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Alain Locke Papers, Moorland-Spangman Research Center, Howard University

ALAIN LEROY LOCKE, 1918,
the year he earned a Ph.D. from Harvard University,
and the year he formally embraced the Bahá'í Faith

Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism

by Christopher Buck

African American philosopher Alain Locke is arguably the most profound and important Western Bahá'í philosopher to date. Except for one 1979 article in a Bahá'í periodical, scholarship on Locke has neither seriously taken into account his Bahá'í identity nor the Faith's influence on his work. The present study, based largely on archival sources, contributes to research on this "missing" dimension of Locke's complex life and thought. It examines Locke's worldview as a Bahá'í, his secular perspective as a philosopher, and the synergy between his confessional and professional essays. This study also argues that Locke had a fluid hierarchy of values—loyalty, tolerance, reciprocity, cultural relativism, and pluralism (the philosophical equivalent of "unity in diversity")—and that this hierarchy represents a progression and application of quintessentially Bahá'í ideals. Locke's distinction as a "Bahá'í philosopher" may therefore be justified on ideological as well as historical grounds. Locke "translated" Bahá'í ideals "into more secular terms" so that "a greater practical range will be opened up for the application and final vindication of the Bahá'í principles" in order to achieve "a positive multiplication of spiritual power."¹

One can appreciate the deep-seated desire and the ever-recurrent but Utopian dream of the idealist that somehow a single faith, a common culture, an all-embracing institutional life and its confraternity should some day unite man by merging all his loyalties and culture values. But even with almost complete intercommunication within practical

grasp, that day seems distant, especially since we have as great a need for cultural pluralism in a single unit of society as in a nation as large and as composite as our own . . . The pluralist way to unity seems by far the most practicable.

—Alain Locke
 “Pluralism and Ideological Peace” (1947).²

Bahá'í philosopher?

Recent scholarship on the African American philosopher and aesthete, Alain LeRoy Locke (d. 1954), has brought his work “back to influential life.”³ Locke is arguably the most profound and important Western Bahá'í philosopher to date. Gayle Morrison rightly calls him “the outstanding black intellectual”⁴ among the early Bahá'ís. He embraced the Bahá'í Faith in 1918, the year he received his doctorate in philosophy from Harvard University. In what sense, then, is Locke a Bahá'í philosopher? Although there is no formal discipline of Bahá'í philosophy as such, Bahá'í philosophy is expected to evolve over time. A close comparison of Locke's Bahá'í essays with his philosophical ones discloses some striking resonances between the two, from shared vocabulary to parallel concepts.

The present study will attempt to fill a lacuna in the literature on Locke, in which his worldview as a Bahá'í is given passing mention at best, or is ignored altogether. By further developing Ernest Mason's initial work on Locke's Bahá'í identity and its presumed interaction with his thinking as a philosopher,⁵ this study hopes to fill in this “missing” dimension of Locke that has all too often been glossed over in the literature. While we will never know if Locke himself would have been comfortable with that label, certainly he would have acknowledged the impact of his Bahá'í experience on his life in general and probably on his philosophy in particular. As will be shown, the converse holds true as well, in that much of Locke's formal philosophical thinking informed his Bahá'í perspective.

In a popular publication, *The Black 100*, Alain Locke ranks as the thirty-sixth most influential African American ever, past or pres-

ent.⁶ Distinguished as the first African American Rhodes Scholar, Locke was the philosophical architect—indeed, the “Dean”⁷—of the Harlem Renaissance, a period of cultural efflorescence connected with the “New Negro” movement of the mid-1920s to mid-1930s. This was a watershed period in African American history for psychological revalorization and race vindication. “Arguably Locke was the first black American,” writes Winston Napier, “seeking to challenge European cultural imperialism through the formal articulation of a black aesthetics.”⁸ Among his other roles, Locke was the first African American president of the American Association for Adult Education, a predominantly white, national education association.⁹ He helped found the prestigious Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, which he chaired in 1945. Locke served on the editorial board of the *American Scholar* and was a regular contributor to national journals and magazines.¹⁰ By universal acclamation, Locke has achieved immortality as a great African American. Yet by comparison his identity and contributions as a Bahá’í remain relatively obscure.

Augmented by his fame and prestige in wider American society, his role as a contributor to the first five volumes of the *The Bahá’í World* invites a closer examination of Locke’s significance as a Bahá’í writer during the early years of the American Bahá’í community. Except for Ernest Mason’s article,¹¹ which exists in splendid isolation, there is a dearth of literature on the topic. As interest in Locke intensifies and new documents come to light, this essay will complement prior scholarship by taking a closer look at the Bahá’í dimension of Locke’s life and thought, and exploring how the synergy between Locke’s Bahá’í essays and philosophical ones permit one to speak of an inchoate “Bahá’í philosophy” in embryonic form.

The present study is based, in part, on Locke’s autobiographical note “Values and Imperatives” that prefaced his first formal philosophical essay,¹² published when he was fifty years old (1935). Locke refers to this self-narrative as his “psychograph.” In it, Locke does not directly mention the fact that he was a Bahá’í. But he does allude to it, calling himself a “universalist in religion.”¹³ As a

methodological control and anchor of authenticity, periodic references to Locke's psychograph will be made throughout this essay.

Locke begins his psychograph: "I should like to claim as life-motto the good Greek principle,—*'Nothing in excess,'* but I have probably worn instead as the badge of circumstance,—*'All things with a reservation.'*"¹⁴ While a Bahá'í for most of his adult life, Locke had some reservations about ways in which the Bahá'í Faith was understood and applied by some of his fellow Bahá'ís. His reservations may contribute to a richer understanding of Bahá'í principles as he interpreted them through his unique perspective as both a race leader ("perforce an advocate of cultural racialism") as well as a "cultural cosmopolitan" steeped in the "philosophy of value," allied with "cultural pluralism and value relativism."¹⁵ This study will thus situate Locke within the context of those intellectual formations—value-theory, pragmatism, Boasian anthropology, and cultural pluralism, as well as Bahá'í principles—that deeply influenced him.

Early life

An African American ("Negro") child of the Northern Reconstruction with an enlightened upbringing, Locke was the only son of Pliny Locke and Mary (Hawkins) Locke, who had been engaged for sixteen years before they married.¹⁶ Alain LeRoy Locke was born on 13 September 1885, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, not in 1886, as is commonly thought.¹⁷ For reasons that have eluded historians, Locke always represented the year of his birth as 1886—not 1885.¹⁸ At birth, although his name was recorded as "Arthur," his parents may have actually named him "Alan." From the age of sixteen, Locke later adopted the French spelling, "Alain" (close to the American pronunciation of "Allen") and added the middle name "LeRoy" (probably because he was called "Roy" as a child).¹⁹

In his psychograph, Locke reflects on his childhood: "Philadelphia, with her birthright of provincialism flavored by urbanity and her petty bourgeois psyche with the Tory slant, at the start set the key of paradox; circumstance compounded it by decreeing me as a

Negro a dubious and doubting sort of American and by reason of racial inheritance making me more of a pagan than a Puritan, more of a humanist than a pragmatist.”²⁰ While Locke himself did not explain what he meant by the “key of paradox.” The “paradox” appears to be a reference to twists of fate and to tensions as well as the harmony between his cultural nationalism and integrationist universalism—perhaps never fully resolving the ideological paradox. In Philadelphia, Locke led a sheltered and somewhat privileged life (relative to the lives of the vast majority of other black Americans at the turn of the last century).²¹ A biographer notes that Locke was a “child of privilege in a black household whose ancestors on both sides had been free before 1865.”²²

Locke’s family background shows how nature and nurture combined to provide him with rare educational advantages. Locke’s paternal grandfather, Ishmael Locke (1820-1852), attended University of Cambridge with support from the Society of Friends. Ishmael was employed as a teacher in Salem, New Jersey and, over four years, established schools in Liberia, where he met and married Alain Locke’s paternal grandmother, Sarah Shorter Hawkins, who was from Kentucky. Ishmael Locke later served as principal of the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia, following his tenure as headmaster of a school in Providence, Rhode Island.²³

Locke’s father, Pliny Locke, graduated from the Institute in 1867, and taught mathematics there for two years, after which he taught freedmen in North Carolina during the early years of Reconstruction. He also held a position as an accountant in the Freedman’s Bureau and the Freedman’s Bank, and was private secretary to General O. O. Howard. He was accepted to the Howard University Law Department (later called the School of Law), and graduated in 1874. That year, Pliny returned to Philadelphia as a clerk in the U.S. Post Office. He died in 1891.²⁴

Locke’s mother, Mary (Hawkins) Locke, was from a family of free blacks, among whom were soldiers who had fought with valor during the Civil War and missionaries to Africa under the Society of Friends. Mary Hawkins was a descendant of Charles Shorter, a free Negro who had fought in the War of 1812.²⁵ She was educated at the

old when his father died, Locke was sent by his mother to one of the Ethical Culture schools, which was a pioneer, experimental program of Froebelian pedagogy (after Friedrich Froebel [d. 1852], who opened the first kindergarten). By the time he enrolled in Central High School of Philadelphia (1898-1902), Locke was already an accomplished pianist and violinist. From 1902 to 1904, Locke attended the Philadelphia School of Pedagogy.³⁴ Locke graduated second in his class in 1904. That year, Locke entered Harvard College as an honor student, where he was one of only a few African American undergraduates.

As a philosophy major, Locke studied under George Herbert Palmer, Josiah Royce, Hugo Münsterberg, and Ralph Barton Perry.³⁵ Remarkably, Locke completed his four-year program in only three years. During this time, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. In 1907, Locke won the Bowdoin Prize—Harvard's most prestigious academic award—for an essay that he wrote. Locke also passed a qualifying examination in Latin, Greek, and mathematics for the Rhodes scholarship, which had just been established in 1904.³⁶ Locke made history and headlines in May 1907, as America's first—and astonishingly, until 1960, the only—African American Rhodes scholar. He graduated *magna cum laude* with his bachelor's degree in philosophy that same year.³⁷ On his Rhodes scholarship, Locke studied at the University of Oxford from 1907 to 1910. "At Oxford," Locke found himself "once more intrigued by the twilight of aestheticism."³⁸ An account of Locke's experiences at Oxford is given by Jeffrey Stewart.³⁹ Rejected by five Oxford colleges, Locke was finally admitted to Hertford College.

As a Harvard senior in 1905, Locke had met Horace Kallen, a German-born Jew who was a graduate teaching assistant in a course on Greek philosophy—taught by George Santayana—in which Locke had enrolled.⁴⁰ This was the beginning of an association that lasted for many years. Kallen recorded some personal observations about Locke as a young man. Locke was "very sensitive, very easily hurt." Recalling a conversation at Harvard, Kallen writes that Locke would strenuously insist that, "I am a human being," that, "We are all alike Americans," and that his "color ought not to make

any difference."⁴¹ This is corroborated by a letter Locke wrote to his mother, Mary Locke, shortly after having been awarded his Rhodes scholarship, in which he insists: "I am not a race problem. I am Alain LeRoy Locke."⁴² Unfortunately, in that era, color made all the difference. Two years later, on a Sheldon traveling fellowship, Kallen ended up at Oxford at the same time as Locke.

At Oxford, recommencing their earlier conversation at Harvard, Locke asked Kallen, "[W]hat difference does the difference [of race] make?" "In arguing out those questions," Kallen recounts, "the phrase 'cultural pluralism' was born."⁴³ While the term itself was thus coined by Kallen in this historic conversation with Locke,⁴⁴ it was really Locke who developed the concept into a full-blown philosophical framework for the melioration of African Americans. Although distancing himself from Kallen's purist and separatist conception of it, Locke was part of the cultural pluralist movement that flourished between the 1920s and the 1940s.

