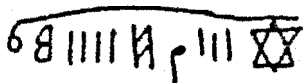




**VOL. 5: 1-2 JANUARY 1991**



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NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE  
ENGLAND  
U.K.

## THE BAHÁ'Í SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

Moojan Momen

On 12 March 1923, Shoghi Effendi sent to the Bahá'ís of America a listing of oriental terms and phrases spelled according a standard system of transliteration. He asked them henceforward to keep to this system in place of the previous arbitrary spellings that had been in use in Bahá'í publications<sup>1</sup>. It was also sent to the British National Assembly in a letter dated 23 April 1925<sup>2</sup>; and to the German National Spiritual Assembly on 5 November 1925<sup>3</sup>. This listing appeared in the *Bahá'í Year Book* in 1926 (see Addendum One<sup>4</sup>). The list as published in the *Bahá'í Year Book* is not, however, exactly the present system as it contains no underlined pairs of letters (eg *sh*, *ch*, etc) and no dots under any letters. This was however, probably for typographical reasons, since books appearing as early as 1923 did use the full system (see below). In Volume 2 of the *Bahá'í World*, 1926-28, all of the features are present (see Addendum Two<sup>5</sup>). The listing as given in Volume 2 of the *Bahá'í World* remains substantially the same in every subsequent volume with the exception of a few words added to the list over the years. Also from *Bahá'í World*, Volume 2 onwards, a statement appears on the reverse of the title page to the effect that "The spelling of Oriental words and proper names in this issue of THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD is according to the system of transliteration established at one of the International Oriental Congresses."

From the June 1923 issue of *Star of the West*, we see attempts being made to introduce the system although these are at first very patchy. The first books that appear to be trying to put the system into use are Esslemont's *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* and Herrick's *Unity Triumphant* (the latter not entirely consistently), both published in 1923<sup>6</sup>. Although some books appearing in 1924 did not follow the system<sup>7</sup>, from this time on, books and other printed material published under Bahá'í auspices have followed this system.

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<sup>1</sup> *Bahá'í Administration*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1968, p.43 ; see also p. 48 and p.56, which seems to indicate that the original list was later slightly amended.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in Addendum Four below. See also letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 11 November 1925, *Unfolding Destiny*, London: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1981, p. 39; there is also a note regarding accents on pp. 46-7.

<sup>3</sup> *The Light of Divine Guidance: the messages from the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith to the Bahá'ís of Germany and Austria*, Hofheim-Langenhain: Bahá'í-Verlag, 1982, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *Bahá'í Year Book*, vol. 1 (April 1925-April 1926), New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1926, p. 131.

<sup>5</sup> *Bahá'í World*, vol. 2 (1926-8), New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1926, p. 131.

<sup>6</sup> J.E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era* (London: George Allen and Unwin) and Elizabeth Herrick, *Unity Triumphant: the call of the Kingdom* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co). A pamphlet *Bahá'í Manuscripts* privately published by Charles Mason Remey in 1923 also appears to be using the new system. However, Mohammed Ali Alkany, *Lessons in Religion* (Boston: Tudor Press, 1923) and *Bahá'í Scriptures* (New York: Brentano's), both also published in 1923, do not use the system.

<sup>7</sup> See for example *The Wisdom of Abdu'l Baha*, New York: Baha'i Publishing Committee.

## Source of the Bahā'ī Transliteration System

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Although the statement that the system is one "established at one of the International Oriental Congresses" has appeared in Bahā'ī publications since 1928, it was for a long time not clear exactly which of the International Oriental Congresses was meant. It would appear that Shoghi Effendi, on whose instructions the statement was inserted, never specified which Oriental Congress was being referred to.

Recently, I made an exhaustive search of the proceedings of the International Oriental Congresses and found what I presumed Shoghi Effendi must have been referring to. The Congress concerned was the 10th International Congress of Orientalists held at Geneva in 1894. The Royal Asiatic Society had been giving attention to the question of a uniform transliteration system for some time. In May, 1890, a committee of the Society had been set up to consider the matter. They looked at a number of the systems then current:

1. That used by F. Max Müller and the Oxford University Press for the Sacred Books of the East series;
2. That adopted by the Government of India on the recommendation of Sir W.W. Hunter;
3. That suggested by Sir M. Monier-Williams and published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in 1890; also presented to the Berlin Congress of Orientalists;
4. That adopted by the Société asiatique of France;
5. That adopted by the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft;
6. That adopted by the Bengal Asiatic Society;
7. That adopted by the Pali Text Society.

This committee presented its report to the Royal Asiatic Society and it was adopted by the Council of the Society in May 1894. It was published in an Addendum to the Society's Journal in July 1894.

The Tenth International Congress of Orientalists was held September, 1894, at Geneva. During the opening session of the Congress, on 4 September, on the motion of Lord Reay, president of the Royal Asiatic Society and acting on behalf of it, a representative commission was appointed to look at the subject of transliteration.

The Commission consisted of a number of very eminent figures: Professor Charles-Adrien-Casimir Barbier de Maynard, who had occupied the chair in Turkish at the Ecole spéciale des langues orientales; then the Professor of Persian at the Collège de France (1875-1885); and was at this time occupying the chair in Arabic of the Collège de France as well as being deputy administrator of the Ecole des langues orientales and President of the Société asiatique;

Professor Dr Georg Bühler, a German specialist on Sanskrit and India at the University of Vienna;  
 Professor Michael Jan De Goeje, specialist in Arabic and Islam at the University of Leiden;  
 Professor Albert Socin, specialist in Arabic and Kurdish at the University of Leipzig;  
 Professor Ernst Windisch, Sanskrit and Pali scholar from the University of Leipzig;

As well as a number of less eminent persons who had taken a special interest in the subject of transliteration:

Emile Senart, a French orientalist with a special interest in India;

James Burgess, who had been Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India and who had published a paper on the subject of transliteration of Indian languages;

Lt-Col. George T. Plunkett, Director of the Science and Art Institutions, Dublin, who had been on the Royal Asiatic Society committee on transliteration.

H. Thomson Lyon, a member of the Royal Asiatic Society and the author of an article on transliteration of Arabic in the Society's journal for 1890.

As much work had already been done on the subject of transliteration by the Royal Asiatic Society, the system that this commission recommended was very similar to the system already devised by the Society. The report of this commission was presented to the Congress at its final session on 12 September 1894 and was adopted by the Congress.

An addendum to the proceedings of the Congress (published by E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1897) contains the report of the Committee on Transliteration. This report suggests a transliteration system for Arabic, Sanskrit and Pali (see Addendum Three for the English translation of this report published in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, October 1895, pp. 879-882; the original is published in French; I have also included the report of the sub-committee for the transliteration of the Arabic alphabet, pp. 888-889)<sup>8</sup>.

Although the system adopted by the 1894 Congress is not identical to the Bahā'ī system, there are sufficient points of similarity to make it likely that this is the system to which Shoghi Effendi was referring. Shoghi Effendi has evidently used the permissible alternatives in every case where they recommend single letters (eg. *sh* instead of *s*; except for *j* where the alternative *dj* is primarily for the French). The only major ways in which Shoghi Effendi has deviated from this system is that it recommends *al-* in all cases for the Arabic definite article whereas Shoghi Effendi uses the double consonant in the case of the "Sun letters": *as-*, *ash-*, *ar-*, etc. Also Shoghi Effendi uses *v* instead of *w* for the Persian letter *vav*.

I sent a report of my finding to the Universal House of Justice and received a reply dated 22 October 1987 (see Addendum Four). About a year later, I received a further letter dated 16 October 1988, enclosing a copy of a page from a notebook kept by Shoghi Effendi at Oxford (see Addendum Five). This notebook clearly indicates that Shoghi Effendi had considered a number of alternatives in formulating the Bahā'ī system and also confirms that it is indeed the 1894 International Congress of Orientalists that he was referring to.

On this page from Shoghi Effendi's notebook, there is also reference to a Council meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society in October 1896. This refers to an addendum to the October 1896 issue of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* in which the system adopted by the 1894 International Congress of Orientalists is approved by the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society with a few minor emendations. These emendations were principally to avoid any overlap between the Sanskrit and Arabic transliteration systems (Addendum Six contains the system proposed by the Geneva Congress together with the emendations suggested by the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society). It will be seen that the emendations include allowing *v* for the Persian letter *vav*.

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<sup>8</sup> For further information regarding the workings of the transliteration committee, see the report by G.T. Plunkett in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, October 1895, pp. 890-92.

## Some Problems of the Bahā'ī Transliteration System

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In 1978, I entered into correspondence with the Universal House of Justice over some problems relating to the Bahá'í System of Transliteration. These problems which will be familiar to those who have ever tried to use the Bahá'í system extensively are outlined in the text of my letter dated 15 August 1978. This and the reply of the Universal House of Justice dated 20 October 1978 is given in Addendum Seven. This led on to a further interchange of correspondence with a letter of mine dated 2 November 1978 and a reply dated 8 March 1979 (Addendum Eight).

A reading of this correspondence reveals that a number of useful principles and amendments are approved:

there is no need to transliterate the names of well-known places;

the use of *-a* to indicate the Arabic final *h*;

the freedom to choose Arabic or Persian forms of words and names;

the freedom to choose flat accents if desired, etc.

## Some Peculiarities of the Bahā'ī Transliteration System

---

One of the peculiarities of the Bahá'í transliteration system which is briefly alluded to in my letter of 15 August 1978 is the propensity to use the short vowel *i* in many situations where the standard Persian pronunciation would be *a*. Examples of this are: *siyyid*, *Karbilá*, *Mazindarán*, and *Ādhirbáyján* where the normal pronunciation would give *sayyid*, *Karbalá*, *Mázarandán*, and *Adharbáyján*.

This matter continued to puzzle me until one day I heard the late Hand of the Cause Mr Dhikru'llah Khadem say that Shoghi Effendi spoke Persian with an Isfahani accent. This was the result of Munlirih Khánúm's marriage to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Munlirih Khánúm was from Isfahan. She had passed on her Isfahani accent to her four daughters and they to their children. And so presumably all of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's grandchildren, including Shoghi Effendi, spoke with Isfahani accents. I later asked a number of other Iranians who had met Shoghi Effendi, including Mr Abu'l-Qasim Afnan and Mr Ali Nakhjavani, and they also confirmed that Shoghi Effendi had an Isfahani accent. It struck me that this was the answer to the puzzle over this particular peculiarity. The substitution of an *i* for an *a* in the above examples would lead precisely to an Isfahani accent. Shoghi Effendi had written these words exactly as he spoke them.

A number of other peculiarities remain unexplained. For example the persistent use of *-lyyi-* in such words as *Bahlyyih*, *Báblyyih*, etc. The original Persian has a doubled *y*, whereas the transliteration seems to indicate three *ys*: *i*, *y*, *y*. Consistency would demand that either the accent on the first *i* or else one of the two *ys* should be omitted. A number of much-used words and phrases also appear to be inconsistent: *Alláh-u-Abhá*, which should surely be *Alláhu Abhá*; *Shi'ih* which in this form is a collective noun but is often used as though it were an adjective (which should really be *Shi'i*). This in fact accords with Iranian pronunciation although incorrect grammatically.

## ADDENDA

### Addendum One:

Transliteration system outlined in *Bahá'í Year Book*, 1926 ..... p.18

### Addendum Two:

Transliteration system outlined in *Bahá'í World*, vol. 2, 1928 ..... p.19

### Addendum Three:

Report of Committee on Transliteration of 10th International Congress of  
Orientalists held at Geneva in 1894 ..... p.21

### Addendum Four:

Universal House of Justice: Letter and Memorandum of Research Department,  
dated 22 October 1987 ..... p.26.

