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 18 and 23.
- ¹⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 186.
- ¹⁷ Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, references to Rosenberg, pp. 205–7; Gobineau and Prokesch-Osten, pp. 207–9.
- ¹⁸ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 187–8.
- ¹⁹ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 29.
- ²⁰ A complete English translation is published in *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 2002).
- ²¹ English translations of both works are included in *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*.
- ²² Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 31.
- ²³ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 188.
- ²⁴ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, pp. 33–4.
- ²⁵ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 189.
- ²⁶ Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas: The Most Holy Book* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1992). See also, Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, p. 275 and chapters 13 to 17 for the author's commentary on the contents of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*.
- ²⁷ Translations of the “Fire Tablet” appear in most Bahá'í prayer books, and a full translation of the “Tablet of Wisdom” is published in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1994), pp. 137–52. The contents and circumstances of composition of the “Tablet of Vision” are described in Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 223–4.
- ²⁸ For a complete account of this incident, see Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 189–91.
- ²⁹ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, p. 252.
- ³⁰ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 191–2. See also Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 24–5.
- ³¹ Munírih Khánúm, *Memoirs and Letters* (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1986), p. 46.
- ³² Glenn Cameron with Wendi Momen, *A Basic Bahá'í Chronology* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1996), p. 100.
- ³³ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 47.

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- ³⁴ Baharieh Rouhani Ma'ani, *Ásíyih Khánúmm, The Most Exalted Leaf entitled Navváb* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1993), p. 54.
- ³⁵ Adib Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1987), vol. 4, p. 1.
- ³⁶ Ma'ani, *Ásíyih Khánúmm*, p. 56.
- ³⁷ 'Abdu'lláh Páshá was the Ottoman ruler from 1819–1832. See Chapter 2 of this Appendix.
- ³⁸ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, p. 415.
- ³⁹ J.E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1970), pp. 35–6; and Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 192.
- ⁴⁰ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, pp. 86–7.
- ⁴¹ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, p. 11.
- ⁴² Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 91.
- ⁴³ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, p. 11.
- ⁴⁴ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 193.
- ⁴⁵ Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 38.
- ⁴⁶ Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa or Life in the Holy Land 1882–1885* (Jerusalem: Canaan Publishing House, 1976), pp. 129–31. This book was first published under the title *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine*.
- ⁴⁷ For example, see the childhood recollections of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's daughter, Túbá Khánúmm in Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, pp. 13–4; and the impressions of May Maxwell, mother of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánúmm, one of the first pilgrims to visit the Holy Land from the West in 1898–99, *ibid.*, pp. 28–30. The spirit of the gatherings may also be deduced from the Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh addressed to the brother-in-law of Munírih Khánúmm, a translation of which appears in Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 95. 'Ali-Akbar Furútan's collection of the personal accounts of early believers who were in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh includes a number of incidents that occurred at Ridván Garden, 'Ali-Akbar Furútan, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1986), pp. 57–60, 66, 104 and 107.
- ⁴⁸ Bahiyyih Randall-Winckler, *My Pilgrimage to Haifa, November 1919* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1996), pp. 66–9.
- ⁴⁹ This farmhouse appears to have been part of the estate of the Sursuk family, who lived in the nearby mansion, now known as Beit Liberman. A local historian, Mr. Eli Bar-On, believes that both buildings were erected about 1880. Unpublished memorandum dated 7 June 1996, Bahá'í World Centre, Office of Israel Affairs, file 720.009.
- ⁵⁰ Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, p. 232.
- ⁵¹ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, pp. 335–6.
- ⁵² Furútan, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 101–2.
- ⁵³ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, p. 104.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 101.
- ⁵⁵ Ugo Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi, Recollections* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1974), pp. 141–3.
- ⁵⁶ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, p. 139, and vol. 4, p. 372.
- ⁵⁷ Complete translations of these and other works from this period are published in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*.
- ⁵⁸ Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*. Translated by Shoghi Effendi (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1988). For an explanation see Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, pp. 368–412.
- ⁵⁹ A complete translation is published in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 219–23.
- ⁶⁰ Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 40.
- ⁶¹ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, p. 114.
- ⁶² Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 224–5.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 229–30.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 231.
- ⁶⁵ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, pp. 104–5; and Balyuzi, *Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory*, p. 407, which confirms Bahá'u'lláh's four visits to Haifa.
- ⁶⁶ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, p. 359.
- ⁶⁷ A complete translation prepared by Shoghi Effendi is published in *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1976), pp. 14–7; and *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 3–5.
- ⁶⁸ Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi*, p. 173.
- ⁶⁹ Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 216–7; and Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 28–9.
- ⁷⁰ Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 237–8.
- ⁷¹ Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí, later to be appointed one of the “Hands of the Cause of God” by Shoghi Effendi, was in attendance at this interview. See Ṭarázu'lláh Samandarí, *Moments with Bahá'u'lláh*, translated by Mehdí Samandarí and Marzieh Gail (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1995), pp. 29–37.
- ⁷² Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 222.



- ⁷³ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, pp. 419–20.
- ⁷⁴ H.M. Balyuzi, *'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1992), pp. 131–2.
- ⁷⁵ Rúhíyyih Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl* (London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2000), p. 34.
- ⁷⁶ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 56.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 206 and endnote 1. See also Dichter, *Akko*, p. 214.
- ⁷⁸ It appears that as a child Shoghi Effendi was full of energy and would often run up and down the long flight of steps to the upper story of the house. 'Abdu'l-Bahá attested to Shoghi Effendi's vitality when he once wrote a short sentence to please his grandson "Shoghi Effendi is a wise man — but he runs about very much!" Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 7.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 8.
- ⁸⁰ Roy Wilhelm, Stanwood Cobb, and Genevieve Coy, *In His Presence, Visits to 'Abdu'l-Bahá* (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1989); and extracts from accounts by Thornton Chase, Ella Goodall Cooper, and Mary Hanford Ford in Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, pp. 58–63.
- ⁸¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1994), p. ix. Collected and translated from the Persian by Laura Clifford Barney (later, Mrs. Dreyfus-Barney). The first edition of this book was published in London in 1908.
- ⁸² Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 430–1.
- ⁸³ *The Bahá'í World* (Wilmette, Illinois: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), vol. v, p. 171.
- ⁸⁴ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 264–5.
- ⁸⁵ Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 320–23 and Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 58.
- ⁸⁶ Balyuzi, *'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 125.
- ⁸⁷ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 267–9.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 272.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 275.
- ⁹⁰ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 3, pp. 430–1.
- ⁹¹ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 276.
- ⁹² This statement could also have been made at the location of the Old Western Pilgrim House (4 Haparsim Street), however, because of the view and seating arrangement this appears to be the more probable location. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, pp. 250–1.
- ⁹³ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 141.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid. See also *The Bahá'í World*, (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1978), vol. xvi, p. 537. This is a memorial on Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney, who was involved in the purchase of the land and the construction of the house.
- ⁹⁵ Draft Policy Statement of the Bahá'í World Centre on the German Templar Colony, Office of Israel Affairs, file 713.111.
- ⁹⁶ Bahá'í World Centre, *Visiting Bahá'í Holy Places* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 2001), p. 28.
- ⁹⁷ Randall-Winckler, *William Henry Randall*, p. 158.
- ⁹⁸ Balyuzi, *'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 417.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 420–2.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 414.
- ¹⁰¹ For accounts of these events, see *ibid.*, pp. 425–30; and Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 332–7.
- ¹⁰² Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 311–7.
- ¹⁰³ News articles and editorials commenting on the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá appeared in many newspapers around the world including the *London Times*, the *Morning Post*, the *Daily Mail* (France), the *New York World*, *Le Temps* (France) and the *Times of India*, *ibid.*, p. 312.
- ¹⁰⁴ Bahá'í World Centre, *Visiting Bahá'í Holy Places*, p. 28.
- ¹⁰⁵ *The Bahá'í World*, vol. v, p. 175.
- ¹⁰⁶ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 108 and 347.
- ¹⁰⁷ Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, pp. 146 and 151.
- ¹⁰⁸ In the earlier years of the Faith, Western and Eastern pilgrims were lodged separately. In 1963, the Universal House of Justice decided to accommodate all the pilgrims together in the Haifa Pilgrim House, where they were lodged and fed as guests of the Bahá'í World Centre until 1969, when the growth in numbers made this impractical, and the pilgrims were asked to make their own arrangements.
- ¹⁰⁹ Mírzá Muḥsin Afnán, husband of the second daughter of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Túbá Khánúm.
- ¹¹⁰ Email of 31 December 1997 regarding sites 5 and 7, Office of Israel Affairs, file 700.009. See Randall-Winckler, *William Henry Randall*, p. 119.
- ¹¹¹ Wilhelm, Cobb and Coy, *In His Presence*, p. 79.
- ¹¹² Ibid., pp. 110 and 112.
- ¹¹³ E-mail of 31 December 1997 regarding site 4, Office of Israel Affairs, file 700.009.

Notes



¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *The Bahá'í World* (Haifa: Bahá'í World Centre, 1976), vol. XV, p. 412.

¹¹⁶ See Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 364–9, for a detailed explanation of this chain of events and the significance of the change in the orientation of the graves.

¹¹⁷ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 180; and Bahá'í World Centre, *Visiting Bahá'í Holy Places*, p. 87, state that a Persian believer offered the land and the Randalls financed the building. In his diary entry, Henry Randall said his wife, Ruth, offered to buy land and erect the Pilgrim House. See Randall-Winckler, *William Henry Randall*, p. 138.

¹¹⁸ Charles Mason Remey, “Design for the Bahá'í Pilgrim House, Haifa”, *Star of the West*, vol. 12, no. 11, September 1921, pp. 184–6.

¹¹⁹ Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi*, pp. 61–2.

¹²⁰ This model is now displayed in the hall of the Mansion of Bahjí.

¹²¹ For details on the structure and components of the building, see Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi*, chapter VII.

¹²² Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 171.

¹²³ Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 364–9.

¹²⁴ Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 147.

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 260–3.

¹²⁶ Momen, *The Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, pp. 460–1.

¹²⁷ Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi*, pp. 151–69.

¹²⁸ Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 264.

¹²⁹ Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi*, p. 166.

¹³⁰ Rabbani, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 265.

¹³¹ Ruhe, *Door of Hope*, p. 171.

¹³² Ibid., p. 224, chapter 11, note 5.

¹³³ Taherzadeh, *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 4, p. 170.

¹³⁴ *Bahá'í Shrine and Gardens on Mount Carmel, Haifa, Israel, A visual journey*. Edited and compiled by the Haifa Tourist Board ([Haifa]: Municipality of Haifa, Haifa Tourist Board and Ministry of Defense Publishing House, 2001), p. 34.

¹³⁵ Bahá'í World Centre, *Visiting Bahá'í Holy Places*, p. 25.

¹³⁶ *Bahá'í Shrine and Gardens on Mount Carmel*, p. 9.

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BAHÁ'Í HOLY PLACES IN HAIFA AND THE WESTERN GALILEE

Heritage Management Plan

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Heritage Management Plan

1. Institutional Structure and General Principles

One of the distinguishing features of the Bahá'í religion is the continuity of legitimate leadership, with a clear line of succession from Bahá'u'lláh to 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Shoghi Effendi to the Universal House of Justice, each of whom derived their authority from explicit texts in the sacred scripture. Despite the many upheavals on the world scene and in the Middle East, in particular, in the last century and a half, this central authority has been exercised from the Haifa-Acre area without interruption from 1868 until the present day, a factor which has clearly redounded to the benefit of the conservation of the Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee.

Since 1963, the central authority of the worldwide Bahá'í community has been the Universal House of Justice. A collegial body composed of nine members elected every five years, the Universal House of Justice operates without permanent officers. It meets and functions continuously in its Seat on Mount Carmel, and all nine members are required to reside in Haifa on a full-time basis during their term of office. The protection and conservation of the Bahá'í Holy Places is one of the primary concerns of the Universal House of Justice, and all activities related to this subject are carried out under its close supervision. The properties are managed, on a day-to-day basis, in the name of the Bahá'í World Centre.

The foundation underlying all management policies and decisions is a belief in the unique historical and religious importance of these properties for generations yet unborn and a sense of sacred responsibility to preserve them in trust for the worldwide Bahá'í community and humanity as a whole.

Basic principles concerning the importance of Holy Places and the manner in which they should be preserved derive from the sacred writings of the Bahá'í Faith. In letters addressed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to relatives of the Báb who were responsible for carrying out repairs to the latter's house in Shiráz in about 1903, we find the following instructions:

The restoration of the blessed house is a most pressing duty, which cannot suffer a moment's delay. The house must, however, preserve its original design. Nor should the slightest change or modification be permitted.... The state of the house, as regards the disposition of its rooms, its walls, its dimensions and architecture, should not be altered in the least.

The aim is not to embellish, but to preserve the precise state and condition prevailing in that blessed abode at the time when the exalted Beauty, the Primal Point—may my soul be a sacrifice for His sake—was dwelling therein. Nor should the house be altered in any of its general or particular characteristics. This, indeed, is that which is required; otherwise, were gem-encrusted bricks of gold and silver to be layered one upon another, yet would they fail to render it justice. Bear ever in mind that the purpose is to preserve the original design from

alteration, and that the same holdeth true for the ornamentation, doors, and other dependencies.¹

Starting with the undertaking referred to in the above correspondence, the Bahá'í community has acquired over a hundred years of experience with conservation work. The first major restoration project in the Haifa-Acre area was carried out seventy-five years ago under the direction of Shoghi Effendi. Drawing on this accumulated experience, enriched by a continuous process of consultation with specialists in a wide range of disciplines from Israel and all over the world, the Bahá'í World Centre has developed and continues to develop policies regarding the conservation of the Bahá'í Holy Places for future generations.

Since the cultural values inherent in the Bahá'í Holy Places include historical associations related to different periods and to processes of change over time, as well as a contemporary testimony to a living belief system, there can be no simple standard of authenticity, applicable in all circumstances. There will be cases, such as the house of the Báb in Shíráz, where accurate representation of the condition of a place at a specific time in the past must be the paramount objective. In other instances, it may be essential to conserve traces of several different periods and/or evidence of changes that were introduced. There will also be situations in which further development of the sites may be required in order to maintain the authenticity of their testimony to the belief system as it evolves in inter-action with a changing environment.

The management approach is characterized by the following fundamental principles and objectives:

- The key to preserving the authenticity of historic structures lies in minimizing the loss to the original building fabric. Thus, only works indispensable for the conservation of a building should be carried out, and repair should always be preferred over restoration. Worn parts should only be replaced when all repair options have been exhausted. Regular maintenance is the most effective and economical form of conservation over the long term.
- All buildings within a heritage site form an integral part of its character and atmosphere. Consequently, any new construction should be in stylistic harmony with the historical structures so as to blend into the atmosphere of the place, rather than compete for the attention of the visitor. The distinction between authentic and new or rebuilt structures should be carefully documented, and staff should be knowledgeable enough to clear up any confusion that might arise in the minds of the visitors.
- Attention must be given to the integration of each heritage site in its surroundings. No matter how valuable a site may be or what technical means are mobilized, effective protection can best be assured in the long run only with the understanding and goodwill of the people who live and work nearby. Consequently, the objective should be to achieve a balance in which the site provides benefits to its surroundings that compensate for the demands it makes and the constraints it imposes. In this context, it is helpful to think of buffer

¹ Extracted from two letters preserved in the manuscript collection at the Bahá'í World Centre. The translation from the Persian was prepared by the Research Department of the Bahá'í World Centre.

zones as “zones of interaction” and to examine the reciprocal influences with a view to finding synergistic or mutually beneficial solutions.

- Public access should be provided to the extent compatible with the conservation of the properties. No entry fee will be charged and no goods or services will be offered for sale or rent at any of the sites. Visitors will be requested to show the respect due to a holy place by their dress and deportment while on the sites.
- The Bahá'í World Centre will not actively promote public visits to the sites, and every effort will be made to ensure that the treatment of the properties in the public media, and any promotion by others, meets standards of dignity in accord with social norms for places held sacred by the followers of any religion.

2. Legal Status and Protection

2.1. British Mandatory Legislation

The constitutional framework for the British mandatory administration was an Order in Council adopted in 1922.² Although it has been amended by legislation since the establishment of the State of Israel, it has not been repealed. Article 83 of the Order contains the following significant provision, which is still in effect:

All persons in Palestine shall enjoy full liberty of conscience, and the free exercise of their forms of worship subject only to the maintenance of public order and morals. Each religious community recognized by the Government shall enjoy autonomy for the internal affairs of the community subject to the provisions of any Ordinance or Order issued by the High Commissioner.

The above guarantee of the “autonomy” of religious communities recognized and validated the “millet system” which was a feature of Ottoman law. The “internal affairs” to be left to the discretion of the religious communities included: the organization and functioning of religious institutions and the management of their properties; the settlement of doctrinal disputes; jurisdiction over endowments and trusts created under religious law; and practically all matters relating to family law and inheritance affecting the members of the community.

The subject of holy places was explicitly dealt with in a further Order in Council adopted in 1924, which stipulated that “no cause or matter in connection with the Holy Places or religious buildings or sites in Palestine shall be heard or determined by any Court in Palestine.”³ As the Order did not provide a definition of what constitutes a holy place, the courts have presumed that the intent was to accept the determination of each religious community as to the sacredness of places of interest to it. As it remains in effect today, the 1924 Order in Council prevents the courts from adjudicating rights or claims to religious buildings or sites unless their intervention is strictly necessary to preserve law and order.⁴

² Generally referred to as the Palestine Order in Council (1922-1947).

³ The Palestine (Holy Places) Order in Council, 25 July 1924.

⁴ Ruth Lapidot, “Freedom of Religion and of Conscience in Israel”, *Catholic University Law Review*, vol. 47 (September 1998), pp. 453-55.

The Bahá'ís residing in the Haifa-Acre area were recognized in 1929 as a religious community under the 1922 Order in Council. This recognition was confirmed by an order signed by the Prime Minister of Israel in 1971.

2.2. Law for the Protection of Holy Places

Adopted by the Knesset in June 1967, shortly after the Six-Day War, this law aims (i) to guarantee the freedom of access for the members of the different faiths to the places sacred to them, and (ii) to prevent desecration of holy places and any other actions likely to violate the feelings of the believers with regard to those places. The law institutes criminal penalties for actions in contradiction with these purposes. It does not define any of the critical terms but delegates authority to the Minister of Religious Affairs to issue regulations in implementation of the law. As of this date, such regulations have only been issued with regard to Jewish Holy Places.

As interpreted by the courts, this law creates a judicial recourse in matters of access to holy places but not with regard to ownership, control, worship or other activities carried on within such places. It is noteworthy that the law reaches beyond the notion of desecration, which usually implies physical damage to or soiling of the premises themselves, to prohibit purely symbolic acts, words or images that are likely to offend the feelings of believers with regard to places that are sacred to them.

2.3. Planning and Building Law

The Planning and Building Law (1965) institutes a system of regulation of “land-uses” by town-planning schemes and sets out elaborate provisions concerning the content and approval procedure for such schemes. It contains specific provisions intended to protect holy places and other historical or archaeological sites,⁵ but the right granted to any interested party, both to propose schemes and to object to those put forward by others, is the primary tool available to a non-governmental body interested in the protection of heritage sites. As explained in Section 3 below, the Bahá'í World Centre makes extensive use of this instrument.

2.4. Antiquities Law

The Antiquities Law (1978) and related legislation, which deals primarily with the protection of man-made heritage antedating 1700 C.E., requires the approval of the Israel Antiquities Authority for nearly any material intervention on an “antiquities site”, as defined by the Authority. If the antiquity site is “used for religious requirements or devoted to a religious purpose”, the approval can only be given by a committee of three ministers.

2.5. Status Agreement

The status of the Bahá'í institutions in Israel is defined in a formal international agreement between the Bahá'í World Centre and the State of Israel signed in April 1987, which contains the following stipulations with regard to the Bahá'í Holy Places:

⁵ Articles 61(3) and (4), 99, and the Fourth Schedule, which requires local authorities to establish preservation commissions and approve lists of sites for preservation.

The Government of Israel recognizes that the holiest places of the Bahá'í Faith, in accordance with the Bahá'í Sacred Scriptures, are located in Israel, and confirms that the Universal House of Justice is the Trustee of the Bahá'í International Community over the Holy Places of the Bahá'í Faith in Israel and over the Bahá'í endowments in Israel. (Article 1A)

The Government of Israel recognizes the Holy Places of the Bahá'í Faith as Holy Places, and they shall be granted the protection given in Israel to places of worship which are holy to religious communities. (Article 2)

2.6. Ownership

Almost all the properties covered by the nomination are owned by the Bahá'í World Centre through locally incorporated non-profit societies that serve as real estate holding companies. Much of the land was donated by believers or purchased from private owners in the early decades of the twentieth century. Other holdings were acquired through exchanges with the government agency that manages state lands. In a few cases, the community acquired rights to the land through adverse possession and/or expropriation from individual descendants of Bahá'u'lláh, who claimed personal rights through inheritance.

2.7. Contractual Arrangements

One of the Bahá'í Holy Places, the Prison, is located on property that is owned by the State of Israel and serves as a national museum and memorial site under the management of the Ministry of Defense. Bahá'í pilgrimage rights to this Holy Place have been recognized since the 1920s, and the room occupied by Bahá'u'lláh has been in the exclusive possession of the Bahá'í World Centre since 1951. A formal agreement signed in March 1999 between the Bahá'í World Centre and the Ministry of Defense, acting for the Government of Israel, confirms detailed understandings with regard to the restoration and maintenance of the areas of particular interest to Bahá'ís, as well as the access rights of Bahá'í pilgrims and other Bahá'í visitors.

Certain properties that constitute part of the buffer zones for the Holy Places are held under long-term lease or as protected tenancies. Generally, this is seen as a step towards acquisition of full ownership. Other such properties are owned by the Bahá'í World Centre but leased out to third parties for dwelling or cultivation purposes. The terms of the leases typically give the Bahá'í World Centre leverage to ensure that these properties are used in a way that is compatible with their function in relation to the particular Holy Place.

3. Town-Planning Measures Affecting Specific Sites

The attached maps, numbered 2-A through 2-I, show each of the sites in its surroundings with an overlay of town-planning schemes. The text below summarizes the provisions of the relevant schemes and describes the strategic situation with regard to the protection of the site in question.

3.1. Bahjí (Map 2-A)

A major threat was posed to Bahjí in the late 1980s when the Public Works Department gained approval for a scheme to construct a highway along its eastern perimeter, with an interchange at the location of the main public entrance to the site. The Bahá'í World Centre had not been informed of the scheme in time to exercise its right of objection under the Planning Law, but application was made to the Supreme Court of Israel essentially on the basis of the Law for the Protection of Holy Places. After the Court granted a temporary injunction, the parties negotiated a settlement under which the interchange was cancelled, the road was moved fifty meters to the east and an acoustic barrier was erected between the road and the Holy Place.

Most of the site itself is covered by an outline scheme (#849/G) prepared in the 1970s for the City of Acre, whose borders have since been altered to include additional lands in the area. This scheme is outdated and practically inoperative in that it no longer provides an adequate basis for the issuance of building permits. In order to construct the new visitors' center and public entrance for the Holy Place, it was necessary to obtain approval of a "spot scheme" (#11622/G), which covers an area of six hectares in the northern part of the site.

On the west side, a scheme for a new housing development within Acre (#9763/G) has been approved and implementation has begun. Just north of the municipal border is a cooperative settlement, which has also adopted a scheme (#11474/G). In the southeast, there is an existing residential neighborhood, which is governed by schemes 3658/G and 2/50/12. None of these schemes would appear to have significant adverse effects on the Holy Place. In the southwest, northwest and north, however, there are large areas, including parts of the site itself, which are still subject to the agricultural land-use in effect before the lands were annexed by Acre. In December 2004, a State institution known as the Manof Youth Village started to construct a private sewage treatment plant in one of these areas within the designated buffer zone for Bahjí, apparently without any of the necessary permits and approvals and despite the firm opposition of the Ministry of the Environment. After the Bahá'í World Centre protested to the relevant authorities, the Municipality of Acre issued a stop-work order on about 16 December. At this time, it does not appear that this objectionable project will proceed.

The Bahá'í World Centre has submitted a scheme that will fill the planning vacuums and create a proper framework for the protection and development of this important site. This scheme recognizes the sacred area at the heart of the site, surrounds it with a buffer of private open space and creates a zone for public institutions in the northwest and an area for maintenance and logistical installations in the southeast.