Kallen describes a racial incident over a Thanksgiving Day dinner hosted at the American Club at Oxford. Locke was not invited, because of "gentlemen from Dixie who could not possibly associate with Negroes."⁴⁵ Elsewhere, Kallen is more blunt: "[W]e had a race problem because the Rhodes scholars from the South were bastards. So they had a Thanksgiving dinner which I refused to attend because they refused to have Locke."⁴⁶ In fact, even before they left for Oxford, these Southern Rhodes scholars had "formally appealed to the Rhodes trustees to overturn Locke's award"⁴⁷—but to no avail. "What got Kallen particularly upset, however," according to Louis Menand, "was the insult to Harvard."⁴⁸

In support of this, Menand cites a letter to Harvard English professor Barrett Wendell, in which Kallen speaks of overcoming his admitted aversion to blacks through his loyalty to Harvard and by virtue of his personal respect for Locke. After having invited Locke, as his guest, to tea in lieu of the Thanksgiving dinner, Kallen writes that, "tho' it is personally repugnant to me to eat with him . . . but then, Locke is a Harvard man and as such he has a definite claim on me."⁴⁹ The irony is that Kallen harbored some of the very same prejudices as the Southern Rhodes scholars who shunned Locke, but not

to the same degree. "As you know, I have neither respect nor liking for his race," Kallen writes, "—but individually they have to be taken, each on his own merits and value, and if ever a Negro was worthy, this boy is."⁵⁰

Locke was deeply wounded: "Now, the impact of that kind of experience left scars," remarks Kallen.⁵¹ And it wasn't just the prejudice of his fellow American peers that so disaffected Locke, for he was almost as critical of British condescension as he was of American racism. In 1909, Locke published a critique of Oxford ("Oxford Contrasts"),⁵² particularly of its aristocratic pretensions.⁵³

He found social acceptance elsewhere. He belonged to the "Oxford Cosmopolitan Club," which attracted a number of international students ("colonials"). According to Posnock, "This group soon became Locke's intimate circle."⁵⁴ For years to come, Locke nurtured these contacts through extensive correspondence. While "socially Anglophile" as he says in his psychograph, Locke found himself increasingly drawn to his sense of "race loyalty."⁵⁵ As evidence of this, Locke helped establish the African Union Society, and served as its secretary. Its constitution stated the society's purpose was to cultivate "thought and social intercourse between its members as prospective leaders of the African Race."⁵⁶ Indeed, it was at Oxford that a crucial transformation took place: At entrance, Locke saw himself as a cultural cosmopolitan; on exit, Locke resolved to be a race leader.⁵⁷ Hence, in his psychograph, Locke describes himself as "a cultural cosmopolitan, but perforce an advocate of cultural racialism as a defensive countermove for the American Negro."⁵⁸ In a letter to his mother while he was at Oxford, Locke reflected: "Oxford is a training-school for the governing classes, and has taught your son its lesson."⁵⁹ The Oxford experience steeled Locke's sense of destiny as a nonchauvinistic "advocate of cultural racialism."⁶⁰

So acutely did the Thanksgiving Day dinner incident traumatize Locke that he left Oxford without taking a degree. He spent the next two years studying Kant at the University of Berlin and touring Eastern Europe.⁶¹ Locke mentions in his psychograph that, while at Oxford, he became "but dimly aware of the new realism of the Aus-

trian philosophy of value.”⁶² During his study at the University of Berlin in 1910-1911, Locke became conversant with the “Austrian school” of anthropology, known as philosophical anthropology, under the tutelage of Franz Brentano, Alexius von Meinong, Christian Freiherr von Ehrenfels, Paul Natorp, and others. In Paris, he studied under Bergson. Locke preferred Europe to America. There were moments when Locke resolved never to return to the United States. Reluctantly, he did so in 1911. In 1912, with the help of Booker T. Washington, Locke joined the faculty of Howard University as a professor of English.⁶³

In 1916-1917, Locke took a sabbatical as an Austin Teaching Fellow for one year at Harvard. During his graduate year there, Locke explored the ideas of such great thinkers as Hugo Münsterberg and von Ehrenfels, as well as Kant and Hegel.⁶⁴ In his psychograph, Locke writes: “Verily paradox has followed me the rest of my days: at Harvard [as an undergraduate], clinging to the genteel tradition of Palmer, Royce, and Münsterberg, yet attracted by the disillusion of Santayana and the radical protest of James: again I returned [as a graduate student] to work under Royce but was destined to take my doctorate in value theory under Perry.”⁶⁵ Here, Locke discloses important links in his intellectual pedigree, which included the value theorists of Europe and the pragmatists of America.⁶⁶

Locke’s dissertation, “The Problem of Classification in Theory of Value,” was an extension of a lengthy essay he had written at Oxford. It was Harvard mentor Josiah Royce who inspired Locke’s interest in the philosophy of value.⁶⁷ Indeed, the underlying basis for Locke’s philosophy was values theory. Values theory constituted the “pivot of Locke’s thinking,” which was “his belief that human values are central in determining the course of social life.”⁶⁸ For Locke, there are five value-types, each with corresponding “feeling-modes” which are, respectively:

Modal Quality	Value Type	Value Predicates	Value Polarity	Value Polarity
			<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
EXALTATION (Awe-Worship)	Religious	Holy—Unholy Good—Evil	Holiness Salvation	Sin Damnation
TENSION (Conflict-Choice)	Ethical/ Moral	Good—Bad Right—Wrong	Conscience Right	Temptation Crime
ACCEPTANCE	Logical	Correct—Incorrect	Consistency	Contradiction
AGREEMENT	Scientific	True—False	Certainty	Error
REPOSE/ EQUILIBRIUM	Aesthetic/ Artistic	Beautiful—Ugly Fine—Unsatisfactory	Satisfaction Joy	Disgust Distress

These value genres constitute Locke's typology of values. The five "value provinces"⁷⁰ are the battlefields of cultural conflicts and the common ground of mutual respect through value transposition. Values are "rooted in attitudes, not in reality and pertain to ourselves, not to the world."⁷¹ Moreover, Locke favored a "historical-comparative approach" as "the only proper . . . way of understanding values, including particularly those of one's own culture and way of life."⁷²

In 1918, Locke was awarded his Ph.D. in philosophy from Harvard. That same year, Locke became a Bahá'í. Locke was "perhaps the most deeply and exquisitely educated African American of his generation."⁷³ This assessment is brought into even sharper relief in the sobering knowledge that, as late as 1935—a full generation after Locke—three-fourths of all blacks had not gone beyond a fourth-grade education.⁷⁴ His "exquisite" education had prepared Locke for his historic role, which was—to cite his psychograph—to become "a philosophical mid-wife to a generation of younger Negro poets, writers, artists."⁷⁵

Academic career

As previously mentioned, in 1912 Locke joined the faculty of the Teachers College at Howard University as Assistant Professor of the

In June 1925, Locke was fired from Howard University by its white president, J. Stanley Durkee, for Locke's support of an equitable faculty pay scale and for student demands to end mandatory chapel and ROTC. Following his dismissal, since he was no longer gainfully employed, Locke needed to find a patron for support of his intellectual work. He found his patron in Charlotte Mason, a wealthy white woman, with whom Locke faithfully corresponded until her death in 1940. He did not return to Howard University until 1928, when its first black president, Mordecai Johnson, reinstated him.⁸⁴ Locke was subsequently promoted to the Chair of the philosophy department. He is credited with having first introduced the study of anthropology, along with philosophy and aesthetics, into the curriculum at Howard.⁸⁵

In 1943, Locke was on leave as Inter-American exchange Professor to Haiti under the joint auspices of the American Committee for Inter-American Artistic and Intellectual Relations and the Haitian Ministry of Education. Towards the end of his stay there, Haitian President Lescot personally decorated Locke with the National Order of Honor and Merit, grade of Commandeur.⁸⁶ During the 1945-1946 academic year, Locke was Visiting Professor at the University of Wisconsin and in 1947, as Visiting Professor at the New School for Social Research. One of Locke's former students at Wisconsin, Beth Singer, described her professor as follows: "Locke was a quiet, extremely scholarly, and well organized lecturer; I do not recall his speaking from notes."⁸⁷ After mentioning the fact that Locke was a Bahá'í, Singer recalls that "Dr. Locke seemed somehow aloof, and my friends and I were pretty much in awe of him."⁸⁸

On 28 May 1946, Locke gave a commencement address at University of Wisconsin High School. Beth Singer notes the subsequent newspaper story, "Dr. Locke Pleads for World Culture," having quoted Locke as saying: "[W]e are fast approaching a stage in which culture will have to be international. This culture must have courtesy and reciprocity and must be aided by religious tolerance . . . And in order to have tolerance, we must have every person intelligently aware of the common denominators of basic ideas and basic moral issues. That is necessary for basic unity."⁸⁹ Interpreted through a

journalist's ear, this report of Locke's lecture is a way to understand Locke in more practical, mundane terms.⁹⁰

From 1948-1952, Locke taught at City College of New York as well as continuing to teach at Howard University. In June 1953, Locke retired, and was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters. He moved to New York in July.

The Harlem Renaissance

As "philosophical mid-wife to a generation of younger Negro poets, writers, [and] artists,"⁹¹ Alain Locke was the ideological master-mind behind the Harlem Renaissance, "an artistic explosion in the decade following World War I."⁹² In its mythic and utopian sense, Harlem was the "race capital" and the largest "Negro American" community in the world. The Harlem Renaissance, consequently, presented itself as a microcosm or "self-portraiture" of black culture to America and to the world. The movement was an effusion of art born of the experience of "even ordinary living" that has "epic depth and lyric intensity."⁹³ As editor of the anthology known as *The New Negro*, published in December 1925,⁹⁴ Locke contributed the title essay, which served as a manifesto. In the new preface to the reissue of *The New Negro* anthology in 1968, Robert Hayden (a well known Bahá'í and America's first black poet-laureate) echoes Locke's vision of the Harlem Renaissance as rooted in the transracial experience of America: "The Negro Renaissance was clearly an expression of the Zeitgeist, and its writers and artists were open to the same influences that their white counterparts were. What differentiated the New Negroes from other American intellectuals was their race consciousness, their group awareness, their sense of sharing a common purpose."

For Locke, art ought to contribute to the improvement of life—a pragmatist aesthetic principle Richard Shusterman calls "meliorism."⁹⁵ The Harlem Renaissance—known also as the "New Negro Movement"—sought to advance freedom and equality for blacks through art. It was "not just a great creative outburst in the stimulating atmosphere of the 1920s," it was "actually a highly self-con-

scious modern artistic movement.”⁹⁶ Locke himself spoke of a “race pride,” “race genius,” and the “race-gift.”⁹⁷ This “race pride” was to be cultivated through developing a distinctive culture, a hybrid of African and African American elements.⁹⁸ Locke had hoped the Harlem Renaissance would provide “an emancipating vision to America” and would advance “a new democracy in American culture.”⁹⁹ But the Harlem Renaissance was more of an “aristocratic” than democratic approach to culture.¹⁰⁰ In principle, Locke was an avowed supporter of W. E. B. Du Bois’s idea of a cultural elite (the “Talented Tenth”)¹⁰¹, but differed from Du Bois’s insistence that art serve as propaganda.¹⁰²

Much criticized by other African Americans, Locke himself came to regret the Harlem Renaissance’s excesses of exhibitionism, after it had dissolved just a few years later.¹⁰³ While the dazzling success of the movement was short-lived, it is said to have had a more subtle, yet enduring influence. According to Johnny Washington, the civil rights movement actually had its roots, in a subterranean way, in the Harlem Renaissance: “Locke was to the Harlem Renaissance what Martin Luther King, Jr., was to the civil rights movement of the 1960s.”¹⁰⁴ In the end, however, the efflorescence of black culture failed to lead to civil and political rights for African Americans. It would take a Martin Luther King, Jr. to spearhead a movement that would achieve that goal.¹⁰⁵

Eventually, as Posnock points out, “Locke enunciated his theory of cosmopolitanism *post facto*, after the Harlem Renaissance, his principal site of engagement, had largely run its course.”¹⁰⁶ As Locke matured in his philosophical thinking, he favored open identities over closed social ones.

Locke as a Bahá’í

Prior to the Harlem Renaissance, Locke had become a Bahá’í. As stated earlier, Locke embraced the Bahá’í Faith in 1918. There is thus a certain synchronicity between Locke’s religion and his philosophy and, as I shall argue, a synergy between the two acted as a dynamic intensifier. Indeed, around the same time as he launched



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the Harlem Renaissance, Locke made a pilgrimage to the Bahá'í world center in Haifa, Israel (then Palestine), and traveled throughout the American South on a Bahá'í-sponsored lecture tour.

In his psychograph, Locke described himself as a “universalist in religion.”¹⁰⁷ In a private communication, one leading authority on Locke recently expressed doubts as to his formal affiliation with the Bahá'í Faith. So, the question has to be asked: What direct proof, beyond circumstantial evidence, establishes Locke's actual status as a Bahá'í? While he certainly associated with Bahá'ís and participated in Bahá'í events—over a number of years, in fact—was Locke ever formally on record as a declared Bahá'í? Moreover, did Locke's involvement in the Bahá'í Faith influence his vocation as a philosopher? To address these questions, I will discuss Locke's involvement in the Bahá'í Faith on the basis of archival as well as published documents.

Since formal enrollment procedures did not exist in the early Bahá'í community, no contemporary archival record of the exact date of Locke's conversion can be found. The academic and religious literature on Locke could only speculate as to the date of his conversion, which had in itself been the source of some doubt (outside of Bahá'í circles). In the course of my research and at my request, archivist Roger Dahl, searching the National Bahá'í Archives for documents relating to Locke, discovered the evidence scholars had been looking for: Dahl found a "Bahá'í Historical Record"¹⁰⁸ card that Locke had filled out in 1935, at the request of the National Spiritual Assembly, which, in conducting its Bahá'í census, had mailed the forms in triplicate to all Bahá'ís through their local spiritual assemblies and through other channels.¹⁰⁹ Locke was one of seven black respondents from the Washington D.C. Bahá'í community to complete the card.¹¹⁰ In "Place of acceptance of Bahá'í Faith" is entered "Washington D.C." Locke personally completed and signed the card, "Alain Leroy Locke" (in the space designated: "19. Signature"). Under item #13: "Date of acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith," Locke entered the year "1918."¹¹¹ This date is significant in that it predates previous estimates that placed Locke's conversion in the early 1920s.¹¹²

The discovery of Locke's Bahá'í Historical Record card confirms what was already evident from a host of other sources. (Those sources, however, failed to pinpoint the date of Locke's conversion.) The card does not, however, shed any light on the precise circumstances surrounding his conversion. It is quite possible that Locke came into contact with the Faith through W. E. B. Du Bois, who had personally met 'Abdu'l-Bahá and had lectured at Green Acre (a Bahá'í school in southern Maine). It is just as likely that Locke encountered the Faith through Louis Gregory, or through one of the other Bahá'ís or friends of the Faith from among the circle of educated African Americans in Washington D.C. After all, 1918 was just six years after 'Abdu'l-Bahá had lectured at Howard University and at the NAACP convention in Chicago. In short, the Faith was widely known among the black intelligentsia, and Locke could have been introduced to it by any number of people.¹¹³

- Speaker, "Universal Peace," 5 July 1925, Bahá'í Congress, Green Acre (New York).¹²⁶

1925-1926

- Lecture tour throughout the American South.¹²⁷
- "Impressions of Haifa" published in the *Bahá'í Year Book*.¹²⁸
- Special consultation with NSA on race relations (November, Chicago).¹²⁹

1927 • Speaker, "Cultural Reciprocity," World Unity Conference, 27 March 1927 (New Haven).¹³⁰

- Lends name as contributing editor, *World Unity: A Monthly Magazine Interpreting the Spirit of the New Age* (New York).¹³¹
- Appointed to first National Inter-Racial Amity Committee (8 January 1927).¹³²
- Progress report on interracial work (December).¹³³

1927-1928

- Appointed to second National Inter-Racial Amity Committee.¹³⁴

1928-1929

- Appointed to third National Inter-Racial Amity Committee.