### Addendum Five:

Universal House of Justice: enclosing a copy of a page  
from Shoghi Effendi's notebook ..... p.31

### Addendum Six:

The Geneva Congress system as amended by the Royal Asiatic Society . . p.33

### Addendum Seven:

First interchange of correspondence with the Universal House of Justice  
on Transliteration ..... p.40

### Addendum Eight:

Second interchange of correspondence with the Universal House of Justice  
on Transliteration ..... p.47

Addendum Nine: 'Abdu'l-Bahá on Transliteration ..... p.53

## ORIENTAL TERMS USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

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## LIST OF ORIENTAL TERMS FREQUENTLY USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE, WITH MODERN TRANSLITERATION AND ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY

'Abádih	Dhabih	Kitáb-i-Aqdas	Rahím
'Abbás	Duzdáb	Kurdistán	Rahmán
'Abdu'l-Bahá	Farán	Láhiján	Rahmat
'Abdu'l-Hamíd	Fárs	Lár	Rasht
'Abdu'l-Husayn	Firdawsí	Lawh	Rawhání
'Abdu'lláh	Ganjih	Luristán	Ridván
Abu'l-Fadl	Gilán	Mahcúbu'sh-Shuhadá	Rúhu'lláh
'Adasiyyih	Gul	Mahmúd	Sabzivár
Ádhirbáyján	Gulastán	Maqám	Sadratu'l-Muntahá
Afnán	Habíb	Mákú	Samarqand
Aghsán	Hadíth	Maláyir	Sangsar
'Ahd	Háji	Marághih	Sári
Ahmad	Hamadán	Marhabá	Sháh
Ahsá'i	Haydar'Alí	Marv	Shahid
Ahváz	Haykal	Masá'il	Shahmírzád
'Akká	Himmat-Ábád	Mashhad	Sháhrúd
'Alí	Husayn	Mashíyyat	Sharaf
Alláh-u-Abhá	Huvaydar	Mashriqu'l-Adhkár	Shaykh
Alváh	Ioráhím	Mázindarán	Shí'ih
Alváh-i-Salátín	'Ilm	Mihdí	Shiráz
Amin	Imám	Milán	Shushtar
Amru'lláh	Iqán	Mirzá	Simnán
Anzali	Irán	Mishkín-Qalam	Sísán
Aqá	'Iráq	Muhammad	Sistán
Aqdas	'Iráq-i-'Ajam	Muhammarih	Siyyid
'Arabistán	Isfáhán	Mujtahid	Súfi
Asmá	'Ishqábád	Mulk	Sulaymán
'Aváshiq	Ishráqát	Mullá	Sultán
Ayádi	Ishtihárd	Munírih	Sultán-Ábád
Azal	Islám	Mustagháth	Sultánu'sh-Shuhadá'
'Azamat	Ismá'ilíyyih	Nabíl	Sunní
'Aziz	Istarábád	Najaf	Súratu'l-Haykal
Báb	'Aziz	Najaf-Ábád	Tabriz
Bábu'l-Báb	Jalál	Náqidín	Táhirih
Baghdád	Jamál	Násiru'd-Dín	Tajalliyát
Bahá	Jamál-i-Mubárah	Nawrúz	Takí
Bahá'i	Jásb	Nayríz	Tákur
Bahá'u'lláh	Ka'bih	Nishábúr	Tarázát
Bahíyyih	Kalimát	Núr	Tarbíyat
Bahjí	Kamál	Pahlaví	Táshkand
Balúchistán	Karand	Qádiyán	Tawhid
Bandar-'Abbás	Karbilá	Qahqahih	Thurayyá
Bárfurúsh	Káshán	Qá'im	Tihrán
Basrih	Kawmu's-Sa'áydih	Qamsar	'Ulá
Bátúm	Kawthar	Qasr-i-Shírin	'Ulamá
Bayán	Kázim	Qawl	Urúmiyyih
Bayt	Kázimayn	Qayyúm	Vahid
Birjand	Kirmán	Qazvín	Váhid
Bismi'lláh	Kirmánsháh	Qúchán	Valí
Bukhárá	Khalkhál	Quddús	Varqá
Burújird	Khánigayn	Qudrat	Vazír
Búshir	Khaylí-Khúb	Qum	Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá
Bushrúyyih	Khurásán	Qur'án	Yahyá
Bushrú'i	Khuy	Qurratu'l-'Ayn	Yazd
Chihriq	Kitáb-i-'Ahd	Rafsinján	Zanján
Dawlat-Ábád			Zaynu'l-Muquarrabín

## TRANSLITERATION OF ORIENTAL TERMS FREQUENTLY USED IN BAHÁ'Í LITERATURE

*Arranged Alphabetically*

Ábádih	Bahjí	Ibráhím	Láhiján
'Abbás	Balúchistán	'Ilm	Lár
'Abdu'l-Bahá	Bandar-'Abbás	Imám	Lawh
'Abdu'l-Ḥamid	Bárfurúsh	Iqán	Luristán
'Abdu'l-Husayn	Bašrih	Irán	
'Abdu'lláh	Bátúm	'Iráq	
Abu'l-Faḍl	Bayán	'Iráq-i-'Ajam	Maḥbúbu'sh-Shuhadá'
'Adasiyyih	Bayt	Iṣfáhán	Maḥmúd
Ádhirbáyján	Birjand	'Ishqábád	Maqám
Afnán	Bismi'lláh	Ishráqát	Mákú
Aghṣán	Bukhára	Ishthárd	Maláyir
'Ahd	Burújird	Islám	Marághih
Aḥmad	Búshir	Ismá'iliyyih	Marḥabá
Aḥsá'i	Buṣhrúyih	Istarábád	Marv
Ahváz	Buṣhrú'i	'Izzat	Masá'il
'Akká			Mashhad
'Alí	Chihriq	Jalál	Mashiyyat
Alláh-u-Abhá		Jamál	Mashriq'l-Adhkár
Alváh	Dawlat-Ábád	Jamál-i-Mubárah	Mázindarán
Alváh-i-Saláṭín	Dhábih	Jásb	Mihdi
Amin	Duzdáb		Milán
Amru'lláh		Ka'bih	Mirzá
Anzali	Fárán	Kalimát	Mishkín-Qalam
Áqá	Fárs	Kamál	Muḥammad
Aqdas	Firdawsi	Karand	Muḥammarih
'Arabistán		Karbilá	Mujtahid
Asmá'	Ganjih	Káshán	Mulk
'Aváshiq	Gilán	Kawmu'sh-Ṣa'á'idih	Mullá
Ayádi	Gul	Kawthar	Munirih
Azal	Gulastán	Kázim	Mustagháth
'Azamat		Kázimayn	
'Azíz	Ḥabib	Kirmán	Nabil
	Ḥadith	Kirmánsháh	Najaf
Báb	Háji	Khalkhál	Najaf-Ábád
Bábu'l-Báb	Hamadán	Khániqayn	Náqidín
Baghdád	Haydar-'Alí	Khayli-Khúb	Náṣiru'd-Dín
Bahá	Haykal	Khurásán	Nawrúz
Bahá'i	Himmat-Ábád	Khuy	Nayriz
Bahá'u'lláh	Husayn	Kitáb-i-'Ahd	Nishábúr
Bahíyyih	Huvaydar	Kitáb-i-Aqdas	Núr
		Kurdistán	



Pahlavi	Rahmat	Simnán	Tawhid
Qádiyán	Rasht	Sisán	Thurayyá
Qahqahih	Rawhání	Sístán	Tíhrán
Qá'im	Ridván	Siyyid	
Qamsar	Rúhu'lláh	Súfi	'Ulá
Qasr-i-Shirin	Sabzivár	Sulaymán	'Ulamá
Qawl	Sadratu'l-Muntahá	Sultán	Urúmiyyih
Qayyúm	Samarqand	Sultán-Abád	Vahid
Qazvín	Sangsar	Sultánu'sh-Shuhadá'	Váhid
Qúchán	Sári	Sunni	Vali
Quddús	Sháh	Súratu'l-Haykal	Varqá
Qudrat	Shahid	Tabriz	Vazir
Qum	Shahmirzád	Táhirih	
Qur'án	Sháhrúd	Tajalliyát	Yá-Bahá'u'l-Abhá
Qurratu'l-'Ayn	Sharaf	Taki	Yahyá
	Shaykh	Tákur	Yazd
Rafsinján	Shi'ih	Tarázát	
Rahím	Shiráz	Tarbiyat	Zanján
Rahmán	Shushtar	Táshkand	Zaynu'l-Muqarrabín

### GUIDE TO TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION OF THE PERSIAN ALPHABET

ا .....á	خ .....kh	س .....s	ک .....k
ب .....b	د .....d	ط .....d	گ .....g
پ .....p	ذ .....dh	ت .....t	ل .....l
ت .....t	ر .....r	ز .....z	م .....m
ث .....th	ز .....z	' .....'	ن .....n
ج .....j	ژ .....zh	غ .....gh	و .....v
چ .....ch	س .....s	ف .....f	ه .....h
ح .....h	ش .....sh	ق .....q	ی .....y
			.....'

a .....as in account	i .....as (e) in best	u .....as (o) in short	aw .....as in mown
á .....as in arm	í .....as (ee) in meet	ú .....as (oo) in moon	

## TENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ORIENTALISTS,

HELD AT GENEVA.

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### *Report of the Transliteration Committee.*

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(TRANSLATION.)

THE Committee appointed by the Congress to select a system for the transliteration of the Sanskrit and Arabic Alphabets has held several meetings. After having examined and discussed the systems which have hitherto been used, and taken note of the various improvements which have been suggested by members of the Congress and other savants, the Committee submit for the approval of the Congress, and with a view to general adoption by Orientalists, the systems shown in the two tabular forms annexed to this report.

They have taken as a basis for their work the report presented by a special committee appointed by the Royal Asiatic Society of London, and the systems of transliteration usually adopted in France, in Germany, and by the Bengal Asiatic Society. They do not pretend to have discovered a perfectly scientific system; it was necessary to give weight to established usages, and also to take into consideration the varying pronunciations which the letters of the Arabic alphabet have received in different Muhammadan countries. This is one reason for the alternative modes of transliteration proposed for certain letters, but the number

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for which these alternative methods are suggested has been kept as small as possible, and it is hoped that the Orientalists of every country will endeavour to still further reduce this number by conforming as much as possible to the system recommended by the Committee.

As regards the transliteration of Sanskrit, the differences of opinion have been much less, and only in the case of a very small number of letters has any difficulty arisen. In these instances the Committee have chosen from among the various equivalents proposed those which on the whole seem best suited for practical use.

To obtain uniformity each country and each society must make some concessions, and the Committee hope that the systems now proposed will be unanimously adopted and brought into general use.

BARBIER DE MEYNARD,  
G. BÜHLER,  
J. BURGESS,  
M. J. DE GOEJE,  
H. THOMSON LYON,

G. T. PLUNKETT,  
EMILE SENART,  
SOCIN,  
WINDISCH.

TRANSLITERATION OF THE SANSKRIT AND  
PALI ALPHABETS.

अ . . . . .	a	उ . . . . .	u
आ . . . . .	ā	ऊ . . . . .	ū
इ . . . . .	i	ऋ . . . . .	ṛ
ई . . . . .	ī	ॠ . . . . .	ṝ
ए . . . . .	e	ऌ . . . . .	ḷ

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ए . . . . .	e	प . . . . .	p
ऐ . . . . .	ai	फ . . . . .	ph
ओ . . . . .	o	ब . . . . .	b
औ . . . . .	au	भ . . . . .	bh
क . . . . .	k	म . . . . .	m
ख . . . . .	kh	य . . . . .	y
ग . . . . .	g	र . . . . .	r
घ . . . . .	gh	ल . . . . .	l
ङ . . . . .	ṅ	व . . . . .	v
च . . . . .	c	श . . . . .	ś
छ . . . . .	ch	ष . . . . .	ṣ
ज . . . . .	j	स . . . . .	s
झ . . . . .	jh	ह . . . . .	h
ञ . . . . .	ñ	ळ (in Pali & ) . . .	ḷ
ट . . . . .	ṭ	ॠ (Anusvara, Niggahita) m	
ठ . . . . .	ṭh	ॡ (Anundika) . . .	m̄
ड . . . . .	ḍ	: (Visarga) . . . .	ḥ
ढ . . . . .	ḍh	× (Jihvāmūhya) . .	ḥ
ण . . . . .	ṇ	× (Upadhmanīya) . .	ḥ
त . . . . .	t	ऽ (Avagraha) . . .	ˆ
थ . . . . .	th	Uddatta . . . . .	ˆ
द . . . . .	d	Scarita . . . . .	ˆ
ध . . . . .	dh	Anudatta . . . . .	ˆ
न . . . . .	n		

## TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC ALPHABET.

Recommended.	Recommended.
ا at beginning of word omit; hamza else- where ʾ	ع ʿ غ g permissible gh ف f ق q ك k ل l م m ن n و w ه h ي y
ب b	vowels ا a, ى i, ُ u
ت t	lengthened ۱ a, ي i, ۱ u
ث t permissible th	diphthongs ۱ ay and ۱ au
ج j permissible dj	e and o may be used in place of i and u
ح h	also ē and ō in Indian dialects, û and ô in Turkish
خ h permissible kh	ل of article ال to be always l.
د d	
ذ d permissible dh	
ر r	
ز z	
س s	
ش s permissible sh	
ص s	
ض d	
ط t or t	
ظ z or z	

ADDITIONAL IN PERSIAN, HINDI,  
AND PAKSHTŪ.

پ	p
چ	c permissible <u>ch</u>
ژ	z permissible <u>zh</u>
گ	g
TURKISH LETTERS.	
ک	when pronounced as y
	<u>k</u> is permitted.
ن	n

## HINDI AND PAKSHTŪ.

ت or پ t
ڈ or د d
ر or ر r

## PAKSHTŪ LETTERS.

ټ ts
ځ g
ښ n
کښ kh

Also in India will be recognized s for ث, z for ذ, and z for ض.

## PROPOSALS

OF THE

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE TRANSLITERATION  
OF THE ARABIC ALPHABET.

- 
1. The Committee agree upon the following:—

ب *b* — ت *t* — ح *h* — د *d* — ر *r* — ز *z* — س *s* —  
 ع *ʿ* — ف *f* — ق *q* — ك *k* — ل *l* — م *m* — ن *n* —  
 ه *h* — پ *p*.

2. For ح they recommend *j*, but will allow *dj* to be used as a substitute.
3. For ض *ḍ*, but allow *z* in India.
4. For ط *ṭ* and for ظ *ẓ*. This is to avoid upsetting the Indian accepted system—elsewhere *t* and *z* will suffice.
5. For ي *y* whenever ي is a consonant. Whilst fully appreciating the reasons why German Orientalists have preferred *j*, the Committee feel obliged to adopt the character used throughout India and by English, French, and many other writers and scholars.
6. ' at the commencement of a word need not be transliterated, *hamzah* in the middle or at the end of a word to be represented by ' above the line.
7. For ع ' above the line (a comma reversed).