3.2. North Slope of Mount Carmel (Map 2-B)

The last comprehensive plan for the northern slope of Mount Carmel was a municipal outline scheme (#422/HF) adopted in 1937, which designated the land owned by the Bahá'í World Centre around the Shrine of the Báb and extending down to the German Colony, as "private open space". On the uphill side of the main artery now known as Hatzionut Avenue, the small area of the Monument Gardens was also recognized as "private open space", but the rest of the present site was planned as a

residential area crossed by several public roads. Scheme 1642/HF, approved in 1977, made it possible to erect the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, without resolving the fundamental planning contradictions. This task was left to Scheme 1815/HF, adopted in 1994, which cancelled all the road incursions and re-designated the rest of the site as a combination of “public buildings” and “private open space”. An amendment to Scheme 1815/HF, adopted in 1997, extended the area of “private open space” below the Shrine all the way to Hagefen Street, canceling a dead-end road that connected with the old monumental staircase to the Shrine.

These town-planning schemes, combined with strenuous and in some cases very costly efforts to acquire the last remaining properties needed to complete the site, enabled the Bahá'í World Centre to successfully prosecute the most ambitious development project ever undertaken by the Bahá'í community. This eleven-year undertaking, known as the “Mount Carmel Projects”, involved the construction of the terraced gardens stretching from Panorama Street at the crest of Mount Carmel to Hagefen Street at its foot and the erection of two large buildings in the administrative complex at a total cost of some \$250 million.

The Municipality of Haifa and the relevant government agencies have launched a comprehensive planning process for the German Colony, which is historically and visually connected with the Shrine of the Báb and the terraced gardens. A series of schemes has been prepared under the general designation #1796/HF, and they are at various stages in the approval process. These schemes, which aim to achieve a balance between preservation and development, will provide a reasonable degree of protection against tall or otherwise incongruous building, once they have been legally approved. Sub-scheme 1796/8 will permit the erection of a hotel on the corner of Ben Gurion Avenue and Hagefen Street, opposite the lower entrance plaza of the terraced gardens, but the volume and shape of the proposed building make it relatively unobtrusive.

The ridge of Mount Carmel (south of the Bahá'í site) is mainly residential, but the skyline is defined by the rectangular profiles of two large hotels and a pair of “twin towers”, one of which is a third hotel and the other residential flats. There is one extensive plot of publicly-owned land, formerly occupied by a military facility, the future of which has yet to be determined. The sloping areas to the east and west of the site are also residential. Most of them are still subject to Scheme 422/HF and others of similar vintage, which limit building heights to three to five stories. A more recent scheme (#1018/A/HF), applicable to the area adjacent to the administrative complex, allows five to seven stories. Unfortunately, the older schemes like 422/HF are out of tune with current standards and policies to the extent that they no longer act as an effective restraint on development pressures. In the absence of a credible current standard, it is possible to win approval for isolated developments that bear no relationship to the surrounding urban fabric. Two cases in point are visible in the buffer zone to the east of the Bahá'í site, one a sixteen-story tower and the other a slab-sided ten-story concrete apartment block. The proper long-term solution is a new comprehensive plan for the north slope of Mount Carmel, but in the meantime, some vigilance will be required to ensure that no additional “exceptions” of this kind are granted. Some comfort may be taken from the fact that nearly all the areas

within the buffer zone are fully built with multi-family dwellings owned as condominiums, a form of ownership that makes further development quite difficult.

3.3. Ri v́an Gardens (Map 2-C)

The Ri v́an Gardens are situated at the center of a shield-shaped area of about 160 hectares that is enclosed on all sides by major roads and a railway line. The Na'mayn and Hilazon Rivers, which drain much of the coastal plain, cross the area 200 meters to the south of the Holy Place on their way to the Mediterranean Sea. The national railway authority has determined that the junction between the coastal line and a future branch line to Carmiel should be located in the area of the nature reserve where the two rivers join. Except for a small housing area and a commercial/industrial zone to the north of the Holy Place (Scheme #3124/G), this area is presently undeveloped, part of it being actively farmed and the rest largely unusable swampland.

Located in close proximity to the urban center of Acre and to the seacoast, this area constitutes the last major land reserve within the present borders of the city. Scheme 10334/G, which has been prepared by the Israel Lands Administration and the Municipality of Acre, covers the entire area except for the parts already built-up. It is based on a hydrological study that proposes measures to reduce the risk of flooding from the rivers, coupled with a massive landfill operation to raise by three to five meters the level of the land on which the new neighborhood is to be built. Part of the proposed development will be drained by a gravity line to the sea, but other parts will rely on a pumping system to lift the water to the level of the river.

After protracted negotiations, it has been agreed that the Holy Place will be encircled by roads and retaining walls that will protect it from surface run-off from the built areas, while its own drainage needs will be met by the pumping system. The building plan permits only low-rise construction in the vicinity of the Holy Place, with all the tall buildings to be located on the eastern and southern fringes of the development.

3.4. Mansion of Mazra'ih (Map 2-D)

The Bahá'í World Centre submitted Scheme 9409/G for the protection and development of this Holy Place in 1996, but the planning authorities declined to deal with it, preferring to give priority to the processing of schemes for the two neighboring settlements, Kibbutz Evron and Al-Mazra Village. The Kibbutz Evron outline scheme (#11080/G) took effect in 2001, and the outline scheme for the Village (#13161/G) was finally approved in 2004. The revised version of Scheme 9409/G, which was approved for deposit on 15 March 2004, shares a common border with the Kibbutz scheme and amends the Al-Mazra scheme with regard to the area of the future visitors' center (the *khan*) and the farmland just to the east of the Holy Place. In addition, it implements an agreement reached between the Mateh Asher Regional Council and the Local Council of Al-Mazra by adding a supplementary housing area of two hectares to the Village in return for the latter's agreement not to build on the farmland directly to the east of the Holy Place.

With these changes, Scheme 9409/G will protect the Holy Place with a core area of "public institutions", while canceling an unplanned road which currently is a major source of nuisance. The mansion, the *khan*, the Ottoman aqueduct and its pools are

clearly marked as buildings for conservation, and the location of the future entrance and parking lot is fixed. Finally, the scheme facilitates urban renewal in a small residential quarter near the mansion, which is owned by the Bahá'í World Centre, protects 13 hectares of agricultural land, which is an essential part of the historic character of the place, and preserves the long-distance views toward the Galilee Hills.

3.5. Place of Revelation of the “Tablet of Carmel” (Map 2-E)

This site was zoned as “private open space” by Scheme 963/HF, which was approved in 1957 in connection with the acquisition of the land by the Bahá'ís. The steep slope of Mount Carmel that falls away to the north of the site is designated as “public open space” by Scheme 545/B/HF. On the eastern side, there is a low-density residential area with a public school, which is subject to Scheme 870/HF, adopted in 1952, as amended in 1994 (Scheme 870/A/HF). There is a plan in preparation for a new housing development several hundred meters to the east, but the proposed building heights are not excessive.

When the military facility that occupies the land to the west of the site is relocated, this area will also be redeveloped as housing. The plans being prepared on behalf of the Israel Lands Administration call for buildings ranging from two to seven stories arranged according to the topography of the site. The planners have expressed a willingness to discuss the plan with the Bahá'í World Centre and to take steps to minimize the adverse impact of the development on the Bahá'í site.

The site is bordered on the south by Tchernikhovsky Street, which is a segment of a main traffic artery which runs along the ridge of Mount Carmel. On the opposite side of this street, there is a shopping center and an apartment complex comprising three sixteen-story towers that overlook the Bahá'í site. This latter development, presently under construction, was authorized by Scheme 1195/BM/HF.

3.6. Persian Quarter (Map 2-F)

The properties that comprise the Persian Quarter are situated near the center of a sector of the Haifa German Colony for which the Municipality has commissioned a conservation and development scheme (#1796/4/HF). This scheme will effectively stabilize the situation in the area and allow only minimal additional construction while maintaining the existing maximum building heights. The northern end of the garden of the Old Western Pilgrim House is threatened with expropriation in connection with a separate road scheme to which the Bahá'í World Centre has objected.

3.7. Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery (Map 2-G)

The Bahá'í Cemetery is located, together with the National Maritime Museum and the National Naval Museum, in a triangular area framed by roadways that form part of a major intersection. The land-uses in the area are stipulated in Scheme 1068/HF, whose principal purpose was to authorize the road development.

The cemetery is adjacent to the southern side of the triangle, which is an urban street known as Allenby Road. There is a row of three- to four-story residential buildings (Scheme 107/B/HF) on the opposite side of this street, between it and the slopes of

Mount Carmel, which is preserved as “open space” by Scheme 545/B/HF. Further to the west lies the sacred site of the cave of Elijah and the path of a cable car connecting the western tip of Mount Carmel (“Stella Maris”) with a recreational facility on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea.

A solid 1.8-meter wall on the south side of the cemetery provides a measure of privacy and noise protection in relation to Allenby Road and the dwellings located along it. Traffic noises from the ramp on the east are largely screened by the building that houses the National Maritime Museum. In contrast, the cemetery enjoys a relatively open view toward the Mediterranean Sea to the north and is exposed to noise from the highway and railway line from the same direction. Both the lookout point at Stella Maris and the cable cars provide views into the cemetery.

A plan for the expansion of the National Naval Museum, recently put forward by an association of retired officers, would involve the construction of a large building that would reduce the noise but close off the view to the north. If the initiators of this project are successful in raising the necessary funds, they will be obliged to submit and win approval of a new town-planning scheme. This matter will be followed closely to ensure that any adverse effects on the cemetery are kept within reasonable bounds.

3.8. Junayn Garden (Map 2-H)

Once a modest farmer's house in an agricultural area, Junayn Garden is now located on the edge of a recently built housing development authorized by Scheme 21/BM/G. This scheme confirms the land-use of the Bahá'í site as “private open space” and limits building heights in the adjacent areas to the south and west to two stories. The older residential neighborhood to the north is also limited in density and building height by Scheme 7642/G. The industrial area to the east, which included a malodorous garbage compacting station, is slated for re-development as a residential area with a small commercial center under Scheme 8241/G. The main north-south railroad line runs along the far side of this new development, which may include a measure of acoustic protection.

3.9. Three Sites in Old Acre (Map 2-I)

The entire Old City of Acre is covered by a new outline scheme (#10895/G), whose primary focus is preservation. The Bahá'í World Centre filed an objection and proposed amendments intended to make the scheme's provisions more balanced and effective. Agreement was reached with the scheme initiators on most of these proposals, and it was hoped that the Northern District Planning and Building Commission would resolve the remaining issues and approve the scheme in June 2004. Unfortunately, the District Commission's decision fell short of expectations, and the Bahá'í World Centre has been obliged to appeal to the National Planning Board. A final decision is expected in early 2005.

4. Relationship with the Surroundings and Other Heritage Interests

Over the years, the endeavor to protect the Bahá'í Holy Places has involved and continues to require a great deal of dialogue, negotiation and accommodation with other

interests. In this process, the concept of a “buffer zone” has proven so simplistic as to be unhelpful.

The first problem is that the size of the “buffer” depends on the nature of the anticipated threat. A strip that provides an adequate solution to noise or visual impacts from low-rise housing will be quite ineffective against a sixteen-story tower, let alone a polluting factory, a highway or a railway line. For this reason, it might be more sensible to think in terms of concentric rings and to define the sorts of land-uses that could be permitted in each without causing harm to the heritage site.

The second difficulty is that the concept of a buffer is fundamentally one-sided. In the long term, no matter how valuable a site may be or what technical means are mobilized, it will be difficult to ensure effective protection without the understanding and goodwill of the people who live and work nearby. Consequently, the objective should be to achieve a balance in which the site provides benefits to its surroundings that compensate for the demands it makes and the constraints it imposes. This is generally not a zero-sum game, and creative planning, design and negotiation can identify ways in which one side can offer a benefit to the other without harm or at a minimal cost to its own interests. In this context, it is helpful to think in terms of “zones of interaction” and to examine the reciprocal influences with a view to finding synergistic or mutually beneficial solutions.

To illustrate these points, a few examples will be offered from the recent experience of the Bahá'í World Centre.

4.1. Ri v́an Gardens

Despite its glorious history and undoubted tourism potential, the city of Acre is presently a depressed area suffering from a population drain, mainly towards its northern neighbor, Nahariya. The national and municipal authorities wanted to reverse this trend by building housing of a higher standard, and one of the sites chosen for a new housing development was the marshy area surrounding the Ri v́an Gardens. This plan involved re-engineering the environment to reclaim swampland for building and protect it from the seasonal risk of flooding from the river. Since the topography of the Holy Place could not be changed to suit the development plan, this project placed it under existential threat, as well as raising concern as to how the urbanization of the area would impact the historic rural character and quintessentially quiet atmosphere of the place.

Protracted negotiations eventually yielded an understanding under which the Bahá'í World Centre will undertake improvements to adapt the site to serve as a unique urban park, conferring a special character on the surrounding neighborhood and making it more readily marketable. In return, the development will provide retaining walls and drainage solutions for the gardens and adopt a stadium-style urban design with low-rise housing near the site and gradually increasing building heights further away.

4.2. Mansion of Mazra'ih

This Holy Place is located on a narrow-waisted strip of land between a Jewish kibbutz and a growing Muslim Arab village on the southern outskirts of Nahariya.

The area between the Holy Place and the nearby main road is being over-run by unregulated commercial development, and much of the narrowest part of the site is occupied by an unplanned but heavily used road that provides the sole access to a regional school, a thriving industrial area and a commercial dumping site, all operated by the kibbutz. In a desperate search for ways to meet the pent-up demand for additional housing in the Arab village, its leadership proposed to develop the farmland to the east and north of the Holy Place, cutting off its last connection with the rural landscape which forms an essential part of its character.

The Bahá'í World Centre proposed to convert an ancient *khan* into a visitors' center, restore sections of the Ottoman aqueduct and develop walking paths in the agricultural area. Thus, the green open space between the two settlements would be preserved and given a new role as a recreational area and tourist attraction with economic spin-offs for both communities. Years of multi-party negotiations have yielded alternative solutions for the road and the expansion of the village, and the scheme put forward by the Bahá'í World Centre in 1996 is now progressing toward approval.

4.3. Prison

The rooms where Bahá'u'lláh and His family were incarcerated for two years after their arrival in Acre in August 1868 are located in a fortress built by the Ottomans on top of Crusader remains and which was later used by the British mandatory authorities to imprison Jewish nationalist figures in the 1920s and 1940s, as well as individuals involved with the Arab uprising of the 1930s. This Bahá'í Holy Place is now located over the restored Crusader halls and within a national museum commemorating the events of the mandatory period. The initial position of the Ministry of Defense was that all parts of the complex should be restored to the period of the late 1940s because of the importance of those events in relation to the struggle to establish the State of Israel. After prolonged negotiations, a compromise was adopted involving the restoration of the interior of the building to its condition at the end of the Ottoman period, reflecting the experience of Bahá'u'lláh and the Jewish detainees of the 1920s, and the exterior to its appearance in the 1940s.

5. Visitor Flows, Facilities and Crowd Management Systems

The Bahá'í World Centre sees itself as trustee of the physical heritage comprising the Bahá'í Holy Places, with an obligation to provide public access to the extent compatible with the conservation of the properties. No entry fee is charged at any of the sites, nor does the Bahá'í World Centre actively promote public visits. All maintenance and operating costs are covered by donations from members of the worldwide Bahá'í community.

5.1. Visitor Constituencies

In discharging this responsibility, the Bahá'í World Centre attempts to serve a broad range of visitors, who come with quite different needs and expectations. An initial distinction may be made between Bahá'ís, the primary focus of whose visit is spiritual, and the general public, most of whom are mainly interested in the aesthetic experience of the gardens. In reality, however, the diversity of needs and expectations is much greater than this simple dichotomy might suggest.

Consequently, it may be more helpful to think of the users of the properties in terms of the following categories:

- Bahá'í Pilgrims: This term refers to participants in the organized nine-day pilgrimage program comprising guided visits to the Holy Places and related activities. Their arrival in the Holy Land crowns many years of waiting and anticipation, and for most it will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Consequently, it tends to be an intense personal experience, and pilgrims are encouraged to focus on the program content.
- Other Bahá'í Visitors from Overseas: Outside the pilgrimage program, members of the Bahá'í community may visit the Haifa-Acre area for periods of a few days after obtaining permission to do so. These visits are generally unstructured and may involve a combination of prayer at the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb with a variety of other activities. This category includes visits of relatives of the staff serving at the Bahá'í World Centre. There is a trend toward larger groups of visitors from particular countries or locations (especially in Europe and the Far East) and toward visits timed to coincide with the celebration of Bahá'í Holy Days.
- Staff of the Bahá'í World Centre: Including dependents, the staff comprises around 700 people with about 75 different nationalities. They make frequent use of the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb for personal prayer and are given the opportunity of visiting the other Holy Places outside working hours on the basis of a fixed schedule. Staff also participate, with the Bahá'í pilgrims and other visitors, in observances of Bahá'í Holy Days held within the properties.
- Overseas Tourists: The majority of overseas tourists consists of participants in commercial package tours, which are affected by economic conditions and perceptions of risk. A brief stop at one of the Holy Places is part of the itinerary of most tours of northern Israel. In addition to the aesthetic experience, many tourists express a desire for information about the properties and the religious values they represent.
- Internal Tourists: Touring within the country on holidays, vacation periods and weekends is part of Israeli culture. Individuals and family groups use private vehicles or public transport, while larger groups hire busses, with or without guides. Anecdotal evidence suggests that members of the Arab and Druze minorities are well represented in the visitor mix. As with the overseas tourists, the gardens and the views are the principal attraction, but there is also an element of curiosity about the cultural significance of the properties.
- Local Residents: The Bahá'í Holy Places are favored by local residents as places within which to stroll and enjoy the fresh air and aesthetic properties of the gardens. Although there are no recreational facilities as such and the range of permissible activities is limited, the properties thus fulfill some of the functions of public parks.

- Learning Groups: This category includes study tours and other organized groups whose primary purpose is learning. They may be organized by universities, schools, professional associations, voluntary organizations or simply groups of friends. These groups represent a challenge because of their insistence on an interactive learning experience with in-depth explanations, while the specific focus of their interest may range across a broad spectrum.
- VIP and Business Visitors: The Bahá'í World Centre frequently receives requests for visits from dignitaries ranging from heads of state and government to ministers, ambassadors, parliamentarians and mayors. There is also an ongoing need to host government officials and other parties involved in different aspects of the Centre's activities.
- Participants in Special Events: Special arrangements are required to accommodate thousands of visitors in a short period of time in connection with large events of various kinds. One to two thousand delegates representing over 180 national Bahá'í communities gather every five years in the Haifa-Acre area to elect the members of the Universal House of Justice. The working sessions are generally held in nearby convention facilities, but the program includes visits to the Holy Places and ceremonial events on-site. The inauguration of the terraced gardens in 2001 was attended by some 3,500 people including 2,800 Bahá'ís from overseas and 700 invited guests, mostly from Israel. A convention on agricultural technology hosted by the Municipality of Haifa in 1999 attracted several thousand participants, of whom some 250 took an optional tour of the Bahá'í gardens.

5.2. Visitor Facilities and Crowd Management Systems

The complexity of this constituency requires careful attention to the planning of facilities and the management of visitor flows. Since arrangements differ according to the particular location, they will be described on a site-by-site basis.

5.2.1. Shrine and Terraces in Haifa

The gardens surrounding the Shrine of the Báb have been open to the public seven days a week without charge for many decades and drew from 200,000 to 250,000 visitors a year in the 1980s and 1990s. The Shrine itself and its immediate precincts are closed to the public from noon on to allow for maintenance and devotional use by the Bahá'í pilgrims, visitors and staff.

A public opinion survey, commissioned in 2001 as the terraced gardens neared completion, indicated a high degree of awareness of the project and a pent-up demand that could have led to a rush of millions of visitors, causing serious problems of congestion and safety. To deal with this situation, a sophisticated crowd management system was devised and implemented, while the local media warned the public against trying to visit immediately after the opening. The crowd management system involved offering guided group tours on two different routes, each starting from a dedicated entry point. Dozens of part-time guides, many of them students, were recruited and trained with the assistance of

the Beit Hagefen Arab Jewish Cultural Center, while ongoing supervision was provided by two licensed tour guides. Due to the heavy initial demand, advance bookings were required and a call-in reservation service was established. In addition, three areas of the gardens, each with its own entrance, were designated for impromptu visits. Arrangements for parking and shuttle service were handled by the Municipality and the Haifa Tourist Board.

During the first six months after the opening of the terraced gardens, the flow averaged over 130,000 visitors per month, with about 20% of the visitors electing to take the guided tours. The visitor flow slowed to around 50,000 per month in the second semester and then stabilized at about 10,000 per week, with occasional peaks of 25,000 to 35,000 per week during holiday periods. Since these figures were generated at a time when international tourism was at a historic low-point because of the worldwide economic downturn and the security situation in the Middle East, it is clear that the potential is significantly greater.

In the first two years, nearly 400,000 visitors were accommodated on approximately 10,000 one-hour tours, all without charge. While this system is relatively costly to operate, it has been successful in assuring a high level of visitor satisfaction and safety, while minimizing vandalism and other damage to the premises. It is also flexible enough to allow rapid adjustment to changes in the level of demand.

5.2.2. Shrine and Gardens at Bahjí

As recently as 1999, this site drew about 110,000 visitors annually. The numbers have declined, partly because of factors affecting tourism generally and partly because of the construction work on the new Visitors' Centre, which required the public to use an alternative entrance gate that lacked convenient parking facilities. The new public entrance adjacent to the Visitors' Centre was opened in October 2004, with a temporary parking lot. The Municipality of Acre plans to upgrade the access road and parking arrangements during 2005. The disruptive effect of these works may keep the flow of visitors at reduced levels for most of the year, but it can be expected to pick up again after the project is completed.

The gardens at Bahjí are open to the public daily during fixed hours, and visitors may move about quite freely, with only minimal restrictions as to the itineraries and areas to be visited. The inner court of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh is open to public visitation during the morning hours four days a week without prior arrangements. The rest of the time, this area is reserved for Bahá'í pilgrims, visitors and staff.

5.2.3. Plans for the Mansion of Mazra'ih and Ri ván Gardens

Neither of these sites is presently open to the general public for lack of adequate facilities, but plans have been prepared to develop both in such a way as to make it possible to open at least the grounds to public visitation.

The plan for Mazra'ih calls for the rehabilitation of an ancient *khan* to serve as a visitors' center and the construction of a promenade along a restored segment of an Ottoman aqueduct with a panoramic view of the Galilee Hills, as well as walking paths through an agricultural area cultivated in the traditional way. The proposed visitors' center at this site will offer facilities for exhibits, lectures, discussions and audio-visual presentations, making it an appropriate venue for receiving "learning groups".

The development plan for the Ri ván Gardens will involve the restoration of the historic water system that created an island and operated a flourmill. The water system and the mill and other ancient structures will be complemented by landscape features that will make the site a varied and interesting as well as an agreeable place to visit. Since the construction of a residential neighborhood surrounding the site will transform it into an urban park, it is assumed that the majority of the visitors will be local residents.

5.2.4. Public Access to Other Sites

Except for the room of Bahá'u'lláh, the Prison will be open to public visitation during the opening hours of the Museum of Heroism operated by the Ministry of Defense.

Special visits to the other sites are arranged when there is a particular interest or need. For example, groups of academics, professionals and government officials have on various occasions toured the House of 'Abbúd, the House of 'Abdu'lláh Pá sh á, the Mansion of Mazra'ih, and the Ri ván Gardens.

5.2.5. Bahá'í Pilgrimage Program

The nine-day Bahá'í pilgrimage program includes visits to nearly all the nominated properties. The pilgrims are divided into groups of 30 to 50, primarily on the basis of language, each of which is assigned a chartered bus and a Bahá'í guide. In order to respect the spiritual nature of these visits and reduce wear and tear on the properties, these groups are split into sub-groups of 10 to 25 for visits to certain Holy Places where space is limited. Given the number of sites to be visited and the logistical constraints, the scheduling is highly complex.

6. Environmental Threats

6.1. Air Pollution

A concentration of heavy industry in the area between Haifa and Acre, most of it dating from the early to middle decades of the twentieth century, poses serious problems of air pollution. The combination of airborne industrial pollutants with the saline humidity of the seacoast is particularly damaging. The result is an abnormally rapid rate of deterioration of the materials used in the Holy Places.

The dominant external building material on these sites is local sandstone, which is a soft and porous stone. Airborne industrial pollutants form a soot-like layer on the

surface of the stone. This not only creates a soiled appearance, but more importantly, the highly acidic material eats into the outer layers of the stone, leaving a rough surface that retains toxic moisture, accelerating the deterioration process. Over time, this process can entirely destroy ornate stone details and eventually cause solid stone blocks to crumble. Although the marble and granite used in some of the buildings are harder and smoother, they are not exempt from the corrosive effect of the pollutants.

Pollution also accelerates the process of corrosion of iron and steel elements, such as handrails, window bars and lighting fixtures. This not only causes deterioration in the metal but also may damage stonework through rust discoloration or actual physical cracking, caused by metallic elements set into the stone expanding as they corrode.

