CHAPTER 5

`ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S 1912 HOWARD UNIVERSITY SPEECH: A CIVIL WAR MYTH FOR INTERRACIAL EMANCIPATION

Christopher Buck

`Abdu'l-Bahá came to North America in 1912 to bring about what may be characterized as "interracial emancipation."[1] As son, successor and spokesman of Bahá'u'lláh, `Abdu'l-Bahá proclaimed Bahá'í principles of ideal race relations (including interracial marriage), gender equality, and world peace: "I am here in this country making an appeal on behalf of universal peace, unity, love and brotherhood," `Abdu'l-Bahá told a journalist. "The Bahaist [*sic*] must be free from religious prejudice, patriotic prejudice, racial prejudice."[2] These were radical teachings during the Jim Crow era of forced racial segregation, to be sure. The black intelligentsia took notice.[3]

While aboard the RMS Cedric of the White Star Line, en route to America, `Abdu'l-Bahá—in a "Tablet"[4] later published in *Star of the West*—wrote that "God willing, with Mr. Gregory's assistance, I will attend the Black gathering (*majma'-i siyāhān*)"—literally, the "Assembly of the Blacks"—referring to his forthcoming lecture at Howard University.[5] Louis G. Gregory (1874–1951), was considered a rising star in Washington's black community, having earned his law degree at Howard University (a historically black university in Washington, D.C.)in 1902 and gained respect as a successful attorney. Gregory became a Bahá'í in June 1909.[6] Gayle Morrison credits Louis Gregory with having lined up `Abdu'l-Bahá's

Figure 5.1 `Abdu'l-Bahá with children. A photographic still from the original film taken of `Abdu'l-Bahá on June 18, 1912, by the Special Event Film Mfg. Co., New York, at the home of Howard and Mary MacNutt, 935 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn. On that occasion, "the Master" said: "The souls of little children are as mirrors upon which no dust has gathered." The film at the Hotel Ansonia taken the same day has not survived. But the voice recording made on "Edison's Talking Machine" (cylinder phonograph) is extant.

Source: National Bahá'í Archives, United States.

speaking engagements in Washington, D.C.), including the speech at Howard University on April 23, 1912.[7]

The Event

On May 4, 1912, *The Chicago Defender* ran a story that captures the aim of `Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to Washington, D.C.: "To Break the Color Line: Abdul Baha, the Great Persian Philosopher and Teacher, Aims to Unite the Peoples of All Races and Creeds in One Great Bond of Brotherhood." *The Chicago Defender* (Big Weekend Edition, May 4, 1912).[8] After announcing that "Abdul Baha … comes to bring hope to the colored people," the article states, in the second paragraph:

> His visit to Washington has been a triumphal march. He has met with and conquered Southern prejudices. He made addresses at Metropolitan A. M. E. church, at Howard University and at many of the white churches and halls and was listened to by many thousands of people of both races, who

applauded his propaganda of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.[9]

On the front page of the the *Afro-American Ledger*, a Baltimore newspaper, a story, captioned—"Bahai Leader at Howard University: Head of Oriental Religious Sect Delivers Lecture to the Student Body. Freedom Here Brought Freedom Elsewhere. The Effect of Freedom in This Country Reacted All Over the World"—effectively captures the essence of `Abdu'l-Bahá's speech. The story opens as follows:

> Washington, April 25—Abdul Bahai [*sic*] Abbas Effendi, oriental seer and world leader of the Bahai movement, delivered the last of his series of lectures last night.
>
> In an address to the students of Howard University, he said: "Let us recall the fact that the first proclamation of liberty, of freedom from slavery, was accomplished in this continent."[10]

Mirza Maḥmud Zarqani, who was part of `Abdu'l-Bahá's entourage,[11] records the following in his *Diary* on `Abdu'l-Bahá's speech:

> Tuesday, April 23, 1912
>
> [Washington DC]
>
> Today the Master [i.e. `Abdu'l-Bahá] went to Howard University, an educational institution for blacks. The hosts (mostly black with a few whites) had made special arrangements so that when the Master arrived He was welcomed by music from a band while the audience applauded with excitement and exuberance. It is difficult to describe the scene adequately. The president of the university was very cordial and introduced `Abdu'l-Bahá as the Prophet of Peace and the harbinger of unity and salvation. Then the Master rose from His seat and spoke on the subject of the harmony between blacks and whites and the unity of humankind. The audience repeatedly applauded Him during the talk, delighted at His words. At the conclusion, the president of the university thanked `Abdu'l-Bahá on behalf of all those gathered. As He left the auditorium, group after group formed two lines, one on each side, all showing their highest respect by bowing and waving their hats and handkerchiefs in farewell to the beloved Master.[12]

This eyewitness account reports firsthand the band welcoming and the president introducing the guest speaker, marking this as a high-profile event. It was not just the fanfare that inspired the enthusiasm of the audience, which, unusually, was racially mixed. It was the message itself, of racial uplift and interracial reciprocity. Howard University's white president,

Reverend Wilbur P. Thirkield introduced `Abdu'l-Bahá.[13] That same year, it was Thirkield who had appointed Alain Locke—the first African American Rhodes Scholar (1907) and acknowledged "Dean" of the Harlem Renaissance—as an assistant professor of English, who began teaching in the 1912–1913 academic year.[14] Locke, who was not in attendance, would later write to `Abdu'l-Bahá and become one of the Bahá'í Faith's most notable African American adherents in 1918.[15] Corroborating Zarqani's account, Joseph Hannen, later honored as a "Disciple of `Abdu'l-Bahá," reported:

> On Tuesday, April 23rd, at noon, Abdul-Baha addressed the student-body of more than 1,000, the faculty and a large number of distinguished guests, at Howard University. This was a most notable occasion, and here, as everywhere when both white and colored people were present, Abdul-Baha seemed happiest. The address was received with breathless attention by the vast audience, and was followed by a positive ovation and a recall. That evening the Bethel Literary and Historical Society, the leading colored organization in Washington, was addressed, and again the audience taxed the capacity of the edifice in which the meeting was held.[16]

This figure of "more than 1,000" is confirmed by the story in *The Washington Times*[17] and is independently verified by a contemporary account in Persian, reporting that "one thousand students were in attendance (*hizār nafar muḥaṣṣilīn ḥāḍir būdand*)."[18] Later, `Abdu'l-Bahá commented on the audiences of the three speaking engagements that day (speech at Howard University (noon), talk in the home of Agnes Parsons (5:00 p.m.), and address at the Bethel Literary and Historical Society, speaking on the importance of science):

> In Washington, too, we called a meeting of the blacks and whites. The attendance was very large, the blacks predominating. At our second gathering this was reversed, but at the third meeting we were unable to say which color predominated. These meetings were a great practical lesson upon the unity of colors and races in the Bahá'í teaching.[19]