1929 • "Impressions of Haifa" reprinted in *Bahá'í World* 1926-1928.¹³⁵**1929-1930**

- Appointed to fourth National Inter-Racial Amity Committee.¹³⁶

1930 • "Impressions of Haifa" reprinted in the *Bahá'í World* 1928-1930.¹³⁷

- Annual progress report on interracial work, 1929-1930.¹³⁸
- Invited by Shoghi Effendi to comment on working translation of *Kitáb-i Íqán*.¹³⁹

1931-1932

- Accepts appointment by NSA to fifth National Inter-Racial Amity Committee.¹⁴⁰

1932 • Speaker, Racial Amity Convention, 10 December 1932 (New York). Planned in cooperation with the National Urban League.¹⁴¹**1933** • "Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle" published in *Bahá'í World* 1930-1932.¹⁴²**1935** • Appointed to Teaching Committee (Washington, DC).¹⁴³ Reports on "stagnation" in the racial amity work (18 April 1935).¹⁴⁴

- Speaker, "Abdul-Baha on World Peace," 26 November 1935 (Washington, DC).¹⁴⁵ Resigns from Teaching Committee, 10 December 1935 (Washington, DC).¹⁴⁶

1936 • "The Orientation of Hope" published in *Bahá'í World* 1932-1934.¹⁴⁷

- 1943 • Speaker, 24 October 1943, Bahá'í Center/Youth Rally (Washington, DC).¹⁴⁸
 - 1944 • Speaker, Thirty-Sixth Racial Amity Convention (New York).¹⁴⁹
• Sends message to 20th anniversary of the passing of Woodrow Wilson (New York).¹⁵⁰
 - 1945 • "Lessons in World Crisis" published in *Bahá'í World* 1940-1944.¹⁵¹
 - 1946 • Speaker, "Democracy in Human Relations," Rhode Island School of Design. (Jointly sponsored by Negro College Club and Providence, Rhode Island Bahá'is.)¹⁵²
 - 1949 • Name appears on list of Bahá'í eligible voters, 6 April 1949.¹⁵³
 - 1949 • Louis Gregory appeals to Locke to identify more fully with Faith.¹⁵⁴
 - 1951 • Louis Gregory again appeals to Locke to identify more fully with Faith.¹⁵⁵
 - 1952 • Locke invited to submit ideas for the "Centenary of Universal Religion."¹⁵⁶
• Picture appears in article on the Bahá'í Faith in October 1952 issue of *Ebony*.
 - 1954 • Bahá'í writings and prayers read at his funeral.
-

From various indications in his unpublished correspondence, it seems that Locke's Bahá'í activities were intense but sporadic. This is not to say that Locke's engagement with the Faith was in any way superficial. His most profound experiences as a Bahá'í were probably his two pilgrimages to Haifa. The Research Department at the Bahá'í World Center has written that they occurred in 1923, and then again in 1934:

Dr. Locke visited the Bahá'í World Centre on at least two occasions. We have not, however, been able to find a record of the exact dates of his pilgrimages. Dr. Locke's first visit appears to have taken place in November or early December 1923. As to the duration of his stay, we note that Dr. Locke, in a letter dated 5 December 1923 written from Egypt, informs Shoghi Effendi of his arrival in Cairo. The letter also refers to "the memory of the past week at Haifa [which] is one of the happiest things I have to cherish—the experience itself being one of the most significant and beneficial experiences of my life."¹⁵⁷

In a subsequent reference to the contents of Locke's letter of 5 December 1923, the Research Department relates:

As stated in the earlier summary, he shares his view that the best way for him to thank Shoghi Effendi is "to devote my best efforts to the Cause." He also asks to be remembered with thanks to the friends until he has had a chance to write them individually.¹⁵⁸

Locke's second pilgrimage was incomplete, lasting just one day. For reasons not yet clear, Shoghi Effendi was unavailable at that time. In determining the date of his second pilgrimage to Haifa, key evidence comes from a letter Locke wrote to Shoghi Effendi on 1 August 1934, who received it on 18 August 1934. From the Research Department's summary of it, we are told:

The letter is written on board the ship "Roma", following Dr. Locke's brief visit to Haifa and the Bahá'í Shrines. He spent "a beautiful day" and visited "all three shrines" in the company of Ruhi Afnan, and as was the case on his first visit some 10 years ago, he was "deeply inspired, and spiritually refreshed." Dr. Locke expresses pleasure at seeing the beauty and care with which Shoghi Effendi has developed the Bahá'í properties on Mount Carmel and in 'Akká, and he comments that the Guardian's "nurture of the principles in concrete symbols is a great contribution." He states that he plans to share his impressions with the friends.¹⁵⁹

Those impressions, if written, were never published. But his "Impressions of Haifa" (1924, 1926, 1929, 1930), approved by Shoghi Effendi as "very good and sufficient,"¹⁶⁰ and first published in *Star of the West*, immortalized his first pilgrimage. Locke continues his letter, expressing his regrets over having missed the opportunity to see Shoghi Effendi:

Dr. Locke laments not having had the opportunity of seeing Shoghi Effendi. However, the "deciding factor" was "the chance of another visit, even though a glimpse." He hopes to return for a lengthier visit "as soon as practically possible."¹⁶¹

Obviously, his contemplated return for a lengthier visit never materialized. The next part of Locke's letter clearly indicates what was on his mind:

He indicates that he would have welcomed the chance to talk to Shoghi Effendi about some of the difficulties under which he had been working during the last several years. He mentions the impact on him of the "factionalism of race." He explains that as a teacher, he has tried to be "a modifying influence to radical sectionalism and to increasing materialistic trends—and in this indirect way to serve the Cause and help forward the universal principles," which he supports without reservation. He foreshadows seeking guidance from the Guardian on this matter in the future.¹⁶²

In his reminiscences of that experience, published as "Impressions of Haifa" (1926, 1929, 1930),¹⁶³ Locke stressed the importance of being able to see a religion in its human incarnation, "without the mediation of symbols."¹⁶⁴ In Locke's eyes, Shoghi Effendi was the living embodiment of all Bahá'í virtues: "For after all the only enlightened symbol of a religious or moral principle is the figure of a personality endowed to perfection with its qualities and necessary attributes."¹⁶⁵ Describing Shoghi Effendi as a "gifted personality," Locke was privileged to see his "[r]efreshingly human"¹⁶⁶ side as well. The two enjoyed a long walk and conversation in the Bahá'í gardens. For Locke, his "Impressions of Haifa" were deep and lasting.

Interracial unity activities

Locke's universalism included social demonstrations of interracial unity, as exemplified by his participation in a "Convention for Amity Between the Colored and White Races" which took place in Washington D.C. on May 19-21, 1921. This gathering was organized by Agnes S. Parsons (a white Bahá'í woman prominent in Washington high society) at the instruction of 'Abdu'l-Bahá who, during her second pilgrimage to Haifa (1920), said to her: "I want you to arrange in Washington a convention for unity between the

white and colored people."¹⁶⁷ 'Abdul-Bahá considered this meeting to have had paramount symbolic and social importance.¹⁶⁸

The conference was a spectacular success. As Leonard Harris notes: "The Bahá'í belief in the unity of humanity was expressed in practical terms by inter-racial meetings (then a fairly unusual situation in Christian America)."¹⁶⁹ Retrospectively, in its 1929-1930 annual report, the nine-member Interracial Amity Committee, of which Locke was an active participant, assessed the significance of the first Amity Convention in 1921, Washington D.C.: "The convention of the colored and white was in reality a great work, because if the question of the colored and white should not be resolved[,] it will be productive of great dangers in [the] future for America. Therefore the Confirmations [sic] of the Kingdom of Abha [*heaven*] shall continually reach any person who strives after the conciliation of the colored and the white."¹⁷⁰ 'Abdu'l-Bahá subsequently praised Agnes Parsons as "the first person to raise the banner of the unity of the white and the colored."¹⁷¹

Locke saw considerable value in these race amity conferences. Despite his delicate heart and the considerable demands on him as a lecturer, the committee work and participation in these gatherings was worth his time and effort. According to archivist Roger Dahl, "Locke was a member of the national Race amity committee for at least five years between 1925 and 1932."¹⁷² In 1931, Locke expressed his "hope next year to be called upon to participate more actively in the Amity conferences and consultations" and registered confidence that "the work is gradually reaching wider and wider circles."¹⁷³

On a sombre note, it appears that Locke became somewhat pessimistic about the future prospects of interracial unity in the Washington D.C. Bahá'í community. In a letter dated 18 April 1935 to Horace Holley, secretary-general of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, Locke wrote:

Since I last saw you, I have had two occasions to meet with the local friends, and have very effectively renewed my contacts with them. This has also given me occasion to make some comparisons between

teacher-training school) had spoken at the Philadelphia convention of 22-23 October 1924, and was among those invited by the National Spiritual Assembly in November 1926, to a special consultation on race.¹⁷⁹

Another dismaying development for Locke may have been the appointment of a predominantly white amity committee for the 1933-1934 Bahá'í year—an appointment that, evidently, excluded Locke himself.¹⁸⁰ It was around this time that the race amity initiatives went into decline, as chronicled by Gayle Morrison.¹⁸¹ The last race amity committee was appointed in 1935-1936. In July 1936, the committee, in the words of Morrison, “unknowingly wrote its own epitaph” in stating: “The National Assembly has appointed no race amity committee this year. Its view is that race unity activities have sometimes resulted in emphasizing race differences rather than their unity and reconciliation within the Cause.”¹⁸² With the demise of the race amity committees, it would seem that Locke’s special services were no longer needed. Finally, in 1941, Locke requested that the local spiritual assembly should henceforth regard him as an “isolated believer,” (i.e., a Bahá'í without a local Bahá'í community) explaining:

I naturally am reluctant to sever a spiritual bond with the Bahai [sic] community, for I still hold to a firm belief in the truth of the Bahai principles. However, I am not in a position, and haven[']t been for years, to participate very practically or even with the fullest enthusiasm, in the collective activities of the local friends. One of my reservations is, of course, the seeming impossibility of any really crusading attack on the practices of racial prejudice in spite of the good will and fair principles of the local believers. They are not to blame perhaps for their ineffectualness any more than we, who are in more practical movements[,] are for our absorption of time and energy in what we regard as more immediately important.¹⁸³

Further contributions to the Bahá'í community

The brightest moments in Alain Locke’s public Bahá'í life were three: (1) the first Race Amity Conference, in which Locke presided

as a session chair on 20 May 1921; (2) his presentation at the Racial Amity Convention in Harlem, 10 December 1932; and (3) his lecture, "Democracy in Human Relations" at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1946. In his 1933 report on behalf of the National Bahá'í Committee for Racial Amity, Louis Gregory was delighted with Locke's public declaration of his Bahá'í identity and his open endorsement of its principles:

For a number of years, in fact since the first amity convention in Washington, Dr. Alain Locke has during the years been a contributor to the work of the Cause, without formally identifying himself with it. Perhaps the most significant feature of this conference was his strong, eloquent and beautiful address, in which he took a decided and definite stand within the ranks of the Cause. This attitude we believe will increasingly with the years influence people of capacity to investigate the mines of spiritual wealth to be found in the Revelation of Bahá'u'l-láh. It will also make what has long been a grandly useful life more glorious, serviceable and influential than ever before. It is to be hoped that the friends both locally and nationally, will largely make use of the great powers of Dr. Locke both in the teaching and administrative fields of the Cause. He has made the pilgrimage to Haifa. The Master in a Tablet praised him highly and it is known that the Guardian shares his love for our able brother.¹⁸⁴

Louis Gregory's disclosure that Locke had received a "tablet" (letter) from 'Abdu'l-Bahá—presumably in response to a letter that Locke had sent—is yet another important piece of the puzzle in reconstructing this lesser known dimension of Locke's life. During the ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, it was customary for new converts to write directly to "the Master" as a testimony of faith. This was more of a precedent than a protocol, yet the practice was widespread enough to warrant the probability that Locke wrote to 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1918, the year Locke indicated that he had become a Bahá'í.