Where it is consistent with the historical appearance of the buildings, the application of lime rendering to external surfaces prevents the pollutants from reaching the stones. In cases where the stone cannot be covered with plaster, experience indicates that periodic cleaning of exposed stone surfaces by gentle spraying of filtered water can prevent the build-up of dangerous toxins and retard the physical deterioration of the stones, while also improving the appearance of the buildings. Furthermore, sealing all open joints in the building envelope helps to prevent deterioration caused by toxic moisture penetrating the interior of the walls.

Environmental sensors have been placed in some of the Holy Places to track the hourly changes in weather and other atmospheric conditions, including pollution. These instruments have been operating for over a year, and we are now starting to analyze the data, which has helped to identify problems and select appropriate treatments for each Holy Place individually.

6.2. Earthquake Risks

The risk of destructive earthquakes is considered relatively high due to the proximity of a major geological fault line. Buildings are monitored regularly for structural weaknesses and earthquake risk is considered, among other factors, in all restoration plans. Reinforcement of foundations is the most obvious way to reduce earthquake risk, but this is itself a delicate and risky undertaking in an old building. These measures have been taken in a few cases, but only when it was indispensable to remedy a clearly established and potentially dangerous weakness in the structure.

A system of sensors was installed in the Shrine of the Báb to monitor changes in cracks that had formed in the inside of the dome. The data from these instruments will help to track any future movements and analyze their implications for the stability of the structure and its ability to withstand seismic shocks.

7. Conservation Policies

Drawing inspiration from the general principles articulated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the texts quoted in Section 1 of this Management Plan and from the accumulated experience of errors made and lessons learned over the last hundred years, the Universal House of Justice has developed and continues to develop policies regarding the conservation of the

Bahá'í Holy Places for future generations. These policies can be summarized in the form of basic principles and an approach to restoration.

7.1 Basic Principles

- Regular Maintenance. Regular maintenance is the most effective and economical form of conservation in the long-term.
- Minimal Intervention. The key to preserving the authenticity of structures lies in minimizing the loss to the original building fabric. Consequently:
 - Only works indispensable for the conservation of a building should be carried out.
 - Repair should always be preferred over restoration. Worn parts should only be replaced when all repair options have been exhausted.
 - Bulging, bowing, sagging and leaning are signs of age visible in all historic buildings, which enhance the experience of the place. Unless the situation is structurally dangerous, repairs are not carried out to correct or hide these “imperfections”.
- Responsible Methods. When repairs are made, the materials should be compatible with the existing building fabric in texture, color, chemical composition, etc. Traditional techniques and materials are generally adopted in repairs, and any work carried out should be reversible. The Holy Places must not be used as “testing grounds” for unproven materials or techniques.
- Workmanship. Only qualified conservators, or those who have been specially trained in conservation methods, should carry out work on the Holy Places.
- Information. The science of conservation is evolving, and it is important to keep in touch with the latest research and the experience and findings of others with regard to techniques and materials. Although sometimes helpful, commercial literature may not be the best source of unbiased information on new products.
- Blending of New Work. Any new work should be in stylistic harmony with historical structures. It is seen as important that it blend into the atmosphere of the Holy Place and not compete for the attention of the visitor by adopting a contrasting style. In the same way, new parts or materials used in repairs should, to the extent possible, match the appearance of the originals. The distinction between authentic and new or rebuilt structures is carefully documented in our records, and the guides who accompany pilgrimage groups on their visits are in a position to clear up any confusion that might arise in the minds of the visitors.
- Integrity of Each Site. Buildings in the vicinity of a Holy Place form an integral part of its environment. Thus, any new construction or work executed on such buildings should follow a similar approach and seek to harmonize with, rather than compete with, the authentic sacred structures.

7.2 General Approach towards Restoration

- All cement-based repairs, construction or products still present in the Holy Places should be removed as soon as possible, even in the absence of any external warning signs. This is because the cement may not only be causing damage, but also hiding the deterioration of the stones, giving the illusion that the wall is sound when it is not.
- To ensure minimal damage to the original fabric, only hand-held tools are used for removal of cement plasters.
- After removal of all cement mortars and plasters, only lime mortars and plasters are applied on the walls, floors and ceilings.
- To the extent possible, the use of plastic and oil-based paints should be avoided on interior walls. Historically, only lime wash was used as an interior finish, and this is the preferred treatment.
- Each Holy Place must be studied and documented on its own merits, and it cannot be assumed that the specific solutions adopted in one case will be appropriate for others.

8. Current and Recently Completed Restoration Projects

8.1. Prison

8.1.1. Historical Background and Significance

The northwest tower of the Acre Citadel, which overlooks the courtyard of the barracks, was constructed in the late nineteenth century on top of the Crusader Hospice of the Hospitallers of St. John, which the Ottomans filled up with earth. Bahá'u'lláh and His family were confined to the upper floor of this tower from August 1868 until November 1870.⁶ The same part of the structure was used by the British mandatory authorities fifty years later to incarcerate several leading figures of the Jewish nationalist movement, including Ze'ev Jabotinsky. The British subsequently converted the entire fortress into a prison, of which the upper floor of the northwest tower became the infirmary, after extensive alterations. During the closing years of the British Mandate, a considerable number of Jewish militants were imprisoned in the Citadel. Several of them were executed in the hanging room on the lower floor of the northwest tower and others were freed in a dramatic breakout organized by the resistance movements in 1947. Subsequently, the Citadel served as a mental hospital for several decades before it was decided to transform it into a museum and memorial site under the management of the Ministry of Defense. The project involving restoration of the interior of the upper floor of the northwest tower to its condition in 1920 was based on an agreement signed between the Bahá'í World Centre and the Ministry of Defense in 1999.

⁶ The significance of the place to Bahá'ís is more fully explained in Section 3.1 of Appendix I.

The most significant changes to the building were those made by the British starting in 1921. A new concrete slab roof under-girded by steel I-beams was added in place of the original wooden ceilings and the internal diaphragm arches that supported them. Stone arches over the doors and windows were dismantled and rebuilt with concrete beams and lintels, and niches and other wall openings were closed, while new openings were created. The internal stone staircase was closed off, and an exterior steel staircase was constructed to allow direct access from the courtyard. In all but one of the rooms, the original stone flooring was ripped out and replaced with poured concrete, while in the remaining room, the stone was left in place but chipped with a chisel to improve the adhesion of the concrete layer poured over it. After the 1947 jailbreak, the alcoves were partitioned off with steel bars to create secure cells for prisoners being treated in the infirmary.

8.1.2. Documentation

Fortunately, the British authorities prepared comprehensive drawings of the building in 1921 before making their alterations. Other important sources of information were written descriptions and accounts from followers of Bahá'u'lláh who were imprisoned with Him, photographs taken by Bahá'í pilgrims from the West in the early 1900s, and an aerial reconnaissance survey made by the German Luftwaffe during World War I.

The Architectural Heritage Research Centre of the Technion prepared a three-volume report presenting and analyzing the available evidence on the physical configuration of the building in 1868 and the subsequent changes. They were assisted in this task by Architect Erol Paker, a leading expert in Ottoman period architecture, who later prepared the drawings for the restoration and helped to oversee the implementation of the work.

The Israel Antiquities Authority, which had undertaken extensive work on other parts of the Citadel and the Crusader structures underneath, carried out a conservation survey which provided important information on construction technology, structural issues and conservation techniques. The Authority's recommendations were instrumental in finalizing the design and specifications for the project.

8.1.3. Condition Prior to Commencement of Work

No major alterations had been made to the building since the end of the British Mandate, but its state of maintenance had deteriorated significantly. As the Crusader halls under the northwest tower were being excavated and restored during the 1990s, signs of movement were detected in the upper part of the building, raising concerns as to its structural stability. The Ministry of Defense and Israel Antiquities Authority then undertook extensive reinforcement measures, which included re-pointing all the walls, tying them together with reinforced concrete beams embedded in the floors, and replacement of the Mandate-era concrete roof. In coordination with the Bahá'í World Centre, the new concrete roof was designed so as to recreate the skylight which had existed during the Ottoman period and through which the son of Bahá'u'lláh had fallen to his death.

8.1.4. Approach towards Restoration

Pursuant to the agreement between the Bahá'í World Centre and the Ministry of Defense, the aim of the project was to restore the interior of the upper floor to its configuration in 1920. Consequently, the alterations made by the British were to be reversed and the pre-existing situation recreated to the extent possible. This involved the removal of concrete lintels, beams and plaster; the rebuilding of stone arches; the reopening of niches and other original wall openings and the closing of later openings; the reconstruction of wooden elements including doors and partitions; the conservation of stone details; the replacement of the concrete floors with stone paving; the replastering of all the walls with lime rendering; and the installation of a false wooden ceiling below the concrete roof to simulate the historic roofing. It had been hoped that the one extant stone floor could be repaired, but after removal of the cement covering, it became clear that the stones were in too poor a condition to be either left exposed or removed. Thus, it was decided to display the stones in one small area and to preserve the rest of the floor *in situ* with a layer of sand between it and the new stone floor on top of it.

8.1.5. Current Project Status

The restoration work at the site began in December 2002 and was completed in June 2004. It was performed by a local contractor hired by the Ministry of Defense under the supervision of the Bahá'í World Centre and the Israel Antiquities Authority.

8.2. Junayn Garden

8.2.1. Historical Background and Significance

In the nineteenth century, this building was a modest farmer's dwelling. It was purchased by some of the believers who had followed Bahá'u'lláh into exile, and He is known to have visited the place on numerous occasions, some of which are described in accounts written by early pilgrims from the East.

8.2.2. Documentation

Aside from the above-mentioned accounts, very little historical documentation has been found. The house and the plot are shown on a topographical map from the early 1930s, and a few twentieth century photographs have been located with the help of local historians. Consequently, the conservation architect employed to perform the survey and assemble the documentation for the project had to rely primarily on the building itself to provide clues as to its probable configuration at the time of Bahá'u'lláh's visits. On this basis, three stages in the life of the building were identified, as follows:

- *Stage I* – Initially, the building was an integral architectural unit built in stone and composed of four similar rooms arranged in a straight line and connected by a corridor. During His visits, Bahá'u'lláh occupied the western-most of these rooms.
- *Stage II* – During this stage, a U-shaped structure, also built of stone, was added to the original row of rooms to form a regular and formal plan of four wings surrounding a square courtyard. This would have provided additional living space, sheds for animals, storage for agricultural tools and equipment and perhaps small workshops. The building technology of this part of the structure indicates that it could have been erected at any time between the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. As of this date, it has not been possible to determine whether or not this part existed at the time of Bahá'u'lláh's visits.
- *Stage III* – This stage is characterized by the deterioration of the building. Low-standard extensions were added after 1950, while large parts of the original structure were allowed to collapse.

8.2.3. Condition Prior to Commencement of Work

The condition of the building prior to the commencement of work was essentially that of Stage III, as described above. Although the original four rooms from Stage I were still standing, cement rendering had been applied to the walls, and the original wooden ceiling had been replaced by a concrete roof. Additional rooms made of concrete, corrugated steel and other non-original materials had been attached to the original structure, including a shelter of steel and wire mesh on the roof. Inside the four rooms, there were extensive signs of cracking on the walls and floors, suggesting foundation instability and incompatibility between traditional and modern materials. More than half of the U-shaped addition identified with Stage II had collapsed, leaving the remainder in an unstable condition. Some of the collapsed rooms had been rebuilt with cement blocks and concrete, and several of the original openings had been filled with brick.

8.2.4. Approach towards Restoration

In determining the restoration approach for this project, the main issue was how much of the remaining original building could be saved. It was clear that all the additions from Stage III should be removed and that the four rooms from Stage I, which were still standing, should be preserved. Given the advanced state of deterioration of the U-shaped addition, it was decided to rebuild it using new materials and incorporating facilities required for current use, but in a style harmonious with the original design.

The technique of under-piling would be used to create a proper foundation for the original four rooms, after which all cement and concrete elements would be removed and the walls stabilized using lime mortars and plasters. The concrete roof would be removed and replaced with one using the traditional system of wood joists and planks. All original windows and doors would be preserved and used as templates for the fabrication of new windows and doors.

8.2.5. Current Project Status

After completing the architectural drawings and obtaining the necessary building permits, work on the site began with the structural stabilization of the original four rooms. The concrete roof of the northern wing has been dismantled, its stone walls have been stripped and all the other buildings on the site have been demolished. The new wooden ceiling is in place and the walls are in the process of being covered with the traditional lime plaster. It is estimated that the project will be completed in the spring of 2005.

9. Maintenance and Monitoring

The understanding that maintenance is the foremost preservation technique requires a systematic and pro-active approach to stay ahead of problems that would otherwise require expensive interventions to the detriment of the originality of the building fabrics. This systematic and pro-active approach involves a clear allocation of responsibility and a major effort in the area of monitoring and reporting.

9.1. Allocation of Responsibility

The Department of Holy Places has overall responsibility for the conservation of the sacred buildings and sites, as well as the operation of the Bahá'í pilgrimage program. With regard to the professional aspect of the conservation work, the key unit is the Building Conservator's Office of the Department of Holy Places. The responsibilities of this unit include:

- Conducting regular inspections of the Holy Places;
- Initiating work procedures and practices that ensure that repair, restoration and maintenance work is executed in a timely and appropriate manner; and

- Supervising the implementation of work to verify that it is being carried out according to approved plans and procedures and to the highest possible standards.

Two resident custodians are assigned to each Holy Place, and play a vital role in the overall maintenance of the structures. In addition to the regular cleaning and upkeep of the premises, they have an intimate knowledge of every part of the property and are often the first to notice physical changes indicative of possible problems.

Other departments actively involved with the maintenance and general upkeep of the Holy Places include:

- The Department of Works is responsible for carrying out repairs and restoration work on the Holy Places, as well as testing products and techniques to determine whether they are suitable for use. It also performs such routine activities as cleaning out gutters and drain lines, which is vital to prevent water infiltration into the buildings.
- The Haifa Gardens Department and Northern Gardens Department are charged with the maintenance of the grounds, each in its own area.
- The Facility Management Department maintains infrastructure systems, including heating/cooling, air treatment and sewage.
- The Cleaning Maintenance Department is responsible for the cleaning of the larger buildings and those that are more heavily used.
- The Department of Security is responsible for the security and protection of the properties as well as basic crowd management with regard to public visitors.
- The Office of Public Information is responsible for the guided tours program in Haifa and the organization of visits by VIP guests and “learning groups”.

9.2. Monitoring and Reporting

Since a systematic maintenance approach must be tailored to the individual needs of each property, the first step has been to carry out a thorough examination of each Holy Place separately and to document its particular strengths and weaknesses. We are proceeding toward this goal in a three-staged process, as described below.

9.2.1. Condition Assessments

The purpose of a condition assessment is to determine the physical state of a structure at a particular time. This assessment will serve as a basis for the determination of maintenance priorities in a more pro-active manner. It will also serve as a benchmark enabling us to track the rate of deterioration for specific parts of the structure and evaluate the need for specific maintenance solutions.

Condition assessments have been performed for the House of ‘Abbúd, the Shrines of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, and the Residence of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá.

9.2.2. Conservation Surveys

After completion of a condition assessment for a Holy Place, the next step is the preparation of a conservation survey. This will include a complete physical survey of the building and preparation of a comprehensive set of drawings that will be used to map out maintenance and repair works. The conservation survey will also elaborate a philosophical approach to each building and set out specific standards and principles to guide maintenance and remedial work in the future.

So far, only the Shrine of the Báb has been the subject of a conservation survey.

9.2.3. Maintenance Manuals

The final step in this three-phase process will be the preparation of maintenance manuals, which will organize the maintenance work for each structure into weekly, monthly and annual procedures. The manuals will be written for the use of the custodians of each Holy Place and also for other Departments listed in Section 9.1 above. The manuals will complete the process of systematization of the maintenance effort.

9.3. Key Indicators

Because of the cultural significance of the properties included in this nomination, the success of the conservation effort will be measured first and foremost by the disasters that are averted, the threats removed and the errors avoided, and secondarily by the qualities of authenticity which are passed on to future generations. It is difficult to devise indicators that will reflect these factors, especially given the physical diversity of the properties.

Nonetheless, it has been decided to track, starting in 2005, the indicators listed in the following table in the hope that they will be useful in identifying significant trends or developments that call for an appropriate response.

Indicators	Periodicity	Base Value	Repository
Number of structures subject to stability concerns	Annual	2	Bahá'í World Centre (BWC)
Exterior noise levels	Every 5 years	53 dB(A)	BWC
Salinity level of well water	Annual	Cl – 300 mg/l	BWC
Average supply price of water for irrigation	Annual	\$0.325/m3	BWC
Expenditures for chemical products used in gardens	Annual	\$50,000	BWC
Number of Bahá'í pilgrims & visitors	Annual	10,000	BWC
Number of public visitors	Annual	600,000	BWC

The Bahá'í World Centre will compile the necessary information and calculate the values of the above indicators on an annual basis, except for the exterior noise levels, which will be tested at each major site once in every five years.

10. Resources

10.1. Financial Resources

The maintenance and operating costs for the properties and all capital expenditures are funded exclusively by voluntary donations from the worldwide Bahá'í community. No entry fees are charged and no grants, subsidies or donations of any kind are accepted from governments, foundations or other sources outside the Bahá'í community.

The Universal House of Justice accords the maintenance of these properties high priority in the allocation of financial and staff resources. As an indication, during the twelve-month period from May 2002 to April 2003, approximately \$4.5 million (US) was spent on the maintenance of buildings and grounds, security and crowd management, restoration works and property insurance.

10.2. Human Resources

The bulk of the preservation and maintenance work on the Bahá'í Holy Places is performed by the staff of the Bahá'í World Centre, which is composed of Bahá'í volunteers from abroad and salaried local employees. To complement these resources, extensive use is made of expert consultants.

10.2.1. Staff Expertise

To the extent possible, key staff positions such as building conservators, landscape architects, horticulturalists, master craftsmen, and cleaning, maintenance and security supervisors are filled with qualified professionals. Such staff keep abreast of the latest developments in their fields by reading academic and industry publications, attending conferences and taking courses offered in Israel and abroad. The less-skilled volunteers and local workers who support this core team receive systematic on-the-job training.

The main qualifications for the positions of Building Conservator and Assistant Building Conservator are training in architecture, engineering and/or construction, and professional experience with the restoration and maintenance of historic buildings.

10.2.2. Staffing Levels

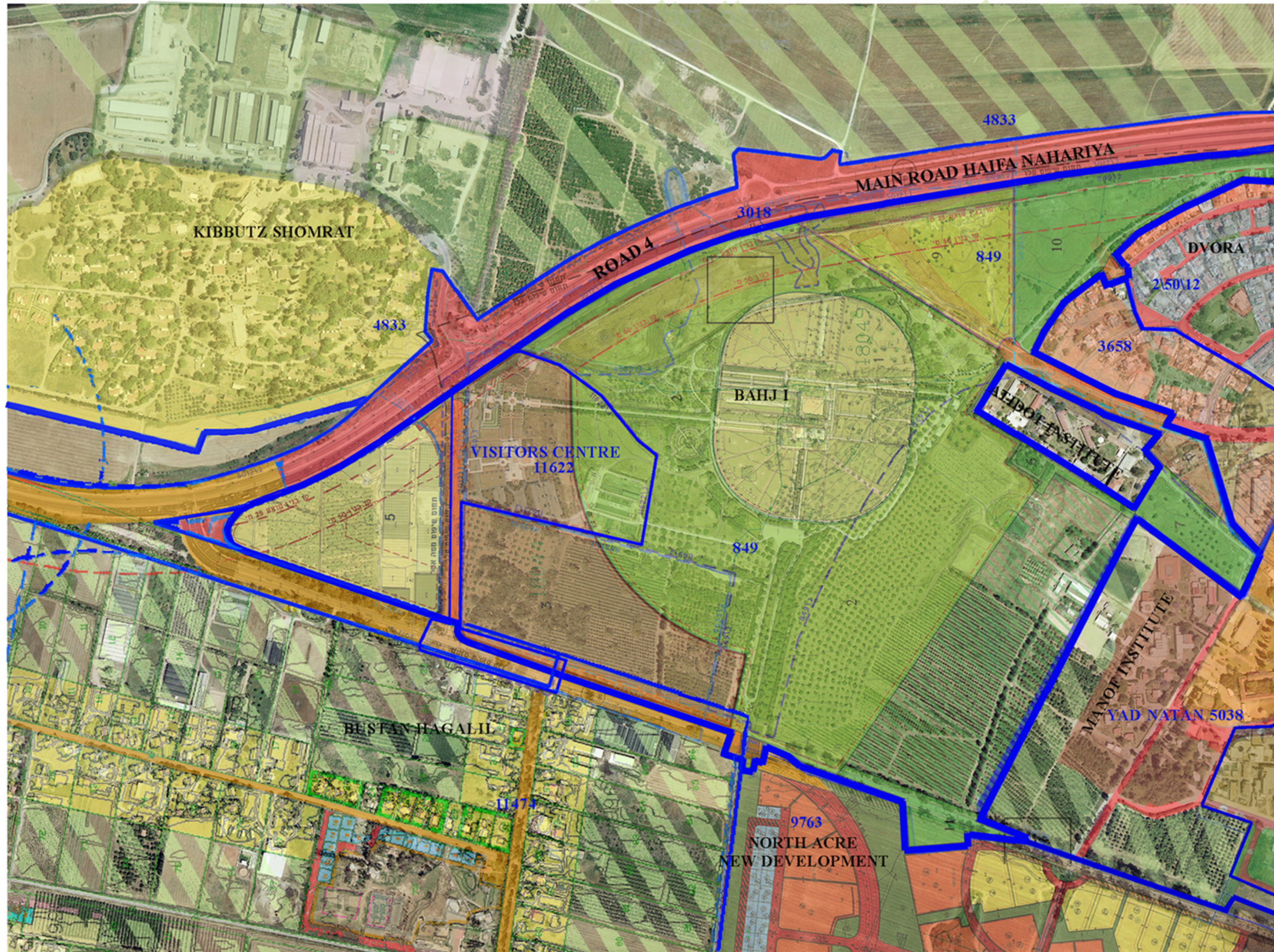
The permanent staff involved with the conservation and maintenance of the properties includes one architect trained in building conservation, three other architects and engineers, an objects conservator, a works department composed of forty tradesmen, and two gardens crews with a combined complement of 150 workers. Twenty-four resident caretakers and a patrolling force of 110 guards ensure the physical protection of the properties.

10.2.3. Consultants

The Bahá'í World Centre makes extensive use of expert consultants to deal with aspects of the buildings directly related to their specific fields of expertise. Within the past couple of years, consultants from Israel, Italy, England and the United States have been employed in the following specialties:

- Stone conservation and preservation
- Plaster conservation
- Condition assessments and conservation surveys
- Water-proofing of historic structures
- Structural and sub-surface engineering

The Bahá'í World Centre also draws heavily on the expertise available in the Israel Antiquities Authority, with whom it consults frequently regarding techniques and approaches to maintenance and restoration issues.