Agnes Parsons, a wealthy Washington socialite and devoted Bahá'í who hosted `Abdu'l-Bahá in the nation's capital, records this note in her *Diary*:

> [Tuesday,] April 23rd
>
> On Tuesday, after seeing several people in the morning Abdul Baha and Dr. Fareed went for a short drive: stopped at Mr. and Mrs. Hannen's and afterward they went to Howard University where Abdul Baha made an address before a large audience of professors and students. He dwelt largely

> upon the need of love and unity between the white and black races and spoke of the gratitude which the colored people should feel for the whites, because, through them came not only freedom for their race, but it was the beginning of freedom for all slaves. He also told through education the differences between the two races would be lessened.[20]

It was during the luncheon that followed the speech that an extraordinary event occurred. According to Gayle Morrison, "It was in the capital on 23 April, with Louis Gregory at His side, that He [`Abdu'l-Bahá] first

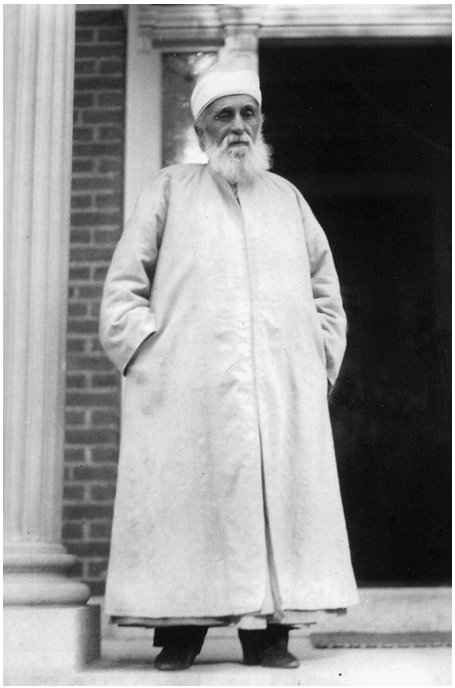

Figure 5.2 `Abdu'l-Bahá, photo probably taken April 22, 1912 (the day before the Howard University speech), standing at the entrance of the Parsons Mansion (as the guest of the Parsons) at 1700 18th Street NW (now owned by the Transatlantic Academy), Washington, D.C., built in 1910 by Arthur J. Parsons, Chief of the Prints Division, Library of Congress, to house his rare book and art collection. His wife, Agnes Parsons (1861–1934), was a prominent Bahá'í whom `Abdu'l-Bahá, in 1920, asked to organize the historic "Convention for Amity Between the White and Colored Races" held May 19–21, 1921, at the old First Congregational Church, 10th & G Streets NW.

Source: National Bahá'í Archives, United States.

confronted—both in public addresses and in a social context—the issue of racial unity."[21] Harlan Ober's account is as follows:

> During the visit of `Abdu'l-Bahá in the United States in 1912 a luncheon in His honor was given in Washington by Mírzá Ali-Kuli Khan and Madame Khan, who were both Bahá'ís. Khan was at that time chargé d'affaires of the Persian Legation in the capital city. Many noted people were invited, some of whom were members of the official and social life of Washington, as well as a few Bahá'ís.
>
> Just an hour before the luncheon `Abdu'l-Bahá sent word to Louis Gregory that he might come to Him for the promised conference. Louis arrived at the appointed time, and the conference went on and on. `Abdu'l-Bahá seemed to want to prolong it. When luncheon was announced, `Abdu'l-Bahá led the way and all followed Him into the dining room, except Louis.
>
> All were seated when suddenly, `Abdu'l-Bahá stood up, looked around, and then said to Mírzá Khan, "Where is Mr. Gregory? Bring Mr. Gregory!" There was nothing for Mírzá Khan to do but find Mr. Gregory, who fortunately had not yet left the house, but was quietly waiting for a chance to do so. Finally Mr. Gregory came into the room with Mírzá Khan.
>
> `Abdu'l-Bahá, Who was really the Host (as He was wherever He was), had by this time rearranged the place setting and made room for Mr. Gregory, giving him the seat of honor at His right. He stated He was very pleased to have Mr. Gregory there, and then, in the most natural way as if nothing unusual had happened, proceeded to give a talk on the oneness of mankind.[22]

Press Coverage

The press covered `Abdu'l-Bahá's invited speech before faculty and students at Howard University assembled in Rankin Chapel at noon on April 23, 1912, which given its message before an interracial audience in defiance of Jim Crow social restrictions, was certainly newsworthy if not historic. *The Washington Bee* (which, as part of its masthead, billed itself "Washington's Best and Leading Negro Newspaper") published the text of the entire speech on May 25, 1912, in an article headlined, "Abdue [*sic*] Baha: Revolution in Religious Worship." The speech was introduced by this brief account of the event:

> On Tuesday, April 23d [*sic*], Abdue [*sic*] Baha, the venerable Persian, leader of the Baha [*sic*] movement, which has several millions of followers throughout the world, and is attracting considerable attention in Washington, addressed the student and faculty of Howard University. The occasion was impressive and most interesting, as in flowing oriental robes this speaker gave his message. He was received with such fervor that the breathless silence during his address was followed by prolonged applause, causing him to bow acknowledgments and give a second greeting. His address has been reported for *The Bee* as follows.[23]

Figure 5.3 Wedding photo (September 27, 1912, New York) of Louis G. Gregory and Louisa ("Louise") A. M. Mathew, the first interracial Bahá'í couple, whom `Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged to marry. They exchanged Bahá'í vows after the rites performed by Rev. Everard W. Daniel, curate of St. Philip's Protestant Episcopal Church, perhaps the most prestigious African American church in the country, in a private ceremony in his residence. In a "Tablet" (translated March 14, 1914), `Abdu'l-Bahá lauded the Gregorys' marriage as "an introduction to the accomplishment" of harmony between the races.