## REPORT OF TRANSLITERATION COMMITTEE. §89

8. For  $\text{چ ز غ ش ذ خ ت}$   
 $t \ h \ d \ s \ g \ z \ c$

but agree that th, kh, dh, sh, gh, zh, ch may be used as substitutes for the above.

They consider that z, h, etc., are better than i, h, i, h, etc., or any others in which the mark is placed above the consonant, as in this position the mark may be taken for the accent of a vowel, the cross of a t, etc. They will allow in India as substitutes for the above  $\text{ت}$  z and  $\text{ذ}$  z.

9. For  $\text{و}$  as a consonant w.

10. For  $\text{گ}$  in Persian, Hindustani, and Turkish g.

That in Turkish books for beginners, if it be thought necessary to mark when the  $\text{ک}$  is to be pronounced as y, the sign  $\text{ک}$  should be used.

11. The Turkish  $\text{ک}$  to be k.

12. That the Hindi and Pakshtū characters be represented thus—

$\text{ت}$  or  $\text{پ}$   $t$  —  $\text{ڈ}$  or  $\text{د}$   $d$  —  $\text{ڑ}$  or  $\text{ر}$   $r$

$\text{ٹس}$  —  $\text{چ}$   $g$  —  $\text{ن}$   $n$  —  $\text{کش}$   $ksh$

13. The  $\text{ل}$  of the article  $\text{ال}$  always to be transliterated l.

14. That the vowel-points be  $\text{ـ}$  a,  $\text{ـِ}$  i,  $\text{ـُ}$  u.

The lengthened vowels  $\text{ـِـ}$ ,  $\text{ـِـ}$ ,  $\text{ـِـ}$ ,  $\text{ـِـ}$ . That e and o may be used in place of i and u in these languages in which it may be necessary. That ū and ō may be also used in Turkish, and e and o in Indian dialects.

That the so-called diphthongs  $\text{ـِـ}$  and  $\text{ـِـ}$  be ay and aw.

G. T. PLUNKETT.

**ADDENDUM FOUR: UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE: LETTER AND MEMORANDUM  
OF RESEARCH DEPARTMENT , DATED 22 OCTOBER 1987**

---

Wixamtree, Sand Lane  
Northill  
Biggleswade  
Beds. SG18 9AD  
England

Dear Baha'i friends,

In 1978, I conducted some correspondence with you regarding the question of the Baha'i system of transliteration. At that time I wrote to you that I had been unable to find which Congress of Orientalists it was that Shoghi Effendi had been referring to when he stated that the Baha'is should use the system approved by the International Congress of Orientalists. As I had some time to spare in the Library of the School of African and Oriental Languages recently, I had another look through the reports of the various annual congresses and on this occasion, I went back further than I had done previously. I believe I have now found the Congress to which Shoghi Effendi was referring.

The tenth International Congress of Orientalists was held in Geneva in 1894. In the published proceedings of this Congress, there is an addendum giving the result of the proceedings of a Commission charged with finding a transcription system. The enclosed photocopies show their recommendations. You will see that Shoghi Effendi has used this system utilising their permissible alternatives in all cases where they recommend single letters. The only ways in which Shoghi Effendi has deviated from this system is that it recommends "al-" in all cases for the Arabic definite article, whereas Shoghi Effendi uses the doubled consonant in the case of the Sun letters - "as-", "ash-", "ar-", etc, also Shoghi Effendi uses "v" instead of "w" for the Persian letter "vav". You will also note that the recommendation, is for flat accents rather than accute. Unfortunately, the brief description on these pages gives no indication of what should be done with respect to the Persian idafa and other difficult situations which I highlighted in my previous correspondence. Shoghi Effendi presumably devised his own solutions to these cases.

With warmest Baha'i greetings,

Dr Moojan Momen

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE  
BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

Department of the Secretariat

22 October 1987

Dr. Moojan Momen  
Wixantree, Sand Lane  
Northhill, Biggleswade  
Beds. SG18 9AD  
England

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice read with great interest your letter of 19 July 1987 about your discovery of further information in connection with the Bahá'í system of transliteration, and referred the matter to the Research Department. We are now directed to send you the enclosed copy of the memorandum prepared by that Department in response.

The House of Justice hopes that the results of the research done at the World Centre will be of assistance to you in your endeavours to solve the riddle of the source of the transliteration system on which Shoghi Effendi based the method now in use in Bahá'í texts.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,



For Department of the Secretariat

Enclosure



## M E M O R A N D U M

To: The Universal House of Justice

Date: 22 October 1987

From: The Research Department

## THE BAHÁ'Í TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

With his letter dated 19 July 1987, Dr. Moojan Momen forwarded the report of a Commission "charged by the [Tenth International] Congress [of Orientalists] to adopt a system of transliteration for the Sanskrit and Arabic languages", which includes a transliteration system for Arabic upon which Shoghi Effendi may have based the method now used in Bahá'í texts.

The Research Department has compared the system proposed by the Transcription Commission with that described in "The Bahá'í World" volumes and agrees with Dr. Momen's observation that the two systems are very similar. It is indeed possible that the beloved Guardian adapted the Commission's proposal for his use. His secretary wrote in response to a query from an individual believer:

As to the origin of the transliteration used by Shoghi Effendi, this was decided upon by an international congress of orientologists and is now adhered to by the most eminent scholars.  
(19 June 1931)

The variations between the Commission's transliteration system and that used in Bahá'í texts could be explained by postulating that, where the Commission permitted alternative transliterations, Shoghi Effendi adopted the variant which was easiest to reproduce on the typewriters of the day, e.g., th instead of t for ث, j instead of dj for ج, t instead of t for ط.

With regard to the use of an acute accent (´) instead of a macron (—) on long vowels, it is interesting to note that carbon copies of early letters typewritten by Shoghi Effendi or on his behalf held in the World Centre Archives show that the accent on long vowels was generally made by typing a straight apostrophe above the letter in question. This involved only backspacing, rather than the backspacing and movement of the platen required to place a dash above the letter. On 23 April 1925, the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf to the National Spiritual Assembly of the British Isles regarding the revision of a folder as follows:

...Shoghi Effendi is desirous that the horizontal accents over the long vowels in the Persian and Arabic transliterated words should be replaced by vertical or nearly vertical ones, if possible, thus:

Bahá'í or Bahá'í instead of Bahā'I

and again, on 23 January 1926:

With regard to the accent on the letter a in the transliteration of Persian names and words and the difficulty of the publishers in having a vertical mark, Shoghi Effendi feels that in case having the regular vertical mark means too much trouble and expense it would be justified to replace it by the horizontal dash on the a, but if the trouble and expense would not be much, for the sake of uniformity throughout transliterations everywhere, it would be best to have the regular vertical mark.

Other variations between Bahá'í transliteration and the system offered by the Commission occur, as is pointed out by Dr. Momen: whereas the Commission recommends that the Lām of the Arabic definite article al always be "l", the Guardian chose to assimilate the Lām of the definite article of the following consonant, when this is one of the "sun" letters, resulting in a doubling of that consonant. Furthermore, ay is transliterated as w when it occurs as an element of a diphthong, as in "Naw-Rúz", but generally as a v when it occurs as a consonant, e.g., "Riḍvān". Examples of consonantal vāvs represented by w are rare, but do occur: "An-Nūru'l-Abhá-Fi-Mufāwadāt-i-'Abdu'l-Bahá" ("The Bahá'í World", vol. 5 (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1936), p. 474) and "waqf property" ("God Passes By", rev. ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1987), p. 357).

Shoghi Effendi enclosed a "list of the best known and most current Bahá'í terms, and other Oriental names and expressions, all properly and accurately transliterated" with his letter to the Western believers dated 12 March 1923. (The letter is published in "Bahá'í Administration: Selected Messages 1922-1932", rev. ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974), pages 34-43.) The "full code" mentioned in the postscript to this letter was included with a letter dated 9 April 1923 addressed to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada. This indicates that the system upon which the Bahá'í system is based existed prior to 1923.

It is our understanding that, according to the proceedings of succeeding International Congresses, the problem of transliteration was not discussed again until the Thirteenth Congress in Leyden, 1931, which was after the Bahá'í transliteration system had been promulgated.

In this connection, the choice of language in the note regarding transliteration on the verso of the title page in "The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record", vol. 2, "April 1926-April 1928" (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1928) is also of interest:

NOTE: The spelling of the Oriental words and proper names used in this issue of THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD is according to the system of transliteration established at one of the International Oriental Congresses.

This note states that the system was "established" at one of the International Oriental Congresses, not "adopted". As we have no record that the Transcription Commission's recommendation was endorsed or adopted by the Tenth Congress, or by later Congresses, this may be an additional support for the hypothesis that the transliteration system adopted by Shoghi Effendi is based on this recommendation.

-3-

In support of the above hypothesis, it would be of value to ascertain, if possible:

Whether the Tenth, or a later, International Congress dealt with the system put forward by the Transcription Commission.

The membership of the Commission, since the universality and practicality of the system was emphasized by the Guardian's secretaries.

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Miscellaneous

almost identical with the system set up by Prof. E. J. S. Brown  
 19th Annual Congress Intern. 1994  
 + C. a. 1902. comical oct. 1896

a	1	a	a
b	u	b	b
pu	u	pu	pu
t	o	t	t
th	o	th	th, t
j	e	j	dj, j
ch	e	ch	ch, c
h	e	h	h
Kh	e	Kh	h, Kh
d	>	d	d
dh	>	dh	d, dh
h	/	h	h
g	i	g	g
gh	i	gh	g, gh
o	u	o	o
oh	u	oh	oh, a
a	oo	a	a, o, g
d	oo	d	d, g, gh
t	b	t	t
dh	b	dh	g, i
gh	e	gh	gh, g
f	i	f	f
K	o	K	K
g	o	g	g
l	o	l	l
m	r	m	m
n	u	n	n
v, w	u	v, w	v, w
h	o	h	h
y	o	y	y

Turkish  $\tilde{a} = \tilde{m}$

ADDENDUM FIVE: UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE: ENCLOSING A COPY OF A PAGE  
FROM SHOHI EFFENDI'S NOTEBOOK

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THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE  
BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

Department of the Secretariat

16 October 1988

Dr. Moojan Momen  
Wixamtree, Sand Lane  
Northill, Biggleswade  
Beds. SG18 9AD  
England

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

We wrote to you on 22 October 1987 on behalf of the Universal House of Justice concerning the Bahá'í system of transliteration, and enclosed a memorandum from the Research Department on this subject. We are now directed by the House of Justice to send you the enclosed copy of a page copied from a notebook kept by Shoghi Effendi when he was at Oxford University.

As you will note, the annotation made by Shoghi Effendi confirms your own conclusion about the International Congress of Orientalists of 1894. Shoghi Effendi also makes reference to the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society held in October 1896.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

*Atina Archibald*

For Department of the Secretariat

Enclosure



ADDENDUM SIX : THE GENEVA CONGRESS SYSTEM AS AMENDED BY THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

( 5 )

TABLE II.

TRANSLITERATION OF THE ARABIC ALPHABET  
ADOPTED BY THE GENEVA CONGRESS.

[Notes in square brackets refer to pp. 6, 7.]

ا at beginning of word omit; hamza elsewhere ـ [ ' or °, Note 8]	غ g permissible <u>gh</u>
ب b	ف f
ت t	ق q
ث t permissible <u>th</u>	ك k
ج j permissible <u>dj</u>	ل l
ح h	م m
خ h permissible <u>kh</u>	ن n
د d	و w [or <i>z</i> , Note 5]
ذ d permissible <u>dh</u>	ه h
ر r	ي y
ز z	vowels ا a, إ i, ؤ u
س s	lengthened ا̣ ā, ي̣ ī, ؤ̣ ū
ش s permissible <u>sh</u>	diphthongs اِي ay and اَوْ ao
ص s [see Note 1]	[ai and au, Note 4]
ض d [ḍ, Note 2]	e and o may be used in place of i and u
ط t or ṭ [only ṭ, Note 3]	also ē and ō in Indian dialects, ū and ō in Turkish
ظ z or ẓ	ل of article ال to be always l.
ع c	

## PERSIAN.

Opening words of the Gulistān—

منت خدا یارا عز و جل که طاعتش موجب قربتست و بشکر  
ندرش مزید نعمت هر نفسی که فرو میرد ممد حیاتست و چون  
بر نیاید مغترق ذات پس در هر نفسی دو نعمت موجودست و بر  
هر نعمتی شکری واجب.

Mionat ḥudāirā 'azza wa jalla kih tā'atas mūjil-i-  
qurbatast. Wa biṣukr andaraṣ mazīd-i-ni'mat. Har nafasi  
kih farū mīravad mumidd-i-ḥiyūtaṣt. Wa cūn bar ni'aya-  
mufarriq-i-zāt. Pas dar bar nafzei dū ni'mat maujūdaṣt.  
Wa bar har ni'mati šukrī wājib.

( 11 )

The Council would take this opportunity of suggesting  
the following scheme for the transliteration of Hebrew.