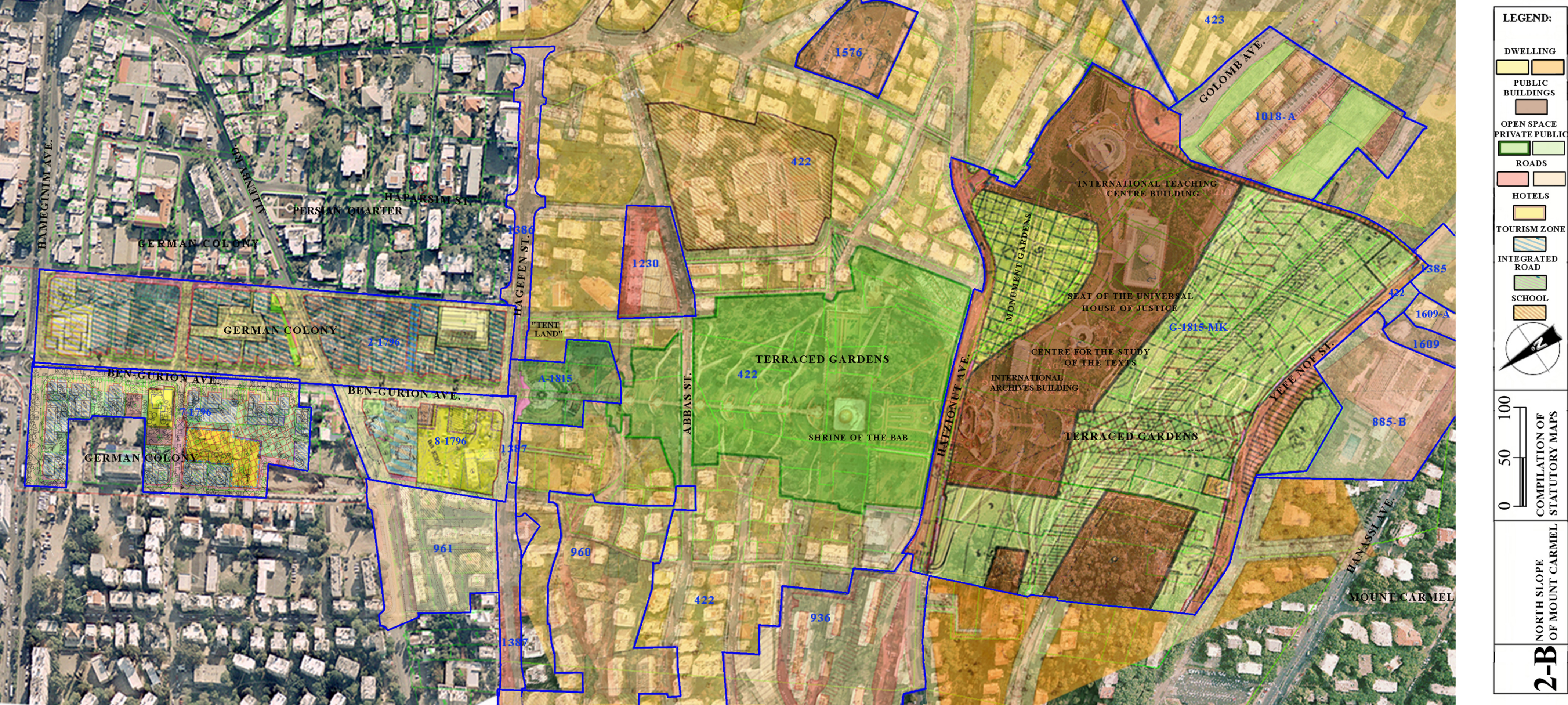
LEGEND:

- DWELLING
- AGRICULTURAL USE
- PUBLIC BUILDINGS
- PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS
- TOURISM
- PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
- PRIVATE OPEN SPACE
- CENTRE OF HOLY PLACE
- SERVICE BUILD'
- ROAD/EXIST

0 100 200

SCALE: COMPILATION OF STATUTORY MAPS

2-A BAHJI

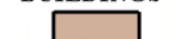


LEGEND:

DWELLING



PUBLIC BUILDINGS



OPEN SPACE

PRIVATE PUBLIC



ROADS



HOTELS



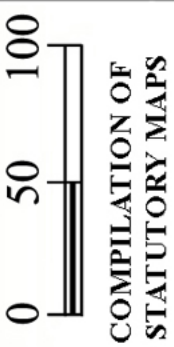
TOURISM ZONE



INTEGRATED ROAD

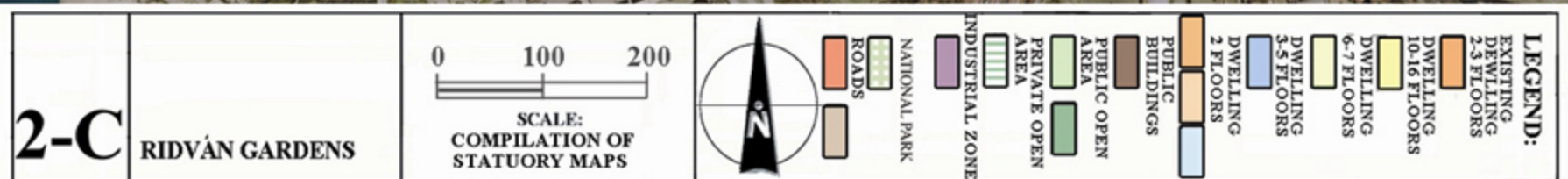


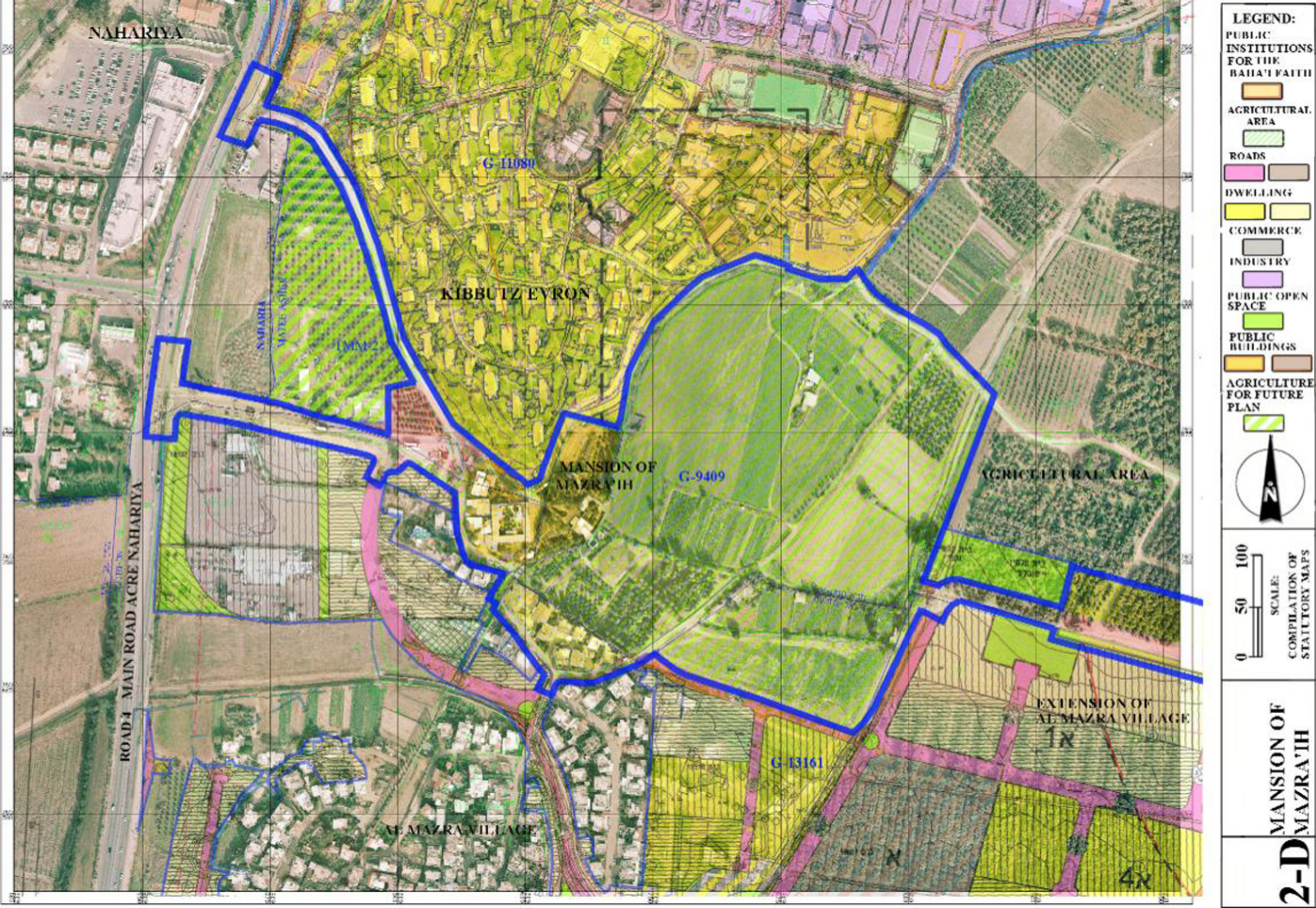
SCHOOL

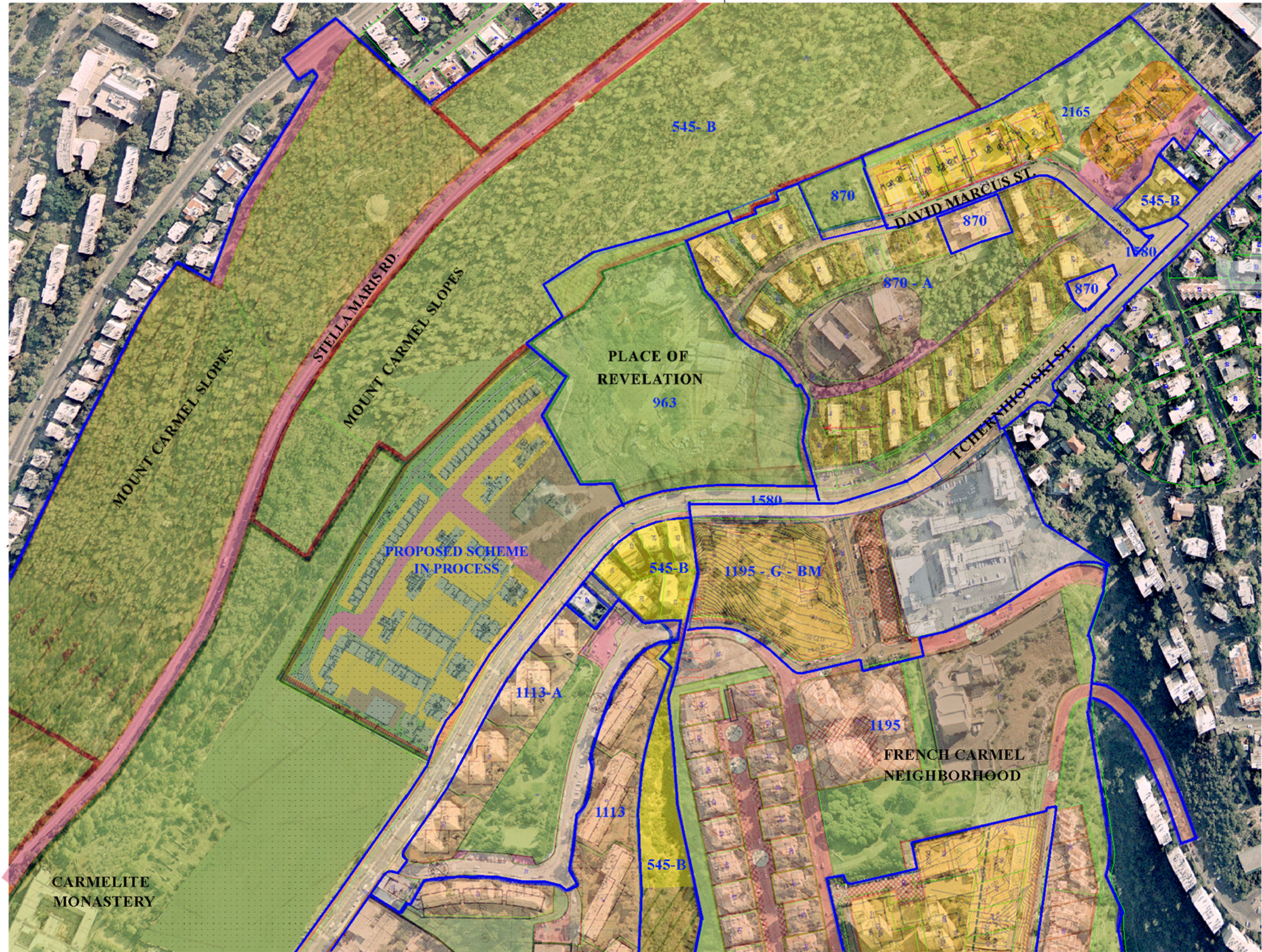


NORTH SLOPE
OF MOUNT CARMEL



2-B














LEGEND:


DWELLING
 

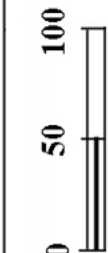
PUBLIC BUILDINGS


OPEN SPACE (PRIVATE, PUBLIC)
 


ROADS
 

COMMERCIAL AREA






SCALE:
COMPILATION OF
STATUTORY MAPS

PLACE OF REVELATION
OF THE
"TABLET OF CARMEL"

2-E



LEGEND:

DWELLING

HOTELS

TOURISM USE

MIXED USE

SPECIAL AREA

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

PUBLIC OPEN AREA

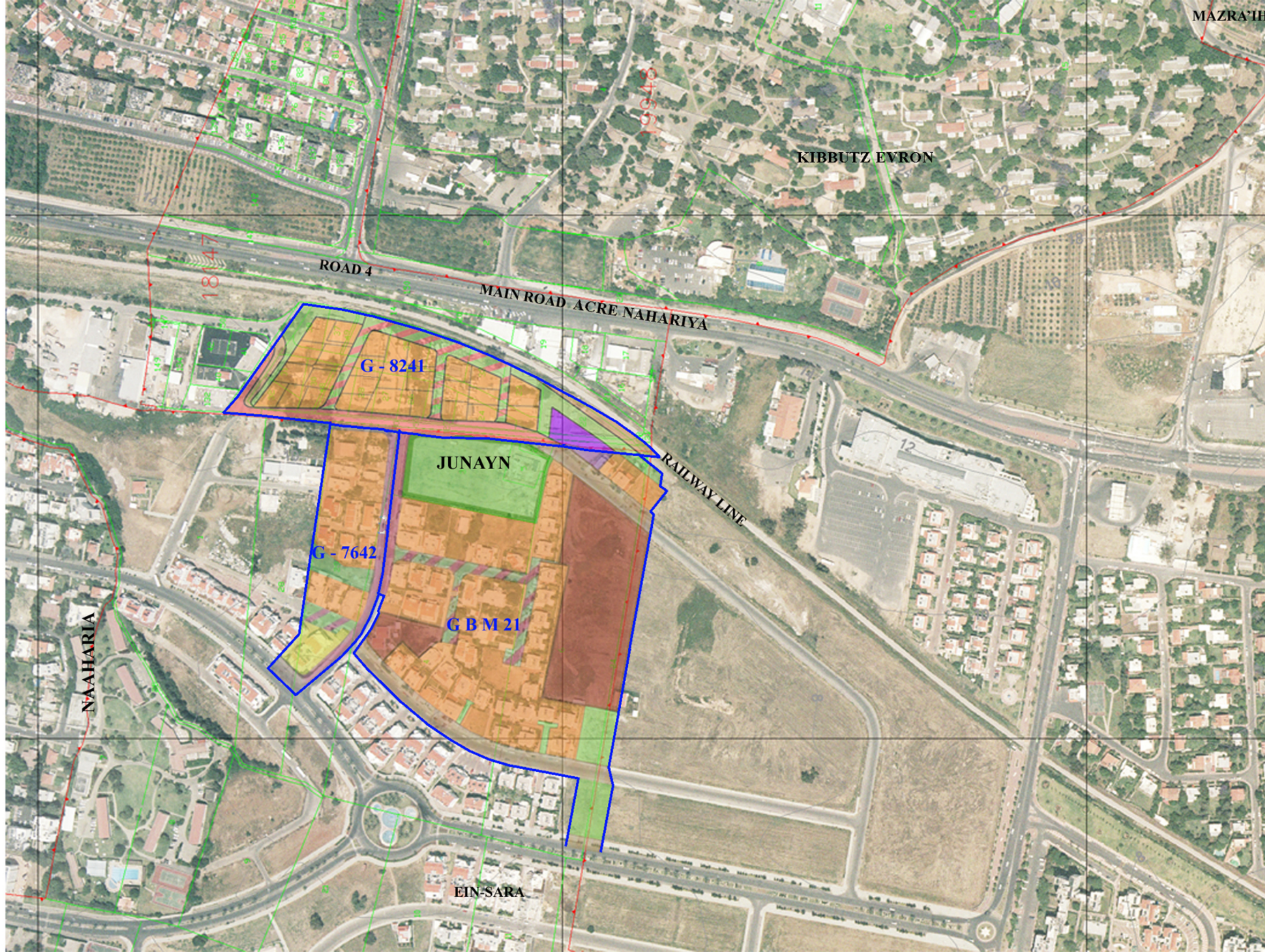
EXISTING ROAD

ROAD

SCALE:
50
0
COMPILED OF
STATUTORY MAPS


PERSIAN QUARTER

2-F



LEGEND:

- Dwelling 2 Floors
- Dwelling 4 Floors
- Public Buildings
- Commercial Area
- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space
- Roads/Passes



0 50 100

SCALE:
COMPILATION OF
STATUTORY MAPS

2-H

JUNAYN

MEMORANDUM

Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee (C-1220) (State Party – Israel)

A comprehensive review of this nomination was conducted in the light of the decision reached by the World Heritage Committee at its 31st Session (31 COM 8B.41) and the ICOMOS evaluation appearing in document WHC-07/31.COM/INF.8B.1, on pages 173-181.

The State Party is gratified by the Committee's acknowledgement of the eligibility of the nominated properties for inscription under criterion (vi), and considers that its observations with regard to the desirability of stronger protection, particularly for the buffer zones and settings of the sites, constitute an implicit recognition of the existence of *tangible values* which can and should be protected in this way, opening the way for a reevaluation of the scope of the nomination and the application of criteria (iii).

The State of Israel nominated these properties based on its recognition of intrinsic values combining harmony with an extraordinary power to manifest and communicate intangible messages of universal significance. It is hoped that the present submission will be helpful in addressing the challenges posed by the richness and complexity of this unique serial nomination.

Part I - Protection of the Buffer Zones and Wider Settings of the Sites

Based on the comments made by ICOMOS in sections 4 and 5 of its evaluation and the ensuing decision of the World Heritage Committee, our review of the protection of the properties focused on (a) the buffer zones and (b) protection under the Combined National Scheme for Building, Development and Conservation ("TAMA 35"), which is the most authoritative and effective instrument at the national level for the recognition and protection of heritage sites. After an examination of all the properties included in the nomination, it was noted that:

- The buffer zone of the site known as the "North Slope of Mount Carmel" was noticeably more "tightly drawn" than the others, and
- The Haifa sites known as the "Persian Quarter" and the "Bahá'í Cemetery" appeared to be unprotected by TAMA 35.

In order to obtain the full benefit of the protection provided by TAMA 35, it was decided to group the nominated properties into "protective units", aligned on the concept of "complexes for preservation" used in that Scheme to designate areas deemed worthy of protection. The eleven sites comprising this serial nomination now form seven protective units, each defined by a common buffer zone, as shown in the revised locator map and serial nomination table which appear as Attachments 1 and 2. This has created a more efficient tool for managing the scope of the nomination.

Accordingly, the North Slope of Mount Carmel and the Persian Quarter have been consolidated into a single protective unit called “Carmel North” comprised of an enlarged buffer zone enveloping two core areas (see map in Attachment 3). Likewise the Bahá’í Cemetery has been combined with the “Place of Revelation” to form a second unit (“Carmel West”) protected by a common buffer zone (see map in Attachment 4). The three properties in Old Acre also become a single unit (“Old Acre”) protected by a buffer zone coinciding with the core area of the inscribed World Heritage site, as shown in the original documentation (Map I). The other four sites (Bahjí; the Mansion of Mazra‘ih; Ri ván Garden and Junayn Garden), which are already recognized by TAMA 35 as complexes for preservation in their own right, each constitutes a separate protective unit.

A closer examination of the situation of the Persian Quarter and the Bahá’í Cemetery led to the conclusion that, since the former is treated for planning purposes as part of the Haifa German Colony, it is already included in a “complex for preservation” recognized by TAMA 35, while the latter is protected by the National Outline Scheme for Cemeteries (“TAMA 19”). Nonetheless, the National Planning Administration has agreed to recommend amendment of TAMA 35 to explicitly recognize, as complexes for preservation, the two protective units of Carmel North and Carmel West, as described above (see correspondence in Attachment 5).

These measures have been coordinated with the Haifa Municipality, which has promised to support a similar change in the comprehensive regional scheme for the Haifa metropolitan area (“TAMAM 6”) and to ensure that the planning team charged with the preparation of a new outline scheme for the City of Haifa gives priority attention and due weight to the protection of the buffer zones and larger settings of the Bahá’í sites, in close coordination with the site manager’s professional advisers (see letter in Attachment 6).

As previously pointed out, the new master plan for Acre recognizes all five Bahá’í sites located within the city boundaries, Bahjí and Ri ván Garden being mentioned by name and the other three sites being included in the recognition of Old Acre.

The State Party believes that the measures described above address the critical comments of ICOMOS and comply with the recommendation of the World Heritage Committee that it “put in place stronger protection, particularly for the buffer zones and settings of the sites which comprise the nominated property.”

Together with the extensive legal protection afforded to these sites as Holy Places according to the legal structure indicated in the original nomination and the vigilant and persistent advocacy of the Bahá’í World Centre in its role as site manager, we respectfully submit that the threshold of “adequate protection” is met, without negating, in any way, the desirability of further improvements over time.

Part II - Scope of the Nomination

In the first stage of its review of the scope of the nomination, the State Party sought to identify ways in which the nomination might be strengthened by a reduction in the number of sites. On the basis of the conclusions of the ICOMOS evaluation, the following points are enumerated:

- Authenticity and integrity are established
- The comparative analysis is accepted: there are no relevant comparators
- The present state of conservation is good and the conservation approaches are appropriate
- The management system provides high-quality management

Given the improved protective measures described in Part I of this memorandum, it was concluded that issues relating to the protection of the properties should likewise not be a significant factor in the determination of the scope of the nomination.

Thus, it was decided that the re-examination should focus on the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated properties in relation to the criteria under which inscription was proposed, and particularly on the question as to whether a reduction in scope would:

- strengthen the justification for inscription under criterion (iii), in such a way as to alleviate the concerns expressed as to the use of criterion (vi) standing alone,
- without adversely affecting the integrity of the property or weakening its eligibility under criterion (vi), which was acknowledged by the Committee in its decision.

To assist in answering this question, an independent expert was engaged to visit all the sites and prepare a study of the ways in which the design and physical attributes of the nominated properties reflect and testify to the values, beliefs and practices of the Bahá'í community, including the specific cultural tradition of Bahá'í pilgrimage (see Part III below). The conclusions of this study, a copy of which appears as Attachment 7, were as follows:

As an ensemble, the Bahá'í sites in Israel represent a complete narrative of the development of the religion during its most formative period. The sites grouped in seven protective units take the visitor through historical events from the beginning of the Baha'i religion as a current of Islam, through its detachment from its roots to its opening to the world and becoming an independent religion.

The physical features of these properties are living testimony to the values, traditions and customs that are the foundation of the religion, and they hold within them ideas and beliefs that are internationally significant and important. Despite the differences in age and style, these properties give visual expression to the most basic concepts of the Bahá'í philosophy, and through the architecture, the placement of the sites in their surroundings and their historical background, one can discover the main values and principles of the religion, as well as its cultural and historical roots. In addition, these sites constitute the physical setting and frame of the traditional practice of pilgrimage that has existed since the earliest days of the religion.

The results of the comprehensive review including the above-mentioned study are summarized in tabular form in Attachment 8, which also shows the regrouping of the eleven sites into seven protective units, as described in Part I above. This table presents an analysis of all the properties comprising the nomination in relation to the requirements of criteria (iii) and (vi) and shows how each and every site meets the standards of both criteria, given the importance of the “completeness of the evidence” for the justification presented under these criteria.

Outstanding Universal Value is not only the undeniable value to the Bahai community but the capability of the *universe* to share the reverence of these values. These sites of meditation evoke this spirit.

Part III - Outstanding Universal Value

To complete the foregoing account of its re-examination of this nomination, the State Party wishes to submit, for consideration by ICOMOS, some further reflections and relevant documentation with regard to the interpretation and application of criteria (iii) and (vi) in the particular circumstances of this case.

Criterion (iii) (Testimonial Values)

Prior to 1996, criterion (iii) was applied almost exclusively to archaeological sites, because of the reference to “a civilization or cultural tradition which has disappeared.” The terms “unique or at least exceptional testimony” were taken to mean the ***best physical representation*** of the lost culture in question. Since the purpose was to ***preserve memory in the form of physical traces***, the evaluation focused not on the architectural or esthetic values of the remains, but rather on their ***completeness*** and how much they communicated about the content of the bygone tradition.

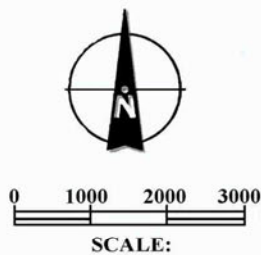
In 1996, the Committee broadened this criterion to include ***living*** cultural traditions and civilizations, without adding any new restrictions. It follows that the Outstanding Universal Value is to be found in the ***completeness*** of the physical representation and its ***power to communicate*** the contents of the particular tradition or civilization.

The conclusions of the architectural study submitted herewith (see Attachment 7) support the claim that the design and physical attributes of the nominated properties reflect and testify, in a powerful way, to the cultural values, beliefs and practices of the Bahá'í community, as well as the process by which it evolved and detached itself from its historical roots.