The press had previously announced the imminent arrival of `Abdu'l-Bahá. On March 4, 1912, a *New York Times* headline announced: "Bahai Leader Due Here: Head of Religious Unity Movement to Arrive Early in April."[24] Similarly, *The Washington Times* published a story, "Leader of Bahai Movement Coming to Capital Soon: Abdul Baha Abbas Will Explain His Philosophy Here."[25] Advance notice of the meeting on the night of April 23, 1912, was announced on the front page of Baltimore's *The Afro-American Ledger* on January 27, 1912,[26] and by *The Washington Bee* on March 30.[27] On April 27, *The Bee* had reported:

> Abdul Baha Abbas, the leader of the Baha [*sic*] movement for the world-wide religious unity, has been in the city. Through the missionary work of

> Mrs. Christian D. Helmick (Mrs. A. C. Barney that was), quite a colony of colored Bahaists [*sic*] has been developed in Washington, and these earnest disciples gave their patron saint an especially warm reception. On Tuesday evening the venerable prophet addressed a large audience at Metropolitan A. M. E. Church, in connection with the Bethel Literary Society. At noon Tuesday, the Abdul [*sic*] spoke to the students of Howard University. The principal advocate of the Bahai faith in this city is Mr. Louis C. [*sic*] Gregory, a brilliant young lawyer and government official, whose zeal in the work was so absorbing that he made a comprehensive tour of Egypt and the Holy Land to study at first hand the history and philosophy of this remarkable cult.
>
> The Behai [*sic*] belief is that universal peace can only come through the harmony of all religions, and that all religions are basically one. Its consistent espousal of the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" is causing the new faith to find considerable favor among many of our leading people. Its white devotees, even in this prejudice-ridden community, refuse to draw the color line. The informal meetings, held frequently in the fashionable mansions of the cultured society in Sheridan Circle, Dupont Circle, Connecticut and Massachusetts avenues, have been open to Negroes on terms of absolute equality. The liberality of the Behaist [*sic*] faith is evidenced in the fact that one can be of any known religious denomination, and yet maintain good standing as a disciple of Behai [*sic*].[28]

This expression, the "color-line," is particularly poignant in light W. E. B. Du Bois's famous statement in 1903: "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line,—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea."[29] Other reports simply gave passing mention, such as the *Washington Herald*: "Abdul Baha addressed the Howard University students yesterday afternoon,"[30] with one notable exception: In an interview with *The Independent*, `Abdu'l-Bahá gave the gist of his message delivered in Rankin Memorial Chapel on that memorable occasion. The interview took place on July 19, 1912, in New York.[31] The unnamed reporter began the article with this brief pen portrait:

> Abdul Baha Abbas, Persian prophet and teacher, courteously replied to questions of a representative of THE INDEPENDENT by means of an interpreter. In spite of the lofty position ascribed to him by his followers, his interest in ordinary human affairs is keen. He was dressed in flowing robes and turban, which accorded well with his square cut gray beard. His blue eyes are frank, lively and humorous, his figure of medium hight [*sic*] and slight, but erect and graceful in spite of his sixty-eight years … [32]
>
> Here is what `Abdu'l-Bahá had to say about his Howard University speech:

> I AM very pleased with America and its people. I find religion, high ideals, broad sympathy with humanity, benevolence and kindness widespread here, and my hope is that America will lead in the movement for universal peace …
>
> Such leadership would be in accord with their own history and the principles on which their government is founded. Never in all the annals of the world do we find such an instance of national self-sacrifice as was displayed here during the Civil War. Americans who had never seen a weapon used in anger left their homes and peaceful pursuits, took up arms, bore utmost hardships, braved utmost dangers, gave up all they held dear, and finally their lives, in order that slaves might be free.
>
> In Washington recently I addrest [sic] the students at Howard University—about fifteen hundred of them—and I told them that they must be very good to the white race of America. I told them that they must never forget to be grateful and thankful. I said to them: "If you want to know really what great service the white race here has rendered to you, go to Africa and study the condition of your own race there." But the same time I said that the white people here must be very kind to those whom they have freed. The white people must treat those whom they have freed with justice and firmness, but also with perfect love. America's example in freeing the slaves has been a power for freedom everywhere. Because America freed her slaves, even at the cost of one of the bloodiest wars of modern times, other nations have felt themselves bound to free slaves. America's leadership in humanitarian and altruistic matters is generally acknowledged.[33]

`Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to a capacity audience — an estimated 1,500 people in attendance.

It would be tempting to read `Abdu'l-Bahá's statement on Africa as an argument that slavery served as a proverbial bridge to civilization. In 1904, Booker T. Washington wrote of slavery as a bridge to Christianity and thus as the "one great consolation" that came of slavery in America:

> Slavery, with all its disadvantages, gave the Negro race, by way of recompense, one great consolation, namely, the Christian religion and the hope and belief in a future life. The slave, to whom on this side of the grave the door of hope seemed closed, learned from Christianity to lift his face from earth to heaven, and that made his burden lighter. In the end, the hope and aspiration of the race in slavery fixed themselves on the vision of the resurrection, with its "long white robes and golden slippers."[34]

Washington surely was not stating that slavery was good, but that the sole good that came of slavery was Christianization. It is not that slavery itself was a bridge to civilization for benighted tribes in Africa, but that freedom from the slavery of ignorance is another form of emancipation.

As evident in the speech itself, `Abdu'l-Bahá spoke on the Civil War in light of Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. But the liberation effected by Emancipation Proclamation was limited; it certainly did not confer equality on freed slaves. In a letter dated January 10, 1913, to philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, `Abdu'l-Bahá wrote that "'Human Solidarity' is greater than 'Equality.' 'Equality' is obtained, more or less, through force (or legislation), but 'Human Solidarity' is realized through the exercise of free will."[35] Therefore neither the Civil War nor the repeal of Jim Crow laws nor the force of civil rights legislation is enough to overcome racism. Only freedom from prejudice can achieve true emancipation. `Abdu'l-Bahá's stress here is rather on how "America's example of freeing the slaves has been a *power for freedom* everywhere" (emphasis added). Here, `Abdu'l-Bahá starts from the premise that "America's leadership in humanitarian and altruistic matters is generally acknowledged."[36]

Translations/Publications of the Speech

A translation of `Abdu'l-Bahá's Howard University speech was first published in the Bahá'í journal *Star of the West* on April 28[37] and in *The Washington Bee*, on May 25, 1912.[38] Seventy years later, the speech was retranslated.[39] The text below is based on the 1982 translation by Amin Banani.[40] His translation follows the original Persian text, now available online.[41]

Franklin Lewis has noted, "This particular talk at Howard University, because it is translated from the transcript of the original Persian, can be considered an accurate record of what `Abdu'l-Bahá said."[42] The basis for this warrant of authenticity is the fact that members of `Abdu'l-Bahá's entourage in America regularly wrote down his spoken words in the original Persian. However, there is no indication of *who* took down the Persian notes of `Abdu'l-Bahá's Howard University speech. Due to circumstances that are beyond the scope of this chapter, many of these Persian notes of `Abdu'l-Bahá's discourses are missing, but the remaining few were published as *Majmū'ih-yi Khiṭābāt Ḥaḍrat-i `Abdu'l-Bahā fī Ūrūpā va Āmrīkā* ("Collected Talks of `Abdu'l-Bahá in Europe and America"), and compiled by Mahmud Zarqani. Volume 1 was personally reviewed by `Abdu'l-Bahá and approved by him for publication,[43] and subsequently published in Cairo by Shaykh Faraju'lláh al-Zakí al-Kurdí in 1921. The Howard University speech was published in Volume 2 (1970–1971).[44] In the preface of Volume 2, the National Committee for the Publication of the Sacred Writings states that the talks published in this volume are derived from prior sources—that is, from an earlier collection of `Abdu'l-Bahá's talks printed in Tehran—but does not indicate the source for each talk. Thus it is possible that the

