
*The Twin
Institutions*

of the

Guardianship

and the

Universal House of Justice

It should be stated, at the very outset, in clear and unambiguous language, that these twin institutions of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh [The Guardianship and Universal House of Justice] should be regarded as divine in origin, essential in their functions and complementary in their aim and purpose. Their common their fundamental object is to insure the continuity of that divinely-appointed authority which flows from the Source of our Faith, to safeguard the unity of its followers and to maintain the integrity and flexibility of its teachings. Acting in conjunction with each other these two inseparable institutions administer its laws and defend its subsidiary institutions. Severally, each operates within a clearly defined sphere of jurisdiction; each is equipped with its own attendant institutions-instruments designed for the effective discharge of its particular responsibilities and duties. Each exercises, within the limitations imposed upon it, its power, its authority, its rights and prerogatives. These are neither contradictory, nor detract in the slightest degree from the position which each of these institutions occupies. Far from being incompatible or mutually destructive, they supplement

each other's authority and functions, and are permanently and fundamentally united in their aims. ¹

Shoghi Effendi
First Guardian

The Mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the Guardian of the Cause of God. ²

'Abdu'l-Bahá

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They [Bahá'u'lláh, Prophet for this age, and His Son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Center of the Covenant] have also, in unequivocal and emphatic language, appointed those twin institutions of the House of Justice [UHJ] and of the guardianship as their chosen Successors, destined to apply the principles, promulgate the laws, protect the institutions, adapt loyally and intelligently the Faith to the requirements of progressive society, and consummate the incorruptible inheritance which the Founders of the Faith have bequeathed to the world.³

Shoghi Effendi

[N]either the Christian nor the Islamic Dispensations can offer a parallel either to the system of Divine Economy so thoroughly established by Baha'u'llah, or to the safeguards which He has provided for its preservation and advancement.⁴

Shoghi Effendi

Both in the administrative provisions of the Bahá'í Dispensation, and in the matter of succession, as embodied in the twin institutions of the House of Justice and of the Guardianship, the followers of Bahá'u'lláh can summon to their aid such irrefutable evidences of Divine Guidance that none can resist, that none can belittle or ignore. Therein lies the distinguishing feature of the Bahá'í Revelation. Therein lies the strength of the unity of the Faith. . . .⁵

Shoghi Effendi

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And now concerning the House of Justice which God hath ordained as the source of all good and freed from all error, it must be elected by universal suffrage...and the guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body.⁶

'Abdu'l-Bahá

[The Guardianship] enhances the prestige of the exalted assembly [UHJ], stabilizes its supreme position, safeguards its unity, assures the continuity of its labors, without presuming in the slightest to infringe upon the inviolability of its clearly-defined sphere of jurisdiction.⁷

Shoghi Effendi

Divorced from the institution of the Guardianship the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh would be mutilated and permanently deprived of that hereditary principle which...has been

invariably upheld by the Law of God...Without such an institution the integrity of the faith would be imperiled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would suffer, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representatives [UHJ] would be totally withdrawn. ⁸

Shoghi Effendi

Only those who come after us will be in a position to realize the value of the surprisingly strong emphasis that has been placed on the institution of the House of Justice and of the Guardianship. ⁹

Shoghi Effendi

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[I]t is the light of Divine Guidance that causeth all the universe to be illumined. ¹⁰

'Abdu'l-Bahá

In this Dispensation, divine guidance flows on to us in this world after the Prophet's ascension, through, first the Master, and then the Guardians. ¹¹

Shoghi Effendi

It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, Upon all the Aghsán, the Afnán, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and

subordination Unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. ¹²

'Abdu'l-Bahá

He [the guardian of the Cause of God] cannot override the decision of the majority of his fellow-members, but is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Bahá'u'lláh's revealed utterances. ¹³

Shoghi Effendi

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Acting in conjunction with each other **these two inseparable institutions** administer its affairs, coordinate its activities, promote its interests, execute its laws and defend its subsidiary institutions. ¹⁴

Shoghi Effendi

Bahá'u'lláh - Prophet founder of the Bahá'í Faith.

'Abdu'l-Bahá - Son of Bahá'u'lláh and appointed Center of the Covenant

Shoghi Effendi - appointed First Guardian.

Charles Mason Remey - appointed Second Guardian

Joel Bray Marangella - appointed Third Guardian.

Sources:

- 1 - Shoghi Effendi - World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 148
- 2 - 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, ¶ 17
- 3 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 19
- 4 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 20
- 5 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 21
- 6 - 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, ¶ 25
- 7 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 8
- 8 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 148
- 9 - Shoghi Effendi - The World order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 8
- 10 - 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.
¶ 22
- 11 - Shoghi Effendi - Bahá'í References to Judaism, Christianity & Islám, p 159
- 12 - 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá,
¶ 17
- 13 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 150
- 14 - Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 148

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The Line of Succession From Bahá'u'lláh:

The Lesser Covenant

As to the most great characteristic of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, a specific teaching not given by any of the Prophets of the past: It is the ordination and appointment of the Center of the Covenant. By this appointment and provision He has safeguarded and protected the religion of God against differences and schisms, making it impossible for anyone to create a new sect or faction of belief. To ensure unity and agreement He has entered into a Covenant with all the people of the world, including the interpreter and explainer of His teachings, so that no one may interpret or explain the religion of God according to his own view or opinion and thus create a sect founded upon his individual understanding of the divine Words. ¹⁵