The original nomination was based on the understanding that the various ways a religion or belief system is given outward expression constitute a “***cultural tradition***”. Within the context of the Bahá'í faith, pilgrimage is a practice that has been observed for well over a century and has unquestionably acquired a traditional character. Attachment 9 describes the connection between Bahá'í pilgrimage and the belief system, how the practice has developed over time and how it relates to each of the sites included in the serial nomination.

Legend:

Site Map	Protective Zone	Site Name
J	Carmel North	North Slope of Mount Carmel Persian Quarter
K	Carmel West	Place of Revelation of the "Tablet of Carmel" Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery
A	Acre North	Bahjí
I	Old Acre	House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá Prison House of 'Abbúd
C	Acre South	Ridván Gardens
D	Match Asher - Mazra	Mansion of Mazra'ih
H	Nahariya	Junayn Garden



MEDITERRANEAN SEA



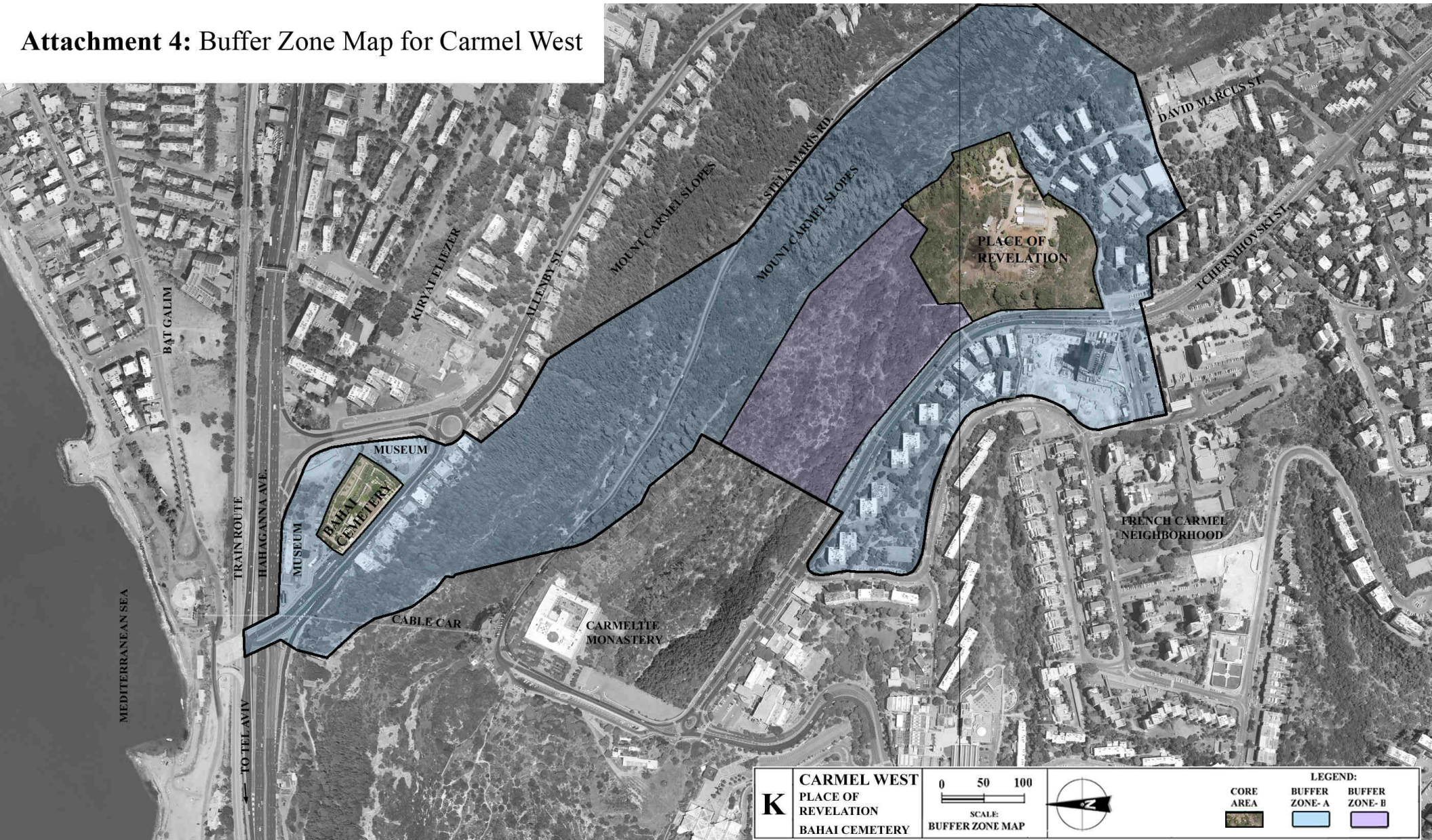
Attachment 2: Serial Nomination Table

Serial Nomination Table:						
Protective Zone	Site Name	Municipality	Coordinates (center-point)	Core Area (ha)	Buffer Zone (ha)	Site Map
Carmel North	North Slope of Mount Carmel	Haifa	Easting: 686046 Northing: 3632482	25.2	40.5	J
	Persian Quarter	Haifa	Easting: 686418 Northing: 3632865	3.0		
Carmel West	Place of Revelation of the “Tablet of Carmel”	Haifa	Easting: 684888 Northing: 3633323	3.6	29.0	K
	Haifa Bahá’í Cemetery	Haifa	Easting: 684552 Northing: 3634096	0.55		
Acre North	Bahjí	Acre	Easting: 695551 Northing: 3646979	12.9	67.9	A
Old Acre	House of ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá	Acre	Easting: 693362 Northing: 3644733	0.79	25.1	I
	Prison	Acre	Easting: 693462 Northing: 3644725	0.07		
	House of ‘Abbúd	Acre	Easting: 693298 Northing: 3644462	0.06		
Acre South	Riḍván Gardens	Acre	Easting: 695440 Northing: 3643916	10.9	62.1	C
Mateh Asher - Mazra	Mansion of Mazra‘ih	Mateh Asher and Mazra	Easting: 696194 Northing: 3651834	4.7	25.3	D
Nahariya	Junayn Garden	Nahariya	Easting: 695758 Northing: 3652615	0.81	4.8	H

Attachment 3: Buffer Zone Map Carmel North



Attachment 4: Buffer Zone Map for Carmel West



TRANSLATION FROM HEBREW

**[LETTERHEAD OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL,
MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR, PLANNING ADMINISTRATION]**

To: Mr. Albert Lincoln
Secretary-General
Bahá'í World Centre

Date: 1 November 2007

Ref: TC 2007-19933

From: Architect Shamaí Asif
Director, Planning Administration
Ministry of Interior

Subject: TAMA 35 – Bahá'í Holy Places
Ref: your letter dated 22 October 2007

The provisions of TAMA35 include a mechanism for monitoring and updating (as detailed in section 18), once every 4 years from the day of its approval, which makes it possible to review and update the scheme.

This request regarding the updating of Table 2 will be used by us when assembling the necessary amendments and submitting them to the National Planning and Building Board, as our recommendation for the updating of the scheme documents.

Sincerely,

Architect Shamaí Asif
Planning Administration Director

Cc: Tamar Kfir – Manager of the Division for Combined Planning
Mr. Igal Shahaṛ – Haifa District Commissioner
Architect Adam Colman – Haifa District Planner
Yael Solomon – Acting Manager, Long Term Planning Department

BAHÁ'Í
INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY

Office of the Secretary General

Bahá'í World Centre, P.O. Box 155, 31001 Haifa, Israel
Telephone: 972 (4) 835 8194 Fax: 972 (4) 831 3357

22 OCTOBER 2007

OUR REF:
760.001

TRANSMITTED BY FAX: 02 567 0617

Architect Shamai Assif
Director, National Planning Administration
Ministry of the Interior
2 Kaplan Street
Jerusalem 91061

TAMA 35 – TREATMENT OF THE BAHÁ'Í HOLY PLACES

Dear Mr. Assif,

I would like to thank you warmly for the meeting held in your office on 16 October and for the positive attitude you manifested concerning the issues we raised.

As agreed, we are submitting herewith our formal request for the amendment and/or clarification of TAMA 35 with regard to its treatment of the Bahá'í Holy Places included in the nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List submitted by the State of Israel and registered by UNESCO under the number C-1220.

Our request is to amend the paragraph of List 2 dealing with Urban Complexes for Preservation in the Haifa District to read as follows:

מחוז חיפה – בינימינה (המושבה ההיסטורית), זכרון יעקב (המושבה ההיסטורית ומבנים ברחובות הסמוכים), חדרה (מרכז המושבה ההיסטורית), חיפה (מתחם בהאי – המושבה הגרמנית והרובע הפרסי, אדמות ההיכל ובית הקברות הבהאים).

We attach a copy of the locator map which was part of the nomination document submitted to UNESCO, and which shows the nine sites that comprise the nominated property. Seven of the nine sites are already identified in TAMA 35 as Complexes for Preservation, and the purpose of the above proposal is to recognize the connection between the two remaining sites (marked F and G on the locator map) and the adjacent sites B and E so that it is clear that they are included in the complexes which TAMA 35 has already designated for preservation.

This matter is of real importance and urgency because, in its evaluation of the nominated property, ICOMOS points to the incomplete coverage by TAMA 35 and “recommends that the State party urgently address the lack of adequate protection...” On this basis, the World Heritage Committee decided to refer the nomination “back to the State Party in order to allow it to ... put in place stronger protection....”

Attachment 5: Correspondence with Planning Administration

In order to pursue the inscription of the Bahá'í Holy Places at the next session of the World Heritage Committee, Israel must submit documentation by mid-November showing that action is being undertaken along the lines indicated above. Such documentation could take the form of a letter from the National Planning Administration either clarifying that the Persian Quarter and the Bahá'í Cemetery are included in the existing Complexes for Preservation or undertaking to ensure that the next update of TAMA 35 will include an amendment to List 2 along the lines proposed above.

Since you have indicated your intention to seek their views, we are sending copies of this submission to the Haifa District Planning Commission and the Israel Committee for World Heritage.

Yours sincerely,



Albert Lincoln
Secretary-General

Hebrew Translation

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Igal Shahar, Chair, Haifa District Planning Commission
Architect Adam Kolman, Chief Planner for the Haifa District
Professor Michael Turner, Chair, Israel Committee for World Heritage
Architect Danny Raz, Raz Architects

Translation of Hebrew excerpt above:

Haifa District – Binyamina (the historic colony), Zichron Yaakov (the historic colony and buildings in the adjacent streets), Hadera (center of the historic colony), **Haifa** (Bahá'í complex, the German colony and the Persian quarter; and the Bahá'í temple land and cemetery).

Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee

ARCHITECTURAL STUDY

By Yael Hammerman

Licensed Architect

Master of Arts in Urban and Regional Planning



Introduction

The Bay of Haifa, defined by Mount Carmel in the south and the Old City of Acre in the north, is one of the most prominent geographical features of the eastern Mediterranean coastline. Along the shores of this bay are clustered the sites of the Bahá'í religion that have been nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List. The sites are related to one another in a functional and emotional manner, as well as geographically, and they constitute a singular texture in which the physical and the historical memory of the Bahá'í religion is preserved.

A description of the principal features of each site focusing on its architectural characteristics will be followed by a discussion of the cultural values which are common to all of them. These include an original architectural language that weaves several different styles into a harmonious fabric, which is both esthetically striking and charged with meaning, communicating a great deal about the Bahá'í community and its beliefs and practices, as well as its development during its most formative period. In the second part of the study, attention will be given to certain specific Bahá'í values, beliefs and cultural traditions, such as pilgrimage, and the ways they are reflected in the architectural design and physical attributes of the properties that have been described in the first part.

The Gardens

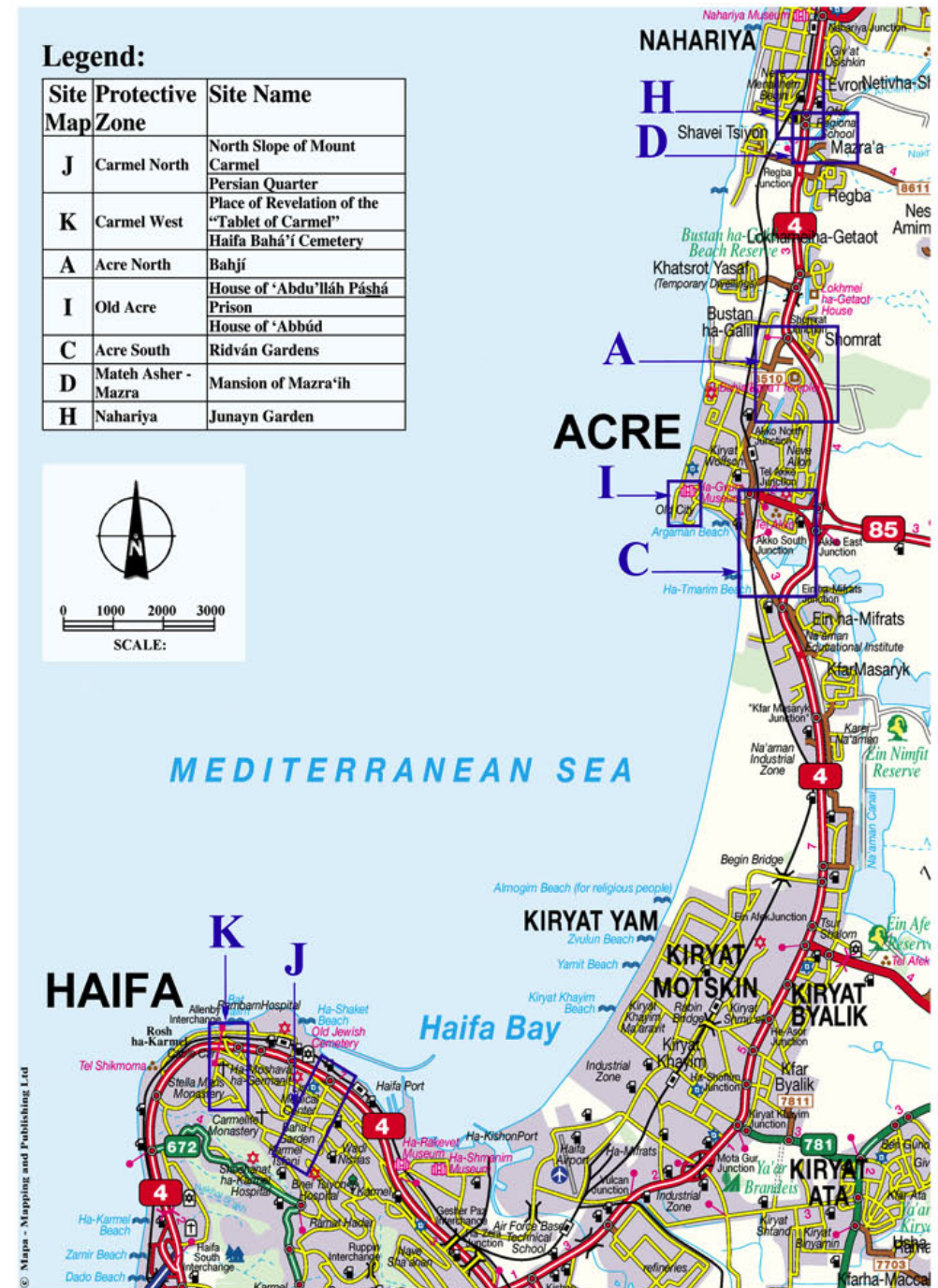
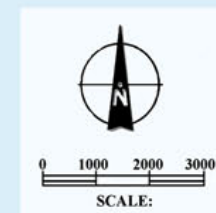
In the architectural analysis of these sites, great importance is given to the gardens, which contribute no less than the structures to the unique character of the properties. Indeed, in these sites, the gardens have several essential functions:

a. The gardens serve as a medium to insulate the buildings and certain outdoor spaces of particular importance from the noise and frenetic activity of the surroundings, which are mainly urban. The same insulating effect could be achieved by a structure, such as a high wall, but gardening is softer and less divisive. The quiet atmosphere of the protected inner spaces creates a sense of calm serenity which is conducive to contemplation, prayer and spiritual gatherings, without any feeling of being confined or cloistered.

b. The gardens also constitute the way to approach places which are considered sacred. As such, they contribute to the spiritual experience, transforming a simple path into a process that enables the pilgrim to prepare him or herself to enter the holy place. In most cases, the gardens allow the visitor to choose among different routes, and some offer the option of circling around the sacred spot without necessarily entering it, an act which has its own spiritual significance.

Legend:

Site Map	Protective Zone	Site Name
J	Carmel North	North Slope of Mount Carmel
		Persian Quarter
K	Carmel West	Place of Revelation of the "Tablet of Carmel"
		Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery
A	Acre North	Bahjí
I	Old Acre	House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá
		Prison
		House of 'Abbúd
C	Acre South	Ridván Gardens
D	Match Asher - Mazra	Mansion of Mazra'ih
H	Nahariya	Junayn Garden



c. Finally, the gardens are the fabric that connects the different buildings located in them. While the structures are built in different styles based on the period of construction and their usage, the gardens have a unique and clear planning language, both within each garden and among the different gardens.

The gardens designed by the Bahá'ís have common characteristics: interplay of light and shade; usage of water elements and geometrical shapes like circles and eight-pointed stars that repeat themselves; symmetrical designs yielding to asymmetrical elements out of respect for nature or history; and juxtaposition of very intensive areas and extensive areas, often with a gradual merging that softens boundary lines within the garden and at the perimeter of the site, creating a transition area or buffer which promotes harmony between the site and its surroundings.

Many of these common elements can be traced to the Persian influences which are visible in all the gardens.

The origin of Persian gardens may date back as far as 4000 BCE; the presence of water grew increasingly important. This trend manifested itself in garden design with greater emphasis placed on fountains and ponds in gardens.

Sunlight and its effects were an important factor of structural design in Persian gardens. Textures and shapes were specifically chosen by architects to harness the light.

Shade is also very important in the garden, without which it could not be a usable area. Trees and trellises are used to create resting areas for gathering and seclusion that are especially needed in the Persian summer heat.

(Khonsari et al, 1998)

The Persian style often attempts to integrate that which is "indoors" with the "outdoors". This is often achieved through the connection of a surrounding garden, with an inner courtyard. (Newton, 1979)

The Buildings

It is useful to distinguish two kinds of buildings, (i) those that were purchased by the Bahá'ís and adapted to a greater or lesser extent to their needs, and (ii) those that were designed and built by the Bahá'ís themselves. The buildings purchased by the Bahá'ís are mostly Ottoman and Arab and serve primarily the need to preserve the historical memory of the development of the religion and its founders, although they are not without architectural value.

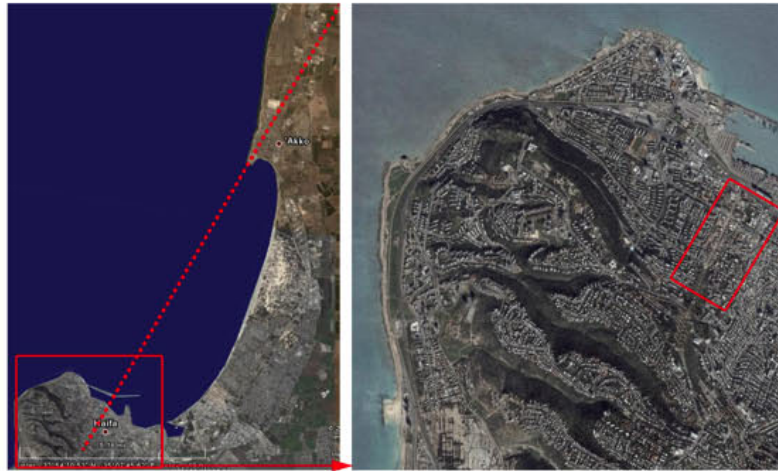
Ottoman architecture has been described as a synthesis of the architectural traditions of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

The Ottomans achieved the highest level architecture in their lands hence or since. They mastered the technique of building vast inner spaces confined by seemingly weightless yet massive domes, and achieving perfect harmony between inner and outer spaces, as well as light and shadow. (Goodwin, 2003)

Structures that were built by the Bahá'ís are also divided into two main periods of time. Those erected at the beginning of the 20th century – the buildings of the Persian neighborhood in Haifa and the first stage of the shrine of the Báb – were built in a local oriental architecture. The buildings constructed after 1950, including the superstructure of the Shrine of the Báb, are mostly neo-classic in style, although they incorporate oriental elements. This style was chosen due to the consensus that it represents a form of "perfect beauty" that preserves its values even when architectural fashions change.

Many architectural principles repeat themselves in the Ottoman buildings purchased over the years, in the local/oriental structures erected by the Bahá'ís in the beginning of the 20th century and in the neo-classical buildings that were built by the Bahá'ís from the 1950's until today. The connections established between outside and inside through interior courtyards, balconies and wide windows, which bring greenery and sunlight into the structures, lead to a feeling of disconnection from the immediate environment, on the one hand, and to a merging with the global space, on the other. The aspiration toward universality finds expression in the blending of classical and oriental styles and the assimilation of elements from other cultures. The human scale of the buildings is striking. While religious structures are often designed and constructed in a way that makes the believers feel small and insignificant in the presence of the overwhelming grandeur of the divine, the Bahá'í structures provide a sense of comfort, simplicity and human warmth.

North Slope of Mount Carmel (Map J)



Mount Carmel has historical and geographic significance for the Bahá'í religion as well as other religions. This is reflected in the design of the terraces and the different architectural elements related to them. The basic site layout is founded on the vision of 'Abdu'l-Bahá from 1910 and was partially implemented by Shoghi Effendi in the 1950s. Many architectural features of this site are directly related to the basic principles on which the Bahá'í religion is based, to the historical story of the religion's development and to the traditional practice of Bahá'í pilgrimage, which has been an important factor in its formative period and continues to this day.

In the aerial photograph, it is possible to see the direct geographical and visual connection between this site and the Old City of Acre across the bay. This is of primary importance because Acre was the residence of Bahá'u'lláh during the last 24 year of his lifetime and is now the location of his shrine. Thus, this axis links the twin holy cities of Haifa and Acre and the shrines of the twin prophets, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

Coordinate: E: 686046 N:36324682
 Area (ha): 25.2
 Statutory protection: Protected by the National outline plan (tama 35)

Architectural Elements	Year of Erection	Historically	Today	Physical Condition	Planner / Architect
1. Shrine of the Bab	Phase 1 -1909 Phase 2 - 1953	Burial of the Bab (1909)	Shrine of the Bab	Excellent	William Sutherland Maxwell
2. Terraced Gardens	Phase 1 -1930 Phase 2 - 2001	The concept of Abdu'l-Baha (1910)	Framing & approach to the Shrine of Bab	Excellent	Fariborz Sahba
3. Arc Path & Monument Gardens	1932 - 1939	Burial of Baha'u'llah's Family		Excellent	Shoghi Effendi
4. International Archives Building	1957	Houses the original manuscripts & sacred relics		Excellent	Concept by Shoghi Effendi
5. Seat of the Universal House of Justice	1983	Office of the elected international governing body instituted by Baha'u'llah in his writings		Excellent	Husayn Amanat
6. Centre for the Study of The Texts	1999	Houses the center of scholarly research and library		Excellent	Husayn Amanat
7. International Teaching Centre Building	2000	Coordinates a worldwide network of counsellors to the elected institutions		Excellent	Husayn Amanat
8. Haifa Pilgrim House	1909	A lodge for pilgrims from the Orient	Preparation place before visiting the shrine of the Bab	Very Good	Unknown
9. Tent Land		Where Baha'u'llah pitched his tent in 1890	A garden	Good	

In the following analysis it will be explained how each element was planned separately while internalizing the principles of the religion and referring to the historical and geographic location of the site. The analysis focuses on design elements including the treatment of the seen and the unseen, the exposure to "landscape windows", the approach to the shrine, which enhances the anticipation of the pilgrims and their spiritual feelings while deepening the sense of connection to the historical narrative of the pilgrimage.



Shrine of the Báb

The shrine was built on the location chosen by Bahá'u'lláh as the resting place for the remains of his precursor, the Báb. It stands on the central terrace, with nine terraces above and nine below. The garden surrounding it is the oldest, and has a character of its own, with mature trees that shade and hide the shrine. The flora in the garden, the wind blowing through the leaves and the shading create a quietness insulated from the busy street nearby, and a sense of calm. Openings in the vegetation reveal the Haifa Bay, the sea and Old Acre in the distance. Here, as well, the historical story connects with the spiritual experience.

The original tomb of the Báb was one-storey stone structure built in the beginning of the previous century. A colonnade surrounding the structure was added in 1953. A new slab resting on the columns and the walls of the original structure forms the base for an octagonal element with windows, surmounted by a drum with a round dome covered in gilded ceramic tiles.