א . . . . .	'	צ . . . . .	z
ב . . . . .	b	כ . . . . .	q
ג . . . . .	g	ך . . . . .	r
ד . . . . .	d	ש . . . . .	s
ה . . . . .	h	ט . . . . .	t
ו . . . . .	v	ת . . . . .	th
ז . . . . .	z	י . . . . .	i
ח . . . . .	h (or hh)	כ . . . . .	k
ט . . . . .	t	ל . . . . .	l
י . . . . .	y	מ . . . . .	m
יא . . . . .	j	נ . . . . .	n
יב . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
יג . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
יד . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
טו . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
טז . . . . .	th	ק . . . . .	q
יז . . . . .	i	ר . . . . .	r
יח . . . . .	h	ש . . . . .	s
יט . . . . .	v	ת . . . . .	th
כ . . . . .	k	י . . . . .	i
כא . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
כב . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
כג . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
כד . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
כה . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
כו . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
כז . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
כח . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
כט . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
ל . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
לא . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
לב . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
לג . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
לד . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
לה . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
לו . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
לז . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
לח . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
לט . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
מ . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
מא . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
מב . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
מג . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
מד . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
מה . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
מו . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
מז . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
מח . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
מט . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
נ . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
נא . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
נב . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
נג . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
נד . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
נה . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
נו . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
זא . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
זב . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
זג . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
זד . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
זה . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
זו . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
זח . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
זט . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
זז . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
זח . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
זט . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
חא . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
חב . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
חג . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
חד . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
הא . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
הב . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
הג . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
הד . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
הה . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
הו . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
הז . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
הח . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
הט . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
הז . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
הח . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
הט . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
וא . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
וב . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
וג . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
וד . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
וה . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
וו . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
וז . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
וח . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
וט . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
וו . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
וז . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
וח . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
וט . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
וו . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
וז . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
זא . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
זב . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
זג . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
זד . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
זה . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
זו . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
זח . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
זט . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
זז . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
זח . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
זט . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
חא . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
חב . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
חג . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
חד . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
הא . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
הב . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
הג . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
הד . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
הה . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
הו . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
הז . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
הח . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
הט . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
הז . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
הח . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
הט . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
וא . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
וב . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
וג . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
וד . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
וה . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
וו . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
וז . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
וח . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
וט . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
וו . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
וז . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
זא . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
זב . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
זג . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
זד . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
זה . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
זו . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
זח . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
זט . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
זז . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
זח . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
זט . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
חא . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
חב . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
חג . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
חד . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
הא . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
הב . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
הג . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
הד . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
הה . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
הו . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
הז . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
הח . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
הט . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
הז . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
הח . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
הט . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
וא . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
וב . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
וג . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
וד . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
וה . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
וו . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
וז . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
וח . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
וט . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
וו . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
וז . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
זא . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
זב . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
זג . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
זד . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
זה . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
זו . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
זח . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
זט . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
זז . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
זח . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
זט . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
חא . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
חב . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
חג . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
חד . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
הא . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
הב . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
הג . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
הד . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
הה . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
הו . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
הז . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
הח . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
הט . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
הז . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
הח . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
הט . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
וא . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
וב . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
וג . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
וד . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
וה . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
וו . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
וז . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
וח . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
וט . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
וו . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
וז . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
זא . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
זב . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
זג . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
זד . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
זה . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
זו . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
זח . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
זט . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
זז . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
זח . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
זט . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
חא . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
חב . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
חג . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
חד . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
הא . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
הב . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
הג . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
הד . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
הה . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
הו . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
הז . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
הח . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
הט . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
הז . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
הח . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
הט . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
וא . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
וב . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
וג . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
וד . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
וה . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
וו . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
וז . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
וח . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
וט . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
וו . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
וז . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
זא . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
זב . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
זג . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
זד . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
זה . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
זו . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
זח . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
זט . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
זז . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
זח . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
זט . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
חא . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
חב . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
חג . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
חד . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
הא . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
הב . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
הג . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
הד . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
הה . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
הו . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
הז . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
הח . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
הט . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
הז . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
הח . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q
הט . . . . .	v	ר . . . . .	r
וא . . . . .	z	ש . . . . .	s
וב . . . . .	'	ת . . . . .	th
וג . . . . .	b	י . . . . .	i
וד . . . . .	g	כ . . . . .	k
וה . . . . .	d	ל . . . . .	l
וו . . . . .	t	מ . . . . .	m
וז . . . . .	h	נ . . . . .	n
וח . . . . .	v	ס . . . . .	s
וט . . . . .	z	ע . . . . .	e
וו . . . . .	'	פ . . . . .	p
וז . . . . .	b	צ . . . . .	c
זא . . . . .	g	ק . . . . .	q
זב . . . . .	d	ר . . . . .	r
זג . . . . .	t	ש . . . . .	s
זד . . . . .	th	ת . . . . .	th
זה . . . . .	i	י . . . . .	i
זו . . . . .	h	כ . . . . .	k
זח . . . . .	v	ל . . . . .	l
זט . . . . .	z	מ . . . . .	m
זז . . . . .	'	נ . . . . .	n
זח . . . . .	b	ס . . . . .	s
זט . . . . .	g	ע . . . . .	e
חא . . . . .	d	פ . . . . .	p
חב . . . . .	t	צ . . . . .	c
חג . . . . .	h	ק . . . . .	q



( 6 )

ADDITIONAL IN PERSIAN, HINDI, AND PAKSHTŪ.	HINDI AND PAKSHTŪ.
پ <i>p</i>	ت or پ <i>t</i>
چ <i>c</i> permissible <i>ch</i>	د or ذ <i>d</i>
ز <i>z</i> permissible <i>zh</i>	ر or ز <i>r</i>
گ <i>g</i>	
TURKISH LETTERS.	PAKSHTŪ LETTERS.
ک when pronounced as <i>y</i> , <i>k</i> is permitted.	ځ <i>ts</i>
ن <i>n</i>	چ <i>q</i>
	ن <i>n</i>
	کښ <i>ksh</i>

Also in India will be recognized *z* for ت, *z* for ذ, and *z* for ز.

The above scheme contains, it will be seen, two schemes—one for the transliteration of Sanskrit, Pāli, and the allied alphabets, and one for the transliteration of Arabic and the allied alphabets. These two tables are inconsistent with one another on several points. In applying the Congress scheme, therefore, to the transliteration of Hindi (which is written both with Sanskrit and Arabic letters) the same word would have to be transliterated differently according to the alphabet before the transliterator. These points are as follows:—

(1) The sound represented in English by *sh* is represented in the first table by *ʃ*, and in the second by *s* (*sh* being permissible). On the other hand, the *ʃ* is used in the first table for the Sanskrit ष (*sh*) and in the second for ص (*s*). The practical difficulties arising from this discrepancy are, however, so small that the Council would merely point out the discrepancy.

(2) The sign *ḍ* is used in the Sanskrit table for ढ (the cerebral *d*), and in the Arabic table for ض (*dād*). This discrepancy could be avoided by selecting *ḍ* for the *dād*.

( 7 )

(3) The alternative transliteration  $\text{ḥ}$  allowed for  $\text{ḥ}$  in the second table clashes with the use of the same sign in the first table. This alternative transliteration might be dropped out of Table II.

(4) The diphthongs  $\text{ai}$  and  $\text{au}$  in the first table are replaced by  $\text{ay}$  and  $\text{aw}$  in the second. It would be better to adhere to the first table.

(5) The transliteration  $\text{w}$  for the  $\text{w}$  in the Arabic table clashes with that proposed for the  $\text{व}$  in the Sanskrit table. Both  $\text{v}$  and  $\text{w}$  might be allowed for each of these letters.

(6) The sound represented by  $\text{ch}$  in the English orthography is transliterated  $\text{c}$  in the Sanskrit table, and  $\text{c}$  ( $\text{ch}$  being permissible) in the second table. It would be more consistent to adopt  $\text{c}$  throughout.

There are also one or two other matters which are worthy of notice.

(7) The signs  $\text{z}$  and  $\text{ṣ}$ , and  $\text{ḍ}$  and  $\text{ṭ}$  are each of them used in Table II as the transliteration of two different letters.

(8) No sign has been suggested in the Arabic table for the transliteration of the wasla. The comma above the line ' used in the table to represent the hamza might be used for the wasla, and either a stroke or a circle above the line ( ' or ° ) might be used for the hamza.

(9) No sign has been suggested in the Arabic table for the silent  $\text{t}$ . The sign  $\text{ḥ}$  might be used to represent this letter.

(10) A stroke beneath the line (thus  $\text{ḥ}$  or  $\text{ṣ}$ ) might be suggested to signify that a letter written in any alphabet to be transliterated is not to be pronounced.

Subject to the suggestions above made, which will, the Council hopes, meet with the approval of Continental scholars, the following passages would illustrate the scheme as adopted by the Congress.

#### SANSKRIT.

Rg Veda : opening lines—

अ॒ग्निमी॒ळे पु॒रोहि॑तं य॒क्षस्य॑ दे॒वमृ॒त्विज॑म् ।  
होता॑रं रत्नधा॒तमम् ॥  
अ॒ग्निः पू॒र्वेभि॑र्च॒धिभि॑रो॒डो नू॑तनै॒रुत॑ ।  
स दे॒वा ए॒ह व॑क्षति ॥

Agnīm ile puróhitam yajñásya devám ṛtvijam  
hótūram ratnadhátamam.  
agnih púrvebhir íshibir ídya nútanaír úta  
sá devā́m éhá vakṣati.

Nalopākhyāna : opening lines—

अ॒सीद् राजा॑ न॒लो नाम॑ वी॒रसे॑नसुतो ब॒ली ।  
उ॒पप॑न्नो गु॒णैरि॑ष्टै रू॒पवा॑न् अ॒श्वको॑विदः ॥  
अ॒तिष्ठ॑न् म॒नुजेन्द्रा॑णां मूर्ध्नि दे॒वप॑तिर् यथा ।  
उ॒पर्यु॑परि स॒र्वेषा॑म् आ॒दित्य॑ इ॒व तेज॑सा ॥

Āsīd rājā Nalo nāma Virasenasuto bali  
upapanno guṇair iṣṭair rūpavān aśvakovidah  
atiṣṭhan manujendrāṇāṁ mūrdhni devapatir yathā  
uparyupari sarveṣām āditya iva tejasā.

( 9 )

## PĀLI.

Digba : opening words—

චිවචෙට්ඨකං චිතංසට්ඨංගතවාදකානර්චනරතගං  
 දකානර්චනාලඤ්ඤාදවානාතතපට්ඨපකොනාගොතිමග  
 තාහිපට්ඨපංසෙකපට්ඨංචවචකොහිහිපට්ඨපහෙහි

Evam me sutam. Ekam samayam bhagavā anturā ca  
 Rājagaham antarā ca Nālandam addhānamaggaṇapāṭipanno  
 hoti mahatā bhikkhusamghena saddhiṃ paṇica matthehi  
 bhikkhusatehi.

## ARABIC.

Opening chapter of the Qur'ān—

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنِ  
 الرَّحِيمِ مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ اهْدِنَا  
 الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ  
 عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ.

Ch. ix, v. 1.

بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.

Ch. x, v. 14.

وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا.

Bismi'llāhi'l-raḥmāni'l-raḥīmi. Al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabbi-  
 'l-'ālamīna'l-raḥmāni'l-raḥīmi māliki yaumi 'l-dini. Īyāka  
 na'budu wa iyāka nasta'nu. Ihdinā 'l-sirāṭa'l-mustaḡima  
 sirāṭa'lladīna an'amta 'alaihim ḡairi 'l-maḡḍūbi 'alaihim  
 wa lā 'l-dāllina.

Ch. ix, v. 1. — Barā'atun mina'llāhi wa rasūlihi ila  
 'lladīna 'āhadtum mina 'l-mušrikīna.

Ch. x, v. 14. — Wa jā'athum rusuluhum bi'l-baiyināti wa  
 mā kūnū liyu'minū.

( 10 )

## Notes—

Hamza at the beginning of a word is omitted, as pre-  
 scribed on p. 5. Only the vowel is written. Ex. *asul*,  
 a lion; plur. *usd*. *Inṣān*, a human being.

Hamza elsewhere = a stroke ' or circle '.

Wasla is represented by an apostrophe. See Note 8, p. 7.

The diphthongs have been written *ai* and *au*, not *ay* and  
*aw*. See Note 4, p. 7.

( 9 )

PĀLI.

Dīgha : opening words—

ච්චමෙට්ඨනං චිතංසමසංහතමාඥනානන්තරතභං  
ඥනානන්තරතභංසමසංහතමාඥනානන්තරතභං  
නාහිසද්ධිසංසෙසාසංසංචමනෙහිහිසද්ධිසංසෙසාසංසංචමනෙහි

Evam me sutam. Ekam samayam bhagavā antarā ca  
Rājagaham antarā ca Nālandam addhānamaggaṇapātipanno  
hoti mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhim pañca matthehi  
bhikkhusatehi.

ARABIC.

Opening chapter of the Qur'ān—

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنِ  
الرَّحِيمِ مَا لِكَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ اهْدِنَا  
الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ  
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ.

Ch. ix, v. 1.

بَرَاءَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ.

Ch. x, v. 14.

وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا.

Bismi'llāhi'l-raḥmāni'l-raḥīmi. Al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabbi-  
'l-'ālamīna'l-raḥmāni'l-raḥīmi māliki yaumi 'l-dīni. Iyāka  
na'budu wa iyāka nasta'īnu. Ihdinā 'l-ṣirāṭa'l-mustaqīma  
ṣirāṭa'llaḍīna an'amta 'alaihim ḡairi 'l-maḡḍūbi 'alaihim  
wa lā 'l-ḍāllīna.

