Green Acre Baha'i History Session

FH Banan

His Daughter's Remembrances

Background Story of this book

- While in many ways it's the story about both my parents, I gives particular attention to my father's adventures, general philanthropy and specific services to the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh. Stories of his exploits and struggles give a personalized vantage to the efforts and trials characterizing the lives of countless Persian Bahá'ís during the first half of the twentieth century. At the same time, this historical period of transition and turbulence gives context for Banan's undertakings.
- Glimpses of Banan's life include three visits with the Master, correspondence with Him, receiving several Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Bahá, being the only successful pilgrim to the Holy Land during the intrigue-and-espionage-imperiled times of World War I, consolidation of the Bahá'í community of Stuttgart Germany, starting a Baha'i girls school in Shiraz, a variety of socioeconomic development initiatives in and around Shiraz, hosting Martha Root during her visit to Shiraz, serious and crucial involvement in the Centennial celebrations of the Declaration in of the Bab in 1944 and the burial of Ahmad (son of the Báb), meeting Picasso, utilizing his position and contacts to repeatedly provide protection for the Bahá'ís, discussing the Faith in-person with Gandhi, meeting with Shoghi Effendi, and traveling to Philadelphia and New York at the Beloved Guardian's request to address Covenant-related issues.
- Beyond gathering memoirs and photographs from my sisters, I drew heavily upon the written memoirs of my own mother and importantly from the tape-recorded recollections of Abu'l-Qasim Afnan, corresponded with the Bahá'í World Centre, and pursued provisional translations of some of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets.

Chapter one
Shiraz, City of Roses and Nightingales

Chapter One. His ancestry:

Mirza Fazl'u'llah Hakim Banan just known as Banan, was born on December 25, 1892 in Shiraz, Iran.

- His grandfather Haj Mohammad Ismail Minakar was a merchant in Tabriz and became an intermediary for the correspondence of the Bab and His uncle in Maku and Chihriq.
- His father Mirza Reza Khan Banan'u'lmulk, held the high position of first general council of Persia in Cairo.
- His mother ,Kukab Khanum Zand , granddaughter of Lotf Ali Khan Zan, last king of Zand Dynasty,
- His brother Mirza Javad Banan'u'lMulk married Dr. Mossadegh sister who became the famous Prime minster of Iran.

Chapter Two
Banan's Childhood, adolescence and eventual Acceptance of the Baha'I Faith

- Seraj'u'lMulk
- Seraj and Takesh become Baha'is.
- They scaped through underside of large Mule from Esfahan to Shiraz.

Takesh, Seraj and Hossain a classmate of Banan participate in the regular fireside.

Mirza Ahmad Zan another grandchild of Lotf Ali Khan becomes Baha'i

- Eventual acceptance of the Faith by Banan in spite of his mother's strong opposition.
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Chapter Three
His First Visit to the Holy Land

- In 1908 , when he was 15 years old and newly declared Baha'i goes to India in Shimla, Himalayas area , enters the university .

Early in in his stay in India he develops severe Malaria and be admitted to a hospital belongs to a influential Maharaja.

After two years of studying he sends a letter to Abd'u'lBaha asking Abd'u'lBaha permission to visit the Holy land.

He grants the permission right away and goes to the Holy Land.

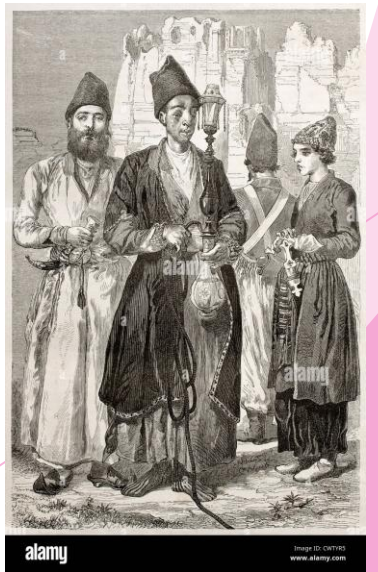
Brief stories about his arrival and seeing Him for the first time , his Malaria recurred, pull up your Aba cloak …..