With its square, octagonal and circular elements, all four facades of the structure are identical. It is built in the neo-classic style, with its universally admired proportions, symbolizing a standard of beauty transcending particular styles, periods or cultures.



The choice of this style mirrors the accent on aesthetics and completeness that is an integral part of the Bahá'í religion.

The golden dome that shines in the sunlight and the lighting that illumines the shrine at night reflect the principle of optimism and the meaning of light in the religion. While in prison, the Báb was refused even a candle so that he would not be able to write his writings. The element of light repeats itself in almost all the structures.

The portico that was created between the original building and the pillars that support the new structure surrounds the shrine on all four sides and provides a covered walkway for the pilgrims who wish to circumambulate the shrine. This practice of circumambulation, which is also found in other religions like Islam and Buddhism, is an act of meditation, relaxation, personal connection and alignment toward the holy place. The circling here also symbolizes the completeness because the circle is the most complete shape in nature and it is equal on all sides.



Terraced Gardens, Arc Path & Monument Gardens, Tent Land



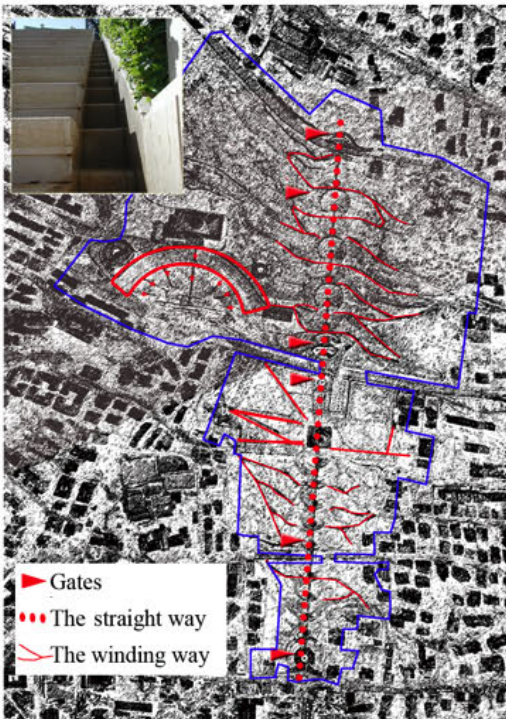
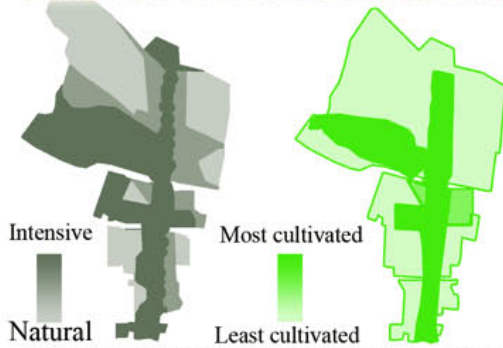
The terraced gardens extend almost a kilometer up the northern slope of Mount Carmel with a vertical rise of 225 meters. In order to create continuity over the full length of the gardens, one of Haifa's main roads was lowered and covered with a bridge which is so wide that the presence of the road underneath is hardly noticeable from the garden above. The 19 terraces that comprise the garden symbolize the establishment of the religion by the Báb and his 18 apostles. The terraces above the shrine are concave in shape, while those below are convex. If these curved lines were connected, they would form multiple circles surrounding the shrine of the Báb, like waves spreading from a pebble dropped in a calm pool of water.

The gardens on the northern slope of the Carmel create the connection between the different architectural elements in the garden and are the "way to reach" the shrine, as well as the administrative buildings. The approach to the shrine of the Báb, like the way to the shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, has great meaning because it transforms the path into a process that intensifies the spiritual



feeling and enables the pilgrims to prepare for the religious experience when they reach the shrine. The usage of the mountain's steep topography, with the shrine situated in its center, creates an experience similar in its principles to the way that leads to the Hellenistic shrines, such as the Parthenon in Athens.

The experience in the terrace garden begins already in the distance. While the golden dome of the shrine is seen from almost everywhere in Haifa and the sea, it hides and reveals itself from different directions and different angles. The pilgrim is exposed to the dome from afar, but it is not within reach and the way is still hidden from him. Only when standing at the bottom of the gardens or at the top of them is the shrine clearly revealed, together with the way to reach it.



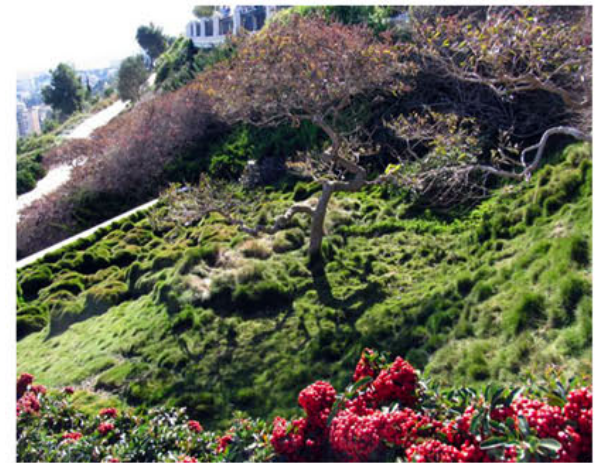
At this point, the pilgrim or other visitor is presented with two options:

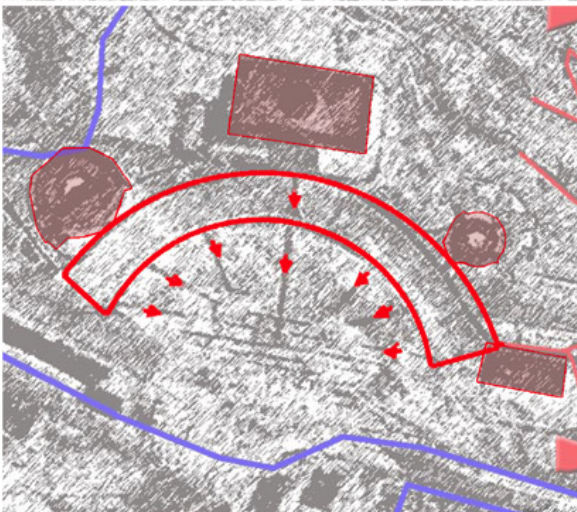
- The direct and apparently simple way, which involves climbing or descending several hundred steps, or
- The more gradual winding way, which prolongs the experience and connects the terraces by a serpentine path along which the views of the shrine keep changing

Although the direct path looks short, the climb is long and difficult. Even when going downhill, the walking is not continuous and there are steep slopes that need to be by-passed in order to return to the direct route. Even on the direct path, one occasionally loses sight of the shrine.

In contrast, choosing the indirect way enables relaxation and meditation. The way passes through intensively manicured areas of the garden, similar in style to French gardens, through transition areas that mimic nature with its variety of plants and colors in an organized disorder, like the English gardens, and even through areas of natural Mediterranean grove, which reaches the garden and is integrated with it. This respect for and integration with nature is an important principle in the Bahá'í religion, and it appears in all the gardens.

Both ways are punctuated with gates that need to be passed in order to reach the holy place. The “wayfarer” is accompanied by running water which masks the urban noise from the surroundings while reinforcing the feeling of calmness and connection to nature. Both routes pass through terraces with water fountains that provide places to rest and relax while listening to the sound of the running water and taking in the panoramic views of the City of Haifa, the Mediterranean Sea and, in the distance, Acre and the hills of the Galilee. The terraces also create the same hiding and revealing of the shrine as the topographic differences and the trees do along the twisted path. These glimpses of the shrine along the way intensify the feelings of anticipation connected with reaching the end of the journey. As a result of the garden's design, any path the pilgrim chooses is a significant part of the spiritual experience.





The Structures on the Arc

The administrative buildings are located along an arc laid out on the slope of the mountain to the east of the terraces, which are connected by two foot paths to the western end of the arc.

Although the buildings are arranged in the arc shape and each structure has its own symmetry, they appear as if they were scattered according to topography and other landscape elements. The special design is reminiscent of the Parthenon and other structures on the Acropolis, which were planned to be seen in a different perspective from each direction during the climb up the mountain and not from the direct frontal position that would reveal their perfect symmetry. In the same way, the indirect views of these structures create a sense of anticipation for the visitors.

The structures around the Arc are characterized by precise clean lines, well-planned proportions and almost perfect symmetry. As with the other structures built by the Bahá'ís since 1950, the choice of the neo-classical style reflects Bahá'í beliefs concerning the connection between aesthetics and the human spirit, as well as the importance of striving for excellence in this world.

The interior of the structures is filled with sunlight and large windows face the view of Acre and the bay, as well as the golden dome of shrine of the Báb. The admission of light through roof openings is a recurring element in different Bahá'í structures. Even the floors that are excavated under ground receive sunlight through light shafts or interior courtyards.

The most recent buildings achieve a nearly seamless degree of integration with nature and their surroundings, whether experienced from within or from outside. Both are wrapped in flora on the exterior and feature courtyards and gardens at different levels that seem to be an integral part of the interior spaces.



Place of Revelation of “Tablet of Carmel” (K), Baha’i Cemetery (K) & Persian Quarter (J)



Coordinate 1: E: 684888 N:3633323 C 2: E: 684552 N:3634096 C 3: E: 686418 N:3633323

Area (ha)1: 3.6 Area 2: 0.55 Area 3: 3.0

1. Statutory protection 1: the National outline plan (tama 35): Urban Complex for Preservation
2. Close to Place of Revelation - will be considered as part of complex
3. Adjacent to North Slope and German Colony - will be considered as part of complex

Place of Revelation of the Tablet of Carmel

The site is situated on the western Carmel ridge, roughly one kilometer southeast of Stella Maris, the point where the Carmel meets the sea. The site overlooks the sea to the west and the north, offering a panoramic view encompassing the entire Haifa Bay area, all the way to Acre and even further north to Rosh Hanikra and Mount Hermon.



An obelisk was erected on the site to mark the location where Bahá'u'lláh composed the “Tablet of Carmel”, one of the most significant writings in the Bahá'í Faith. The planning of the garden and obelisk were supervised by Shoghi Effendi. The obelisk is surrounded on all four sides by a garden composed of simple geometrical shapes, which are meticulously maintained. Local vegetation, such as olive and cypress trees, is integrated in the garden.

Architectural Elements	Year of Erection	Historically	Today	Physical Condition	Designer / Architect
1. Obelisk & Gardens	1971	Bahá'u'lláh wrote the charter of the Baha'i world administration	Pilgrimage Site & garden	Very Good	Shoghi Effendi
2. Cemetery	1911	Cemetery	Cemetery	Very Good	
3. Abdu'l-Baha's Residence	1908	Official residence of the head of the community	Pilgrimage Site & Museum	Good	Abdu'l-Baha
4. Old western Pilgrim House	1910	Accommodation for pilgrims from the west	Pilgrimage Site & Museum	Very Good	Unknown
5. 10 Haparsim Street	1929	Seat of the International Baha'i Council & Universal House of Justice	International Community Secretariat	Very Good	Mason Remey
6. 11 Haparsim Street	~1908	Accommodation for pilgrims from the Orient	Private Residence	Very Good	Unknown
7. Resting Place of Ruhyyih Khanum	2001	Garden	Garden & Resting place	Excellent	Husayn Amanat

Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery

The cemetery is located at the western foot of Mount Carmel. Bahá'í followers from Haifa and Acre have been buried in this cemetery since 1911. After a decision of a court in Egypt declared that the Bahá'í Faith was an independent religion, completely detached from Islam, Shoghi Effendi decided that the tombs should henceforth face the shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahjí, breaking with the local custom of burying the dead facing Mecca.





Bahá'u'lláh's tent in Haifa



The cemetery is bisected by a central avenue of palm trees and divided into sections by terraces. Most of the plantings within these clearly defined sections appear random and natural and include mature trees of a variety of species creating an interplay of light and shadow.

Persian Quarter

The Persian Quarter in Haifa is situated on the eastern edge of the German Colony. It consists of a small park and five buildings that were designed and built by the Bahá'ís in the early decades of the 20th century.

'Abdu'l-Bahá designed his own residence, which features an imposing entrance, a spacious central hall, high ceilings and basements. 10 Haparsim Street was designed as a hostel for pilgrims by an American architect under 'Abdu'l-Bahá's supervision. It includes a large central hall in the shape of a cross, two round rooms with arched ceilings at either end of the central hall, and an exterior balcony. The other structures are ordinary residential buildings that housed members of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's family and visiting pilgrims from both east and west.

All these buildings are stone structures in the local oriental style, which are recognizable as Bahá'í properties primarily because of the characteristic groomed gardens which surround them. The plantings include fruit trees, ornamental plants and extensive lawns and gravel paths leading to the entrances to the structures. The gardens are enclosed with high walls, fences or hedges, but they are not fully hidden from the passer-by, who can always catch a glimpse though a gap in the vegetation or an open grillwork gate. The garden design is typically Persian, with symmetrical shapes and straight lines, but without ornaments or sculptures as seen in the larger gardens. There are no sitting corners in these gardens, which serve essentially as decoration of the facade of the house.

The quarter as a whole has maintained its historic character and constitutes an island of tranquility and beauty in a noisy urban environment.



Bahji (A)



Coordinate: E: 695551 N:3646979
Area (ha): 12.9
Statutory protection: Protected by the National outline plan (tama 35)

Architectural Elements	Year of Erection	Historical Usage	Usage Today	Physical Condition	Desinger / Architect
1. Mansion of Baha'u'llah	Phase 1- 1821, Phase 2 -1868	Baha'u'llah's last home	Museum	Excellent	Unknown
2. Shrine of Baha'u'llah	19th Century		Baha'u'llah's final resting place	Excellent	Unknown
3. Gardens	1950-1980	Open fields	Gardens	Excellent	Several

The Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh

The shrine and mansion of Bahá'u'lláh are in the category of structures purchased by the Bahá'ís. Decades of Bahá'í use and maintenance, combined with the common architectural language expressed in the surrounding landscape development, have blended the different sites and structures into a harmonious whole.

The mansion of Bahá'u'lláh is an Ottoman structure from the beginning of the 19th century. Its stone walls are plastered and painted white, and the roof is covered with red tiles. The ground floor, built in 1821, is surrounded by pillars and is used for operational needs and storage. The upper floor, which was added in 1868, is built around a large central hall covered with a clerestory that brings sunlight into the structure. This hall is surrounded by residential rooms of different sizes that look out on a covered balcony.

In the center of the southern façade, the balcony widens inward to create an outdoors living space protected from the wind and bright sun by moveable panels of colored glass. At the centre of this area is an octagonal fountain (howz) made of marble. The balcony looks out over the olive grove with a view all the way to Old Acre and the Mediterranean Sea.

The house is well preserved and maintained, and today it serves as a museum. Bahá'u'lláh's room, in the southeast corner of the upper floor, has been furnished as it was during his life time. Around the structure is a garden surrounded by a high wall. The wall has two gates, one faces south toward the olive grove, and the other faces west toward the tomb of Bahá'u'lláh.



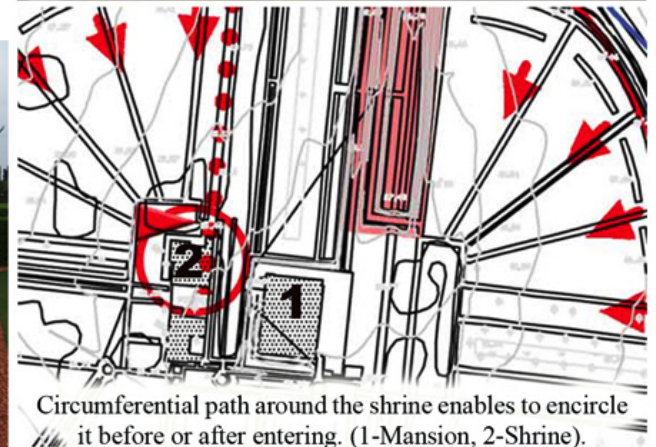
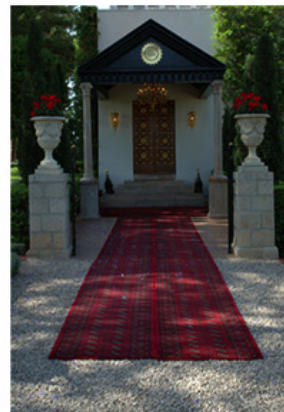


The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh

Architecturally, the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh is a typical Ottoman house – a one-storey structure built around an interior courtyard (sahn) covered by a clearstory, onto which all the rooms of the house open. The courtyard is characteristic of the Persian as well as Ottoman architecture. The original usage of the sahn was a private garden for a family during the day and a living room during the summer evenings.

Bahá'u'lláh's tomb is located in the room that forms the northwest corner of the building. The cultivated area of the courtyard is planted with small trees and ferns and surrounded by a paved area covered with fine oriental carpets. The carpeted area serves as a place for silent prayer and meditation for the pilgrims and other believers, many of whom show their respect by kneeling at the open door of the room where Bahá'u'lláh is buried and laying their heads on the threshold.

Here, as well, elements that are important to the Bahá'í religion are seen: natural light from the roof, the garden design, and the attention to details. The feeling that is given by the overall design of the structure and its garden elements is detachment and protection from the outside world, on the one hand, and openness and integration with the natural world that surrounds and permeates the building through the roof and the courtyard, on the other.



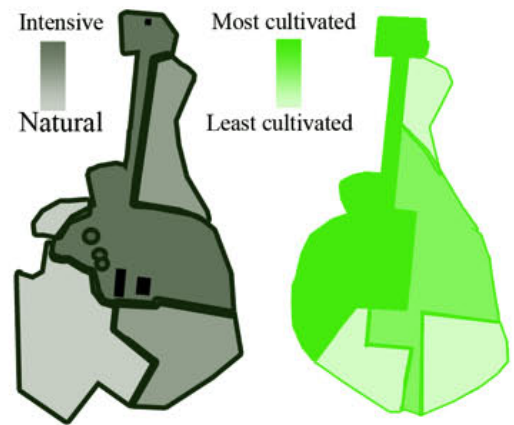
The Gardens

The Bahjí gardens are designed in the Persian Meidan style, which uses natural elements to create formal, geometric patterns. Thus, we find arches made from trimmed bushes, avenues and straight lines defined by trees, and surfaces that are given specific shapes and textures by the vegetation used. Other distinctive design elements include pools and water fountains and wide lawns separated by paths paved with crushed red roofing tiles. The most striking geometrical features are the long, straight path leading from the site entrance to the door of the shrine and the circular path that surrounds the shrine and mansion at a distance of about 100 meters.

Although the style of the garden is based on the Persian gardens, the diversity of vegetation testifies to the disengagement of the Bahá'í religion from its oriental roots and its exposure to other cultures. The flower beds are arranged according to colors, styles and types of flora and include exotic elements like cactus and bonsai trees, as well as garden ornaments from Western Europe and the Far East.



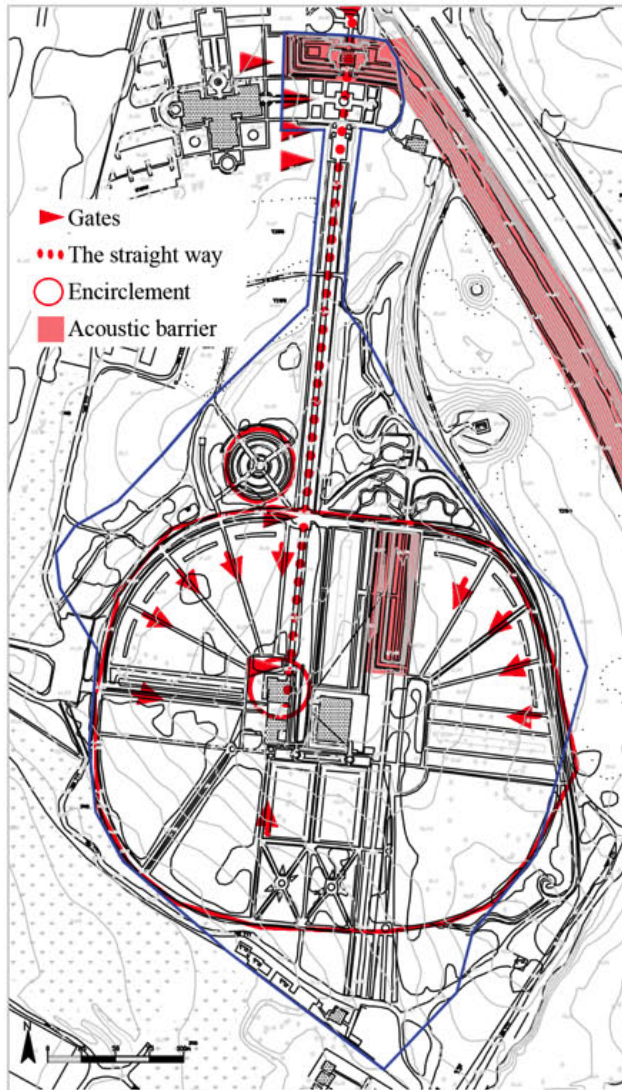
completeness of the garden but rather respects the nature and the trees that were in the area. The principle of integration with the environment, which is the same as in the gardens in Haifa, is so strong that a Sycamore Ficus tree, which is on one of the main axes of the most formal area of the entire garden, was left in its place and the path was widened around it in order to enable passage toward the shrine.



In certain areas of the garden, the neatly arranged garden beds and manicured lawns are framed with trees and bushes precisely trimmed to define the desired axes and geometrical shapes. This exemplary order is in sharp contrast with other areas of the garden, where nature rules and the maintenance is extensive. These areas are populated with spacious orchards and fields for which the only maintenance is cleaning and a light trimming that enable people to walk through the trees. The combination of the two styles – the intensive and the extensive – creates the most interesting and diverse effects in the garden.

For example, the olive grove, which was on the site since it was first purchased, remained in its place and penetrates the precise garden. The olive trees are scattered randomly on the meticulously mowed lawn in a way that does not harm the

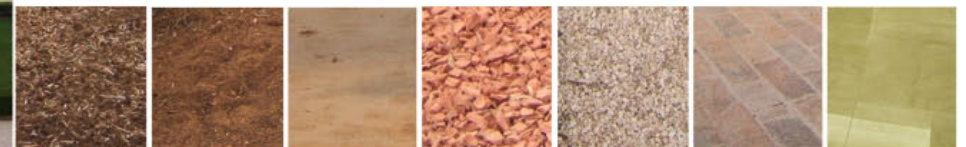




As in Haifa, the garden functions as an approach the shrine and constitutes an important part of the spiritual experience of the pilgrims on their way to visit the sacred spot. The approach avenue is a straight path about 500m long. The walking is not easy and the way changes both in the paving of the path and the kinds of vegetation that border it. As in Haifa, the progress toward the holy place is marked with gates. Some are physical gates, like the large ornamental wrought-iron gate where the straight approach path intersects the circular path. Others points of passage are created by changes in topography and vegetation that narrow or widen the path, and elements like the tree-arches and a tunnel under an acoustic barrier that blocks noise from the city and the adjacent highway. Along the path, one also comes upon areas for rest and contemplation that help the pilgrim or other visitor prepare himself for or digest the spiritual experience. The quiet of the gardens seems to become stronger and stronger as one nears the shrine.



The existence of the circular path offers a choice of indirect routes to the shrine passing through all the areas of the garden from the most styled and cultivated quarter to the areas of the orchard and plantations. This path allows the pilgrim to walk in a large circle around the shrine at a respectful distance, which is conducive to meditation and untying knots of tension. Shortly before the last gate to the shrine, there is another path, which enables the pilgrim to circumambulate the shrine at an intimate distance, much like the arcade around the shrine of the Báb in Haifa.



Old Acre Sites (I) - House of Abdu'llah Pasha, Prison & House of Abbud



Coordinate 1: E: 693362 N:3644733 C 2: E: 693462 N:3644725 C 3: E: 693298 N:3644462
 Area (ha)1: 0.79 Area 2: 0.07 Area 3: 0.06
 1.Statutory protection: the National outline plan (tama 35):Urban Complex for Preservation

Architectural Elements	Year of Erection	Historically	Today	Physical Condition	Designer / Architect
1. House & Courtyard	1810	Residence of Abdu'l-Baha & Shoghi Effendi as a child	Museum & Pilgrimage Site	Very Good	Unknown
2. Prison cell	1797	The place where Baha'u'llah, his family & followers were held imprisoned	Museum & Pilgrimage Site	Very Good	Unknown
3. House & Courtyard	19th Century	Residence of Baha'u'llah (1871 – 1877) where he revealed the Baha'i Book of Laws	Museum & Pilgrimage Site	Very Good	Unknown

House of Abdullah Pasha

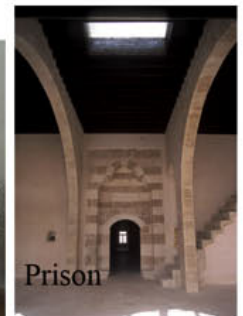
This is a grand courtyard structure of three stories built by one of the Ottoman rulers of Acre in about 1810. The inner yard displays meticulous gardening, much like the intensive design seen in the larger gardens, and has a central water element, as customary in typical Ottoman and Persian structures. The connection between the inside and outside is made by multiple courtyards, a large balcony and generous windows.