Ch. ix, v. 1. — Barā'atun mina'llāhi wa rasūlihi ila  
'llaḍīna 'āḥadtum mina 'l-mušrikīna.

Ch. x, v. 14.—Wa jā'athum rusuluhum bi'l-baiyināti wa  
mā kānū liyu'minū.

( 10 )

Notes—

Hamza at the beginning of a word is omitted, as pre-  
scribed on p. 5. Only the vowel is written. Ex. *asad*,  
a lion; plur. *usd*. *Insān*, a human being.

Hamza elsewhere = a stroke ' or circle °.

Wasla is represented by an apostrophe. See Note 8, p. 7.

The diphthongs have been written *ai* and *au*, not *ay* and  
*aw*. See Note 4, p. 7.

## ADDENDUM SEVEN: FIRST INTERCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ON TRANSLITERATION

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The Universal House of Justice  
P.O. Box 155  
Haifa, Israel

15th August 1978

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

I am in the process of editing a book to be published by George Ronald. This will be a collection of essays by Prof. F. Kazemzadeh, Denis MacEoin, Peter Smith and myself, and is provisionally entitled Studies in Bábí and Bahá'í History. It is hoped that it will stimulate some interest in the academic community and the essays are being written with this in mind.

In connection with this book, a problem has arisen over the matter of transliteration. As you are no doubt aware, the system of transliteration at present in general use in the academic community is somewhat different to that used in Bahá'í books. No system of transliteration is completely satisfactory but the present Bahá'í system suffers from great inconsistencies and it is these inconsistencies which have been the principle cause of criticism such as that levelled by Elwell-Sutton at Balyuzi's Muhammad and the Course of Islam in a recent issue of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (a copy is enclosed for your information). The Bahá'í system is said to be based on a system worked out at one of the Congress of Orientalists. However I have been unable to find any such system in the Proceedings of these Congresses. In any case, it is not so much in the basic system as in its application that inconsistencies arise in present Bahá'í usage.

The principal problems are as follows:

(1) The system ought to be consistent as to whether it is a system of transcription of pronunciation (i.e. it conveys the information of how a word sounds) or a system of transliteration (i.e. it conveys the information of how a word is written). The main problem of the Bahá'í system lies in the fact that it has taken a system that was designed for the transliteration of Arabic words and has applied it to the transcription of Persian pronunciation. In making this transformation, the Bahá'í system has fallen between the two stools and is at present neither entirely a system of transliteration (thus you have Abu'l-Qasim and Dhi'l-Hijih rather than Abú'l-Qásim and Dhú'l-Hijih) nor a system of transcription of the Persian pronunciation (thus the letters

d, dh, and th have no resemblance to the Persian pronunciation which is z, z and s respectively; Mazindarán is pronounced Mazandarán etc.).

(2) The Bahá'í system uses Persian pronunciation and usage even in Arabic expressions and the names of Arabs and Arabic books. Thus Ibnu'l-Arabí wrote al-Futúhátu'l-Makkíya and not Futúhát-i-Makkíyyih as it appears in Bahá'í books. Similarly Shaykh Ahmad was an Arab and should be called al-Ahsá'í and not i-Ahsá'í. But there are inconsistencies even in this usage in Bahá'í books; thus we have Kitáb-i-Aqdas but Kitábu'r-Rúh (both of which are Arabic books).

(3) In the Persian idáfa construction after a word ending in -ih or the long vowels, -ú, -á, -í, the yi sound follows the ending and is not a part of it; thus ríshiy-i-dirakht implies that ríshih has had an h changed to a y, whereas the h has gone and the buffer sound yi has been added. Ríshi-yi-dirakht conveys the structure of this construct better. Similarly, one would have 'Alí-yi-Bastámí.

(4) Normal Bahá'í usage is inconsistent as regards the use of final hamza; thus we have Qayyúmu'l-Asmá' and Siyyidu'sh-Shuhadá' but 'Abdu'l-Bahá and 'Ulamá (with no final hamza indicated).

(5) The Bahá'í system looks somewhat strange and antiquated with oblique accent marks instead of flat ones which are almost universal now, e.g. Báb instead of Bāb.

Thus the present Bahá'í system has many inconsistencies, and while this is acceptable in the corpus of books that exist at present, it presents great problems and confusion to a writer who wishes to transliterate a word that has not previously been transliterated in a Bahá'í publication. Thus this system which was originally introduced in order to eliminate variation and confusion in transliteration in Bahá'í books may in fact in the long run itself create variation and confusion. This is not to say however that the Bahá'í system does not have some advantages over the system currently in use among orientalists; thus, for example, the use of underlining sh, dh, etc. is more scientific than omitting this as orientalists do and of course the Bahá'í system is a better guide to Persian pronunciation than the system used by orientalists.

If it is desired, however, to have a system that transcribes Persian pronunciation, there is in existence a much better, more consistent system,

see H. Busse's History of Persia under Qajar Rule. On the other hand it would involve fewer changes in the present system and be more in keeping with the present trend among orientalists if the Bahá'í system were to be altered so as to become consistently a system of transliteration.

Consequently, for the book that I am now editing, and for any future books aimed at the non-Bahá'í academic community, I would like to propose using the present Bahá'í system but with the following alterations made so as to make it a system of transliteration, to eliminate inconsistencies, and to bring it more into line with the system currently in use as far as the format is concerned.

(1) To standardize all names and expressions using the Arabic 'idáfa construction so that they are connected by u (which is what the Arabic grammatical form requires). This would only affect a very few names such as Násiru'd-Dín (instead of Násiri'd-Dín).

(2) To transliterate all Arabic names and expressions according to Arabic usage and grammar and not Persian, e.g. Shaykh Ahmad al- Ahsá'í, Yá Sáhíba'z-Zamán ( Instead of Sáhibu 'z-Zamán ).

(3) In words and names derived from Arabic which end in o in Arabic and o in Persian, to be transliterated -a where an Arabic name or expression is intended (e.g. Madína) and -ih for Persian names (e.g. Rúzbih).

(4) To keep more closely to grammatical form in Arabic names and expressions, e.g. Mu'tamadu'd-Dawlih ( instead of Mu'tamidu'd- Dawlih ), Abu-Badí' (instead of Aba-Badí' ) .

(5) To use flat accents instead of acute, e.g. Bāb instead of Báb.

(6) To separate more clearly the components of a Persian idáfa construction in which the first component ends in -ih, -á, -ú, -í. e.g. 'Alí-yi-Kaní rather than 'Alíy-i-Kaní.

(7) To eliminate certain usages such as Mazandarán (rather than Mazindarán).

(8) Common place-names such as Baghdad and Shiraz require no transliteration.



(9) To drop the final hamza in all cases, e.g. Qayyúmu'l-Asmá.

(10) To use w for the silent و, e.g. Khwarazm.

This seems a very large list of alterations but in practical terms, the effects that it will have on Bahá'í texts would be very slight. The suggested change in accenting would not alter the appearance of the text greatly and the other changes occur relatively infrequently. Thus for example, I counted only 25 changes (other than accenting) in the Prologue and first three chapters (59 pages) of Balyuzi's The Báb.

Thus with comparatively minor changes in form, one can remove most of the problems and inconsistencies in the present Bahá'í system and bring the system more into line with that followed by most other publications in this field. This is particularly important in a work of the nature of that which I am editing since it is our intention to send the book to a number of learned journals for review and it would be regrettable if this and other books published were to be met with the same sort of criticism as that which has been levelled by Ellwell-Sutton.

If you desire any clarification of the points raised in this letter, I will be in Haifa during the summer,

Warmest Bahá'í greetings,

M. Momen

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE  
BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

Department of the Secretariat

October 20, 1978

Dr. Moojan Momen  
14/15 Shelby Row  
Cambridge  
England

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Your letter of 15 August 1978 making various recommendations about the transliteration of Arabic and Persian terms into the Roman alphabet was referred by the Universal House of Justice to an ad hoc committee.

The report of that committee has now been presented and the Universal House of Justice has instructed us to send you the enclosed copy for your comments, which it will be glad to receive.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

*(Mrs.) Laraine Kerfoot*  
For Department of the Secretariat

Enclosure

44

MEMORANDUM

To: The Universal House of Justice

Date: October 13, 1978

From: Ad hoc Committee

Subject: Transliteration - Dr. Moojan Momen's letter of 15 August 1978

There is no doubt that a number of inconsistencies and anomalies have crept into the practice of Bahá'ís in transliterating Arabic and Persian terms. We feel Dr. Momen's letter presents a very helpful approach to overcoming these, although we differ with him in a number of his specific recommendations. We shall make a few general observations first on the matter of transliteration and shall then comment on the recommendations listed on page 3 of his letter.

- 1) It is of great practical value to Bahá'ís to have a system that can transliterate both Arabic and Persian. Our Holy Writings are in both languages and thus the same term sometimes appears in Persian and sometimes in Arabic. While, therefore, the system is basically one of transliteration, we feel that it is an advantage rather than otherwise for it to be able to indicate in various minor ways the difference between Persian and Arabic usages, especially in the pronunciation of vowels.
- 2) It must be remembered that the system is for use not merely for English publications, but for publications in all those languages using the Roman alphabet, except for Turkish. If, therefore, we are to consider the current usage of orientalists, we should consider that of orientalists writing in German, French, Spanish, Italian, etc. as well as those writing in English.
- 3) The primary purpose, however, is not for scholarly works, but to provide a system which can be used by all Bahá'ís writing in the Roman alphabet. In other words, while it should be possible for scholars to know immediately from the transliterated form how a word was written in the original text, the system is primarily intended for use by laymen. This influences our views in a number of ways, which will be apparent in our specific comments below. It is for this reason, for example, that we favour showing the assimilation of the Arabic definite article in the spelling, as the present system does, although this is a departure from strict "transliteration".
- 4) An important factor is continuity. The present system is now well known to those Bahá'ís who use the Roman alphabet, therefore any changes should be minimal.
- 5) On Dr. Momen's ten specific recommendations we have the following comments.
  - 5.1) We do not see the virtue in standardising the spelling of names as suggested. This is one of the instances where we value the ability of the present system to indicate the Persian pronunciation of what is otherwise an Arabic word. The Persians say "Násiri'd-Dín" and we prefer it to be spelt that way.

Cont'd/....

- 5.2) Here again, the same applies, as Persians generally, when pronouncing Arabic words, do not normally observe Arabic grammatical rules.
- 5.3) We agree with this recommendation: to use the ending -a when the word is in an Arabic context and -ih when it is in a Persian one.
- 5.4) Our comment is the same as in 5.1 above.
- 5.5) Here we refer to our point 3 above. The system is intended for day-to-day use by ordinary Bahá'ís, and only secondarily by orientalists. Far more typewriters use the acute accent than the flat accent. Although the acute accents may look strange and antiquated to orientalists, they are much more familiar and natural to the average reader. Here, however, since the purpose of the accent is merely to indicate a long vowel, we see no objection to permitting Bahá'í orientalists to use the horizontal accent (or indeed a circumflex or any other accent) in their scholarly works if they so wish, although, as stated above, we prefer the acute accent and this should be retained for general Bahá'í usage.
- 5.6) We do not agree with this recommendation, but perhaps Dr. Momen would like to discuss it with his publishers. We feel that the effect on the average reader of spelling 'Alf-y-i-Kanī as 'Alī-yi-Kanī might be to cause him to stress the 'yi' unconsciously.
- 5.7) We see no reason to eliminate certain usages in transliterating place-names, as some are pronounced in two ways and both are good usage. A similar case in English is the alternate spellings 'farther' and 'further'.
- 5.8) The Guardian himself left untransliterated place-names such as Mecca which have a well-established English usage. Others, such as Baghdád, Shīráz and 'Akká he did transliterate. We feel this is a matter of judgement that must be left to the author and publisher and may well vary from country to country, or even from book to book depending upon the context and the audience for which it is written.
- 5.9) The hamza is dropped in Persian but not in Arabic. Thus, Qayyúm'l-Asmá', being an Arabic form, needs a hamza at the end, but the Persian form, Qayyúm-i-Asmá does not require it. In quotations from the Writings one should use the Arabic or Persian forms of such names in accordance with the original. If the original uses Arabic, one should transliterate accordingly, and so with Persian. In original writing an author, we feel, should be free to use either as he wishes, as both are current in Bahá'í literature. Thus, although the Most Holy Book is written in Arabic, it is much more common to refer to it in other places by the Persian variant of its name, the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, and this, we feel, is entirely permissible.

Memorandum: Dr. Momen's letter 15.8.78

Page 3

5.10) As such silent letters are very rare we feel it can be left to the decision of individual authors and publishers whether or not they should be transliterated. Our preference is to omit them.

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**ADDENDUM EIGHT : SECOND INTERCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE  
UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE ON TRANSLITERATION**

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58 Birdwood Road  
Cambridge CB1 3SU  
2nd November 1978.

Universal House of Justice  
P.O. Box 155 Haifa  
Israel

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Thank you for your letter of 20th October 1978 forwarding the report of the ad hoc committee on transliteration.

It is somewhat difficult for me to comment on this report since the whole of the report is based on premises which differ from those of my original letter. My primary consideration in drafting this letter was to eliminate the inconsistencies which arise from the fact that the present Bahá'í system is neither wholly a system of transliteration of the written word nor wholly a system of transcription of pronunciation; it is perched somewhere between the two stools and must inevitably fall between them on occasion (as is pointed out, in the review by Elwell-Sutton of Mr. Balyuzi's book Muhammad and the Course of Islam). I feel that as there is unquestionably going to be a great growth in the volume of literature produced by Bahá'í scholars and as this will involve increasing use of names and terms borrowed from Persian and Arabic sources, it is important to eliminate inconsistencies at this stage rather than have to do it later.