Another bright moment in Locke's public life as a Bahá'í took place in 1946, during a visit to Rhode Island, reported in *Bahá'í News*:

When Dr. Alain Locke was scheduled as a speaker for the Rhode Island School of Design's exhibition of Negro art, the Negro College

Club and the Providence Bahá'ís held a joint meeting for which Dr. Locke talked on "Democracy in Human Relations" and spoke of being a Bahá'í. There were twenty non-Bahá'ís present in spite of bad weather. His talk was reported and the next Sunday's program was announced in both the Urban League Bulletin and the Providence Chronicle.¹⁸⁵

Of Locke's travel teaching tour in the Southern States, we know relatively little. This lecture tour took place at some point between October 1925 and spring 1926. This can be inferred from a statement that appeared in the *Bahá'í News Letter*: "Dr. Alain Locke of Washington D.C. who delivered one of the notable addresses at the 1925 Convention in Green Acre, is now making an extensive teaching journey into the Southern States which will bring him in touch with the most influential audiences and individuals. Reports of this journey will be published from time to time."¹⁸⁶

The description of Locke's address at the seventeenth annual convention and Bahá'í Congress deserves notice:

Dr. Alain LeRoy Locke of Washington D.C. delivered a polished address, portraying the great part which America can play in the establishment of world peace, if alive to its opportunity. The working out of social democracy can be accomplished here. To this end we should not think in little arcs of experience, but in the big, comprehensive way. Let our country reform its own heart and life. Needed reforms cannot be worked out by the action of any one group, but a fine sense of cooperation must secure universal fellowship. He praised Green Acre, which he declared to be an oasis in the desert of materiality. He urged all who were favored by this glorious experience to carry forth its glorious message and thus awaken humanity. In final analysis, peace cannot exist anywhere without existing everywhere.¹⁸⁷

Whether due to Locke's disinclination to have such publicity or for some other reason, only one other report of Locke's trip appear to have been published in the *Bahá'í News Letter*. After referring to the publication of *The New Negro* "by Dr. Alain Locke, our brilliant Bahá'í brother of Washington, DC and New York City," the article simply states: "Altogether inadequate has been the mention in previous issues of the News Letter of the remarkable work carried on

throughout the South during the winter by Mr. Louis Gregory, Mr. Howard MacNutt, Dr. Locke and Mrs. Louise Boyle. These teachers, in cooperation with the Spiritual Assembly of Miami and many Bahá'í groups and isolated believers, held an astounding number of meetings from autumn to spring, in churches, schools clubs [sic] and private homes, with the result that a powerful concentration of spiritual forces was focussed on this great and important territory."¹⁸⁸

According to Gayle Morrison, this travel teaching trip began in October 1925. There were seven Bahá'í groups in Florida at that time. Morrison notes that "successful meetings" were held in Miami, Jacksonville, and St. Augustine. Evidently, a new spiritual assembly was formed in Miami as one of the signal outcomes of this teaching trip, through the combined efforts of white Bahá'í "home-front pioneers" and the itinerant teachers. While it is possible that Alain Locke may have been instrumental in helping to establish the Miami Bahá'í council, which may have well been the first spiritual assembly in the South, fresh evidence suggests that the Miami assembly formed in November 1925.¹⁸⁹

How far into the spring of 1926 the trip lasted is not certain. The published accounts of this teaching trip are too general. These leave us with very little idea as to what actually happened. However, in the transcript for the 1926 Convention, in a report from El Fleda Spaulding, chairperson of the National Teaching Committee, on recent Bahá'í efforts in the South, there is reference to Locke that indicates what his primary role may well have been: "[T]he delicate problems here are being ably handled by Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Gregory and Mr. MacNutt. Dr. Locke also expects to speak before a number of the Universities."¹⁹⁰ Some other details on Locke appear in the Southern Regional Teaching Committee Report, which was read into the transcript.¹⁹¹ These details, which have recently been brought to light, are as follows:

An important contribution to the teaching service has been rendered during the past few months by Dr. Alain Locke of Washington, who is regarded by many as the outstanding scholar of the Negro race in America. Having been invited to address many universities and col-

leges in various parts of the country[,] Dr. Locke consented to present the Bahai Message to educators and student groups, and has been able to touch the best Negro institutions in the Middle South and Northern Florida. Before proceeding South he was called to the middle West and was thus enabled to give the message at the Dunbar Forum of Oberlin, at Wilberforce University and at Indianapolis, Cleveland and Cincinnati. Dr. Locke has been everywhere received with marked distinction. He writes of the deep spiritual refreshment experienced through his labours for the Blessed Cause. Through special arrangement with the President, Mrs. Mary Bethune [,] he will make a return visit to the Daytona Industrial Institute in May, and at that time will visit Mr. Dorsey of Miami as his guest to confer on educational plans for the new city. He will also visit the Hungerford School near Orlando in which Mr. Irving Bachellor and other distinguished people are actively interested.¹⁹²

Reference here to "Mr. Dorsey" deserves comment. According to the report, D. A. Dorsey was the owner of the Dorsey Hotel, where weekly Bahá'í meetings were held. The report states:

Its owner, Mr. D. A. Dorsey, is a colored financier, highly regarded by all the promoters of Greater Miami. Having accumulated more than five million dollars, he is now actively engaged in founding a Model Negro City near Miami, in which he has donated a site for a Mashrak el Askar [Bahá'í House of Worship].

It is the desire of Mr. Dorsey to use his wealth for the advancement of his race and he will build schools, a university for the arts and sciences, a hospital, modern administration buildings and other institutions for the practical and cultural progress of his people. He is a man of the highest moral character, simple and unassuming, and respected by all—a noble- hearted[,] God-directed man.¹⁹³

The report also confirms that Dorsey enrolled as a Bahá'í, having "accepted the teachings whole-heartedly through the labors of Mr. Louis Gregory and Mr. [Howard] MacNutt and are constantly bringing people of all races to hear the Glad Tidings."¹⁹⁴ The fate of this model city, and the status of the land he endowed for a Bahá'í temple, as well as solid information on Dorsey himself, require further investigation.

One of the most surprising and rewarding outcomes of my archival research was the discovery of yet another contribution Locke had made to the Faith—one that, in fact, had no connection with race relations whatever. Among the Alain Locke Papers, preserved in the Moorland-Spangarn Research Center at Howard University, were found two letters to Locke, written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi by his secretary at that time, Ruhi Afnan. These letters are dated 15 February and 5 July 1930. The first begins: “Dear Dr. Locke: Shoghi Effendi has been lately spending his leisure hours translating the Book of Iqan for he considers it to be the key to a true understanding of the Holy Scriptures, and can easily rank as one of the most, if not the most, important thing that Bahá’u’lláh revealed explaining the basic beliefs of the Cause. He who fully grasps the purport of that Book can claim to have understood the Cause.”

The “Book of Iqan” is better known in English as the *Book of Certitude* (Kitáb-i Íqán), and has achieved distinction as Bahá’u’lláh’s preeminent doctrinal text.¹⁹⁵ In efforts to perfect his working translation of the Íqán from Persian to English, the Guardian called upon Locke as the person “best fitted to render him [Shoghi Effendi] an assistance” in giving critical feedback on the translation itself. Shoghi Effendi requested that Locke “go over it [the translation] carefully, studying every sentence—its structure as well as choice of words—and giving him your [Locke’s] criticism as well as constructive suggestions that would make it more lucid, English [sic] and forceful.” He adds, “Shoghi Effendi is fully aware of the many duties you have and how pressing your time is, and had he known of an equally fitting person he would surely have saved you the trouble. Yet he finds himself to be compelled.” The first letter accompanied the first half of the translation which Shoghi Effendi decided to send to Locke. The second half was mailed later.

Locke did as Shoghi Effendi requested. The second letter (5 July 1930) was sent to Locke to acknowledge his editorial assistance: “Though they were not so many, he [Shoghi Effendi] found the suggestions you gave most helpful.” Moreover, Ruhi Afnan reported that: “Shoghi Effendi has already incorporated your suggestions and sent his manuscript to the National Spiritual Assembly [of the

United States and Canada] for publication.” A most interesting comment follows: “It naturally depends upon that body and the reviewing and publishing committees to decide whether it should come out immediately or not.”

The potential value of reaching the Western intelligentsia was noted as well: “The most important service that can now be rendered to the Cause is to put the writings of Bahá’u’lláh in a form that would be presentable to the intellectual minds of the West. Shoghi Effendi’s hope in this work has been to encourage others along this line.” At the end of the letter, Shoghi Effendi wrote, in his own hand, the following:

My dear co-worker:

I wish to add a few words expressing my deep appreciation of your valued suggestions in connexion with the translation of the *Iqan*. I wish also to express the hope that you may be able to lend increasing assistance to the work of the Cause, as I have always greatly admired your exceptional abilities and capacity to render distinguished services to the Faith. I grieve to hear of the weakness of your heart which I trust may through treatment be completely restored. I often remember you in my prayers and ever cherish the hope of welcoming you again in the Master’s home.

Your true brother,
Shoghi.

Locke wrote four essays published in six volumes of *The Bahá’í World*, which was not only a record of the development of the Faith internationally, but was its official international voice as well (prior to the establishment of the Bahá’í International Community). Leonard Harris is currently the world’s leading authority on Alain Locke. In his collection of Locke’s philosophical writings, two of Locke’s *Bahá’í World* essays are anthologized: “The Orientation of Hope” (1936)¹⁹⁶ and “Unity through Diversity: A Bahá’í Principle” (1933).¹⁹⁷ “‘The Orientation of Hope,’” according to Harris, “is a definitive expression of Locke’s belief in the Bahá’í Faith and its focus on the universal principles definitive of spiritual faiths.”¹⁹⁸ Locke’s other two *Bahá’í World* essays were: “Impressions of

Haifa" (1926, 1929, 1930) and "Lessons in World Crisis" (1945). These essays profile Locke's perspective as a Bahá'í, even though we have such sketchy details about his Bahá'í activities. How he came to write these essays, which evidently were invited, is an important consideration. Although Shoghi Effendi certainly supervised its publication and approved its contents, normally the editors of *The Bahá'í World* issued invitations to write articles. However, Shoghi Effendi personally contacted Locke by cable, inviting him to contribute his final *Bahá'í World* essay: "WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE ARTICLE FROM YOUR PEN ON ANY ASPECT FAITH FOR CENTENARY ISSUE BAHÁ'Í WORLD VOLUME NINE LOVING GREETINGS SHOGHI RAB-BANI."¹⁹⁹

In his essay, "The Orientation of Hope," Locke gives some fraternal advice to Bahá'ís. This statement serves as eloquent testimony to the strength of his own convictions as a Bahá'í:

Must we not as true Bahá'í believers in these times embrace our principles more positively, more realistically, and point everywhere possible our assertion of the teachings with a direct challenge? . . . Especially does it seem to me to be the opportunity to bring the Bahá'í principles again forcefully to the attention of statesmen and men of practical affairs . . . Is it not reasonably clear to us that now is the time for a world-wide, confident and determined offensive of peaceful propaganda for the basic principles of the Cause of brotherhood, peace and social justice? . . . And to do that powerfully, effectively, the Bahá'í teaching needs an inspired extension of the potent realism of 'Abdu'l-Bahá by which he crowned and fulfilled the basic idealism of Bahá'u'lláh.²⁰⁰

A proper understanding of Locke's *Bahá'í World* essays—especially "The Orientation of Hope" and "Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle"—requires a background in Locke's philosophical thought, which is outlined briefly in the next section.

Locke as philosopher

While his formal training in philosophy was followed by a long and distinguished teaching career as an academic, with numerous publi-

cations to his credit, Locke did not publish a single article on philosophy until he was fifty years old,²⁰¹ seventeen years after he had become a Bahá'í. This significant fact accords with Locke's psychograph in which he disclaims having ever been "a professional philosopher."²⁰² Notwithstanding, his work during this later period articulates his mature thinking as both a professor of philosophy and a philosopher by training. Locke's first formal philosophical essay, "Values and Imperatives," appeared in 1935. This marked the year that saw his "reentry into the doing of philosophy directly"²⁰³ and thus back into the world of grand theory.

What role did philosophy play in Locke's life? What was its purpose? What had Locke hoped to accomplish through the vehicle of philosophy? In a retrospective look at his career in Howard University, Locke wrote that his "main objectives" had been "to use philosophy as an agent for stimulating critical mindedness in Negro youth, to help transform segregated educational missions into centers of cultural and social leadership, and to organize an advance guard of creative talent for cultural inspiration and prestige." Moreover, he wanted to link "the discussion of colonial problems with the American race situation, toward the internationalization of American Negro thought and action."²⁰⁴ Indeed, as Michael Winston observes: "With the dramatic rise of racial consciousness in the former European colonies, Locke's influence became internationalized."²⁰⁵

Locke was deeply influenced by pragmatism, a contemporary philosophical movement that countered both idealism and realism. "Pragmatism is an account of the way people think," according to Menand, "the way they come up with ideas, form beliefs, and reach decisions."²⁰⁶ It correlates truth and experience, self and world. Experience is real, and not a mere mental phenomenon; a dynamic interaction between self and world. Knowledge derives from experience and truth is transformed by experience. Pragmatism is process. It advocates a method. Ideas are relative to time and place. It purports that the truth of a proposition depends on its practical value, not on any intrinsic meaning. Like the scientific method, knowledge can be tested by experience. This has profound cultural

implications. If truth is judged by its consequences, it cannot be divorced from the practical and moral. America, it follows, is accountable to itself.