First Tablet in his honor revealed that becomes a charter for his life.

Chapter Three First Visit to India and The Holy Land

Chapter Four
His Second Visit to Holy Land
Risky Journey

- Beginning of World War I, Iraq, Palestine, and Syria under Ottoman Empire rule.
- Famine broke out in Palestine where Abd'u'lBaha and His family lived. Severe food rationing, deprivation was very severe. No one can travel to the Middle East no communication.
- In 1915, LSA of Shiraz decided to collect hugh'u'ghollah and other contribution and find a volunteer to take the risk and travel to the Holy Land.
- Banan was a good enthusiastic candidate.
- 3000 tuman was collected.
- Delay in Bushihr, meeting an apparent stranger in Bombay ,…
- Then Bombay, Adan, Port Said, Cairo, Beirut , Haifa



Risky Journey

- On page 192 in *The Chosen Highway* by Lady Sarah Blomfield, Tuba Khanum, the daughter of 'Abdu’l-Bahá, says that on January 19, 1915, Fadlu'llah Khan Banan, a friend from Shiraz, arrived in Haifa after many difficulties to obtain some news of the Master and the Baha’i friends. "This was the last one of our friends we saw for a long time.

ChapterFive
Impact in Shiraz

Chapter Six
Germany and India

- In 1918, when he was 26 and living in Shiraz, Banan received an instruction from 'Abd’u'l Bahá’i that the new Baha'i community of Stuttgart, Germany, was in immediate need of assistance. Since this community was so young with little experience in Baha'i life and Baha'i administration, they needed a deepened and more experienced Baha'i to assist and support them. Banan was a very good candidate, and as usual, he immediately decided to go, not even knowing how long he would stay, what the needs of the community were, or whether he possessed the tools to help them. But because the Master asked him, he left right away. He stayed in Stuttgart for one year, and as the following pictures demonstrate, he participated in the Baha'i community life of that wonderful city. He helped many families who were sick and unable to find medical care, and those who were homeless because of war. He even provided families with simple foods such as rice, tea and flour that were sent to him from Shiraz. After about a year, when the community was stronger and with the permission of 'Abdu'l’ Bahá, he left Germany.

Chapter Six
Germany, Holy Land and India

- After Germany Abd'u'lBaha instructed Banan to go to India and try to teach the Faith to people of capacity in India specifically attempt to meet with Gandhi, due to his continued friendship from previous trips Banan had the opportunity to meet privately with Gandhi although with much difficulty. He was received with kindness and respect. Banan talked to Gandhi about the Baha'i Faith and the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh, especially the way it applied to the situation in India. Gandhi replied, "I know the Baha'i is Faiths the remedy for the ills of humanity but at the present time I have other pressing responsibility" . Gandhi had once said of the Faith: "The Bahá'í Faith is a solace to humankind."
- Cited in an article about the Bahá'í Faith during the centenary of the Bahá'í Faith in the *Bombay Chronicle* newspaper on May 24, 1944.

In Haifa in his Third Visit

Chapter Six
Germany and Visit to India

- In 1918

Chapter Seven
His wife Khojasteh and their marriage

His Wife Family

Chapter Eight
New York City, Philadelphia and Fourth and last Visit to the Holy Land

- New Baha'i communities in US, NYC and Philadelphia.
- In 1926, Shoghi Effendi instructed him to go to NYC and Philadelphia.
- Instructed Horace Holley, secretary of US NSA to welcome him and orient him.
- Mr. Taghizadeh's plans.
- Meeting with LSA of Philadelphi.
- Consequence of his visit.
- Visit to Holy Land , reporting to Shoghi Effendi.
- Meeting with Ghavam, Prime minister of Iran in Paris.
- Meeting with Picaso (not a drop of interest or curiosity in him)
- In London met Mrs. Ethel Rosenberg, them visited Edward Brown in his home.
- Met with King Goerge the Fifth.