The ad hoc committee, on the other hand, seems to regard the ability of the present system to include elements of Persian pronunciation as being of greater importance despite the inconsistencies that such a flexibility entails. The ad hoc committee also considers that the present system aids the layman although I must admit that when the inconsistencies of the present system allow for example both Futuhát-i-Makkiyyih (God Passes By, p. 122) and Futuhata'l-Makkiyyah (Balyuzi, Muhammad p.280 ) and even Marághihí and Maraghi'í in the same book (Nabíl's Narrative, Wilmette 1962, p.432 and 458 ), I wonder whether the present system is being of service even to the layman.

Having made these general comments, I will now pass on to consider the specific points made by the committee.

1) See above.

2) The systems in general use among French and German orientalisists are even further removed from the Bahá'í system than the system used by English-speaking orientalisists. The proposals of my original letter would tend to close the gap a little.

3) I have made no objection to showing the assimilation of the Arabic definite article since the correct form in the Arabic is to place a shadda over the first letter of the word the definite article of which is to be assimilated, in my opinion both Al-Shams and Ash-Shams are correct transliterations of الشمس and since the Bahá'í system has favoured the latter, I see no objection to continuing it.

4) I have borne in mind the factor of continuity in putting forward these proposals, in that I have kept them to the minimum necessary to ensure consistency. Otherwise there would have been a large number of other points I would like to have raised: for example, I doubt whether there is any benefit in indicating the idafa in Persian names. Why not just Mulla Husayn Bushrú'í? After all you do not write Tarāzu'llāh-yi-Samandarí, although this is how Persians would pronounce the name.

5.1) In fact neither i nor u correctly transcribes the sound made by Persians in the middle of Naṣíru'd-Dín. Most Persians elide this vowel into a very short indistinguishable sound. The point is made clear by referring to a title that has not previously been transliterated. If one were to take the title نام الدین Persians would disagree as to whether this should be transliterated Ša'rimu'd-Dawlih or Šarimi'd-Daulih. Whereas the truth is that the connecting vowel is an intermediate sound and either u or i would do. Thus inconsistencies will inevitably arise and both forms may turn up in different writers' works. Lastly, may I point out that the voluminous encyclopaedic dictionary Dihkhudá's Lughat-Námih points this word thus: Naṣíru'd-Dín, in over 100 entries under this name including Naṣíru'd-Dín Sháh (Volume for p. 158-166).

5.2) The committee's comment on this point was: "Here again, the same applies, as Persians generally, when pronouncing Arabic words, do not normally observe Arabic grammatical rules." I would ask the question why when transliterating a word from Arabic into Latin characters for an English book we are obliged to approach the matter from the point of view of how a Persian would have pronounced the Arabic word. I realise that the Bahá'í Faith originated in Persia but I wonder to what extent we are justified in Persianising everything. Shaykh Ahmad was an Arab and undoubtedly called himself Shaykh Ahmad al-Ahsá'í. Similarly we have Persianised Turkish names. Thus I doubt whether Kibrisi Mehmed Paşa knew any Persian at all but his name has been Persianised to Muhammad Pásháy-i-Qibrisí. The logical extension of this would be to have Luváy-i-Gitsingir and Hippulít-i-Dirayfús. Moreover I wonder how Arabs and Turks feel about this Persianisation of their language and their names.

If the aim is to bring everything to the way Persians would pronounce it, why not adopt a system designed particularly for that. There is in existence a very good system which transliterates q̣ as ž, i as e, u as o, etc., much closer to the Persian pronunciation than the present Bahá'í system.

5.5) I query the statement that "Far more typewriters use the acute accent than the flat accent". Typewriters in England and America are certainly not sold with an acute accent mark, whereas all typewriters have a hyphen mark which can be moved up to form a horizontal accent.

5.6) This point is fully explained in point 3 on page 2 of my previous letter. Despite the committee's comment, I feel that the greater clarity of Mullá 'Alí-yi-Kaní overrides the advantages of Mullá 'Alíy-i-Kaní. For example I wonder how many lay Bahá'ís will immediately recognize that the first component of, Qibliy-i-'Álam is the word Qiblih with which they are probably familiar.

5.7) I would accept the committee's point that both usages occur. But once again some degree of definition and consistency is required. A useful standard would be Dikḥudá's Lughat-Námih (despite its incompleteness) or for geographical names Farhang-i-Jugráfiyá'i-yi-Írán ( published by the Geographical Committee of the Iranian Army General Staff ). The latter work gives Mazandaran incidentally.

In conclusion, I can only repeat the point made at the beginning of this letter: the principal point is whether we are interested in eliminating inconsistencies or maintaining some degree of flexibility with regard to pronunciation. I think the point regarding Persianisation is also worth further consideration as it affects other areas also.

With loving Bahá'í greetings

M. Momen

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THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE  
BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

Department of the Secretariat

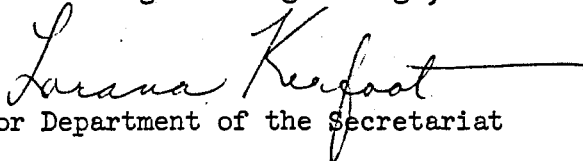
March 8, 1979

Dr. Moojan Momen  
14/15 Shelby Row  
Cambridge  
England

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Consideration of your letter of 2 November 1978 was delayed due to pressures of the work load at the World Centre, but the Universal House of Justice now instructs us to send you the enclosed copy of the report of the ad hoc committee.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

  
For Department of the Secretariat

Enclosure

## MEMORANDUM

To: The Universal House of Justice

Date: February 27, 1979

From: Ad Hoc Committee

Subject: Transliteration - Dr. Moojan Momen's letter of 2 November 1978

The committee found it helpful to receive Dr. Momen's further comments and agrees that our earlier report, being based on premises different from those on which his letter of 15 August 1978 was based, brings us to different conclusions which we hope we set out clearly in our report of 13 October. It is our feeling, however, that we are not too far apart in our thinking and that the results to which our premises necessarily lead offer a considerable amount of leeway to scholars.

With respect to obvious errors, such as the erroneous transliteration of Marághih in the third paragraph of Dr. Momen's letter of 2 November 1978, these require correction and it would be very useful if Dr. Momen would draw to the attention of the World Centre any such errors which appear in basic Bahá'í works.

We wish to comment on a few of the numbered points in Dr. Momen's letter:

- No. 4: We feel that Dr. Momen has illustrated perfectly the type of flexibility which the Committee regards as desirable and which the Universal House of Justice has permitted; e.g.
- Place names and other words that have a current form in a western language do not have to be transliterated—for instance, Mecca, Islam, etc.
  - In many cases we use personal names as the individuals transliterate them; e.g. Zikru'lláh Khádem, Jalál Kházeḥ, etc.
  - It is useful to leave the idáfa in such cases as Mullá Husayn-i-Bushrú'í, where the idáfa designates the geographical area from which he came. In the second example Dr. Momen gives, the idáfa may be dropped, since "Samandarí" is not merely a descriptive word but is Mr. Samandarí's surname.
- No. 5.1: The standardization of "u" rather than "i", as in the examples given by Dr. Momen, could be recommended to the Universal House of Justice as it is admittedly inconsistent in Bahá'í books at present. In all such cases the Committee recommends following the vowel pointing used in some reasonably authoritative Persian dictionary such as Dihkhudá's "Lughat-Námih".
- No. 5.2: The Committee's recommendation was, not to Persianize indiscriminately, but to leave Bahá'ís free to use either the Arabic or Persian form as they prefer and, in translations, to use whatever is the form used in the original. The original Writings of the Faith, in Persian, are permeated with Arabic to the point where the two languages at times seem inter-laced.

Cont'd/....

To: The Universal House of Justice

February 27, 1979  
Page 2

No. 5.2 (cont'd.):

Turkish, of course, presents a special case, as that language now has its own official Romanized spelling.

As to the transliteration of the Persian form of western names, this would not be relevant in cases where the correct western name is known beyond doubt, but it might be an excellent safeguard in the many instances where it is uncertain. In instances of ambiguity perhaps the transliteration of the original could be given in a footnote if not set out in the body of the text.

No. 5.5: The Committee referred not only to English and American usage but to usage of all western languages having the Roman alphabet. It is felt that to acquire in English-speaking countries a typewriter with an acute accent does not present a real difficulty.

No. 5.7: The Committee gratefully acknowledges Dr. Momen's recommendation concerning reference works to establish standards and increase consistency.

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## ADDENDUM NINE: 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ' ON TRANSLITERATION

I am grateful to Stephen Lambden for drawing my attention to an important preliminary to the development of the Bahá'í Transliteration system. This was a statement by 'Abdu'l-Bahá' regarding the spelling of the name of "Bahá'u'lláh" and of "Mashriqu'l-Adhkár". This was published in the *Star of the West*, shortly before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing (vol. 12 (George Ronald reprint, vol. 7), September 1921, pp. 168-170).

# STAR OF THE WEST

## TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA

O thou STAR OF THE WEST!

Be thou happy! Be thou happy! Shouldst thou continue to remain firm and eternal, ere long, thou shalt become the Star of the East and shalt spread in every country and clime. Thou art the first paper of the Bahais which is organized in the country of America. Although for the present thy subscribers are limited, thy form is small and thy voice weak, yet shouldst thou stand unshakable, become the object of the attention of the friends and the center of the generosity of the leaders of the faith who are firm in the Covenant, in the future thy subscribers will become hosts after hosts like unto the waves of the sea; thy volume will increase, thy arena will become vast and spacious and thy voice and fame will be raised and become world-wide—and at last thou shalt become the first paper of the world of humanity. Yet all these depend upon *firmness, firmness, firmness!*

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

## TABLET FROM ABDUL-BAHA

O ye apostles of BAHÁ 'ULLAH—May my life be a ransom to you!

Similarly, the Magazine, the STAR OF THE WEST, must be edited in the utmost regularity, but its contents must be the promulgator of the Cause of God—so that both in the East and the West, they may become informed with the most important events.

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

Editorial Staff: ALBERT R. WINDUST—GERTRUDE BUIKEMA—DR. ZIA M. BAGDADI  
Honorary Member: MIRZA AHMAD SOHRAB

Vol. 12

Ezzat 1, 77 (September 8, 1921)

No. 10

## Tablet from Abdul-Baha regarding spelling of Sacred Name

To the maid-servant of God, Miss Jean Masson (Chicago)—Unto her be the Glory of God, the Most Glorious!—Care of his honor, Mr. Roy Wilhelm (New York):

*He Is God!*

O thou harbinger of the Kingdom!

Thy letter has been received. Its contents indicate that thou art occupied in writing a book in answer to the one who has written against the Truth. Thou asked as to how ye should spell in English the blessed name of His Holiness, BAHÁ 'ULLAH and also Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar. Ye should spell them thus: BAHÁ 'ULLAH and Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar.

It is my hope that in writing this book thou wilt be confirmed. The language, however, must be very lenient and mild. Thou shouldst write it with the utmost politeness. Thou shouldst not look at the expressions of that hostile person, because he was a man full of prejudice and very impolite. Anybody who is endowed with a slight sense of fairness understands that what this person has written is based on the utmost self-interestedness and enmity. This very fact is a sufficient proof showing his fallacy.

Unto thee be the Glory of Abha!

(Signed) ABDUL-BAHA ABBAS.

(Translated by Aziz 'Ullah Khan S. Bahadur, Haifa, Palestine, April 29, 1921.)

Haifa, Palestine,  
May 17, 1921.

Miss Jean Masson,  
My dear Bahai sister:

I am sorry your letter to the Master was kept so long unanswered. It was

due partly to the sickness of the Beloved and partly to his thousand-sided occupation. However, I am glad at last there offered some opportunity when your letter was presented and a Tablet was revealed.

As to the spelling of the two names, BAHA 'ULLAH and Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar, the standard is given by the Master in this same Tablet of yours. The explanation is that BAHA 'ULLAH is composed of two words, Baha and Allah (Glory and God). BAHA 'ULLAH means the Glory of God. Now the *U* signifies *of*. This vowel, when introduced between these two words, joins them together, but in pronunciation the *A* of Allah is dropped and replaced by the same *U*-vowel. We put an apostrophe between the two words in order to show that a letter, i. e., *A*, is dropped and we capitalize the *U* because it replaces the *A* of Allah which is in capital.

Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar is also composed of two words, Mashreq and El-Azkar (Mashreq—dawning place; El—the; Azkar—mentions or prayers or communes). Again *U* signifies *of*. When we put these two words together the *E* of El is dropped in pronunciation and

so that *U*-vowel takes its place. We put an apostrophe to show that the letter *E* is dropped and we capitalize the *U*-vowel because it replaces the *E* of El which is in capital.

I had the pleasure of reading your pamphlet on the Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar. I admired the style of your writing and the tactfulness you have exhibited in it. It is sanctioned by the Master. You will kindly send us many copies for distribution. It is written in a way that will not arouse jealousy in the outside readers.

Will you kindly remember me to our revered sisters, Mrs. True, Arna True, Dr. Appel and Mrs. Houser? Also to our dear brother, Dr. Bagdadi.