The originators of pragmatism include the trinity of Charles Sanders Peirce (d. 1914), who claimed to have “invented” pragmatism and expounded its theory of meaning; William James (d. 1910), who developed pragmatism’s theory of truth; and John Dewey (d. 1952), who contributed his notion of “instrumentalism” to the movement.²⁰⁷ W. E. B. Du Bois had been a student of James.²⁰⁸ Locke had a passion for William James,²⁰⁹ although he rejected James’ radical empiricism. Both Du Bois and Locke read James’ Oxford lectures, *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), as a philosophical allegory for making a “vital connection between pluralism and democracy.”²¹⁰

Pragmatists put a premium on “experience.” They sought to test the truth of ideas in actual experience as a “pragmatic” indicator. They also felt that their philosophical ideas had ethical and political consequences.²¹¹ Moreover, John Dewey felt that pragmatism provided a philosophical basis for democracy, which he viewed as an ethical principle that extended beyond politics to economics and social interactions as well.²¹² Despite his influences, Locke pursued an independent course by deforming the master code of symbols that dominated the world of American pragmatism and reforming them by means of what Houston Baker, Jr., called a “*radical marronage*”²¹³ or reorientation, in order that philosophy might have something meaningful to say about race relations.

Pragmatism gave birth to cultural pluralism, which Locke espoused with almost religious zeal. “Cultural pluralism” was Locke’s philosophical faith, “a new Americanism,” as he called it.²¹⁴ Compensating for liberalism’s fixation on freedom, cultural pluralism provides a philosophical foundation for unity in diversity by extending the idea of democracy beyond individuals and individual rights to the equal recognition of cultural, racial, and other group rights. During the 1920s, the question as to what constitutes American identity was “a national preoccupation.”²¹⁵ Posnock states that “pragmatism’s answer” was “cultural pluralism,” as

opposed to the coercions of assimilation—the pressure to conform—in the American paradigm of the “melting pot.”²¹⁶ “American democracy for Locke,” writes Leonard Harris, “was hardly a finished social experiment, especially since it excluded most of the population from participation.”²¹⁷ For Locke, cultural pluralism provided the social philosophy most needed by democracy,²¹⁸ not just in America, but across the world. Cultural pluralism was thus “the philosophic faith that Alain Locke became a notable spokesman for.”²¹⁹ As his primary philosophical framework, cultural pluralism would make possible a general theory of “unity in diversity.”²²⁰

Locke’s philosophy is really a fusion of pluralism and relativism, as seen in the synonyms he uses for it. “Cultural pluralism” is variously referred to in Locke’s writings as “cultural relativism,” “critical relativism,” as well as “value relativism.”²²¹ Locke’s use of technical terms is not, however, always consistent. As Winston Napier points out, Locke’s “semantic inconsistency clouds his argument.”²²² Strictly speaking, pluralism is a distinctive concept, while relativism is a normative one.²²³ As Mason observes: “It is precisely the separation between pluralism and relativism that explains much of America’s intolerance. For a plurality of ethnic groups simply cannot exist within a society that refuses to recognize the relative and functional nature of values and institutions. Locke’s critique of democracy centers around democracy’s need to develop a relativistic perspective to fit its pluralistic society.”²²⁴ Cultural pluralism has since evolved into what is now known as “multiculturalism.”²²⁵ Recently, Locke has been acknowledged as “the father of multiculturalism.”²²⁶

It is clear that Locke wanted to make a contribution to world peace as well. If intellectuals were inspired with the same vision and could agree on a common paradigm, their leadership had the potential to further that aim. In his essay, “Cultural Relativism and Ideological Peace,”²²⁷ Locke states: “Cultural relativism may become an important source for ideological peace” and, indeed, may serve “as a possible ideological peacemaker.”²²⁸ “Cultural relativism,” Locke believed, “can become a very constructive philosophy by way of integrating values and value systems.”²²⁹ “In looking for cultural

agreements on a world scale," Locke further explained, "we shall probably have to content ourselves with agreement of the common-denominator type and with 'unity in diversity' discovered in the search for unities of a functional rather than a content character, and therefore of a pragmatic rather than an ideological sort."²³⁰ In other words, Locke has proposed a formula for promoting cultural relativism as a "realistic instrument of social reorientation and cultural enlightenment."²³¹

Locke gave specific reasons as to why this program might work. For Locke, cultural relativism had "constructive potentialities"²³² and offered new hope for ideological peace. For relativism to work, it first had to be implemented. Just how would one begin to carry out a program of cultural relativity? Locke had such a plan. Its rationale is developed alongside its strategy. There were three stages in his plan, each of which was intended to have a calculated, cumulative result. The three stages were: (1) cultural equivalence; (2) reciprocity; and (3) limited cultural convertibility.

Equivalence: In his efforts to universalize philosophy, Locke sought to promote intercultural understanding, and the thought that scholars (especially "cultural anthropologists") ought to lead the way—through a systematic process of conceptual translation based on formal comparison:

The principle of *cultural equivalence*, under which we would more widely press the search for functional similarities in our analyses and comparisons of human cultures; thus offsetting our traditional and excessive emphasis upon cultural difference. Such functional equivalences, which we might term '*culture-cognates*' or '*culture-correlates*,' discovered underneath deceptive but superficial institutional divergence, would provide objective but soundly neutral common denominators for intercultural understanding and cooperation.²³³

The search for cultural counterparts is, for Locke, a sound way of trying to make sense of the bewildering diversity of societal norms and mores that, upon investigation, reveal a recognizable logic. "Functional equivalence" for Locke, seems to be synonymous with "real basic similarity" in values.²³⁴ Similarities are seen in function rather than form.

Reciprocity: Beyond tolerance, but assuming notions of equivalence based on "loyalty to loyalty," is a second concept: reciprocity. Reciprocity approaches cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation. "Social reciprocity for value loyalties," writes Locke, "is but a new name for the old virtue of tolerance, yet it does bring the question of tolerance down from the lofty thin air of idealism and chivalry to the plane of enlightened self-interest and the practical possibilities of value-sharing."²³⁵ This is an understatement, for reciprocity is something much more than mere toleration for the purpose of reducing intercommunal conflict:

The principle of *cultural reciprocity*, which, by a general recognition of the reciprocal character of all contacts between cultures and the fact that all modern cultures are highly composite ones, would invalidate the lump estimating of cultures in terms of generalized, *en bloc* assumptions of superiority and inferiority, substituting scientific, point-by-point comparisons with their correspondingly limited, specific, and objectively verifiable superiorities or inferiorities.²³⁶

This is both a historical as well as procedural statement. Cultures are syncretistic. A simple realization of this fact should suffice to dispel pretensions of cultural superiority. This new virtue—reciprocity—is tolerance transformed into a real exchange of values. As Moses observes: "Locke's principle of reciprocity first emerges as a historical law that may be discerned through careful consideration of what has contributed to civilized progress in many an age."²³⁷ Locke translates this historical law into a present-day ethic. In this part of Locke's plan, comparisons would become very specific. The "culture-correlates" would then be weighed, and even judged as to their relative superiority or inferiority. There would be particular cultural values that could be exported and taken up within other modern cultures, which are themselves composite anyway.

Cultural convertibility: As a student of history, Locke foresaw the strong possibility that culture might selectively adopt a foreign cultural value. In assimilating that value to itself, the transplanted value would take root and become part of the new cultural landscape. An example of this might be seen in the import, populariza-

tion, and eventual westernization of the Eastern practices of meditation. Locke sees a third concept coming into play:

The principle of *limited cultural convertibility*, that, since culture elements, though widely interchangeable, are so separable, the institutional forms from their values and the values from their institutional forms, the organic selectivity and assimilative capacity of a borrowing culture becomes a limiting criterion for cultural exchange. Conversely, pressure acculturation and the mass transplanting of culture, the stock procedure of groups with traditions of culture "superiority" and dominance, are counterindicated as against both the interests of cultural efficiency and the natural trends of cultural selectivity.²³⁸

Locke claims that these "three objectively grounded principles of culture relations" might, if properly implemented, "correct some of our basic culture dogmatism and progressively cure many of our most intolerant and prejudicial cultural attitudes and practices."²³⁹ How? Discovery of cultural equivalences was supposed to result in an agenda for intercultural understanding, which would in turn provide a common foundation for intercultural cooperation.

Whom did Locke expect or hope to carry out this plan? Quite possibly his peers. He states: "There has never been a new age without a new scholarship or, to put it more accurately, without a profound realignment of scholarship."²⁴⁰ "It is for this reason that one can so heartily concur in the suggestions of Professor Northrop's paper that a value analysis of our basic cultures in broadscale comparison is the philosophical, or rather the scholarly, task of the hour."²⁴¹

Locke as Bahá'í thinker

In general terms, Locke regarded the Bahá'í Faith as a "movement for human brotherhood."²⁴² This is not to say that he reduced the religion to an amorphous universalism, for in "The Orientation of Hope," Locke calls the Bahá'í Faith "a virile and truly prophetic spiritual revelation."²⁴³

What relationship, if any, exists between Locke's religion and his philosophy? Philosophy has traditionally served as the great sys-

tematizer of religious thinking. Locke's religious works (his Bahá'í World essays) were certainly informed by his philosophy, which served—as philosophy was supposed to in medieval times—as the “handmaid of theology.” Indeed, the presence of key philosophical concepts in Locke's *Bahá'í World* essays accentuates the religio-philosophical (Bahá'í-cultural relativist) synergy. “What we need to learn most,” writes Locke, “is how to discover unity and spiritual *equivalence* underneath the differences which at present so disunite and sunder us, and how to establish some basic spiritual *reciprocity* on the principle of unity in diversity.”²⁴⁴

“The purity of Bahá'í principles,” Locke argues, “must be gauged by their universality on this practical plane.”²⁴⁵ Locke then poses a challenge in the form of a test of authenticity: “Do they [Bahá'í principles] fraternize and fuse with all their kindred expressions? Are they happy in their collaborations that advocate other sanctions but advance toward the same spiritual goal? Can they reduce themselves to the vital *common denominators* necessary to mediate between other partisan *loyalties*?”²⁴⁶ This is classic Lockean philosophy, transposed within a Bahá'í value system.

The reverse also held true, in that religion served as Locke's handmaid of philosophy. Bahá'í values suffuse Locke's philosophical thought. Judith Green observes that: “Locke's work shows the influence of serious engagements with Marxism, with diverse religious and spiritual traditions including, among others, Christianity, Buddhism, and Bahá'í.”²⁴⁷ This appears to underestimate the relative importance of the Bahá'í influence on Locke. As Johnny Washington notes: “During the latter part of his career, he accepted the Bahá'í faith and attempted to integrate it into his own philosophy of values.”²⁴⁸ This statement suggests that Locke himself transposed Bahá'í principles of unity into his philosophy.

Locke stressed Bahá'í universality as its primary mission for the present: “But it is not the time for insisting on this side of the claim; the intelligent, loyal Bahá'í should stress not the source, but the importance of the idea, and rejoice not in the originality and uniqueness of the principle but rather in its prevalence and practicality.”²⁴⁹ Locke continues: “The idea has to be translated into every important

province of modern life and thought, and in many of these must seem to be independently derived and justified."²⁵⁰ This statement signals Locke's intention and method: namely, that he would apply Bahá'í principles to his own "province of modern life and thought"—philosophy.

A closer comparison of Locke's essays reveals a synergy between the two. "For Locke, cultural pluralism and cultural relativism," Ernest Mason claims, "both have their foundation in the Bahá'í principle of unity in diversity."²⁵¹ In demonstrating a thematic simultaneity in Locke's religious and philosophical writings, Mason declares: "In the following examination of Locke's social philosophy I hope to demonstrate fully that Locke was, theoretically and practically, concerned with the very social issues stressed in the Bahá'í Faith: justice, equality, nonviolence, tolerance, and racial and ideological peace."²⁵² Mason was not alone in making this assertion. Kenneth Stickers observes:

The Bahá'í religion provided Locke the concrete experience of unity in diversity, for a central teaching of that faith is that the Word of God is essentially one but is spoken differently through the prophets of the various religions of the world, in ways relative to unique sociohistorical conditions. Locke expressed the Bahá'í principle with this metaphor: "think of reality as a central fact and a white light broken up by the prism of human nature into a spectrum of values."²⁵³

This has implications for future Lockean studies in particular, and for African American and for mainstream American philosophy in general.