Howard University talk was derived from a much earlier collection that had been authenticated and approved for publication by `Abdu'l-Bahá, but further investigation is required.[45]

`Abdu'l-Bahá's Howard University speech structurally has two parts: (1) homiletic, that is, in nature, color is a source of beauty, not division; and (2) historical, that is, whites died for blacks in the Civil War, and the Emancipation Proclamation had an international impact. The speech begins as follows:

> Today I am most happy, for I see here a gathering of the servants of God. I see white and black sitting together. There are no whites and blacks before God. All colors are one, and that is the color of servitude to God. Scent and color are not important. The heart is important. If the heart is pure, white or black or any color makes no difference. God does not look at colors; He looks at the hearts. He whose heart is pure is better. He whose character is better is more pleasing. He who turns more to the Abhá Kingdom is more advanced.
>
> In the realm of existence colors are of no importance.[46]

What follows is a homily based on nature, in which colors are not sources of discord, but are a source of beauty and charm, like a beautiful garden of variegated flowers. Since "colors are the cause of the adornment of the garden because a single color has no appeal," `Abdu'l-Bahá tells his audience that "when you observe many-colored flowers, there is charm and display" such that "different colors constitute an adornment." Here, the analogy to skin color cannot have been lost on his audience, and was an indirect way of saying that their own diversity should be valued and appreciated. Noting the natural order and beauty of variegations in the mineral and plant kingdoms, `Abdu'l-Bahá offers doves as a lovely example of the animal kingdom. Doves "never look at color"; instead, "white doves fly with black ones." After giving these examples from nature (which are really metaphors for the audience itself), `Abdu'l-Bahá registers this point: "Now ponder this: Animals, despite the fact that they lack reason and understanding, do not make colors the cause of conflict." And further: "Why should man, who has reason, create conflict? This is wholly unworthy of him." The implication here is that, just as denigrating colors as they occur in rocks and plants is unnatural, decrying certain colors in the animal realm is, in fact, unreasonable.

Switching from an elementary scientific argument to a biblical one, `Abdu'l-Bahá points out that "white and black are the descendants of the same Adam." Conspicuous for its absence is the total lack of mention of a so-called curse of Ham myth that played so prominent a role in proslavery

rhetoric (which theologically sanctioned slavery by means of a racialized exegesis of the biblical account of Noah, who planted a vineyard, got drunk, and was seen naked by one of his three sons, Ham, whom Noah then cursed). `Abdu'l-Bahá then explains that skin "colors developed later due to climates and regions; they have no significance whatsoever." Concluding this first part of his structurally two-part speech, `Abdu'l-Bahá brings these arguments directly home to his audience: "Therefore, today I am very happy that white and black have gathered together in this meeting" and that their present "harmony reaches such a degree that no distinctions shall remain between them, and they shall be together in the utmost harmony and love."[47] Then, and the second part of the speech, the argument switches from the natural order of things to social order:

> But I wish to say one thing in order that the blacks *(siyāhān)* may become grateful to the whites *(mamnūn-i sifīdān shavand)* and the whites become loving *(mihrabān)* toward the blacks. If you go to Africa and see the blacks of Africa *(siyāh-hā-yi ifrīqā)*, you will realize how much progress *(taraqqī)* you have made. Praise be to God! You are like the whites; there are no great distinctions left. *(al-ḥamd lillāh shumā miṯl-i sifīdānīd imtiyāz chandānī dar miyān nīst.)* But the blacks of Africa are treated as servants *(khadamah)*.

The speech now shifts to an historical argument based on the Civil War and Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation:

> The first proclamation of emancipation for the blacks was made by the whites of America. How they fought and sacrificed until they freed the blacks! *(avval i'lān-i ḥurriyyatī kih barāyi siyāh-hā shud az sifīdān-i āmrīk būd chih muḥārabih va jān-fishānī kardand tā siyāh-hā-rā najāt dādand.)* Then it spread to other places. The blacks of Africa were in complete bondage, but your emancipation led to their freedom also *(valī najāt-i shumā sabab shud kih ānhā nīz najāt yāftand)*—that is, the European states emulated the Americans, and the emancipation proclamation became universal. *(duval-i urūpā iqtidā bih āmrīkā'ī-hā kardand ān būd kih i'lān-i ḥurriyyat 'umūmī shud.)* It was for your sake *(bijahat-i shumā)* that the whites of America made such an effort. Were it not for this effort, universal emancipation *(ḥurriyyat-i 'umūmī)* would not have been proclaimed *(i'lān nimīshud)*. Therefore, you must be very grateful to the whites of America, and the whites must become very loving toward you so that you may progress in all human grades. Strive jointly to make extraordinary progress and mix together completely.
>
> In short, you must be very thankful to the whites who were the cause of your freedom *(sabab-i āzādī-i shumā)* in America. Had you not been freed, other blacks would not have been freed either. *(agar shumā āzād nimīshudīd sāyir-i siyāh-hā ham najāt nimīyāftand.)* Now—praise be to God!—everyone is free and lives in tranquillity. I pray that you attain to such a degree of good

character and behavior *(ḥusn-i akhlāq va aṭvār)* that the names of black and white shall vanish. All shall be called human *(jamī'-rā 'unvān-i insān bāshad)*, just as the name for a flight of doves is dove. They are not called black and white *(siyāh va sifīd guftih nimīshavad)*. Likewise with other birds.

I hope that you attain to such a high degree—and this is impossible except through love. You must try to create love between yourselves; and this love does not come about unless you are grateful to the whites, and the whites are loving toward you, and endeavor to promote your advancement and enhance your honor *(dar taraqqī-i shumā bikūshand va dar 'izzat-i shumā sa'y namāyand)*. This will be the cause of love *(sabab-i maḥabbat)*. Differences between black and white will be completely obliterated; indeed, ethnic and national differences will all disappear. *(bikullī ikhtilāf bayn-i siyāh va sifīd zā'il mīgardad balkih ikhtilāf-i jins va ikhtilāf-i vaṭan hamih az miyān mīravad.)*

I am very happy to see you and thank God that this meeting is composed of people of both races and that both are gathered in perfect love and harmony. I hope this becomes the example of universal harmony and love *(nimūnih-yi ulfat va maḥabbat-i kullī)* until no title remains except that of humanity. Such a title demonstrates the perfection of the human world and is the cause of eternal glory and human happiness. I pray that you be with one another in utmost harmony and love *(nahāyat-i ulfat va maḥabbat)* and strive to enable each other to live in comfort.[48]

`Abdu'l-Bahá's choice of *"siyāh va sifīd"* for "black and white" is informed by Persian as well as American discourse at that time, as the standard term of reference for a dark-skinned person in Persian is *siyāh-pūst* (literally, black-skinned), just as the word for Native American is *surkht-pūst* (literally, red-skinned), etc.