This house served as the residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the time when the first pilgrims arrived from Europe and North America. Shoghi Effendi was born here in 1897 and the remains of the Báb were kept here until they could be buried in the mausoleum in Haifa.

Prison

The northwest tower of the Acre Citadel was built by the Ottomans in 1797. The area occupied by Bahá'u'lláh and his family has a verandah (ayvan) with a skylight and arched openings overlooking the central courtyard of the citadel where the garrison drilled, as well as an inner apartment comprised of eight rooms opening onto a central hall. During the British Mandate, the fortress was transformed into a prison, but the area included in the nomination has been restored to its condition at the time of Bahá'u'lláh's incarceration based on extensive research and documentation.



House of Abbud and Udi Khammar

The House of Abbud is a typical Ottoman courtyard structure of noble proportions situated in the western section of Old Acre, adjacent to the sea. The building was owned by two Christian families, but during the time of Bahá'u'lláh's occupancy, the two units were merged into one. There are three internal courtyards open to the sky, one at ground floor level and two on the third floor, where the living quarters are located. All three courtyards are lit and adorned with planters. In addition to the courtyards and many large windows, the structure features a balcony overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Bahá'u'lláh resided in this structure from 1871 to 1877, during which time he penned the book of laws of the Bahá'í Faith.

Ridvan Gardens (Map C)



Ridván Garden, whose name means "paradise", is located about one kilometer from the walls of the Old City of Acre. It was originally built on a small island between channels of the Na'aman River that were dug to power a complex of flour mills. The island was rented by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1875 as a beautiful, quiet and restful place for his father, Bahá’u’lláh.

The road that leads to the island is covered with gravel and passes through two lines of cypress trees, agricultural fields and orchards. The entrance to the island garden itself is a massive stone gate with wooden doors, which open onto a little bridge covered with an arbor that crosses the channel where the Na'aman used to flow. The central garden is long and relatively narrow, and it is surrounded by orchards of pomegranate and citrus trees.

The garden is typically Persian, in the style of Hayat gardens, and like them it provides a place for spiritual and social relaxation. In the centre of the garden is a fountain, fed by gravity from an elevated tank attached

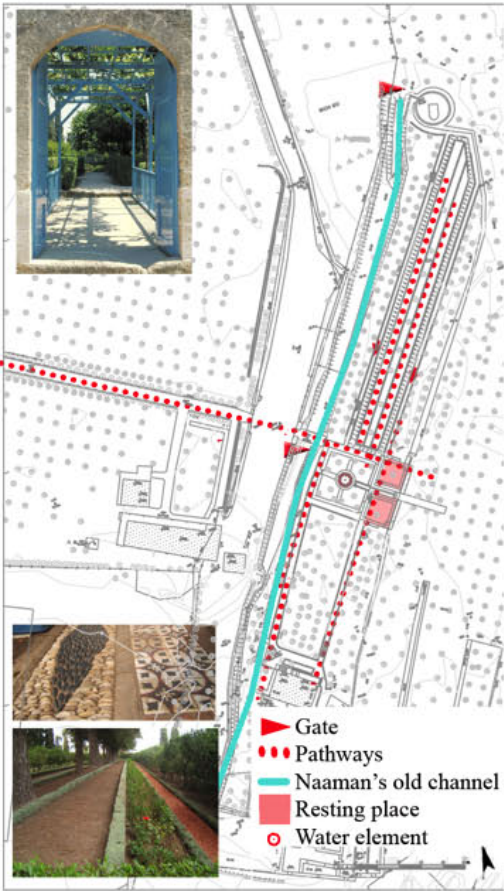


Coordinate: E: 695440 N:3643916
Area (ha): 10.9
Statutory protection: Protected by the National outline plan (tama 35)

Architectural Elements	Year of Purchase	Historically	Today	Physical Condition	Planner / Architect
1. The Gardens	1875	Frequently visited by Baha'u'llah	A garden	Good	Unknown
2. The House on the Island	1875	Overnight resting place of Baha'u'llah	Pilgrimage Site & Museum	Very good	Unknown
3. Ancient flour mill		Flour mill	Part of the garden		Unknown

to a well from which the water was lifted by a pump operated by a donkey. From the fountain, the water cascaded down into a marble channel which drained into the river. On both sides of the marble channel, the ground is paved with tile alternating with rounded river stones set on edge. Two large mulberry trees provide shade for this area, which is framed with carved wooden benches, some of which projected out over the river. The area has been preserved in its original form and has been visited for over a hundred years by the Bahá'í pilgrims, who recall the gatherings held there in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, who loved the garden and the tranquility it gave and called it his "verdant paradise" and even the "New Jerusalem".

The main difference between this garden and the others is the tall trees that give shade and enable the enjoyment of the garden during the hot summer days. The garden lacks open views to the landscape and even the views to the other parts of the garden are limited. The only structure that is located in the garden is also hidden among the trees.



Mansion of Mazra'ih (Map D) & Junayn Garden (Map H)



Coordinate1: E: 696194 N:3651834 C2: E: 695758 N:3652615
Area (ha): 4.7 Area 2: 0.81
Statutory protection: National outline plan (tama 35) Rural & Urban Complex for Preservation

Architectural Elements	Year of Purchase	Historically	Today	Physical Condition	Planner / Architect
1. The Mansion	19th Century	Residence of Baha'u'llah 1877-1879	Museum	Very Good	Unknown
2. Farmhouse	19th Century	Farmhouse	Pilgrimage Site	Very Good	Unknown

Mansion of Mazra'ih

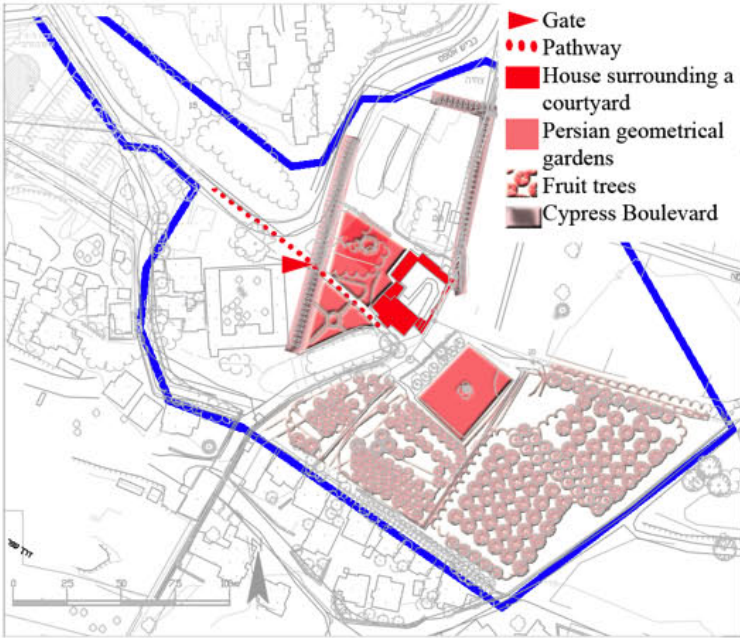
The Mansion of Mazra'ih was the first home of Bahá'u'lláh after he was allowed to leave the walls of Old Acre. It is situated on a limestone ridge adjacent to the aqueduct which transported water to Acre and commands an impressive long-distance view to the east out over the valley to the Galilee Hills. Traditional terraces planted with fruit trees flank the mansion on the south and east. Distinct elements of Persian garden design appear, but most of the gardening is extensive and dissolves into the surrounding orchards. There is no use of ornaments, sculptures, etc. in these gardens.

After passing the entrance gate, one is greeted by a modest garden comprised of several flowerbeds arranged in a characteristically Persian geometrical layout. On the east side of the house, there is a large pool and a patio paved with marble through which runs the channel of the old aqueduct. The pool used to draw water from the aqueduct and store it for use in irrigating the fields and orchards on the slopes below the house. Directly east of the house is another square of lawn with a geometrically shaped flower bed in the centre of which stands a tall palm tree. On the north side of the house is a large planted courtyard surrounded on the other three sides by service buildings and high stone walls, access being provided by arched gates with heavy wooden doors.

The building is an Ottoman dwelling built in several stages. The first stage was constructed from exposed limestone, and the original entrance to the house may have been from the south due to a row of Cypress trees leading from the garden to the wall of the structure, which displays a large arch blocked by a later construction. The ground floor of the house consists of high arches, which outline the spaces. It was used for kitchens and other services, with a large room for receiving guests, while the family living space was on the upper floor, which had the best views and ventilation.

Junayn Garden

This is a modest one-storey farmhouse situated between Acre and Nahariya, not far from the Mansion of Mazra'ih. The house belonged to Bahá'í followers, and Bahá'u'lláh stayed there as a guest. Of simple, rustic construction, the house is in the form of a hollow square with a central courtyard open to the sky. It has recently been restored to its historical condition and the landscaping of the plot will be undertaken in the near future.



Cultural Values

As noted in the review of the sites, the architecture is not only a highly esthetic and harmonious blending of various styles. It is also charged with meaning and communicates a great deal about Bahá'í values, beliefs and cultural traditions, such as pilgrimage, as well as the development of the Faith in its most formative period.

The Connection between the Architecture and Bahá'í Cultural Values and Beliefs

Several principles and traditions that are at the basis of the Bahá'í religion have clearly influenced the design characteristics of the sites as a whole. These include:

Universalism: The diversity among the cultures is perceived as the source of harmony in human relations, as expressed in this statement of 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

If in a garden the flowers and fragrant herbs, the blossoms and fruits, the leaves, branches and trees are of one kind, of one form, of one color and of one arrangement, there is no beauty or sweetness, but when there is variety, each will contribute to the beauty and charm of the others and will make an admirable garden, and will appear in the utmost loveliness, freshness and sweetness. Likewise, when difference and variety of thoughts, forms, opinions, characters and morals of the world of mankind come under the control of one Supreme Power and the influence of the Word of the One True God, they will appear and be displayed in the most perfect glory, beauty, exaltation and perfection.
(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Baha'i World Faith, p. 295)

This appreciation of diversity is expressed in the assimilation of elements of architecture and design from different cultures in the structures and the gardens.

Esthetics and the human spirit: Bahá'ís believe that physical beauty and refinement in man's surroundings promote inner qualities of spirituality, as expressed in the following statement:

My meaning is this, that in every aspect of life, purity and holiness, cleanliness and refinement, exalt the human condition and further the development of man's inner reality. Even in the physical realm, cleanliness will conduce to spirituality, as the Holy Writings clearly state. And although bodily cleanliness is a physical thing, it hath, nevertheless, a powerful influence on the life of the spirit. It is even as a voice wondrously sweet, or a melody played: although sounds are but vibrations in the air which affect the ear's auditory nerve, and these vibrations are but chance phenomena carried along through the air, even so, see how they move the heart.

A wondrous melody is wings for the spirit, and maketh the soul to tremble for joy. The purport is that physical cleanliness doth also exert its effect upon the human soul. (‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 146)

This understanding finds expression in the striving toward order and beauty which affects maintenance as well as design and gives a common feel to all the gardens and structures, regardless of function and whether purchased or built by the Bahá'ís.

Egalitarianism/Simplicity/Humility: There is no clerical hierarchy in the Bahá'í community, which is governed by a system of councils composed of laymen elected by the community for fixed terms. The equality of men and women is one of the key principles, and no distinction is made among believers on the basis of gnostic knowledge or seniority in the Faith. These egalitarian principles are mostly expressed in the human scale of the structures, including even the most important shrines and administrative buildings.

The love of light and the beauty of nature: In addition to the cultural background from which the Bahá'í architecture arose (Persia and Turkey), the Báb's long stay in prison without even a candle for writing, as well as the imprisonment of Baha'u'llah inside the walls of Old Acre, intensified the "need" of sunlight and the strong affinity to nature and to the outdoors.

“...Bahá'u'lláh ... was greatly attracted by the beauty of nature. In spite of their meagre resources, the believers of His days tried wherever possible to create simple yet beautiful surroundings for Him. They even brought flowering trees and shrubs from lands as far away as Persia and planted them in the Garden of Ridvan outside 'Akká, that Bahá'u'lláh loved to visit after so many years of incarceration within the walls of the City. (Adib Taherzadeh, The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 328”)

Haji Mirza Haydar-'Ali recalls many scenes in which 'Abdu'l-Bahá was seen to be carrying heavy vessels of water on His shoulder for watering the flowers and shrubs in the garden around the Shrine. So strenuous was this task for the Master that sweat could be seen pouring from His face as He carried this heavy burden. The same chronicler has recounted that on several occasions, He was seen gathering soil, placing it inside His cloak and carrying the load on His shoulders to where He was making some flower-beds in the small garden He had created with His own hands in order to beautify the approaches to the Holy Shrine. (Ibid., p. 190)

As previously detailed, these elements are prominent in all the structures and gardens.

Acceptance of the other and integration with surroundings: Although the gardens are unique and prominent in relation to their surroundings, a significant effort has been made to integrate them into the natural and built environment that existed prior to the development of the sites. Many visible features of the design testify to this philosophy. An olive grove and an ancient Sycamore tree, which existed prior to the development of the garden in Bahji, were left in place although they do not match the lines according to which the garden was planned. In the Haifa gardens there is gradual blending from the manicured and symmetrical core to the natural Carmel forest. These principles are also expressed in the management of the sites, which has shaped their physical properties. The fact that the most important sites are designed to welcome the public without charge affects the planning of entrances, walking routes and visitor facilities. Likewise, the understanding, patience and flexibility shown by the Bahá'ís in their negotiations with the local authorities and neighbors has affected the planning and the measures taken for the protection of the sites.

The Connection between the Architecture and Bahá'í Pilgrimage

All of the sites included in the nomination are significant to Bahá'í pilgrimage because they are visited by the pilgrims of today and/or because they are connected with the history of pilgrimage as experienced by previous generations. Although the pilgrims draw specific lessons about their religious identity and the history of their Faith from specific sites, the emotional aspect of the pilgrimage experience as a whole is strongly influenced by the common design language and messages referred to above. In addition, there are particular design elements that are directly connected with the function of the sites, and the shrines in particular, as places of pilgrimage

The Haifa-Acre axis: Bahá'ís see the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh as the “twin prophets” of their religion and Haifa and Acre as the twin holy cities comprising the spiritual and administrative centre of their Faith. The strong visual axis connecting the shrine of the Báb and its terraced gardens with Acre and the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh is thus of primary importance.

Approaches to the shrines: The matter of the approaches to the shrines, which is discussed in detail in the text dealing with the gardens in Haifa and at Bahjí, is highly significant for the Bahá'í pilgrim who has traveled halfway around the world for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to approach the most sacred spots, the places

toward which he or she has been directing his or her prayers since childhood. For such a person, the process of approaching the shrine stirs thoughts and feelings which may be no less important than those experienced while visiting it.

Circumambulation: Similarly, the use of circular elements in the gardens is highly symbolic, while offering, to the pilgrims and other believers, the possibility of giving practical expression to the profound spiritual attitude reflected in the following passage:

Circumambulation of the holy places is an act of devotion and love. It is an expression of the individual's humility, submissiveness and adoration toward the Holy Ones. It is also a sign of one's utter dependence on them. We note that the same act takes place in nature. A satellite circles around a planet and is held in orbit by the force of attraction. It originates from, and its very existence depends upon, the planet. (Adib Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, v 4, p. 108)

Naturally, the act of circling the shrines on foot at different distances has other levels of meaning and offers special views as well as opportunities for relaxation and contemplation.

Distinction among sites and areas: The strength of the geometrical elements and the formality of the garden design increase with the level of sacredness, providing important cues to the pilgrim and visitor alike regarding the character of the space he or she is entering.

The Connection between the Architecture and the Historical Development of the Bahá'í Faith

In the beginning, the Bahá'í religion sprang from Islam, and Baha'u'llah's affinity to the culture from which he was exiled is clearly seen. With the detachment of the Bahá'í religion from Islam and its evolution into an independent world religion, it was exposed to other cultures and assimilated architectural elements from the East and the West. This development can be traced in both the gardens and the buildings, as the strong Islamic and Persian influences found in the early properties become combined with elements from other cultures in the more recent buildings and gardens.

For example, the Persian elements are dominant in the Ridván Garden, which was the first to be developed by the Bahá'ís. The gardens at Bahjí are mixed gardens,

essentially Persian but with neo-classic elements, such as marble pillars and ornamental urns, local flora, such as olive, citrus and pomegranate trees, and exotic elements such as cactus gardens and bonsai trees. In the terraced gardens in Haifa, which are the newest, the diversity and the influence of western elements are even stronger, and one can see neo-classic steps, elements of English gardens and widespread usage of local flora.

Likewise, the first structures that were purchased by the Bahá'ís in Acre were typical Ottoman buildings with a strong affinity to Persian architecture. The first structures built by the Bahá'ís in Haifa (the shrine of the Báb and the buildings in the Persian Quarter) adopted local oriental architecture, a choice which reflects practical considerations while manifesting a degree of detachment from the Persian sources. In the final stage, the choice of an international neo-classical style integrating diverse elements, including some signs of fidelity to oriental roots, reflect the independence of the religion and its world-wide spread.

Clearly, this shift in perspective, or at least the boldness in expressing the detachment from Islam and the yearning toward independence and universality, finds its most obvious expression in the cemetery in Haifa, where the graves of believers buried before 1925 are oriented toward Mecca, while subsequent graves face toward the shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Acre.

Conclusion

As an ensemble, the Bahá'í sites in Israel represent a complete narrative of the development of the religion during its most formative period. The eleven sites grouped in seven protective units take the visitor through historical events from the beginning of the Baha'i religion as a current of Islam, through its detachment from these roots to its opening to the world and becoming an independent religion.

The physical features of these properties are living testimony to the values, traditions and customs that are the foundation of the religion, and they hold within them ideas and beliefs that are internationally significant and important. Despite the differences in age and style, these properties give visual expression to the most basic concepts of the Bahá'í philosophy, and through the architecture, the placement of the sites in their surroundings and their historical background, one can discover

the main values and principles of the religion, as well as its cultural and historical roots. In addition, these sites constitute the physical setting and frame of the traditional practice of pilgrimage that has existed since the earliest days of the religion.

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**Analysis of Serial Nomination
in Relation to Criteria III and VI
(See notes below)**

Protective Zone	Core Area	Site Feature	Associations	Traces	Testimony	Communicators
Carmel North	North Slope of Mount Carmel	Shrine of the Báb	Persecution and martyrdom of the Báb and mistreatment of His remains; site selection by Bahá'u'lláh; construction and interment by 'Abdu'l-Bahá; burial of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; design and erection of superstructure by Shoghi Effendi, Maxwell and Giachery	Tombs of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá; architecture of original building and superstructure; views to and from German Colony and Acre	Pilgrimage; commemoration of Holy Days; circumambulation; connection with administrative complex; sacredness of Mount Carmel; "return" of Elijah; sacred threshold; harmony in diversity; vindication of the Báb; importance of light	Location; golden dome; nocturnal illumination; blend of architectural styles and motifs; portico for circumambulation; threshold
		Terraced Gardens	Fulfillment of vision articulated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1910; plan by Patrick Geddes; stairway built by Shoghi Effendi; persecution and martyrdom of the Báb and mistreatment of His remains; story of His 18 disciples	Number of Terraces and their relationship to the Shrine; monumental architecture; nocturnal illumination	Pilgrimage; fundamental concept of unity/oneness; concentric circles; sacred precincts; approach to holy place; deference to Bahá'u'lláh; victory of love over hate; respect for nature and history; universality, openness and optimism	Haifa-Acre axis; 19 Terraces; monumental design (formality, geometry); use of color and illumination; integration of asymmetrical elements and diversity of garden ornaments; openness to visitors and integration in urban landscape
		Arc Path & Monument Gardens	Lives of Greatest Holy Leaf, Navaab, Purest Branch and Munireh; role of Shoghi Effendi in transfer, re-interment and design of gardens and Arc Path	Four tombs and their placement in garden; Arc Path	Pilgrimage; fulfillment of "Tablet of Carmel"; place of administration in Faith; role of Greatest Holy Leaf; sacrifice of Purest Branch	Architecture of tombs and lay-out of garden and Arc Path; relationship between Monument Garden and administration buildings
		International Archives Building	Fulfillment of "Tablet of Carmel"; role of Shoghi Effendi in design and construction	Location on Arc Path; classical Greek design	Pilgrimage; central role of scripture; importance of historical context and evidence	Internal design and contents
		Seat of the Universal House of Justice	Fulfillment of "Tablet of Carmel", as elucidated by Shoghi Effendi	Function, location and style of building	Pilgrimage; place of administration in Faith; authority of the Universal House of Justice	Dominant position and monumental architecture, including internal design
		Centre for the Study of the Texts	Fulfillment of "Tablet of Carmel", as elucidated by Shoghi Effendi	Function, location and style of building	Pilgrimage; role of authorized interpretation; importance of scholarship	Architecture and internal design
		International Teaching Centre Building	Fulfillment of "Tablet of Carmel", as elucidated by Shoghi Effendi	Function, location and style of building	Pilgrimage; institution of the learned	Architecture and internal design
		Haifa Pilgrim House	Pilgrimage of Eastern believers in the time of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi	Building exterior and main rooms	Pilgrimage	Architecture, internal design and proximity to Shrine of the Báb
		Tent Land	Bahá'u'lláh's visits in 1890-91	Location, site	Historical connection with German Colony; link with Christian messianism	Proximity to Templar house with inscription "Der Herr ist nahe"
	Persian Quarter	Residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and his period of residence, 1913-21; that of Shoghi Effendi, 1921-57; service of Greatest Holy Leaf and Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum; first election of Universal House of Justice 1963	Rooms of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Greatest Holy Leaf; second floor apartment of Shoghi Effendi; central hall and public areas	Pilgrimage; transition from personal to institutional leadership	Design and lay-out of public areas
		Old Western Pilgrim House	Early pilgrimages by Western believers and their meetings with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi	Main hall, dining area and guest rooms; courtyard and gate	Pilgrimage; meeting of East and West	Main hall, dining area and guest rooms; courtyard and gate
		10 Haparsim Street	Bahá'u'lláh's visit to Haifa in 1890-91; pilgrimage from the West during the time of Shoghi Effendi; custodianship of the Hands of the Cause 1957-63; establishment of the Universal House of Justice	Site and architecture; dining room of Shoghi Effendi; upstairs rooms, central hall and council chamber	Pilgrimage; transition from personal to institutional leadership	Site and architecture; dining room of Shoghi Effendi; upstairs rooms, central hall and council chamber
		11 Haparsim Street	Period of residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's family; early pilgrimage	Architecture and external appearance of building	Pilgrimage	Architecture and external appearance of building
		Resting place of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum	Period of Shoghi Effendi and service of Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum	Location, garden lay-out and tomb	Pilgrimage; a role model of female leadership; joining of east and west	Design of monument and atmosphere of garden
Carmel West	Place of Revelation		Composition of "Tablet of Carmel"	Site & location between monasteries	Sacredness of Mount Carmel; basis of administration in scripture	Obelisk and garden, view to Acre
	Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery		Lives of historic figures buried there; Shoghi Effendi's decision to change the direction of tombs in late 1920s	Individual monuments and lay-out of tombs	Pilgrimage; stages in the establishment of independent status of the Bahá'í Faith	Individual monuments and lay-out of tombs

Notes:

"Associations" means the events and literary works mentioned in criterion vi.

"Traces" means authentic material evidence which supports the memory of the events and literary works.

"Testimony" means aspects of the cultural tradition to which the sites testify.

"Communicators" refers to the physical attributes of the sites that reflect or testify to these aspects of the tradition.