Chapter Nine
His life and Impact in Shiraz

- His connection with government and clerics. Geopolitical Political status of the country.
- Extreme enthusiasm of young Baha'is.
- Another attempt on his life.
- Bahai School for girls.
- Fars magazine.
- Help Mossadegh to escape Shiraz.
- Hosting Martha Root visit in Shiraz. **May 5-13 1930**
- Creation of telephone and telegram line from Bushur to Shiraz to Esfahan.
- Centennial commemoration of the Bab's Declaration. **May 23, 1944**
- Transfer of remains of Ahmad, infant son of the Bab to a safe place. **Was born in 1843. On April 21 1955** in special ceremony for interment was held.
- Khojasteh's Interfaith activities, Baha'i library, Baha'i cemetery and more.
- Covenant breaking in Shiraz.

Transfer of Remains of Ahmad, the Bab's only Son

- The Guardian heard the news of internment, on, 24 April 1955, cabled his
- joy "Shiraz Assembly care Khadem Tehran. Overjoyed Historic Achievement
- congratulates valiant friends living remembrance shrines supplicating
  - bountiful blessings. Shoghi"

Chapter three and Nine Chapter nine His Impact in Shiraz

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Family in Shiraz

Chapter Eleven
Between Siraz and Tehran and Final Stage of His Life

- Main Reasons he had to leave Shiraz with sorrow and regrets.
- Severe opposition of clerics and political leaders and betrayal of old friends.
- Attempts on the life of his son and daughter.
- Advise of his influential friends.

Last Days

یکی از خبرنگاران کلنگی به دست تیمسار باتمانقلیچ می دهد
تا عکسی هنگام خراب کردن گنبد از او بگیرد.

His resting place in Tehran Bahai Cemetery with the whole Tablet written on grave stone , was desecrated in 1980

One of Thirteen Tablets in His Honor

- *"O exalted Banan! Thou art truly a helper of the friends and a strong arm of those who follow the Way of the Lord. The days of reunion are remembered.*
- *Thy pleasing countenance is ever present in this assemblage. I always remember thee imploring the Threshold of the single Lord with extreme lowliness and beseeching assistance and protection from the Court of the merciful. Thou wert a companion to 'Abdu'l-Bahá night and day, and, in the assemblage of the friends, thou wert a precious person. Praise the God, the portals are wide open and the confirmation of the Kingdom of Abhá is all-encompassing. My cherished hope is that thou mayest become a brilliant sign and a mighty force, that at every moment inhale a fragrance from the Abhá Paradise. And in every breach drops from the cloud of mercy may descend upon the rose garden of thy heart and soul. Upon thee be glory of All-Glorious Lord*
- 'Abdu'l-Bahá Abbas 6 Moharram 1338."

First Tablet addressed to him by Abd'u'Baha

- *He is God,*
- *O thou servant of God, your letter was perused and the content became clear. But 'Abdu'l Bahá should*
- *consider and wish for you what is conducive to your welfare and not what you desire. What is beneficial for you is that you, either in Shiraz or in Tehran, and to the extent possible, engage in work and activities, and in the interim gain mastery of the English language. If possible, obtain employment in a British establishment, and even if the assignments are insignificant, be content in order to learn the language in a befitting manner, and then commence your travels. The Holy Land is in constant turmoil. The Covenant-breakers commit a new corrupt act every day, and there remains no stability and tranquillity to permit the study of language or to exert oneself in the field of service. You will be able to render better services where you are. Centre your intentions on service, and the circumstances for rendering it will appear and confirmations will arrive. Rest assured.*
- *May the glory of the Glorious be upon you,*
- **'Abdu'l Bahá Abbas**