With Bahai love and greeting, I remain,

Your brother in the Covenant of God,

*Aziz 'Ullah S. Bahadur.*

The Tablet above concerning the spelling of the sacred name, BAHA 'ULLAH, and of Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar, settles conclusively a matter that has long created among American believers a friendly divergence of opinion.

The original spelling of the name of the Blessed Perfection, as given to Americans, was, as we know, BAHA ULLAH, sometimes BEHA ULLAH. Some of us, in the early days of the Cause in the West, found difficulty in its correct pronunciation. We did not seem to understand, some of us, that 'a' and 'u' have other sounds in the English language besides long 'a' and long 'u,' hence that most sacred name was often, out of our ignorance, pronounced incorrectly and sometimes irreligiously.

If there is one name that is the perfection of the beautiful, the musical, pronounced, enunciated correctly and sacredly, it is BAHA 'ULLAH. Pronounced incorrectly, irreverently, it is sacrilegious. So to aid us in our ignorance, our difficulty in the enunciation

of Arabic letters, one of the friends, Mr. Roy Wilhelm, I believe, supplicated Abdul-Baha to settle the difficulty, suggesting that the letter 'o' instead of 'u' would aid Americans in arriving at the correct pronunciation.

Abdul-Baha responded to the effect that the name of the Blessed Beauty should be spelled BAHA 'O'LLAH. This Command has been adhered to religiously by most of the friends in America, though some have always regarded the original spelling, BAHA ULLAH, with deepest reverence and longing.

European Bahais seem never to have adopted the American spelling, nor have European scholars outside the Bahai ranks. Manifestly the new spelling was given only to Americans to aid us in our immaturity, our Bahai childhood.

Today, however, we have passed beyond the period of our infancy in the Bahai Cause. Persian and Arabic terms and words have grown singularly and beautifully familiar to us. And many of us have felt for long that we have

matured sufficiently to be given the correct spelling, at least of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH. We have felt also that a unified spelling of the sacred names throughout the Bahai world would make for the universal unification, which is one of the basic principles of the Bahai Cause. We have felt, also, not only that there should be a standardized spelling in all Bahai literature, but that Bahai literature should be the most perfect literature in the world, so elevating it above all criticism by scholars and the unfriendly.

Being engaged upon a most important work in the interest of the Bahai Cause, a work which, when completed, must compete scholastically, as well as historically, with all literature inimical to the Cause, I supplicated Abdul-Baha for the correct spelling of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH and Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar. Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar has also passed through various etymological changes in our American terminology in our effort to arrive at its correct spelling.

In response to this supplication came the Tablet above, with the very clear letter of explanation by Aziz 'Ullah S. Bahadur, stating explicitly the correct spelling of both words.

"Ye should spell them thus: BAHĀ 'ULLĀH and Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar."

The STAR OF THE WEST, standing as

it does for the pure Teachings, the pure creative Word, is the logical medium for the dissemination throughout the Bahai world of this explicit instruction as to the spelling of the two names. It is vastly important that we should have a standardized spelling of all oriental Bahai terminologies and at some future date, through this same medium, a list will be given with the correct spelling from the pen of the supreme Authority, Abdul-Baha.

As to the pronunciation of BAHĀ 'ULLĀH and Mashreq 'Ul-Azkar, not much need be said. But let us remind ourselves that by accenting the final syllables of the words we express in our voice somewhat of the reverence that is in our hearts.

Let us remind ourselves also that the first 'a' in Baha corresponds in sound most closely to the 'a' in 'ask,' and the 'U' in 'Ullah' to the 'u' in 'full.'

Divided into syllables, then, we have: BA-HĀ 'UL-LĀH'.

Mash-req' 'Ul-Az-kar'.

I am sure it is as deep a satisfaction to every American Bahai, as to myself, to have revealed the authorized spelling of these two names, that of the Manifestation of God and the great Bahai Institution.

*Jean Masson.*

Stephen Lambden

Set forth below are some selected, (largely) very recent transliteration systems adopted in standard encyclopaedias and in a few periodical publications and books. They are only loosely arranged in chronological order. It will be seen that the use of flat macrons has for decades been very widely adopted to indicate long vowels in Arabic-Persian transliteration. The antero-palatals ( sun letters = al-ḥurūf al-shamsiyya ) are also very widely ignored in transliterating the Arabic definite article ( ال , al- ). The possibly complicating factor of trying to represent Persian pronunciation in transliteration is not generally taken into account. It seems to me that there remains some way to go before Bahā'ī scholars universally agree upon a fully coherent transliteration system suitable for academic use and in line with internationally-respected transliteration systems ( see below ). Having said this, I am not implying that all Bahā'ī publications should follow a modern academically-respected transliteration norm.

The system adopted by Shoghi Effendi took into account, as Moojan Momen has ably illustrated, internationally-adopted transliteration methods for Persian and Arabic. It is the case today however, that the Bahā'ī method seems – at least to many working in academe – somewhat archaic; a little out of step with modern academically-informed oriental scholarship. Perhaps contemporary Bahā'ī academics might do well to follow Shoghi Effendi's example and give renewed weight to internationally-respected transliteration systems. Should, at some stage in the not-too-distant future, something as well researched and set forth as the 'transliteration rules' contained in the Encyclopaedia Judaica ( see p. 61 below ), be worked out and consulted upon ?

# Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics

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## SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION

## I. HEBREW

CONSONANTS			
·	א	l	ל
b, bh	ב	m	מ
g, gh	ג	n	נ
d, dh	ד	s	ס
h	ה	·	·
v, w	ו	p, ph	פ
z	ז	q	ק
q or ch	כ	r	ר
t	ט	ś, sh	ש
y or j	י	t, th	ת
k, kh	כּ		

VOWELS			
Short.	Long and Diphthongal.		Shevas.
a	א	א	א
e	ē, ē	אֵ, אֵי	ע
i	i	אִ, אִי	י
o	ō, ō	אֹ, אֹי	ו
u	ū	אֻ, אֻי	וּ

א	אֵ	אִ	אֹ	אֻ	} Composite sh'vas. (simple sh'va).
ע	אֵי	אִי	אֹי	אֻי	
י	אִי	אִי	אֹי	אֻי	
ו	אֹי	אֹי	אֹי	אֹי	

## II. ARABIC

CONSONANTS			
·	ا	q	ق
b	ب	t	ط
t	ت	z	ظ
th	ث	·	ع
j	ج	gh	غ
h	ح	f	ف
h	ه	q	ق
d	د	k	ك
dh	ذ	l	ل
r	ر	m	م
z	ز	n	ن
s	س	h	ه
sh	ش	v, w	و
q	ق	y	ي

## SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION

II. ARABIC—*continued*

VOWELS		
Short.	Long.	Diphthong.
a    َ	ā    ِ	ai    اِى
i    ِ	i    ِى	au    اُو
u    ُ	ū    ِو	

III. PERSIAN AND HINDUSTANI<sup>1</sup>

The following in addition to the Arabic transliteration above

p    پ	z    ز
t    ت	r    ر
s    س	zh    ذ
ch    چ	z    ض
d    د	g    گ

<sup>1</sup> The diacritical marks in this scheme are sometimes omitted in transliteration when absolute accuracy is not required, the pronunciation of *z* being the same as that of *s*, while *z*, *z*, *z*, are all pronounced alike.

## IV. SANSKRIT

## CONSONANTS

Gutturals—k, kh; g, gh; ṅ (=ng in finger).  
 Palatals—ch (=ch in church), chh; j, jh; ñ (=n in onion).  
 Cerebrals—t, ṭh; ḍ, ḍh; ṇ (a sound peculiar to India).  
 Dentals—t, th; d, dh; n (=n in not).  
 Labials—p, ph; b, bh; m.  
 Semi-vowels—y; r; l; v.  
 Sibilants—ś or sh; ṣ or sḥ; s.  
 Aspirate—h.  
 anunāsika (◌ं); annvāra, m̐; visarga, ḥ; avagraha (◌').

## VOWELS

SIMPLE.	DIPHTHONGAL.
a    ā    or    ॐ	e    ॐ
i    ī    or    ॐ	o    ॐ
u    ū    or    ॐ	
ṛ    ॠ	
ḷ	

# THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF ISLAM

NEW EDITION

1960-

PREPARED BY A NUMBER OF  
LEADING ORIENTALISTS

EDITED BY AN EDITORIAL COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF  
H. A. R. GIBB, J. H. KRAMERS, E. LÉVI-PROVENÇAL, J. SCHACHT

## LIST OF TRANSLITERATIONS

### SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC CHARACTERS:

Consonants			Long Vowels	Diphthongs
ا (except when initial)	ز	z	آ	aw
ب	س	s	و	ay
ت	ش	sh	ي	
ث	ص	s		īyy (final form ī)
ج	ض	ḍ		uww (final form ū)
ح	ط	ṭ		
خ	ظ	ẓ		
د	ع	ʿ		
ذ	غ	gh		
ر	ف	f		

اَ a; at (construct state)

ال (article), al- and ʾl- (even before the antero-palatals)

### PERSIAN, TURKISH AND URDU ADDITIONS TO THE ARABIC ALPHABET:

پ	p	ژ	zh	ٹ	t	ف	f
چ	č	ق or گ	g (sometimes ğ in Turkish)	د	d		

### Additional vowels:

- a) Turkish: e, ı, o, ö, ü. Diacritical signs proper to Arabic are, in principle, not used in words of Turkish etymology.  
b) Urdu: ē, ō.

For modern Turkish, the official orthography adopted by the Turkish Republic in 1928 is used.  
The following letters may be noted:

c = ç	ğ = ğ	j = ĵ	k = k and ḳ	t = t and ṭ
ç = č	h = h, ħ and kh	ş = sh	s = s, ş and sh	z = z, ẓ, ç and dh

### SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION OF CYRILLIC CHARACTERS:

а	a	е	e	к	k	п	p	ф	f	ш	shč	ю	yu
б	b	ж	ž	л	l	р	r	х	kh	ы	ı	я	ya
в	v	з	z	м	m	с	s	ц	ts	ь	ʼ	ѣ	ě
г	g	н	n	н	n	т	t	ч	č	ѐ	é		
д	d	й	y	о	o	у	u	ш	sh	э	é		

# ENCYCLOPAEDIA JUDAICA

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## TRANSLITERATION RULES 91

### ARABIC

أ	a <sup>1</sup>	ض	ḍ
ب	b	ط	t
ت	t	ظ	ẓ
ث	th	ع	c
ج	j	غ	gh
ح	h	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	ه	h
ش	sh	و	w
ص	ṣ	ي	y
ـ	a	أ	ā
ـ	i	إ	ī
ـ	u	ؤ	ū
و	aw	ـ	īyy <sup>2</sup>
ي	ay	و	uww <sup>2</sup>

1. not indicated when initial
2. see note (f)

- a) The EJ follows the *Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer* and the *Times Atlas* in transliteration of Arabic place names. Sites that appear in neither are transliterated according to the table above, and subject to the following notes.
- b) The EJ follows the *Columbia Encyclopaedia* in transliteration of Arabic names. Personal names that do not therein appear are transliterated according to the table above and subject to the following notes (e.g., Ali rather than 'Alī, Suleiman rather than Sulayman).
- c) The EJ follows the *Webster's Third International Dictionary, Unabridged* in transliteration of Arabic terms that have been integrated into the English language.
- d) The term "Abu" will thus appear, usually in disregard of inflection.
- e) Nunnation (end vowels, *tanwīn*) are dropped in transliteration.
- f) Gemination (*tashdīd*) is indicated by the doubling of the geminated letter, unless an end letter, in which case the gemination is dropped.
- g) The definitive article *al-* will always be thus transliterated, unless subject to one of the modifying notes (e.g., El-Arish rather than al-'Arīsh; modification according to note (a)).
- h) The Arabic transliteration disregards the Sun Letters (the antero-palatals (*al-Ḥurūf al-Shamsiyya*)).
- i) The *tā-marbūṭa* (o) is omitted in transliteration, unless in construct-state (e.g., *Khirba* but *Khirbat Mishmish*).

These modifying notes may lead to various inconsistencies in the Arabic transliteration, but this policy has deliberately been adopted to gain smoother reading of Arabic terms and names.

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

(MIDDLE EAST STUDIES ASSOCIATION, NEW YORK )

## TRANSLITERATION GUIDE FOR CONTRIBUTORS — :

### CONSONANTS

Column Headings: A = Arabic, P = Persian, OT = Ottoman Turkish, MT = Modern Turkish

A	P	OT	MT	A	P	OT	MT	A	P	OT	MT
ع	ب	ب	—	ز	zh	ج	ج	ك	—	گ	گ
ب	b	b	b or p	س	s	س	s	ل	l	l	l
ت	p	p	p	ش	sh	ش	sh	م	m	m	m
ث	t	t	t	ص	s	ص	s	ن	n	n	n
ث	s	s	s	د	z	ذ	z	ه	h	h <sup>3</sup>	h <sup>3</sup>
ج	j	c	c	ط	t	ط	t	و	w	v or u	v
ح	ch	ç	ç	ظ	z	ز	z	ي	y	y	y
خ	h	h	h	ع	‘	‘	—	ا	-a <sup>1</sup>		
ك	kh	h	h	غ	gh	g or ğ	g or ğ	ال	2		
د	d	d	d	ف	f	f	f				
ذ	z	z	z	ق	q	k	k				
ر	r	r	r	ك	k or g	k or n	k or n				
ز	z	z	z			or y	or y				
						or ğ	or ğ				

<sup>1</sup> (-at in construct state)  
<sup>2</sup> (article) al- and 'l-  
<sup>3</sup> (when not final)

### VOWELS

ARABIC AND PERSIAN	OTTOMAN TURKISH	MODERN TURKISH
<i>Long</i>   or ع	â { words of Arabic	â
و	û { and Persian	û
ي	î { origin only	î
<i>Doubled</i> "z	iy (final form î)	iy (final form î)
و'	uww (final form û), etc.	uvv
<i>Diphthongs</i> و'	au or aw	ev
ي	ai or ay	ey
<i>Short</i> -	a or e	a or e
-	u or ü	u or ü
-	o or ö	o or ö
-	i or i	i or i

For Ottoman Turkish, authors may either transliterate or use the modern Turkish orthography. Articles submitted in French and German may be transliterated according to the systems common in those languages.