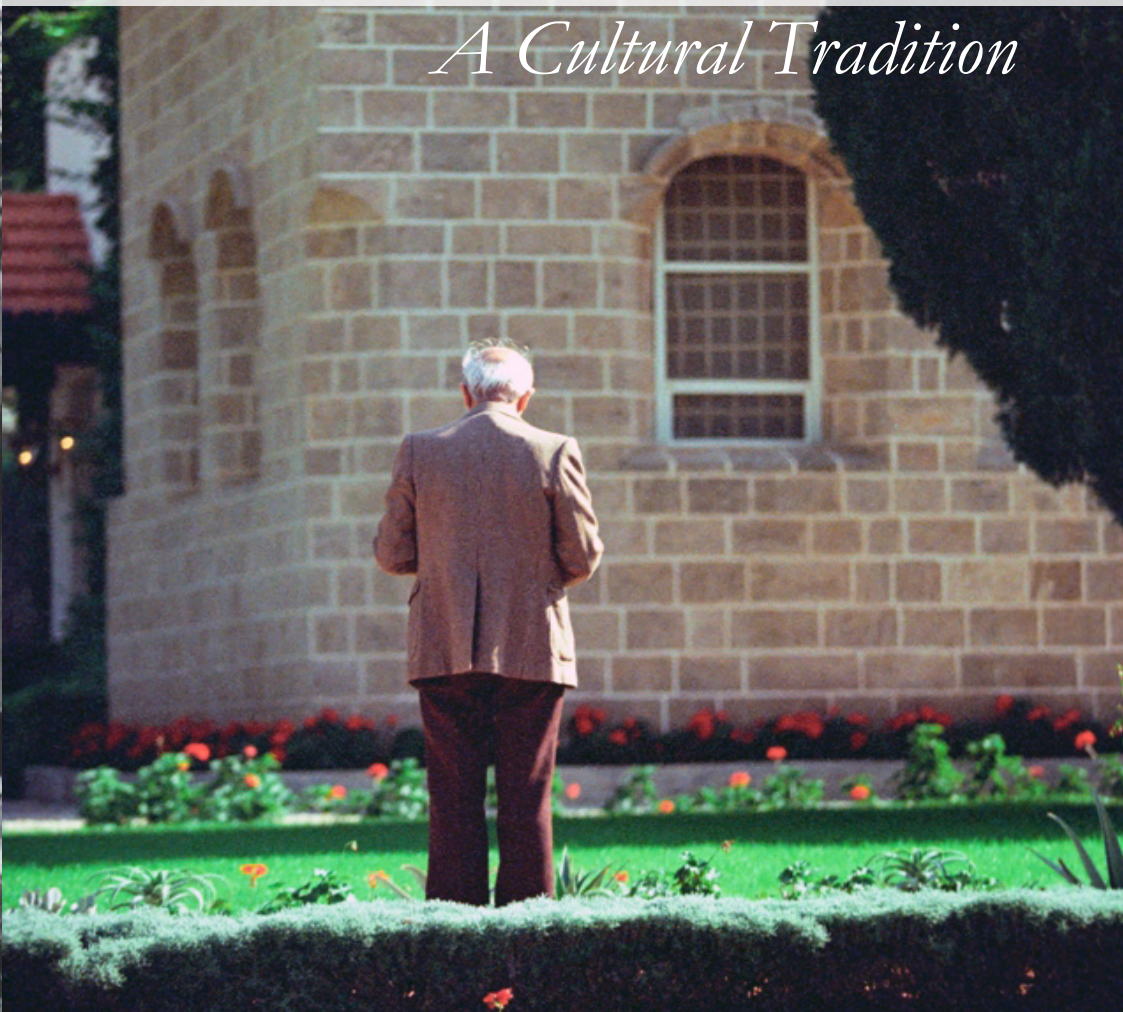
Protective Zone	Core Area	Site Feature	Associations	Traces	Testimony	Communicators
Acre North	Bahji	Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh	Passing of Bahá'u'lláh; His period of residence 1879-1892; interview with E.G. Brown; story of Udi Khammar; revelation of scripture	Room of Bahá'u'lláh with mandar, bed and personal items; inscription and tomb of Udi Khammar; architecture	Pilgrimage; commemoration of passing of Bahá'u'lláh; vindication after years of humiliation	Architecture, decoration and interior design
		Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh	Passing of Bahá'u'lláh	Tomb	Pilgrimage; qiblah for obligatory prayer; simple dignity; harmony of garden and building; concept of sacred threshold	Architecture; indoor garden; threshold
		Circular gardens	Shoghi Effendi	Lay-out of NW quadrant, north-south path, and terrace	Pilgrimage; qiblah for obligatory prayer; circumambulation; sacredness and centrality; respect for nature and history	Circumambulation path; formality; geometry; integration of asymmetrical elements (trees)
		Pilgrim House	'Abdu'l-Bahá	Historical photos	Pilgrimage	Décor & samovar
		Tea House	'Abdu'l-Bahá	External appearance	Pilgrimage	External appearance
Old Acre	House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá		Residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá 1896-1911; birth of Shoghi Effendi; first pilgrimage from the West; concealment of the remains of the Báb; composition of <i>Some Answered Questions</i>	Room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; suite where pilgrims were lodged and received; family suite and tea room; room of the Greatest Holy Leaf	Pilgrimage; early development of Faith in the West	Room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá; suite where pilgrims were lodged and received
	Prison		Emprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh and His family and followers 1868-70; martyrdom of Mirza Mihdi; revelation of scripture including messages to Napoleon and Pius IX	Cell of Bahá'u'lláh and surrounding area, including rooms occupied by family members and place where Mirza Mihdi fell	Pilgrimage; suffering of Bahá'u'lláh and significance of sacrifice of Mirza Mihdi	Austere atmosphere and authentic architectural details
	House of 'Abbúd		Revelation of Kitab-i-Aqdas; residence of Bahá'u'lláh 1871-77; marriage of 'Abdu'l-Bahá	Interior and exterior design, lay-out and furnishings	Pilgrimage; significance of Kitab-i-Aqdas	Room of Bahá'u'lláh; room where Aqdas was revealed
Acre South	Riḍvân Gardens		Bahá'u'lláh's frequent visits 1877-92; gatherings of believers; references in scripture	Room of Bahá'u'lláh with bed and personal items; paved area with benches; well, fountain and channel; garden design and atmosphere	Pilgrimage; exposition on trustworthiness in the "Tablet of Tarazat"	Approach avenue, arched gate and bridge, paved seating area, garden design and atmosphere
Mateh Asher - Mazra	Mansion of Mazra'ih		Bahá'u'lláh's residence 1877-79; revelation of scripture; stories of Mulla Mihdi-i-Yazdi, Queen Marie and Lilian McNeil	Room of Bahá'u'lláh with bed and personal items; Tablet room	Pilgrimage; Bahá'u'lláh's release from confinement and His love of nature	Gardens, orchards and open views; pastoral atmosphere and traditional agriculture
Nahariya	Junayn Garden		Visits of Bahá'u'lláh	Location and room used by Bahá'u'lláh	Pilgrimage; values of simplicity and closeness to nature	Site and room of Bahá'u'lláh



Bahá'í Pilgrimage



A Cultural Tradition





Pilgrims climbing the stairs in the courtyard of the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá



A pilgrim praying in the gardens

Introduction

Pilgrimage, the journey to and visitation of a sacred place, is a practice found in most of the world's religions. Beyond the physical journey, which may resemble, in its outward forms, certain kinds of tourism, pilgrimage is essentially a spiritual experience. In its highest form, it is an experience of profound significance, which may fulfill the longings of a lifetime or mark a major turning-point in the life of an individual or a family.

For Bahá'ís, the reverence toward and aspiration to visit the Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee is comparable to the feelings of Christians with regard to Nazareth and Bethlehem, Jews for Jerusalem, Buddhists for the Gangetic plains of Northern India, and Muslims toward Mecca. Likewise, the practice of pilgrimage to these places has evolved and developed over nearly 140 years, acquiring the character of a distinct cultural tradition, as in other religions.

The Obligation to Perform the Pilgrimage

For Bahá'ís, making a pilgrimage represents the fulfillment of a religious duty prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of their faith, in His book of laws, the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. This duty is to be performed once in a lifetime by all believers who are financially able to make the journey, but the timing is left to the individual.

The Evolution of Bahá'í Pilgrimage Over Time

While Bahá'u'lláh was alive, pilgrims came to the Acre area from Iran and other countries of the Middle East with the purpose of attaining His presence. From the period of Bahá'u'lláh's imprisonment in the Acre Citadel, there are accounts of pilgrims who, after traveling on foot from Iran, were obliged to return home in the same way,



'Abdu'l-Bahá traveling with pilgrims from Haifa to Acre along the beach (1921)

without even being allowed to enter the walled city, contenting themselves with a glimpse of His hand as He waved to them from a window of the citadel. The more fortunate ones had the experience of being in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, and some received the special gift of having prayers and

writings revealed in their honor. These encounters, which nearly always took place at one of the sites included in the nomination, left an indelible mark upon the pilgrims, becoming a memory treasured by their descendents to the present day. It was during this time that the pilgrims began the practice of circumambulation, which involved walking around the abode of Bahá'u'lláh as a symbolic gesture of love and reverence.

It was customary for pilgrims at that time to seek permission before embarking on pilgrimage, although some apparently did not wait for a response. A typical pilgrim would arrive in Acre and be welcomed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who would make arrangements for his or her lodging and prepare them for the experience of meeting the object of their journey, Bahá'u'lláh Himself. The pilgrims generally stayed until Bahá'u'lláh gave them leave to depart, and as a result, the duration of the pilgrimage varied from a few days to several months.



'Abdu'l-Bahá with pilgrims from the East and West in front of His home in Haifa (1920)

Following the passing of Bahá'u'lláh in 1892, the focal point of the pilgrimage experience was His Shrine in Bahjí. After the interment of the remains of the Báb on Mount Carmel in 1909, the focus was enlarged to include His Shrine. Visitation to these two shrines included the practice of circumambulation, the removal of footwear upon



Left: 'Abdu'l-Bahá walking towards the Old Western Pilgrim House (1921)



Right: Several pilgrims standing on the porch of the same building

entry, and the recitation of a particular text from the scriptures entitled the "Tablet of Visitation". The pilgrims were received by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who met with them personally on a daily basis, rejoicing their hearts with affectionate words of advice and encouragement, answering their questions and illuminating their understanding with his explanations of the teachings of the Faith.

Starting in 1898, pilgrims began arriving from Western Europe and North America, usually by steamship. Many of them have left published accounts of their experience including the hospitality offered to them by 'Abdu'l-Bahá at the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá in Acre or one of the houses of the Persian Quarter in Haifa. During the latter part of this period, the pilgrims from Iran and other Middle Eastern countries were lodged in the pilgrim house next to the Shrine of the Báb. 'Abdu'l-Bahá usually met with the eastern and western pilgrims separately, and the men and women had different programs out of deference for local customs. As



Pilgrims in front of the Pilgrim House in Haifa

in the time of Bahá'u'lláh, pilgrims sought the permission of the head of the faith before arriving or leaving, resulting in stays of variable duration.

Like his grandfather and great grandfather before him, Shoghi Effendi followed the practice of personal meetings with the pilgrims. When accompanying the pilgrims on their visits to the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, he would invariably recite the “Tablet of Visitation”, which was also used by the pilgrims themselves when visiting the Shrines alone or in groups. By now the practice of group circumambulation of the two shrines had become a well established tradition and an integral part of the observance of Holy Days by local believers and pilgrims alike. Shoghi Effendi instituted visits to the archives, during which the pilgrims were shown portraits of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, original manuscripts of the scriptures, sacred relics and other historical artifacts, as well as trips to Acre to visit the Citadel, the House of ‘Abbúd, the Ridván Garden, and other sites.

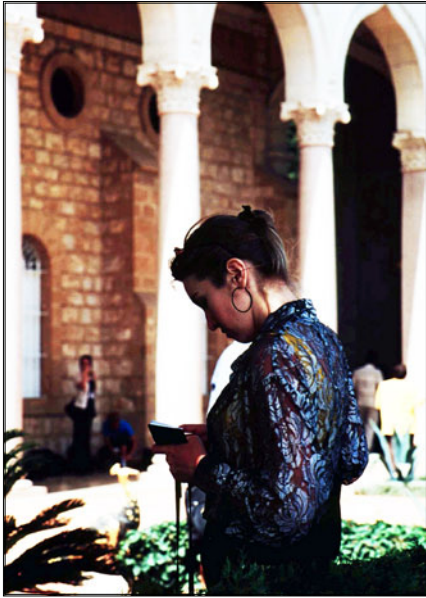
In 1929, Shoghi Effendi completed the construction of the building at 10 Haparsim Street, which was designed as a hostel for western pilgrims, and adopted the custom of taking the evening meal with them in the dining room on the lower level. He usually met with the eastern pilgrims in the pilgrim house next to the Shrine of the Báb. These gatherings offered the pilgrims the opportunity

to converse with the head of their faith, ask clarifications of the teachings, and understand his vision of the needs of the community in the current stage of its development. Shoghi Effendi continued to approve all requests by the believers to make the pilgrimage, but in 1951, he announced that the duration of pilgrimage would henceforth be fixed at nine days.

Pilgrimage continued without interruption after the passing of Shoghi Effendi in 1957, through the interregnum and under the Universal House of Justice when it was first elected in 1963, with most of the traditional elements described above. In the early days, the members of the Universal House of Justice shared meals with the pilgrims and took turns accompanying them to the shrines and reciting the “Tablet of Visitation”, as Shoghi Effendi had done. The growth of the community, however, made it necessary to accommodate ever increasing numbers, which, in turn, dictated significant organizational changes. In 1969, the Universal House of Justice asked all pilgrims to arrange their own accommodations in local hotels, abolishing the distinctions between eastern and western believers. A system was instituted for processing requests



Pilgrims entering the Shrine of the Báb (left) and circumambulating the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh (right)



Pilgrim praying outside the Shrine of the Báb

and scheduling group pilgrimages. The shared evening meals were replaced by an afternoon tea during which the pilgrims could mingle with the members of the Universal House of Justice, who now took turns giving evening talks to the pilgrims. Members of the International Teaching Centre assumed the responsibility of accompanying the pilgrims and reciting the “Tablet of Visitation” during their initial visit to the Shrine of the Báb, which now involves a group circumambulation, since the space inside is insufficient to accommodate an entire group.

Current Practice

The annual number of pilgrims visiting the Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee has grown from a few score to over five thousand, with groups of up to 400 coming at once. The central focus continues to be the visits to the Shines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb and meetings with the elected leadership of the faith. The standard nine-day program also includes visits to virtually all the sites included in the nomination, which are conducted by special pilgrim guides chosen from among the volunteer staff of the Bahá'í World Centre. As they visit these sites, today's pilgrims

understand that they are continuing a long-standing tradition, walking in the footsteps of earlier generations while eagerly learning about the historical events that shaped the community, its culture and its identity, and drawing closer to the spirit of its founding figures.

Conclusion

The practice of pilgrimage to the Bahá'í Holy Places in Haifa and the Western Galilee is an integral part of the belief system and community life of Bahá'ís, and it has acquired a traditional character that is comparable to that of pilgrimage in other religions. Circumambulation, removal of footwear and the recitation of the specially designated “Tablet of Visitation” in connection with visits to the Shines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, and the receipt of guidance and spiritual nourishment through direct meetings with the leadership of the community are among the traditional practices that have characterized Bahá'í pilgrimage throughout the years and provide a sense of continuity that will project into the future.



The Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh

Sample Pilgrimage Program

DAY 1 <i>Monday</i>	Morning:	Orientation in the auditorium of the International Teaching Centre Building	DAY 5 <i>Friday</i>	Morning:	Visit to the Mansion of Mazra'ih and the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí
	Afternoon:	Circumambulation and visit to the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahji		Evening:	Presentation by a member of the International Teaching Centre
DAY 2 <i>Tuesday</i>	Morning:	Circumambulation and visit to the Shrines of the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá	DAY 6 <i>Saturday</i>	Day reserved for individual visits*	
	Afternoon:	Reception by the Universal House of Justice	DAY 7 <i>Sunday</i>	Morning:	Visit to the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, the International Teaching Centre and the Centre for the Study of the Texts
	Evening:	Presentation by a member of the House of Justice		Evening:	Presentation by a member of the International Teaching Centre
DAY 3 <i>Wednesday</i>	Morning:	Prayers at the Shrine of the Báb	DAY 8 <i>Monday</i>	Morning:	Visit to the House of 'Abdu'lláh Páshá
	Afternoon:	Visit to the International Archives Building		Evening:	Presentation by a member of the House of Justice
	Evening:	Meeting with the International Teaching Centre	DAY 9 <i>Tuesday</i>	Morning:	Visit to the Residence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Old Western Pilgrim House
DAY 4 <i>Thursday</i>	Morning:	Visit to the Prison and the House of 'Abbúd		Evening:	Pilgrim Farewell
	Afternoon:	Visit to Ridván Garden			
	Evening:	Visit to Bahjí			

**Sites visited by pilgrims individually: Place of Revelation of the "Tablet of Carmel"; Tent Land; Haifa Bahá'í Cemetery; Monument Gardens; Resting Place of Amatu'l-Baha Ruhiyyih Khanum. Junayn Garden is currently not visited pending completion of the landscaping.*

האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים
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The Bahá'í Faith – Its Significance as an Independent World Religion

The nineteenth century has a particular place in the history of religion. It was characterized by an outburst of religious activity in the East and in the West resulting in the birth and development of major religious movements, some of which became distinct denominations and others even independent world religions.

Among the most significant of these phenomena are the development of the HABAD (Lubavitch) movement in the Jewish Hassidut ("Hassidism"); the birth of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (commonly known as the "Mormons"), which has become an independent world religion severed from its Christian roots; the appearance of the Adventist movement in the United States and particularly the development of the Seventh Day Adventists and the Jehovah's Witnesses into self-contained denominations or churches within modern Christianity. The messianic fever that gripped Christianity during this period had many other more ephemeral manifestations such as the German Templar movement, which concentrated its activity in the Holy Land.

In the East, the nineteenth century witnessed the birth and development of the Bábí-Bahá'í faith in Iran, which cut itself away completely from its Shí'ite Muslim origins and very rapidly became an independent world religion balanced between East and West and attracting believers from all parts of the world. Within Sunnī Islam, there were several messianic and "renewal" movements, some of which, like the Ahmadiyyah in India, the Wahnābiyyah in Arabia, the Mahdiyyah in the Sudan, and the Sanusiyyah in Libya, wrote impressive chapters in modern Islamic history, while others, like the religious/intellectual movement of Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh, enriched modern Islamic thinking generally without spawning a distinct organization or stream.

All but one of the religious movements born in the nineteenth century remained attached either to their original mother religion or at least to the cultural world to which that religion belonged. The Bahá'í faith is the exception. It is not a sect, denomination or stream of thought within Islam, but an independent religion free of any affiliation to other religious systems. In addition, it completely transcended the cultural world of the Levant and became a worldwide movement divorced from any particular cultural ties and disconnected from any particular social association or ethnic group.

There are a few necessary components, which show the independence of a religious movement and define it as an independent religion. These components are **Holy**

Persons, Holy Times, Holy Scriptures, and Holy Places. The existence of all these four components together in a unique form in the Bahá'í faith testify not only to its independence as a religion, but also to its departure from its Islamic roots and its Iranian ethnic and cultural background.

Holy Persons: The founders of the religion, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, are its holy figures. Both are regarded as divine manifestations, but according to the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb was his herald. Although the life, ministry and martyrdom of the Báb are highly important, his message is valid only when confirmed by Bahá'u'lláh. The immediate two heirs of the latter, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, are also regarded as divinely guided persons, and as such can also be included among the Holy Persons of the religion. All these persons are unique to the Bahá'í faith and the first indication of its independence.

Holy Times: The Bahá'í faith has its own calendar, a year composed of 19 months and a month composed of 19 days, with 4 or 5 intercalary days every year to complete the 365 days of the solar year. By establishing this calendar (which begins in the year 1844), the Bahá'í faith broke away completely from the twelve-month lunar calendar of the Muslims, as well as from the Hijri-solar calendar of the Iranians. The Bahá'ís have their own holidays relating directly to the history of the faith and the lives of its founders. None of these holidays, including the 19-day fast (in the 19th month), bears any relation to any other existing religion.

Holy Scriptures: The writings of Bahá'u'lláh are the holy scriptures of the Bahá'í faith. Although none of these writings is more sacred or authoritative than the others, the "Most Holy Book", written in Acre in about 1873 is the Holy Book *par excellence* of the Bahá'ís, for it contains the essence of Bahá'u'lláh's legal and moral teachings. The book was written in Arabic but unlike Islam, the Bahá'í faith does not regard Arabic as a holy tongue. In fact, there is no Bahá'í holy language and every believer may pray, as well as read and study the holy scriptures, in his own language. Bahá'u'lláh advised the human race to choose one auxiliary language with which all people would be able to communicate with each other. It seems that English is occupying this position now, and the House of Justice, the highest administrative body of the faith, decided that all official translations of the Most Holy Book should be made from the English translation, rather than the Arabic original.

Holy Places: Although the Báb lived and died in Iran, and Bahá'u'lláh was born in Iran and lived there for the first 35 years of his life, the religion which was born from their activity was established in the Holy Land, more particularly in Acre and Haifa. It was in the prison cell in the citadel of Acre, and then in the various places where he lived in the city, and outside it, in Mazra'ih and the estate of Bahjí, that Bahá'u'lláh wrote many of his works including the Most Holy Book (written within the walls of the city, in the House of 'Abbúd). All these places, which served also the immediate heirs of Bahá'u'lláh, are intimately connected with the history of the faith and with the creation of its intellectual and spiritual heritage. Bahá'u'lláh chose Haifa to be the final resting place of the Báb, and his son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, fulfilled his instructions, building the mausoleum where the remains of the Báb were interned in 1909 and over which was erected the beautiful golden dome encircled by gardens that has become the symbol of the whole city. Bahá'u'lláh singled out Mount Carmel as his own mountain in the same way that Sinai is the mountain of Moses, Hirá' is the mountain of Muhammad and the Mount of Beatitude, Mount Tabor, and the Mount of Olives

are the mountains of Jesus. Standing on this mountain, he communicated one of his most beautiful prophecies, the “Tablet of Carmel”, and pointed out the place where the centre of his world religion would be erected in the future. The Holy Places in Acre and Haifa do not have only historical significance, they are sites of pilgrimage for Bahá’ís from all over the world, and the point to which they direct their prayers (particularly the tomb of Bahá’ulláh in Bahjí near Acre, which is the most sacred spot on earth for the Bahá’ís). The eyes of millions of believers in 193 countries all over the globe turn to these Holy Places and their prayers are directed towards them. A common memory has already been created that connects every stage in the birth and development of the religion with these sites, which have become doors of hope to many unprivileged individuals in all continents.

In addition to these four points that characterize the independent nature of the Bahá’í faith as a world religion, there are two more things that are unique to it.

First is the message, which, from the very beginning of his activity, Bahá’ulláh addressed to the whole human race – a message emphasizing the unity of humanity in the full sense of the word. The world is one country, he said, and all human beings are its citizens, entitled to enjoy life in an egalitarian society, and to experience the right to live in peace, free from poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, and fear.

Second is the absence of any religious offices or public rituals in this faith. Bahá’ulláh did away with the religious ceremonies and clerical institutions which occupy a central place in all other religions. Bahá’í communities all over the world are run by elected bodies composed of laymen. There is no clergy, no arm of mission, no conversion methods or ceremonies, and there are no special seminaries, *madrasahs*, or *yeshivas* for training religious functionaries. From this point of view, the Bahá’í religion is unique among all religions whether universal or ethnically or culturally centered, where the clerical functionaries are essential for the running of the religious institutions or the spreading of the religious message. There is nothing in the Bahá’í faith which is even remotely reminiscent of the Christian mission. The Bahá’í faith spreads by the believers themselves, who endeavour to attract more members to their religion, but there is no official body that is responsible for such activity.

In addition to the positive points that have been discussed concerning the independence of the Bahá’í faith, the opposition to it is no less significant. The faith has been declared as non-Islamic by all the Muslim official bodies, and it is forbidden or unrecognized in most of the Muslim countries, including Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and others. It was even opposed by the Soviet Union at the time.

Based on all the foregoing elements, the Bahá’í faith was chosen by The Hebrew University of Jerusalem as an independent field of study on a parallel with much older religions and social-cultural systems such as Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. The study of the Bahá’í sacred texts (which include the writings of Bahá’ulláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá) is the prime interest of the Chair in Bahá’í Studies at the University. These scriptures, like the scriptures of the earlier monotheistic religions, are the main source for learning the nature of the Bahá’í religion, understanding its rich legal, theological and moral systems, and appreciating its contribution to the human spiritual endeavour.

After a thorough study of all the components which signify the originality and the independence of any cultural and socio-religious system, it is perfectly clear that the Bahá'í faith is a unique historical and sociological phenomenon, which stands on the same level as the other world religions. And in spite of its relatively short history, it has had an impressive impact on the universal arena and brought hope and meaning to the lives of millions.

Jerusalem, 31 October 2007

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Sharon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Moshe Sharon PhD
Professor
Chair in Bahá'í Studies