In modern Persian, "emancipation proclamation" is translated as *i'lāmiyyih-yi āzādī*, but `Abdu'l-Bahá uses *i'lān-i ḥurriyyat*, which means the same thing. The term *ḥurriyyat* is an Arabic-loan word equivalent in meaning to the native Persian *āzādī* ("liberty").[49] The Persian word *āzād* is perhaps closer to the sense of emancipation from slavery here, in that the Persian word here means "free, independent, liberated, delivered, manumitted."[50] Similarly, *i'lān*[51]is a verbal noun defined as "Publishing, divulging, manifesting; publication, declaration, proclamation" and "A declaration or proclamation." Similarly, *i'lāmiyyih*[52] means "a manifesto; a declaration."[53]

Considering that this was the Jim Crow era, it is highly significant that `Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged the whites, beyond reciprocal goodwill (i.e. interracial "love"), to "promote" the "advancement" and "enhance" the "honor" of the blacks: "You must try to create love between yourselves; and this love does not come about unless you are grateful to the whites, and the whites are loving toward you, and endeavor to promote your advancement and enhance your honor *(dar taraqqī-i shumā bikūshand va dar 'izzat-i shumā sa'y*

namāyand)." Advancement presupposes equality of opportunity. Under the "separate but equal" doctrine promulgated under the 1896 US Supreme Court decision, *Plessy v. Ferguson*,[54] the idea that whites should advance the progress of blacks was far more than liberal. It was radical, and antithetical to true purpose of the *Plessy* ruling, which, as pointed out by Associate Justice, John Marshall Harlan (the only Supreme Court justice who dissented), was to justify legalized segregation under the "thin disguise"[55] of equality: "The thing to accomplish was, under the guise of giving equal accommodation for whites and blacks, to compel the latter to keep to themselves while travelling in railroad passenger coaches. No one would be so wanting in candor as to assert the contrary."[56]

In the original, the Persian term for "advancement" is *taraqqī*.[57] This term is as pointed as it was poignant, for it sharply contrasts the prevailing social orientation of most whites toward blacks at that time. At best, liberal whites tolerated blacks; at worst, oppugnant whites were lynching blacks. To speak of "harmony" (*nahāyat; nimūnih*) between the races must have made a distinct impression on the audience, one that elicited a standing ovation. Given how deeply American society was steeped in racial prejudice, `Abdu'l-Bahá's rhetoric—particularly the message it conveyed—was exceptional.

But why did `Abdu'l-Bahá choose the Emancipation Proclamation (and the Civil War) as his theme? This topic, in particular, was uncharacteristic of him to dwell on, although it fit perfectly in the context of "race amity" as among the major themes he had chosen to address during his travels in North America. Perhaps because it was the fiftieth anniversary of April 16, 1862, when Congress abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, with financial compensation to former slave-owners, when President Lincoln signing the Compensated Emancipation Act of 1862 into law. An alternative occasion that may have influenced `Abdu'l-Bahá's choice of topic, was the fiftieth anniversary of the "Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation" (issued on September 22, 1862) was fast approaching. On Sunday, September 27, 1912, this anniversary was celebrated in Washington, D.C. in the very same church in which `Abdu'l-Bahá spoke in the evening of April 23, 1912.

One news story reported: "The emancipation celebration began Sunday afternoon at the Metropolitan A. M. E. church with a monster 'song jubilee' and an address by Dr. S. M. Newman, president of Howard University."[58] On September 28, 1912, Baltimore's *The Afro-American Ledger* reported on the "golden jubilee of the lifting of the shackles of slavery from the race" observed on September 27, during which the "principal sessions were held in the Metropolitan A. M. E. Church," where President Taft addressed the audience: "It is a pleasure to be here," said the President, "at the celebration of the greatest act in the life of Lincoln, whose life was filled with great acts. The extinction of slavery meant the extinction of a living lie, because the

Declaration of Independence said that all men were free and equal." Mr. Taft went on to say that while Mr. Lincoln abhorred slavery, that he realized that it was recognized by the United States Constitution.[59]

President Taft made an important point here, that the principles of freedom and equality, as enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, were compromised by the Constitution, prior to the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, all of which were prefigured by the Emancipation Proclamation. Ironically, the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation theoretically could have preserved slavery in the Southern States. The Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was effectively an ultimatum: if the Confederacy did not surrender by January 1, 1863, then President Lincoln would emancipate all the slaves in Confederate territory. If the Confederate states did surrender, however, then their slaves would not be freed and the institution of slavery, although contained, would be preserved inviolate.[60]

Lincoln was not constitutionally empowered to abolish slavery (since the Constitution supported it), except by ingeniously exercising his war powers by issuing the Proclamation, an executive order, as commander-in-chief, thus expropriating property (i.e., slaves, pursuant to the two Confiscation Acts of Congress) under the pretext of military necessity.[61] In other words, President Lincoln, who was without direct legislative power, had to circumvent the Constitution (it took the Thirteenth Amendment to abolish slavery from the Constitution itself) by dint of his executive war power, which Senator David Turpie (D. Ind.), vividly characterized, on February 7, 1863, in his speech to the Senate, so: "This war power is a most singular article. India rubber has had some reputation heretofore for being elastic; gold and silver for being malleable and ductile; but sir, they must yield to this war power in all those qualities."[62]

Anticipating the occasion of fiftieth anniversary of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, `Abdu'l-Bahá's choice of topic was exquisitely timely.

The Civil War / Emancipation Proclamation Myth

We should note that `Abdu'l-Bahá was not a historian of American history, but rather used historical generalizations rhetorically in order to reinforce his theme of the need for interracial harmony. Although, in saying that the "first proclamation of emancipation *(avval i'lān)* for the blacks was made by the whites of America," `Abdu'l-Bahá may be speaking temporally, yet he appears to be giving full effect to America's primacy in terms of influence, rather than sequence. This can be gathered etymologically from the following:

The Persian term *avval* can also mean "first" in the sense of "foremost," as Steingass indicates: "First, prior, foremost; chief, greatest, highest; best, principal, excellent; beginning, principle" [*sic;* read "principal"].[63] `Abdu'l-Bahá may well have had the figurative sense of the word in mind here, in that Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation commanded greater international influence than earlier proclamations, as the first among equals.

With Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation thus being understood as "first and foremost" among other such proclamations, `Abdu'l-Bahá's Civil War / Emancipation Proclamation myth should be further appreciated as a vehicle of socio-moral truth, by alluding to some of the political and social effects of the Emancipation Proclamation (and its later developments) as a consequence of American influence abroad, as well as at home. To idealize the Civil War is to mythologize it. Here, `Abdu'l-Bahá mythologizes the Civil War by essentializing it. This Civil War myth, like most myths, serves as a vehicle of a social and moral truth: the need for interracial unity. `Abdu'l-Bahá's observations, as quoted above, had their basis in later developments in the Civil War and beyond.[64]

Here, `Abdu'l-Bahá invokes history (by a special interpretation or mythified view of it) in order to make history. Certainly the origins and motivations of the Civil War are complex, and are debated by historians to this very day. Yet, by stressing the blood and treasure that the Union's white soldiers (and, of course, the complementary black regiments) had sacrificed for the emancipation of blacks, `Abdu'l-Bahá impressed upon his audience the fact that the reciprocal goodwill needed to foster racial harmony could, on the part of blacks, find justification in recognizing and acknowledging what some whites had done to abolish the evil of slavery perpetrated by the slaveholding whites. This rhetorical strategy smashed the icons caricaturing all whites as the oppressor. Some were, yet others weren't.

The true causes of the Civil War are a matter of long-standing controversy among historians of American history. The Civil War is typically represented as a battle over states' rights (from the Confederate perspective) and Lincoln's determination to preserve the Union. On December 26, 2010, E. J. Dionne, Jr., columnist for *The Washington Post*, challenged that view in a thought-provoking op-ed piece title, "Don't spin the Civil War." "We would do well to be candid about its causes," Dionne writes, "and not allow the distortions of contemporary politics or long-standing myths to cloud our understanding of why the nation fell apart." Note Dionne's use of the term "long-standing myth" here. And what is that myth? Dionne characterizes it as the view that "the central cause of the war was…states' rights" rather than the true cause of the Civil War, which was "our national disagreement about race and slavery."[65]

In his 2010 article, "America's Changeable Civil War," published in *The Wilson Quarterly*, Christopher Clausen notes that "a lively debate over what caused the Civil War continues."[66] "States' rights" as the cause of the Civil War is the classic Southern justification. Clausen then asks: "That abstract phrase 'states' rights' as used before the Civil War immediately prompts the question, states' rights to what?"[67] Clausen quotes the historian, James M. McPherson, for the answer: "'The right to own slaves … the right to take this property into the territories; freedom from the coercive powers of a centralized government.'"[68] Indeed, there is "no logical connection between local autonomy and racial oppression."[69]

`Abdu'l-Bahá's statement, that is, "The first proclamation of emancipation for the blacks was made by the whites of America. How they fought and sacrificed until they freed the blacks!"—could hold true from the time that the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863. "From this point forth," writes Christopher Ewan, commenting on the Emancipation Proclamation, "the abolition of slavery in the states in rebellion was to be a war aim of the Union."[70] Considering the controversy among historians over the Civil War, `Abdu'l-Bahá's Howard University speech could be considered a type of "counter-revisionism." That said, the history of the Civil War—and the Emancipation Proclamation and its international influence—was invoked as a foil for the present, with `Abdu'l-Bahá inviting his audience to make future history by transforming the present, where the "civil war" against racism (as the social legacy of slavery) still had to be won, in order to achieve interracial emancipation for North America and for the world.

It is worth stressing, therefore, that the purpose of the speech was not historical, but socio-moral. The Civil War was over, but its victory somewhat undone. In place of forcible slavery, enforced segregation remained as the deconstruction of Reconstruction. And even when the 1896 *Plessy* decision would be overruled in 1954 by *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), pervasive racism would perdure in pandemic proportions. Civil Rights legislation could never succeed in extirpating racial prejudice, nor eliminate private discrimination. Only a transformation in human outlook, augmented by the self-authenticating consciousness of the "oneness of humankind," could accomplish what neither war nor law could achieve. `Abdu'l-Bahá was the Lincoln of the spirit. His Howard University speech was an emancipation proclamation for the abolition of Jim Crowism.

Historical Influence of the Emancipation Proclamation

Although `Abdu'l-Bahá's purpose in the Rankin Chapel speech was to encourage interracial amity, he obviously invoked Civil War history as part

of his rhetorical strategy. Are `Abdu'l-Bahá's citations to American history as sound as they were rhetorically effective? Did the Emancipation Proclamation have a world-historical impact? There is no question of the global influence of Abraham Lincoln, "the Great Emancipator," as memorialized in the recent multiauthor work published by Oxford University Press.[71] As one measure, the international publication of Lincoln biographies shows just how universal Lincoln had become:

> We have barely begun to address Lincoln's full international reach. We should register that by 1900, works about him had been published in (sequentially) German, French, Dutch, Italian, Portuguese, Greek, Spanish, Danish, Welsh, Hebrew, Russian, Norwegian, Finnish, Turkish, Swedish, and Japanese; and over the next twenty-five years or so the list had extended to embrace lives in Polish, Chinese, Czech, Arabic, Hungarian, Persian, Slovak, Armenian, and Korean.[72]

Yet the question remains: did the Emancipation Proclamation influence the course of slavery in Europe and Africa, as `Abdu'l-Bahá asserted? Certainly the Emancipation Proclamation was a pivotal event in American history. To oversimplify, the North's goal, first and foremost, was to preserve the Union from secession by the rebel South. In issuing the Proclamation, however, President Lincoln made abolition of slavery an explicit aim of the war effort. A tactical document with symbolic power, Lincoln hoped to damage the Confederate cause abroad, and to galvanize Europe's support for the North. In this, Lincoln succeeded, brilliantly. The international impact was immediate and far-flung. The Proclamation turned popular opinion in Britain and France (both of which had abolished slavery) in favor of the Union, now that abolition emerged as an explicit goal of the war effort. Remarking on the impact in Britain, Henry Adams wrote, on January 23, 1863:

> The Emancipation Proclamation has done more for us here than all our former victories and all our diplomacy. It is creating an almost convulsive reaction in our favor all over this country … Certain it is, however, that public opinion is very deeply stirred here … If only you at home don't have disasters, we will give such a checkmate to the foreign hopes of the rebels as they never yet have had.[73]

But what impact that the Emancipation Proclamation have on world history? It is clear that `Abdu'l-Bahá, in saying that the "first proclamation of emancipation *(avval i'lān)* for the blacks was made by the whites of America," was underscoring the influential primacy of the Emancipation

Proclamation, rather than its temporal primacy. The Emancipation Proclamation, followed by the Thirteenth Amendment, abolished slavery in America. Yet this was not the first time that slavery was abolished in modern history. England and France, among other countries, had done so long before. Rather, the Emancipation Proclamation was "first" in the sense of "foremost" for its international impact. This reading, if correct, is not without historical support.