Unity in diversity is a Bahá'í principle that Locke transposed into his philosophy: "It is just at this juncture that the idea of unity in diversity seems to me to become relevant, and to offer a spiritual common denominator of both ideal and practical efficacy."²⁵⁴ Locke wanted to replace absolutes with universalisms: "Even though it is not yet accepted as a general principle, as a general desire and an ideal goal, the demand for universality is beyond doubt the most characteristic modern thing in the realm of spiritual

values, and in the world of the mind that reflects this realm."²⁵⁵ Through the vehicle of philosophy, Locke replaced "identity" with "equivalence" and "difference" with "unity in diversity."²⁵⁶ In so doing, Locke offered "a solution reconciling nationalism with internationalism, racialism with universalism."²⁵⁷

Both as a philosopher and as a Bahá'í, Locke, as a matter of principle, envisioned a series of "progressive integrations" that would take place "in due course" and "step by step, from an initial stage of cultural tolerance, mutual respect, reciprocal exchange, some specific communities of agreement and, finally, commonality of purpose and action." But since he was not a thoroughly systematic thinker, we cannot read this statement with full confidence in its sequence. Green calls this a "peacemaking democratic transformation . . . by stage-wise progression."²⁵⁸

In my own reading, there is a progression in Locke's social philosophy in which tolerance leads to reciprocity which, in turn, culminates in "unity in diversity." Locke describes his own universalism as a "fluid and functional unity that begins in a basic progression of value pluralism, converts itself to value relativism, and then passes over into a ready and willing admission of both cultural relativism and pluralism."²⁵⁹ Locke's hierarchy of loyalty, tolerance, reciprocity, and cultural relativism and pluralism (the philosophical equivalent of "unity in diversity") was a pragmatic application of quintessentially Bahá'í values. In its practical application, this hierarchy is formulaic:

Loyalty expresses group solidarity. Loyalty is related to the idea of tolerance. Loyalty is love of one's own race, ethnicity, culture. The concept of loyalty is connected with the notion of community. "Indeed," as Stickers corroborates, "it was [Josiah] Royce's theories of loyalty and community and Locke's experience in the Bahá'í faith . . . that provided the main intellectual influences on Locke's pluralism."²⁶⁰ Locke's attraction to Royce's ideas owes a great deal to the fact that Royce was "the only major American philosopher during the early 1900s to publish a book condemning racism."²⁶² Locke's cultural relativism was grounded in Royce's social ethic of "loyalty

Sojourner Truth, with older contemporaries like Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois (who assisted his early career), with younger contemporaries like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, and with our living generations of African American public intellectuals."²⁶⁸ Speaking of America, Locke stated that "this ominous rainbow . . . shows a wide diffusion of bias and prejudice in our social atmosphere and, unfortunately, presages not the passing, but the coming of a storm . . . and unless America solves these minority issues constructively and achieves minority peace or minority tolerance, in less than half a generation she will be in the flaming predicament of Europe."²⁶⁹

The other stream is his cosmopolitan outlook, particularly his commitment to "cultural pluralism" (now known as multiculturalism). Locke's pluralism compensated for some of the deficiencies of liberalism. As Segun Gbadegesin rhetorically asks: "How, if at all, does liberalism differ from pluralism? Liberalism's emphasis is freedom: freedom is its battle cry. But there are other values, including justice . . . and community."²⁷⁰ Locke's cosmopolitan paradigm of unity is a "theoretical and praxical transformation of classical American pragmatism."²⁷¹ According to Green, Locke had precociously conceptualized "deep democracy" as "cosmopolitan unity amidst valued diversity."²⁷²

Education would play a transformative role in helping to bring about this world culture—one characterized by a "race-transcending"²⁷³ consciousness. Locke also spoke of the role of education in cultivating "international-mindedness."²⁷⁴ Art, education, as well as philosophy were venues through which Locke sought to move the world.

Conclusion

If interracial unity, beyond racial justice, was Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "dream" for America, it was Alain LeRoy Locke's vision for the world. Locke prized unity. He had a disdain for black "self-segregation"²⁷⁵ as well as for Jim Crow segregation.²⁷⁶ In an unpublished essay that Johnny Washington titled, "The Paradox of Race," Locke

not only advocated racial integration but encouraged interracial marriage as well.²⁷⁷ It is quite clear that Locke's vision of interracial unity was inspired by his experience as a member of the early American Bahá'í community. Interracial unity, in Bahá'í parlance, is often described as "unity in diversity"—a term that encompasses the entire range of human differences.²⁷⁸ This term appears in both Locke's philosophical as well as religious essays.

One can tentatively say that the Bahá'í principle of "unity in diversity" has indirectly influenced African American philosophy by way of Locke. This essay has also suggested that Locke's religious works were informed by his philosophy. Not only was there a synergy between the two, but there was also a creative connection between Locke's Bahá'í values and philosophical commitments. For instance, in his essay, "Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle," Locke praises Royce: "Josiah Royce, one of the greatest American philosophers[,] saw this problem more clearly than any other western thinker, which is nothing more or less than a vindication of the principle of unity and diversity carried out to a practical degree of spiritual reciprocity." Here, Locke directly correlates religious and philosophical principles. Locke's philosophy may be seen as an unique synthesis of the following thinkers:

Value Theory

Christian Freiherr von Ehrenfel
Alexius Meinong
Wilbur Urban

Pragmatism

Charles Sanders Peirce
William James
John Dewey

Philosophy of Loyalty

Josiah Royce

Cultural Pluralism

Franz Boas
Melville J. Herskovits

Cultural Nationalism

W. E. B. Du Bois

Ideas

values as intrinsic to cognition
values as feelings
value types/qualities

Ideas

theory of meaning
theory of truth
pluralism and democracy

Ideas

philosophy of loyalty

Ideas

race and culture
race and culture

Ideas

the Talented Tenth

Naturalism

George Santayana

Bahá'í Principles

Bahá'u'lláh

'Abdu'l-Bahá

Shoghi Effendi

Ideaspragmatist aesthetics²⁷⁹**Ideas**

world unity

interracial unity

unity in diversity

This list is by no means exhaustive. It should also be borne in mind that, despite his intense commitment to Bahá'í principles, Locke rarely cited the Bahá'í writings. Although he acknowledged that "there is no escaping the historical evidences of its [unity through diversity's] early advocacy and its uncompromising adoption by the Bahá'í prophets and teachers," Locke followed his own advice to Bahá'ís in that "the intelligent, loyal Bahá'í should stress not the source, but the importance of the idea, and rejoice not in the originality and uniqueness of the principle but rather in its prevalence and practicality."²⁸⁰

The salience of race remains a social fact. Locke adroitly linked race progress with world peace. In one of his Bahá'í essays, Locke states: "Each period of a faith imposes a special new problem."²⁸¹ In a philosophical essay, "Cultural Relativism and Ideological Peace," Locke expresses a similar conviction, hinting at what would today be called a paradigm shift: "There has never been a new age without a new scholarship, or, to put it more accurately, without a profound realignment of scholarship."²⁸² Locke's realignment of scholarship was to detoxify "race" of its biologism, to transform "race" into culture, to "convert parochial thinking into global thinking",²⁸³ and to promote "progressive vistas of the new intercultural internationalism" with "passports of world citizenship good for safe ideological conduct anywhere."²⁸⁴ "The intellectual core of the problems of peace," Locke maintains, "... will be the discovery of the necessary common denominators and the basic equivalences involved in a democratic world order or democracy on a world scale."²⁸⁵

As a religious personality, throughout his adult life, Locke vacillated and oscillated between Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith.

Locke was always listed in biographies as an Episcopalian, the denomination in which he was raised. While his mother at first urged him to become a Methodist,²⁸⁶ she later encouraged him to become a more fully committed Bahá'í.²⁸⁷ In an unpublished and undated autobiographical statement, Locke wrote: "I am really a Xtian [sic] without believing any of its dogma, because I am incapable of feeling hatred, revenge or jealousy . . . I have always hoped to be big enough to have to justify myself not to my contemporaries but to posterity. Small men apologize to their neighbors, big men to posterity."²⁸⁸ In an untitled and undated manuscript in the Alain Locke papers, Locke expresses his appreciation of the Bahá'í Faith in these words:

The gospel for the Twentieth Century rises out of the heart of its greatest problems—and few who are spiritually enlightened doubt the nature of that problem . . . The redemption of society—social salvation, should have been sought after first . . . The fundamental problems of current America are materiality and prejudice . . . And so we must say[,] with the acute actualities of America's race problem and the acute potentialities of her economic problem, [that] the land that is nearest to material democracy is furthest away from spiritual democracy . . . And we must begin heroically with the greatest apparent irreconcilables: the East and the west, the black man and the self-arrogating Anglo-Saxon, for unless these are reconciled, the salvation of society cannot be. If the world had believingly understood the full significance of Him [Jesus Christ] who taught it to pray and hope[:] "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in Heaven[,] " who also said[,] "In my Father's house are many mansions," already we should be further toward the realization of this great millen[n]ial vision. The word of God is still insistent, and more emphatic as the human redemption delays and becomes more crucial, and we have what Dr. Elsemont [Esslemont] rightly calls Baha'u'llah's "one great trumpet-call to humanity": "That all nations shall become one in faith, and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled . . . These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and family.[""]²⁸⁹

In that same essay, Locke speaks of the "Old South" as well as

the "New Negro," of "a New South" in a "new era." Locke's vision was world-embracing, as he was equally as concerned for "suppressed minorities the world over today." Moreover, he believed that any real solution to these problems would have to come about through "a revolution within the soul."

Indeed, there were moments when, for various personal reasons,²⁹⁰ Locke later withdrew from active involvement in the Washington D.C. Bahá'í community. But there were moments of courage and grandeur, when Locke publicly identified himself as a Bahá'í. As late in his life as 1952, Locke gave a Bahá'í "fireside"—his last known Bahá'í speaking engagement. One of those present states that: "He certainly clearly identified himself—indeed was introduced—as a Bahá'í to all of us there, Bahá'ís and seekers."²⁹¹ The important point to bear in mind is that, as late as 1952, we have evidence that Locke continued to identify himself as a Bahá'í. Almost all of Locke's previous Bahá'í speaking engagements were highly visible, public events.

In this case, Locke spoke at a private fireside—one that was by invitation only and, most likely, not publicized. This episode shows that Locke was willing to participate in private and well as public Bahá'í events. It shows a dimension of Locke's life as a Bahá'í that was hitherto unknown to us. Perhaps the greatest significance this new information holds is that it dispels the notion, held by some authorities, that late in life Locke was a "freethinker," uncommitted to any religion. It can now be argued, based on this fresh evidence, that Locke remained a committed Bahá'í until the end of his life.

Also in 1952, it must have been with Locke's permission that his photograph appeared (alongside a picture of a fellow Bahá'í, Robert S. Abbott, founder of the *Chicago Defender*) in an *Ebony* magazine article entitled, "Baha'i Faith: Only church in world that does not discriminate."²⁹² Of Locke, Shoghi Effendi reportedly said that: "People as you, Mr Gregory, Dr Esslemont and some other dear souls are as rare as diamond."²⁹³

Just as one cannot understand Locke without reference to his intellectual pedigree, the Bahá'í Faith was part and parcel of his spiritual pedigree. It was the dominant spiritual influence on Locke.

48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 391.
50. Ibid.
51. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
52. Alain Locke, "Oxford Contrasts," *Independent*, Vol. 67 (July 1909) pp. 139-42.
See also idem, "The American Temperament," *North American Review*, Vol. 194 (August 1911) pp. 262-70.
53. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 294.
54. Posnock, *Color and Culture: Black Writers and the Making of the Modern Intellectual*, p. 194.
55. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
56. Winston, "Locke, Alain LeRoy," p. 399.
57. Stewart, "A Black Aesthete at Oxford."
58. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
59. M. G. Brock and M. C. Curthoys, eds., *The History of the University of Oxford*, Vol. VII. Nineteenth-Century Oxford, Part 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 804, citing Jeffrey Green, *Black Edwardians* (1998) p. 154.
60. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
61. Menand, "The Metaphysical Club," p. 390.
62. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," pp. 121-22.
63. Menand, "The Metaphysical Club," p. 390.
64. William B. Harvey, "The Philosophical Anthropology of Alain Locke," in Russell J. Linnemann, ed., *Alain Locke: Reflections on a Modern Renaissance Man* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University, 1982) p. 18.
65. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122. For an analysis of Locke's dissertation on value theory, see Ernest Mason, "Alain Locke's Philosophy of Value," in Russell J. Linnemann, ed., *Alain Locke: Reflections on a Modern Renaissance Man* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1982) pp. 1-16. Locke had originally intended to study under Royce as his Ph.D. supervisor, but Royce had died by the time Locke returned to Harvard.
66. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 10.
67. Charles Molesworth, "Alain Locke and Walt Whitman: Manifestos and National Identity," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. 176.
68. Mason, *Locke's Social Philosophy*, p. 28.
69. Locke, "Values and Imperatives," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 43.
70. Locke, "Values and Imperatives," p. 45.
71. Ibid., p. 36.
72. Locke, "The Need for a New Organon in Education," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 272.
73. Molesworth, "Alain Locke and Walt Whitman: Manifestos and National Identity," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. 175.
74. Fitchue, "Locke and Du Bois," p. 113.
75. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
76. Menand, "The Metaphysical Club," p. 396 and Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 205. These lectures were later edited and published: *Alain Locke, Race Contacts and Interracial Relations*, edited by Jeffery C. Stewart (Washington: Howard University Press, 1992).
77. See Alain Locke, "Major Prophet of Democracy." Review of *Race and Demo-*

- cratic Society* by Franz Boas. *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 15, no. 2 (Spring 1946) pp. 191-92. See also Mark Helbling, "Feeling Universality and Thinking Particularistically: Alain Locke, Franz Boas, Melville Herkskovits, and the Harlem Renaissance," *Prospects*, Vol. 19 (1994) pp. 289-314.
78. Cited by Peggy Pascoe, "Miscegenation Law, Court Cases, and Ideologies of 'Race' in Twentieth-Century America," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 83, no. 1 (June 1996) p. 53, no. 23.
79. Pascoe, "Miscegenation," p. 53.
80. Menand, "The Metaphysical Club," pp. 396-97.
81. Fraser, "Another Pragmatism," p. 7.
82. "The Negro's Contribution to American Culture," *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 8 (July 1939) pp. 521-39, reprinted in Jeffrey C. Stewart, ed., *The Critical Temper of Alain Locke: A Selection of His Essays on Art and Culture* (New York: Garland, 1983) and quoted in Tommy Lee Lott, "Nationalism and Pluralism in Alain Locke's Social Philosophy," in Lawrence Foster and Patricia Herzog, eds., *Defending Diversity: Contemporary Philosophical Perspectives on Pluralism and Multiculturalism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994) p. 106.
83. Fraser, "Another Pragmatism," p. 17.
84. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, pp. 296-97.
85. Harvey, *The Philosophical Anthropology of Alain Locke*, p. 21.
86. Alain Locke, "The Negro in the Three Americas," *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 14 (Winter 1944) p. 7 (editorial note).
87. Beth J. Singer, "Alain Locke Remembered," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. 328.
88. *Ibid.*, p. 329.
89. *Ibid.*, pp. 329-30.
90. The text of that speech is extant, to which the newspaper account may be compared. The present writer has requested—but not yet received—the text of this speech, archived in the Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-123, Folder 8 ("On Becoming World Citizens." Commencement Address at University of Wisconsin High School, 28 May 1946. [typescript]).
91. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
92. See Verner D. Mitchell, "Alain Locke: Philosophical 'Midwife' of the Harlem Renaissance," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. 192.
93. Locke, *The New Negro*, pp. 6 and 47, quoted in Franke, *op. cit.*, pp. 23 and 26.
94. Alain Locke, ed., *The New Negro* (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, Inc., 1925). Reprinted, with a new preface by Robert Hayden (New York: Atheneum, 1969).
95. Shusterman, "Pragmatist Aesthetics: Roots and Radicalism," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, pp. 102 and 109, no. 8.
96. Astrid Franke, "Struggling with Stereotypes: The Problems of Representing a Collective Identity," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. 22.
97. Locke, *The New Negro*, pp. 11, 47, 99, quoted in Shusterman, "Pragmatist Aesthetics," p. 105.
98. Fraser, "Another Pragmatism," pp. 15-17.
99. Locke, *The New Negro*, pp. 52-53 and 9, quoted in Shusterman, "Pragmatist Aesthetics," pp. 102 and 104.

instructions in case of death); and Folder 7 (Last will and testament, 1943). In neither of these executory documents was there any testament of faith. Along with many other Bahá'ís at that time, Locke was probably unaware of the Bahá'í proscription against cremation.