# A CONCORDANCE OF THE QUR'AN

Hanna E. Kassis    UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS    1983  
Berkeley   Los Angeles   London

## TRANSLITERATIONS

The following list is arranged according to the English alphabetical order, with the insertion of the romanized Arabic consonants that have no phonemic or alphabetical equivalents in English. The order is that in which the entries are arranged in the Concordance.

### CONSONANTS

LETTER	ARABIC NAME	COMMENTS
'	<i>alif</i>	Also known as the <i>hamzah</i> . A glottal stop which at the beginning of a word is not transliterated but is implied in the vowel that follows it. In any other position it is transliterated as '. (See "Vowels and Diphthongs", below)
‘	<i>‘ayn</i>	A laryngeal without equivalent in any Western language
b	<i>bā</i>	= English "b"
d	<i>dāl</i>	= English "d"
dh	<i>dhāl</i>	Pronounced as "th" in "that"
ḍ	<i>ḍād</i>	A velarized "d"; no English equivalent
f	<i>fā</i>	= English "f"
gh	<i>ghayn</i>	Roughly equivalent to the French "r"
h	<i>hā</i>	= English "h"
ḥ	<i>ḥā</i>	A fricative "h"; no English equivalent
j	<i>jīm</i>	Pronounced as "j" in "just"

<i>k</i>	<i>kāf</i>	= English "k"
<i>kh</i>	<i>khā</i>	Roughly equivalent to the "ch" in "Bach"
<i>l</i>	<i>lām</i>	= French "l"
<i>m</i>	<i>mīm</i>	= English "m"
<i>n</i>	<i>nūn</i>	= English "n"
<i>q</i>	<i>qāf</i>	A velarized "k"; no English equivalent
<i>r</i>	<i>rā</i>	= Spanish "r"
<i>s</i>	<i>sīn</i>	= English "s"
<i>sh</i>	<i>shīn</i>	Pronounced as "sh"
<i>ṣ</i>	<i>ṣād</i>	A velarized "s"; no English equivalent
<i>t</i>	<i>tā</i>	= English "t"
<i>th</i>	<i>thā</i>	Pronounced as "th" in "thin"
<i>ṭ</i>	<i>ṭā</i>	A velarized "t", no English equivalent
<i>w</i>	<i>wāw</i>	Pronounced as "w" in "war". (See "Vowels and Diphthongs, below)
<i>y</i>	<i>yā</i>	Pronounced as "y" in "yarn". (See "Vowels and Diphthongs, below)
<i>z</i>	<i>zayn</i>	= English "z"
<i>ẓ</i>	<i>ẓā</i>	A velarized "dh"; no English equivalent

**VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS**

<i>a</i>	<i>fat.hah</i>	Pronounced as "a" in "cattle"
<i>i</i>	<i>kasrah</i>	Pronounced as "i" in "fin"
<i>u</i>	<i>ḍammah</i>	Pronounced as "oo" in "foot"
<i>ā</i>	<i>alif</i> <i>mamdūdah</i>	Pronounced as "a" in "man" or "father", depending on letters that precede and follow it
<i>á</i>	<i>alif</i> <i>maqṣūrah</i>	Pronounced as "a" but occurs only at end of words
<i>ī</i>	<i>yā</i>	Pronounced as "ee" in "meet"
<i>ū</i>	<i>waw</i>	Pronounced as "oo" in "moon"
<i>aw</i>		Roughly equivalent to "ou" in "out"
<i>ay</i>		Roughly equivalent to the cockney "a" in "hate"

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**L.P. ELWELL-SUTTON (Ed.), BIBLIOGRAPHICAL GUIDE TO IRAN** Sussex:  
**Harvester Press + New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books 1983.**

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## TRANSLITERATION

Methods of transliterating and transcribing Persian are legion. In making one's choice one must be guided first of all by the purpose for which the 'latinization' is required. In the preparation of grammars, linguistic studies, and so on, a *transcription* is needed that represents to a limited degree the pronunciation of the original language; the spelling in the original script is of secondary importance, and may even be irrelevant. On the other hand, historical, literary, philosophical or scientific works call for a *transliteration* that will enable the specialist reader easily to convert names and words back into their original spelling; pronunciation is of minor importance, though for the benefit of non-specialist readers it may be desirable that deviation from the actual sounds should not be too great. A further complication in the case of Persian is that many of the names and words are of Arabic origin, and book titles indeed may be in pure Arabic; it is probably preferable for that reason to adopt a transliteration system that is based strictly on the original script, and so can be applied to any language written in that script, regardless of pronunciation. The effect of this is of course to produce 'latin' spellings that often look unfamiliar, but nevertheless are easily interpreted.

A second consideration is that, when transliteration systems, especially for Persian, are already legion, it is undesirable to invent yet another. It was natural therefore for the editorial working party to decide that one of the better-known of existing systems should be adopted, and faced with the choice between those used by the *Cambridge History of Iran*, the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, and the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, they opted for the first.

In compiling a bibliography, a particular problem concerns the names of Iranian or Arab writers who frequently or solely use European languages, and latinize their names for this purpose according to some conception of their own. In the present work the policy adopted has been,

(a) when the author has written only in European languages, to use own spelling;

(b) when he has written in both Persian or Arabic and in a European language, to use the properly transliterated form for his Persian or Arabic works and his own spelling for his European-language works, and in the index to cross-reference from the second to the first. In certain cases the transliterated form has been included in brackets after the European spelling of the name.

The CHI version of the Arabo-Persian alphabet, as adopted for the present work is as follows:

### *Consonants*

' b p t s (Pers.) th (Ar.) j ch h kh khw d z (Pers.) dh (Arab.) r z zh s sh s ž (Pers.) d (Ar.)  
 t z ° gh f q k g l m n v (Pers.) w (Ar.) y

### *Vowels*

a i u ā ī ū ai au



## TRANSLITERATION OF LANGUAGES

*Transliteration* The major transcription problem in Iranian studies results from the difficulty or coordinating the representation of Persian and Arabic words. The system which has found fairly wide acceptance and is used with some variations by the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, the Library of Congress, and the *Cambridge History of Iran* does not entirely suit the rendering of Persian. On the other hand, a scheme designed for Persian does not fit Arabic. Yet so many Arabic words, titles, and phrases are intimately involved in Persian usage that the employment of two systems would be unfeasible and would lead only to chaos. Unfortunately, no amount of ingenuity can devise a scheme ideal for rendering both Persian and Arabic. Any proposed system is bound to prove unsatisfactory in some respect and to offend a cherished habit or usage.

The *Encyclopaedia's* approach to the problem seeks to balance the difficulties of transliteration and those of pronunciation; it aims at an accurate rendering with compact and simple forms. In order not to add to the proliferation of systems, the *Encyclopaedia* has worked out one in conjunction with the Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum and the Persian Heritage Series, after adequate consultation with a number of leading scholars. In this scheme (charted below, p. 4), digraphs have been discarded, and each phoneme is represented by a single letter. The two "anomalies" in the resulting system are *k* used for the voiceless glottal plosive (traditionally *kh*) and *g* for the voiced glottal plosive or affricate ("gh"). Although perhaps jarring at first sight, these renderings are not without precedent in the transliterations used by orientalists.

However, several concessions have been made in order to accommodate current usage and to avoid confusion. Thus the macron indicating vowel length has been retained in *ī* and *ū*, and the Arabic definite article has been written as *al-* even when the *-l* precedes a *šamsī* letter. Compound proper names are indicated as a unit by means of hyphens. When the first element of a name is 'Abd-, Abu-, or Ebn-, the second element is capitalized: when the first element is another word than these three, the second element is in lower case. For example, 'Abd-al-Hayy, Abu'l-Faẓl, Nāser-al-dīn, Neẓām-al-molk.

### Persian and Arabic

The system employed here aims to achieve simplicity and accuracy. It has been jointly adopted by the Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, The Persian Heritage Series, The Persian Studies Series, and the Modern Persian Literature Series. Some common personal titles and frequently cited place names are given in anglicized form: all other terms are transliterated. For further discussion of the transliteration system, see the Introduction, p.1.

CONSONANT			CONSONANT			VOWEL	
	Persian	Arabic	Persian	Arabic		Persian	Arabic
ا	ā		ز	ḏ	ا	ā	
ب	b		ط		ی	ā	
پ	p		ظ		و	ū	
ت	t		ع		ی	i	
ث	t̤, ṯ	ṯ	غ	ġ	ی	a	
ج	j		ف	f	ا	o	
چ	č		ق	q	ا	e	
ح	h		ك	k	ا	a, e	a
خ	k̤		ك	g	ا	aw, ow	aw
ط	k̤		ل	l	ی	ay, ey	ay
د	d		م	m			
ذ	d̤, z̤	ḏ	ن	n			
ر	r		و	v			
ز	z		ه	h			
ژ	ž		ی	y			
س	s						
ش	š						
ص	ṣ						

The letter *z* is represented as *h*.

When Abū or the Arabic preposition *fī* is followed by the article *al-*, the macron is omitted and the vowel letter remains unchanged, i.e., Abu'l-, fī'l-.

ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY Ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. : London 1987 ( Vol. 19 of World Spirituality, An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest ).

## List of Transliterations

### Arabic characters

ا	k
ب	l
ت	m
ث	n
ج	h
ح	w
خ	y
د	ah; at (construct state)
ذ	(article) al- and 'l- even before the anteropalatals)
ر	
ز	
س	
ش	
ص	
ض	
ط	
ظ	
ع	
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q

### long vowels

أ	ā
و	ū
ي	ī

### short vowels

ـَ	a
ـُ	u
ـِ	i

### diphthongs

ـَو	aw
ـَي	ay
ـِي	iiy (final form ī)
ـُو	uww (final form ū)

### Persian letters added to the Arabic alphabet

پ	p
چ	ch
ز	zh
گ	g

## NOTES ON transliteration for contributors to IRAN

## I. OLD AND MIDDLE PERSIAN

It is recognized that no rigid lines can be laid down here, but it is suggested that the Old Persian syllabary should be transliterated according to the table in Kent, *Old Persian. Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, p. 12; that for Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian, the transliteration system given in Andreas-Henning, *Mitteliranische Manichaica*, vol. III, p. 66, should be used; whilst for Pahlavi, the table of alphabets given in Nyberg, *A Manual of Pahlavi*, new edition, p. 129, may be used as a reference for transcription.

## II. ISLAMIC AND MODERN PERSIAN

The system used for the *Cambridge History of Islam* should be used here as far as possible.

## Consonants

## (a) Arabic

ا	ā	ز	z	ق	q
ب	b	س	s	ك	k
ت	t	ش	sh	ل	l
ث	th	ص	ṣ	م	m
ج	j	غ	gh	ن	n
ح	h	ط	ṭ	ه	h
خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	و	w
د	d	ع	ʿ	ي	y
ذ	dh	غ	gh	ا	-a (in construct state: -at)
ر	r	ف	f		

(b) Persian additional and variant forms. The variant forms should generally be used for Iranian names and for Arabic words used in Persian.

پ	p	ز	z	گ	g
ث	ṭ	ژ	zh	و	v
چ	ch	ز	z		

(c) The Persian "silent h" should be transliterated *a*, e.g. *nāma*.

## Vowels

## Arabic or Persian

Short:    a   u   i

Long: | or ی ā

و ū

ی ī

Doubled = iyy (final form ī)

Diphthongs َو au

اِ ai

ی

## NOTES

1. The *izāfa* should be represented by -i, or after long vowels, by -yi, e.g. *umarū-yi jānkī*.
2. The Arabic definite article should be written as al- or l-, even before the so-called "sun letters", e.g. 'Abd al-Malik, Abu 'l-Naṣr.
3. The macrons of Abū and Dhū (Zū) should be omitted before the definite article, e.g. Abu 'l-Abbas (but Abū 'Ubaida).

It is obvious that for the rendering of linguistic and dialectal material, and possibly also for contemporary literary and spoken Persian, this rigorous system of transliteration is inappropriate; contributors should use their discretion here.

## III. GENERAL POINTS

1. Names of persons should be rigorously transliterated.
2. Conventional English equivalents (without macrons or diacritics) should be used for the names of countries, provinces or large towns, e.g. Khurasan, Shiraz. Otherwise, all place-names should be rigorously transliterated. Archaeologists are asked to be especially careful in representing the names of little-known places at or near sites.
3. Modern Turkish names and words should be written in the current romanized Turkish orthography.
4. Where classical Greek and Latin renderings of Old and Middle Persian names exist, these familiar forms should be used for preference.