'Abdu'l-Bahá

**BAHÁ'U'LLÁH APPOINTS
'ABDU'L-BAHÁ AS
CENTER OF THE COVENANT**

When the Mystic Dove will have winged its flight from its Sanctuary of Praise and sought its far-off goal. its hidden habitation, refer ye whatsoever ye understand not in the Book to Him Who hath branched from this mighty Stock. ¹⁶

Bahá'u'lláh
Kitáb-i-Aqdas

It is incumbent upon the Aghsán [His sons], the Afnán [the Báb's kindred] and My kindred to turn, one and all, their faces toward the Most Mighty Branch. Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book: 'When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root.' The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch ('Abdu'l-Bahá). Thus have We graciously revealed unto you our potent Will, and I am verily the Gracious. the All-Powerful. ¹⁷

Bahá'u'lláh
Kitáb-i-'Ahd

**‘ABDU’L-BAHA APPOINTS
SHOGHI EFFENDI AS
FIRST GUARDIAN**

O my loving friends! After the passing away of this wronged one, it is incumbent upon the Aghsán (Branches), the Afnán (Twigs) of the Sacred Lote-tree, the Hands (pillars) of the Cause of God and the loved ones of the Abhá Beauty to turn unto Shoghi Effendi-the youthful branch branched from the two hallowed and sacred Lote-trees and the fruit grown from the union of the two offshoots of the Tree of Holiness,-as he is the sign of God, the chosen branch, the guardian of the Cause of God, he unto whom all the Aghsán the Afnán, the Hands of the Cause of God and His loved ones must turn. He is the expounder of the words of God and after him will succeed the first-born of this lineal descendents. ¹⁸

[S]hould the firstborn of the guardian of the Cause of God not manifest in himself the truth of the words:- “The child is the secret essence of its sire,” that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him. ¹⁹

‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Will & Testament

**SHOGHI EFFENDI
APPOINTS MASON REMEY
AS SECOND GUARDIAN**

O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor, that differences may not arise after his passing.²⁰

'Abdu'l-Bahá
Will & Testament

Proclaim National assemblies of East and West weighty epoch-making decision of formation of first International Bahá'í Council...this first embryonic International Institution, marking its development into officially recognized Bahá'í Court, its transformation into duly elected body, its efflorescence into Universal House of Justice...²¹

Greatly welcome assistance of the newly-formed International Council, particularly its President, Mason Remey...²²

Shoghi Effendi
Cablegrams

(This embryonic Universal House of Justice was retained in an inactive status during the ministry of Shoghi Effendi, but upon its emergence into active functioning life, as would be the case in its second stage as an International Court, would automatically be presided over by Shoghi Effendi's appointee,

Mason Remey. As Presidency of the Universal House of Justice (including presidency of its several preliminary and successive active states) and Guardianship are synonymous terms, according to the Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the person appointed to this supreme position by Shoghi Effendi could be no other than his chosen successor- the second Guardian of the Faith.)

**MASON REMEY APPOINTS
JOEL B. MARANGELLA
AS THIRD GUARDIAN**

December 5, 1961

Dear Joel:

This is to tell you to tell the Bahá'í World that I appoint you to be the third Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith according to the Will and Testament of the Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá.²³

[Charles] Mason [Remey],
Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith
Sealed Letter

(Mason Remey also appointed Joel, President of the second International Bahá'í Council)

BAHÁ'Í MINISTRIES

Bahá'u'lláh

Prophet-founder of the Bahá'í Faith.

1863 - 1892

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'Abdu'l-Bahá

Son of Bahá'u'lláh and appointed
Center of the Covenant.

1892 - 1921

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Shoghi Effendi

Appointed First Guardian.

1921 - 1957

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Charles Mason Remey

Appointed Second Guardian.

1957 - 1966

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Joel Bray Marangella

Appointed Third Guardian.

1966 - present

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Sources:

- ¹ Shoghi Effendi - World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 148
- ² 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, ¶ 17
- ³ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 19
- ⁴ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 20
- ⁵ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 21
- ⁶ 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, ¶ 25
- ⁷ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 8
- ⁸ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 148
- ⁹ Shoghi Effendi - The World order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 8
- ¹⁰ 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. ¶ 22
- ¹¹ Shoghi Effendi - Bahá'í References to Judaism, Christianity & Islám, p 159
- ¹² 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, ¶ 17
- ¹³ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 150
- ¹⁴ Shoghi Effendi - The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 148
- ¹⁵ 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp 455-456; and Bahá'í World Faith, p 248
- ¹⁶ Bahá'u'lláh - see: World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 134; The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, p 42; Herald of the Covenant, Special Edition, Winter 1974/75, p3

¹⁷ Bahá'u'lláh - see: World Order of Bahá'u'lláh, p 134; The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, p 42; Herald of the Covenant, Special Edition, Winter 1974/75, p3

¹⁸ 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament, p 11 ¶ 16, p 12 ¶ 18

¹⁹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament, p 11 ¶ 16, p 12 ¶ 18

²⁰ 'Abdu'l-Bahá - Will and Testament, p 11 ¶ 16, p 12 ¶ 18

²¹ Shoghi Effendi - Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957, pp 7-8

²² Shoghi Effendi - Messages to the Bahá'í World 1950-1957, pp 7-8

²³ Mason Remey - see: Proclamation of the Third Guardian, 11/12/1969, p3; Glad Tidings, May 66, p 1, 1st column, Feb 18, activation of Second International Bahá'í Council.