116. This may be deduced from a letter written by Mariam Haney to "My dear Mr. Locke," in which she urges Locke to attend his first Bahá'í fireside (evidently, at the home of the Obers) for not only his sake, but for her sake and for the sake of other Bahá'ís as well: "My friends write me that you have never been to see them. I really was quite surprised, for my first thought about it all was that you would be rendering them a service. If you ever go once, I know you will want to go again, even if this first time I should ask you to go just to please me! I have your interests at heart and theirs as well, so you can gather why I should be anxious for a meeting between you. Through Mr. and Mrs. Ober, you would meet—(if you cared to) some very lovely people, and I should feel proud to have them know you." Haney to Locke, February 1915, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-33, Folder 49 (Haney, Mariam).
117. Bahá'í Historical Record Cards Collection, and Biographical Information Collection, NBA. Locke received three copies of this form from Joseph F. Harley, III, secretary of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Washington, DC. Harley to Locke, 27 August 1935, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith).
118. Louis Gregory, "Convention for Amity Between the Colored and White Races." In *Star of the West*, Vol. 12, p. 6 (24 June 1921) p. 117-18. Reprinted as Vol. 7 (Oxford: George Ronald, 1978). See also idem, "Inter-Racial Amity," in *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record*, Volume Two, 1926-1928, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1929; reprint, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980) p. 281; and idem, "Racial Amity in America." In *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record*, Volume VII, 1936-1938 (National spiritual assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, 1939; reprint, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980) p. 655; Mariam Haney (secretary, The Teaching Committee of Nineteen), "A Compilation of the Story of the Convention for Amity," 31 May 1921, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith).
119. Of that meeting, Locke writes: "Through a miscarriage of plans, due to necessity of taking some [heart] treatment, I could not manage to meet the group of friends in Stuttgart. I did, however, have some very appreciated hours with the friends in England, especially Miss Rosenberg." Locke to Parsons, 21 October 1922, Agnes Parsons Papers, NBA. See also Remey to Locke, 10 February 1923, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-80, Folder 1 (Remey, Charles Mason).
120. On his passport issued 26 June 1922, Locke, while in Berlin, was granted a visa, dated 25 August 1923, to "Egypt, Palestine & United Kingdom." Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-2, Folder 2 (Passports 1922, 1924).
121. "It is certain that the youth for whom you are now doing so much will[,] to a greater and greater degree, as the years pass, appreciate your service." Gregory to Locke, 12 March 1923, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-32, Folder 50 (Gregory, Louis G.)

122. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 146; Gregory, "Inter-Racial Amity," p. 283; idem, "Racial Amity in America," p. 657; Locke to Parsons, 21 October 1922, Agnes Parsons Papers, NBA. Members of the committee included Agnes Parsons, Elizabeth Greenleaf, Mariam Haney, Alain Locke, Mabel Ives, Louise Waite, Louise Boyle, Roy Williams, Philip R. Seville, and Mrs. Atwater.
123. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 147. Locke's response to his appointment was enthusiastic: "I received word today of the appointment on the Inter-Amity Committee, and am especially anxious to be able to contribute my share to its conferences and findings." Locke to Parsons, 22 May 1924, Agnes Parsons Papers, NBA.
124. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 149; Gregory, "Racial Amity in America," p. 658.
125. This committee had "essentially the same membership for the period 1925-26." Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 155.
126. "The Seventeenth Annual Convention and Bahá'í Congress," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 6 (1925) p. 3. Holley to Locke, 1 June 1925; Holley to Locke, undated ("Sunday P.M." [sic]); Holley to Locke, 23 June 1925, Western Union Cablegram, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace).
127. "News of the Cause," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 10 (Feb. 1926) p. 6.
128. Alaine [sic] Locke, "Impressions of Haifa," in *Bahá'í Year Book*, Volume One, April 1925-April 1926, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1926) p. 81, 83. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 151 and p. 343, no. 18. Holley to Locke, 29 December 1925; Holley to Locke, 28 January 1926, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace). "Impressions of Haifa" was first published in *Star of the West*, Vol. 15, pp. 13-14. In probable reference to this article, Shoghi Effendi wrote: "The article by Prof. Locke is very good and sufficient." (From a letter dated 12 March 1996 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada Publishing Committee). Courtesy of the Universal House of Justice, enclosure to letter dated 16 July 2001 to the present writer.
129. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 164.
130. Holley to Locke, 17 March 1927; Holley to Locke, 20 March 1927; Holley to Locke, 30 March 1927, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace); and Box 164-112, Folder 21 ("Cultural Reciprocity").
131. Holley to Locke, 20 April 1927; Holley to Locke, 16 June 1927; Holley to Locke, 13 February 1930, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace).
132. "National Committee on Race Amity Appointed," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 16 (March 1927) p. 5. Committee members: Agnes Parsons ("Chairman"), Louis Gregory (Executive Secretary), Louise Boyle, Mariam Haney, Coralie Cook, Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Dr. Alain Locke. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 166 and p. 344, no. 4.
133. Louis Gregory, National Committee on Inter-Racial Unity, Gregory to National Spiritual Assembly and all Local Spiritual Assemblies of the United States and Canada, 23 February 1927, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith). This report was praised by Shoghi Effendi as a

- "splendid document [. . .] so admirable in its conception, so sound and sober in its language" and which "has struck a responsive chord in my heart" (Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 173 and p. 347, no. 20). Excerpts published in "Inter-Racial Amity Conferences," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 22 (March 1928).
134. "Committees of the National spiritual assembly 1927-1928," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 19 (August 1927) p. 4. Members of this new committee: Agnes Parsons, Louis Gregory, Coralie Cook, Miss Elizabeth Hopper, Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Dr. Alain Locke, Miss Isabel Rives.
135. Elaine [sic] Locke, "Impressions of Haifa," in *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record*, Volume II, April 1926-April 1928, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1928; reprint, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980) 125, 127. Original manuscript in Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-115, Folder 29 ("Impressions of Haifa" [typescript]).
136. "Committees of the National Spiritual Assembly 1929-1930," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 32 (May 1929) p. 4. Members: Louis Gregory (Chairman), Shelley Parker (Secretary), Agnes Parsons, Louise Boyle, Mariam Haney, Dr. Zia Bagdadi, Dr. Alain Locke, Loulie Mathews, Miss Alice Higginbotham.
137. Alain Locke, "Impressions of Haifa," in *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record*, Volume III, April 1928-April 1930, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1930; reprint, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980) p. 280, 282.
138. Louis Gregory, "Interracial Amity Committee" [1929-1930 Annual Report], *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 40 (April 1930) 10-12. The committee members were: Louis G. Gregory (chairman), Shelley N. Parker (secretary), Agnes Parsons, Mariam Haney, Louise D. Boyle, Zia M. Bagdadi, Alain Locke, Alice Higginbotham, Loulie A. Matthews. In reference to a draft letter (requested by the NSA) to Mrs. Herbert Hoover, who held a reception for black Congressman Oscar DePriest, the committee "pointed out that interracial amity is the basis of universal peace" (*ibid.*, p. 12).
139. Ruhi Afnan (on behalf of Shoghi Effendi) to Locke, 15 February 1930; Afnan (on behalf of Shoghi Effendi) to Locke, 5 July 1930; Shoghi Effendi to Locke, 5 July 1930, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-10, Folder 2 (Afnan, Ruhi).
140. "National Bahá'í Committees 1931-1932," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 53 (July 1931) p. 2. Members: Loulie Mathews (chairman), Louis G. Gregory (secretary), Dr. Zia M. Bagdadi, Mabelle L. Davis, Frances Fales, Sara L. Witt, Alain L. Locke, Shelley N. Parker, Annie K. Lewis. Of his acceptance, Locke writes: "Your letter about the Interracial committee was welcome and enheartening. I have written Mr. Lunt my acceptance, and hope next year to participate more actively in the Amity conferences and consultations." Locke to Gregory, 6 June 1931, Louis Gregory Papers, NBA. Louis Gregory, "The Annual Convention," *Bahá'í News*, No. 52 (May 1931) p. 3. See Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 349, no. 29.
141. Locke spoke at the second session. Louis Gregory (on behalf of the National Bahá'í Committee for Racial Amity), "Inter-Racial Amity Activities," *Bahá'í News*, No. 72 (April 1933) p. 6. See also Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 194,

- citing "Committee Reports: Committee on Inter-Racial Amity," *Bahá'í News*, No. 74 (May 1933) p. 13 as well.
142. See note 1 *supra*.
143. Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Washington, DC, untitled report, 1935, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith). Members of the Teaching Committee: Stanwood Cobb (chairman), Charles Mason Remey (vice-chairman), Mrs. John Stewart (secretary), Clarence Baker, Louise Boyle, William Gibson, Alain Locke, George Miller, Ethel Murray.
144. Locke to Holley, 18 April 1935, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace).
145. Held at the Tea House of the Dodge Hotel. Official program, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith). In a note to Locke written on an announcement of this event sent out by the local spiritual assembly of the Bahá'ís of Washington, DC, Joseph Harley III wrote: "Your Bahá'í record cards have not been received—Bring them Monday, please." (From the Washington, DC, Bahá'í Archives.)
146. Locke to Cobb, 10 December 1935, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-21, Folder 16 (Stanwood Cobb).
147. Alain Locke, "The Orientation of Hope," in *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record*, Volume V, April 1932-April 1934, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (New York: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1936; reprint, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980) 527-28. Reprint in Leonard Harris, ed., *The Philosophy of Alain Locke* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989) pp. 129-132. Leonard Harris' reference (129 n.) should be emended to read, "Volume V, 1932-1934" (not "Volume IV, 1930-1932"). Original manuscript in Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-123, Folder 11 ("The Orientation of Hope." 1934 [typescript]).
148. "I understand from Miss Juliet Thompson that you are going to speak at the Bahá'í center on the afternoon of October 24th." Gulick to Locke, 11 October 1943, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-33, Folder 17 (Gulick, Robert L. Jr.).
149. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 285.
150. Gulick to Locke, 28 January 1944; Gulick to Locke, "25" [February 1944], Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-33, Folder 17 (Gulick, Robert L. Jr.).
151. Alain Locke, "Lessons in World Crisis," in *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record*, Volume IX, April 1940-April 1944, comp. National Spiritual assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Committee, 1945; reprint, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1981) pp. 745-47.
152. "Local Communities," *Bahá'í News*, No. 182 (April 1946) p. 6.
153. "Voting Members of the Washington, DC Bahá'í Community, 6 April 1949, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith).
154. Gregory to Locke, 6 April 1949, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-32, Folder 50 (Gregory, Louis G.) "Although your Bahá'í spirit has been admirably shown by so many traits and activities, yet I have the deepest longing that you will see the wisdom of wholly identifying yourself with the Faith, thereby increasing your joys and usefulness, perhaps twenty-fold."

155. Gregory to Locke, 21 January 1951, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-32, Folder 50 (Gregory, Louis G.) "... my longing is, that you identify yourself fully with it" [the Bahá'í Faith] ... My most earnest hope is that you will see clearly the way to unite with the Bahá'ís in either Washington or New York, in the latter of which, I am told, you maintain a residence."
156. Nina Matthisen to Locke, 5 September 1952; and press release (1953), Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-176, Folder 13 (Bahá'í Faith).
157. Research Department, Bahá'í World Centre, Memorandum to The Universal House of Justice, 12 June 2002.
158. Ibid.
159. Research Department, Bahá'í World Centre, Memorandum to The Universal House of Justice, 26 December 2001.
160. From a letter dated 12 March 1926 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada Publishing Committee, "References to Dr. Alain Locke in Letters Written on Behalf of Shoghi Effendi," Attachment, The Universal House of Justice to Buck, 16 July 2001.
161. Research Department, Bahá'í World Centre, Memorandum to The Universal House of Justice, 26 December 2001.
162. Ibid.
163. Locke, "Impressions of Haifa" (1926, 1929, 1930).
164. Ibid., "Impressions" (1930) p. 280.
165. Ibid.
166. Ibid.
167. Gregory, "Inter-racial Amity," p. 281. See Morrison, *To Move the World*, pp. 134-43.
168. In a message conveyed by Mountfort Mills (an American Bahá'í recently returned from a visit to Palestine), 'Abdu'l-Bahá was reported to have said: "Say to this convention that never since the beginning of time has a convention of more importance been held. This convention stands for the oneness of humanity. It will become the cause of the removal of hostilities between the races. It will become the cause of the enlightenment of America. It will, if wisely managed and continued, check the deadly struggle between these races, which otherwise will inevitably break out" (Gregory, "Convention for Amity Between the Colored and White Races," p. 115).
169. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 5.
170. Gregory, "Interracial Amity Committee" (1930) p. 10. Note that this text differs from the translation given in another report (Gregory, "Convention for Amity Between the Colored and White Races," 115), but the gist is the same. In all likelihood, both translations were taken from the same Persian original.
171. 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Parsons, 26 July 1921 and 27 September 1921. See Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 143 and 342, no. 34.
172. Dahl to Buck, 16 February 2001.
173. Locke to Gregory, 6 June 1931, Louis Gregory Papers, NBA.
174. Locke to Holley, 18 April 1935, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace)
175. Robert Stockman, *The Bahá'í Faith in America: Early Expansion, 1900-1912* (Oxford: George Ronald, 1995) p. 189.

176. Locke to Parsons, 21 October 1922, Agnes Parsons Papers, NBA.
177. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 140. See Alain Locke, "Obituary of George Cook," *Star of the West*, Vol. 18, no. 254. Mariam Haney had solicited this obituary. Haney to Locke, 25 September 1931, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-33, Folder 49 ("Haney, Mariam").
178. Locke to Gregory, 6 June 1931, Louis Gregory Papers, NBA.
179. Morrison, *To Move the World*, pp. 148-49, pp. 164 and 182.
180. Agnes Parsons, who once again served as the chair of that committee, was struck by a car and killed in January 1934. She was seventy-three years old at her death. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 198.
181. *Ibid.*, pp. 194-213.
182. *Ibid.*, p. 213.
183. Locke to Mariam Haney (corresponding secretary of the Washington, DC LSA), 30 March 1941, MSRC, Box 164-33, Folder 49 ("Haney, Mariam").
184. Louis Gregory (on behalf of the National Bahá'í Committee for Racial Amity), "Inter-Racial Amity Activities," *Bahá'í News*, No. 72 (April 1933) p. 6.
185. "Local Communities," *Bahá'í News*, No. 182 (April 1946) p. 6.
186. "News of the Cause," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 10 (Feb. 1926) p. 6. Cf. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 151, who states that this tour occurred in 1925. However, Horace Holley indicates 1926: "I am delighted that the plans have worked out so well for your southern trip. I hope you will keep in touch with me during this trip and send me little memorandums of your public talks and any other news that might be of interest to the friends in the Bahá'í News Letter. You understand, of course, that I will present the story of your trip in an impersonal way and not refer to you as the source of the news. Consequently, please do not be so modest that you lean backward, because trips of this kind are most inspiring to all the friends and I feel that they have a right to know the details of what I am sure is going to be a remarkable speaking journey." Holley to Locke, 28 January 1926, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164_36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace). In a later letter, it is clear that this trip must have taken place prior to August, as Locke was in Paris at that time. Holley to Locke, 17 August 1926, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164_36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace).
187. "The Seventeenth Annual Convention and Bahá'í Congress," *Bahá'í News Letter*, No. 6 (1925) p. 3.
188. "News of the Cause," *Bahá'í News Letter*, no. 10 (Feb. 1926) pp. 6-7.
189. Morrison, *To Move the World*, p. 124. See entry in index on 387, which says that Louis Gregory "helps form first Spiritual Assembly in South."
190. Office of the Secretary Records, National Bahá'í Convention Files, Box 4. Courtesy Gayle Morrison. e-mail communication, 11 Oct. 2002.
191. Gayle Morrison, e-mail communication, 11 Oct. 2002.
192. Southern Regional Teaching Committee (Louise D. Boyle, Agnes Parsons, Louis Gregory), "Report of the Southern Regional Teaching Committee" (15 April 1926) pp. 73-74. Courtesy of Gayle Morrison, e-mail communication, 17 Oct. 2002.
193. Southern Regional Teaching Committee (Louise D. Boyle, Agnes Parsons, Louis Gregory), "Report of the Southern Regional Teaching Committee" (15 April 1926) pp. 73-74. Courtesy of Gayle Morrison, e-mail communication, 17 Oct. 2002.

194. Southern Regional Teaching Committee (Louise D. Boyle, Agnes Parsons, Louis Gregory), "Report of the Southern Regional Teaching Committee" (15 April 1926) p. 74. Courtesy of Gayle Morrison, e-mail communication, 17 Oct. 2002.
195. See Christopher Buck, *Symbol and Secret: Qur'an Commentary in Bahá'u'lláh's Kitáb-i Íqán. Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, Vol. 7 (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1995). Republished online as an electronic book at: <<http://www.bahai-library.org/books/symbol.secret>>.
196. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 129-32.
197. Ibid., p. 133-38.
198. Ibid., p. 129.
199. Shoghi Effendi to Locke, Western Union cablegram, 17 January 1944; Mabel Paine to Locke, 3 February 1944. See also Holley to Locke, 1 February 1944, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-36, Folder 47 (Holley, Horace), and Paine to Locke, 4 March 1944, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-12, Folder 3 (Bahá'í World). Original manuscript in Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-106, Folder 22 (re: Bahá'í revelation of principles)
200. Locke, "The Orientation of Hope," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 130, p. 132.
201. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 8, p. 10.
202. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 122.
203. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 9.
204. Private memorandum, Alain Locke Papers (MSRC), cited by Winston, "Locke, Alain LeRoy," p. 402.
205. Winston, "Locke, Alain LeRoy," p. 404.
206. Menand, "The Metaphysical Club," p. 351.
207. James T. Kloppenberg, "Pragmatism: An Old Name for Some New Ways of Thinking?" *Journal of American History*, Vol. 83, no. 1 (1996) p. 102, n. 3.
208. Posnock, *Color and Culture: Black Writers and the Making of the Modern Intellectual*, p. 184.
209. Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 4.
210. Alain Locke, "Pluralism and Intellectual Democracy," in Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, Second Symposium (New York: Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, 1942). Reprinted in Leonard Harris, ed., *The Philosophy of Alain Locke: Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989) p. 53.
211. Kloppenberg, "Pragmatism," p. 101.
212. Ibid.
213. Houston Baker, Jr., *Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987) p. 75, quoted by Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 12. See Ernest Mason, "Deconstruction in the *Philosophy of Alain Locke*," *Transactions of the Charles S. Pierce Society*, Vol. 24 (Winter 1988) pp. 85-106.
214. Lecture, 8 Nov. 1950, Howard University.
215. Posnock, *Color and Culture: Black Writers and the Making of the Modern Intellectual*, p. 187.
216. Posnock, *Color and Culture: Black Writers and the Making of the Modern Intellectual*, p. 187.

217. Leonard Harris, "Preface," in idem, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. xi.
218. Mason, "Social Philosophy of Alain Locke," p. 26.
219. Kallen, "Alain Locke and Cultural Pluralism," p. 127.
220. Green, "Alain Locke's Multicultural Philosophy of Value," p. 87.
221. Judith Green, "Alain Locke's Multicultural Philosophy of Value," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, p. 87.
222. Napier, "Affirming Critical Conceptualism."
223. Mason, "Social Philosophy of Alain Locke," p. 34.
224. Ibid.
225. Posnock, *Color and Culture: Black Writers and the Making of the Modern Intellectual*, p. 192.
226. Molesworth, "Alain Locke and Walt Whitman: Manifestos and National Identity," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, pp. 175-76.
227. Alain Locke, "Cultural Relativism and Ideological Peace," in Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. MacIver eds., *Approaches to World Peace* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944) pp. 609-618. Reprinted in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, pp. 67-78.
228. Locke, op. cit., p. 70.
229. Ibid.
230. Ibid., p. 75.
231. Ibid., p. 72.
232. Ibid.
233. Ibid., p. 73.
234. Locke, "Pluralism and Intellectual Democracy," p. 60.
235. Locke, "Values and Imperatives," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 48.
236. Locke, "Cultural Relativism and Ideological Peace," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 73.
237. Moses, "Two Lockes, Two Keys," p. 166.
238. Locke, "Cultural Relativism and Ideological Peace," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 73.
239. Ibid.
240. Ibid., p. 70.
241. Ibid., p. 75.
242. Locke to Parsons, 28 June 1922, Agnes Parsons Papers, NBA.
243. Locke, "Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle," in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 130.
244. Ibid., p. 135.
245. Ibid., p. 136.
246. Ibid.
247. Green, *Deep Democracy*, p. 97.
248. Washington, *Alain Locke and Philosophy*, p. xxv.
249. Locke, *Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle*, p. 135.
250. Ibid., emphasis added.
251. Mason, "Locke's Social Philosophy," p. 26.
252. Ibid.
253. Stickers, "Instrumental Relativism and Cultivated Pluralism: Alain Locke and Philosophy's Quest for a Common World," in Leonard Harris, ed., *Critical Pragmatism*, pp. 214-15.

- society: restaurants, health care institutions, and cemeteries. In 1954, this racial caste system was successfully challenged in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, which declared segregation in the public schools unconstitutional. The Jim Crow system was finally dismantled by civil-rights legislation in 1964-68.
277. Johnny Washington, *A Journey into the Philosophy of Alain Locke* (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1994) p. 103.
278. It should be noted that Shoghi Effendi, in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, 2nd rev. edn. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1974 [1938]), used this term to refer to differences of ethnic origins, climate, history, language, tradition, thought and habit (41)—generally, in the sense of a lack of conformity except in essentials—as the bedrock of the Bahá'í community. It is therefore misleading to represent “unity in diversity” as applying only to race. (I am indebted to Gayle Morrison for this important observation.)
279. See Jonathan Levin, “The Esthetics of Pragmatism,” *American Literary History* Six (1994) pp. 658-83.
280. Locke, “Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle,” in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 135.
281. Ibid.
282. Locke, “Cultural Relativism and Ideological Peace,” in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 72.
283. Locke, “The Need for a New Organon in Education,” in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 268.
284. Locke, “Pluralism and Ideological Peace,” in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 99.
285. Locke, “Pluralism and Intellectual Democracy,” in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 62.
286. “You had better make up your mind to become a Methodist—They are certainly loyal to you—I heard your praises sung by several of them.” Mary Locke to Alain Locke, 14 May 1916), Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-65, Folder 21 (page 5).
287. Locke to Parsons, 28 June 1922, Agnes Parsons Papers, NBA.
288. Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-1, Folder 2 (Autobiographical statements).
289. Untitled essay, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-143, Folder 3 (Writings by Locke—Notes. Christianity, spirituality, religion).
290. Locke's homosexual orientation may be relevant to this. See, e.g., Leonard Harris, “‘Outing’ Alain Locke: Empowering the Silenced,” in *Sexual Identities, Queer Politics*, Mark Blasius, ed. (Princeton University Press, 2001) pp. 321-41. In my own research of the Alain Locke Papers at Howard University, I discovered an unpublished autobiographical statement in which Locke referred to his “Achilles heel of homosexuality” which he “kept in an armoured shell [?] of reserve & haughty caution” (Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-143, Folder 5 [Autobiographical writings]).
291. Michael Rochester, personal communication, dated 5.2.02. Dr Rochester states: “Having been strongly attracted to the Bahá'í teachings in November 1951, as a student at the University of Toronto, I vividly remember attending a

fireside held in January or February 1952, in a home in what was then a suburb of Toronto, at which Alain Locke was the speaker. Unfortunately Elizabeth Manser (later my wife) who organized that fireside, no longer remembers how Dr. Locke came to be in Toronto, to be invited to the fireside or the title of his talk. His persona made a great impression on me, not only because what I understood of the Bahá'í stand on the oneness of the human race and the importance of efforts to free ourselves from racial prejudice was immensely attractive to me, but because his modest demeanour, and the wisdom and thoughtfulness with which he expressed himself, were so consonant with what I had already come to appreciate in and expect from the best Bahá'í speakers. He certainly clearly identified himself—indeed was introduced—as a Bahá'í to all of us there, Bahá'ís and seekers.”

292. *Ebony* (October 1952) p. 39. Locke kept a copy of this article. Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-147, Folder 12 (Articles, advertisements that mention Locke).
293. Bahadur to Locke, 27 February 1924, Alain Locke Papers, MSRC, Box 164-12, Folder 2 (Bahadur, Azizullah).
294. From his 1908 Berkeley lecture, “Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results,” quoted in Menand, “The Metaphysical Club,” p. 354.
295. Locke, “Unity through Diversity: A Bahá'í Principle,” in Harris, *Philosophy of Alain Locke*, p. 138.

Search for Values

Ethics in
Bahá'í Thought

EIGHT ESSAYS BY VARIOUS SCHOLARS widen our understanding of the ethical implications of Bahá'í scripture and Bahá'í history. Read this collection of essays as a pioneering work—a first attempt to give coherence and form to a system of Bahá'í ethics as it might exist in theory and in practice.

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