In his book, *One War at a Time: The International Dimensions of the American Civil War*, Dean B. Mahin chronicles the European reaction to the Civil War, including the immediate short-term and long-term impact of the Emancipation Proclamation. One major influence that the Civil War had on world affairs was the spread of democracy: "The victory in the American Civil War of the symbol of popular government spurred the development of more democratic institutions around the world, beginning with historic changes in Britain and France only a few years after Lincoln's death."[74]

Emancipation eventually did become universal. Yet slavery died a slow death across the colonial world. In Africa, slavery was gradually abolished in British territories, as in the Gold Coast (1874), Egypt (1895), Zanzibar (1897), Sudan (1900), Nigeria (1901),[75] Kenya (1907), and Sierra Leone (1928). "Anticolonialism, not abolitionism," writes Anthony A. Iaccarino, "led to the emancipation of most Latin American slaves."[76]

Elsewhere, slavery ended slowly, over time, such as in China (1909), Afghanistan (1923), Nepal (1926), Saudi Arabia (1962), and Oman (1970). In the case of Spanish Cuba and independent Brazil, which were the last bastions of slavery in the Americas, a combination of factors facilitated emancipation, including "the dramatic recent example of U.S. abolition, British successes at effectively ending the transatlantic slave trade, the efforts to attract European immigrants, and the rebellious activities of slaves."[77]

Historically, the call for universal emancipation long preceded the Emancipation Proclamation. In historical perspective, therefore, America was not one of the first countries to formally abolish slavery. America's anti-slavery efforts fall in somewhat the middle of the curve within the global historical trajectory. True, some of the original British colonies in America had abolished slavery, with Pennsylvania being the first in 1780. In 1808, Congress abolished the slave trade, but not slavery itself. On December 18, 1865, Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery and thus radically altered the Constitution (what some legal scholars call the "Second Constitution"). Ironically, ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment marked the first time that the word "slavery" appeared in the Constitution, even though the Constitution had explicitly protected slavery: that is, the Fugitive Slave Clause (barring free states from emancipating runaway slaves and requiring their return to their masters); the now-lapsed Slave

Importation Clause (allowing the Atlantic slave trade to continue for 20 years, until 1808, by immunizing it from congressional action); and the Three-Fifths Clause (diminishing blacks to three-fifths the value of whites for numeration, thereby giving the South representation in the House of Representatives that was disproportionate to the white [male] population).[78]

Abolition and emancipation, with exceptions, were typically successive stages in efforts to eradicate slavery. Denmark abolished the slave trade in 1803, but not slavery itself until 1848. In 1807, Britain passed the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, but did not free slaves until the Emancipation Act in 1833, implemented over the course of the next five years. Mexico abolished slavery in 1829. Britain's abolition and emancipation served as a model in other European nations. In 1848, France emancipated slaves within the French Empire, following a slave revolt in Martinique. Slavery was abolished in the Dutch colonies by 1863, in Puerto Rico in 1873, and in Spanish colonies by 1886. On May 13, 1988, Brazil passed its "Golden Law," thus becoming the "last civilized nation" (or "the last Christian nation") to abolish slavery. But was any of this due to American influence?[79] `Abdu'l-Bahá's thesis that the Emancipation Proclamation had a liberating international impact finds historical support. First, the Emancipation Proclamation, which led to the Union's moral and military victory, sobered slaveholders throughout the world. Indeed, when published to the world, the Proclamation gave great impetus to the "Age of Emancipation" in which "the global experience of emancipation" unfolded.[80] Edward L. Ayers, in a thought-provoking reflection on the wider significance of these events, argues that the Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction were of world–historical importance: "The destruction of American slavery, a growing system of bondage of nearly four million people in one of the world's most powerful economies and most dynamic nation-states, was a consequence of world importance."[81] How so? Ayers's assessment is nuanced, with this conclusion:

> The great American trial of war, emancipation, and reconstruction mattered to the world. It embodied struggles that would confront people on every continent and it accelerated the emergence of a new global power. The American crisis, it was true, might have altered the course of world history more dramatically, in ways both worse and better, than what actually transpired. The war could have brought forth a powerful and independent Confederacy based on slavery or it could have established with its Reconstruction a new global standard of justice for people who had been enslaved. As it was, the events of the 1860s and 1870s in the United States proved both powerful and contradictory to their meaning for world history.[82]

When `Abdu'l-Bahá states that the "blacks of Africa were in complete bondage, but…the European states emulated the Americans, and

the emancipation proclamation became universal," this surely refers to the international impact of emancipation in Europe and Africa. What obviously connected these two continents was the Atlantic Ocean; hence the term, the "Atlantic world," as historian Douglas R. Egerton notes: "Without question, the victory of emancipation in the United States hastened the end of slavery elsewhere in the Atlantic world."[83]

The Role of Whites in Emancipation: The "Other Tradition"

In his interview, cited above, `Abdu'l-Bahá spoke of America's "national self-sacrifice." There is no question that Northerners sacrificed much blood and treasure (i.e. life and wealth) to preserve the Union. But why? After the Emancipation Proclamation, preserving the Union took on ideological dimensions of liberty and equality. Even so, racial prejudice among Northerners ran deep, as Ewan effectively illustrates by means of these soldiers' statements:

> As one artilleryman from New York wrote, "I don't want to fire a single shot for the negroes and I wish that all the abolitionists were in hell." A typical Union soldier's attitude on why he was fighting can be found in the words of one private, who wrote, "I came out to fight for the restoration of the Union and to keep slavery [from] going into the territories and not to free the niggers." Some soldiers were quite open about their racism and opposition to freeing the black man, as the words of one New Yorker can attest, "I think the best way to settle the question of what to do with the darkies would be to shoot them."[84]

But the Emancipation Proclamation fundamentally transformed the Union soldiers' outlook on the Civil War. Once the Emancipation Proclamation translated abolition into official war policy, "by late 1864 and early 1865 most white soldiers were convinced that black liberty was a cause worth fighting for."[85] In *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War*, Chandra Manning has made a compelling case that eradication of slavery became the central purpose of the Civil War. When the war began, the white Northerners who initially joined the Union ranks shared the prevailing antiblack prejudices of their day. Their outlook, however, soon changed dramatically. "Yet the shock of war itself and soldiers' interactions with slaves," Manning notes, "who in many cases were the first black people northern men had ever met, changed Union troops' minds fast."[86] Manning further finds that Northerner soldiers were "intensely ideological"[87] and were quick to embrace emancipation in the larger interests of "liberty, equality, and self-government."[88]

Echoing `Abdu'l-Bahá's theme of the blood and treasure spent in the mission to eradicate slavery—a common theme in American history and rhetoric—President Barack Obama, in his Civil War Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) Proclamation of April 12, 2011, uses the word "sacrifice" three times in this brief text:

> On April 12, 1861, artillery guns boomed across Charleston Harbor in an attack on Fort Sumter. These were the first shots of a civil war that would stretch across 4 years of tremendous *sacrifice*, with over 3 million Americans serving in battles whose names reach across our history…Though America would struggle to extend equal rights to all our citizens and carry out the letter of our laws after the war, the *sacrifices* of soldiers, sailors, Marines, abolitionists, and countless other Americans would bring a renewed significance to the liberties established by our Founders…As a result of the *sacrifice* of millions, we would extend the promise and freedom enshrined in our Constitution to all Americans. Through the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, we would prohibit slavery and indentured servitude, establish equal protection under the law, and extend the right to vote to former slaves.[89]

President Obama's theme of "sacrifice" resounds with `Abdu'l-Bahá's theme of sacrifice in his Howard University speech, which is significant in that this view of the Civil War and Emancipation, nearly a century after `Abdu'l-Bahá's speech, persists to the present. "The first proclamation of emancipation for the blacks was made by the whites of America," `Abdu'l-Bahá stated. "How they fought and *sacrificed* (*ján-fishánī kardand*) until they freed the blacks!" (Emphasis added.) According to Steingass, the Persian term, *ján-fishán,* means: "Ready to sacrifice one's life; zealous."[90]

Of course, many African American soldiers sacrificed their lives as well, as President Obama notes: "Those who lived in these times—from the resolute African American soldier volunteering his life for the liberation of his fellow man to the determined President secure in the rightness of his cause—brought a new birth of freedom to a country still mending its divisions."[91] Here, "[t]hose who lived in these times" encompasses the white Union soldiers who, after all, constituted the majority of the northern forces.

However, a key distinction needs to be made here: Northerners were *not* animated by the ethical or socio-moral principle of interracial unity. The abolitionist vision was lofty, but not that lofty. Abolitionists sought more to eradicate a social evil than to promote an egalitarian ideal. Indeed, the abolition of one social evil, slavery, was not the same as eradicating the bane of racial prejudice, as Private Robert Winn, Third Kentucky Cavalry, predicted on May 3, 1864: "The system of Slavery may suffer material change, yet the negro will not be made practically free."[92]

Historian Chandra Manning frames this problem succinctly, observing that "soldiers…continued to hold ambivalent or prejudicial views of black Americans, and therefore preferred to keep the topics of slavery, racial equality, and black rights hermetically separated."[93] While the Civil War and civil rights would, to the contemporary mind, be inextricably linked, such that civil rights should be the desired outcome of the national struggle, such was not the case in 1912.

So the rhetorical thrust of `Abdu'l-Bahá's speech is that, while the Civil War achieved emancipation from slavery, by the sacrifice of much blood and treasure, racial equality and black rights was yet to be won. There is also the implication that black rights, which legislation alone cannot ensure, would be coefficient with racial equality, requiring a reorientation and transformation of how the races view one another. The Civil War was a metaphor for the Jim Crow era, where the whites should "endeavor to promote your [African Americans'] advancement and enhance your honor." Thus `Abdu'l-Bahá's message of interracial harmony was far in advance of the most liberal of abolitionists, and, during the Jim Crow era of American apartheid, was not only progressive, but socially radical. Emancipation, although a fact of history, was far from being a fully realized social reality.

The Rhetoric of "Progress"

In his speech, `Abdu'l-Bahá sounded the theme of progress: "If you go to Africa and see the blacks of Africa *(siyāh-hā-yi ifrīqā)*, you will realize how much progress *(taraqqī)* you have made." `Abdu'l-Bahá had sojourned in Egypt from September 1910 to August 1911, then from September 1911 to March 1912. He returned from Europe to Ramleh on July 3, 1913, where he remained until December, before returning to Palestine. In Ramleh, Egypt, `Abdu'l-Bahá revealed a "Tablet" (in this case a letter or epistle) on September 12, 1913, to an individual in China, and wrote, in part:

> For example: what is the difference between the African negro and the American negro? The former has not yet adorned himself with the ideals of culture while the latter has become intelligent, sagacious and civilized. During my journey throughout America, at the time when I was in Washington and elsewhere, I delivered detailed addresses in the universities, churches, conventions and meetings of the negroes, and found their audiences composed of most intelligent persons who could grasp the subjects under discussion as well as any other audiences of civilized and intelligent Westerners. Thus a great chasm exists between these two communities of negroes; one in the lowest depth of ignorance; another rising toward the pinnacle of civilization and freedom. Then it is plain that education is the distinguishing mark.[94]

Of course, slavery was not the cause, or even the direct conduit, of the edification of blacks in America. Rather, it was through long-fought and hard-won victories, after major setbacks, in the theaters of emancipation, employment, enfranchisement, and access to higher education for African Americans. Expanded social horizons for African Americans all came about as a result of struggle, that is, of "overcoming"—yet strategically augmented by the assistance of key whites, as Richard Thomas has noted in his monograph, *Understanding Interracial Unity: A Study of U.S. Race Relations*.[95] So, in addition to those whites who sacrificed life and limb, blood and treasure for the emancipation of African Americans, there were those European Americans who were indispensable agents of social change in the legal and legislative arenas to whom, in the words of `Abdu'l-Bahá, African Americans "must be very grateful."

Conclusion

In his 1912 Howard University speech, `Abdu'l-Bahá invoked the Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation in essentialist terms, anchored in historical generalizations, as a rhetorical strategy for promoting *interracial emancipation*. Abolition of slavery was a first step in the progressive emancipation of African Americans within color-bound American society. Slavery's roots run deep in American history, and are yet to be fully extirpated. They extend, in more subtle forms, down to the present. Racism is a ghost of the slaver's psyche, and legislation alone cannot eradicate the problem. Something profoundly different is needed to significantly steer social history in a new direction. This is what makes `Abdu'l-Bahá's 1912 sojourn in America of such historical import.

To recapitulate, `Abdu'l-Bahá, in his Howard University speech, emphasized the personal sacrifice of Northern whites for southern blacks in the course of the Civil War, and that African Americans (as the descendants of emancipated slaves) should therefore be grateful to whites in kind. In so saying, `Abdu'l-Bahá *invoked history* (or a certain view of it) *in order to make history*—by completing the unfinished work of the Emancipation Proclamation. That clarion resounds today, as Manning writes:

> One reason for the vogue for minimizing emancipation is probably that doing so allows us to feel superior to people in the past, but another is that it lets us off the hook for our own shortcomings in living up to the best ideals articulated by Union soldiers in their best moments. Those ideals include a clear vision for why government matters, and what it can do to vindicate ideals like liberty and human equality. If we are to honor the enormous sacrifices of the Civil War generation as well as heed the president's [Barack Obama's]

> call to reflection and renewal, then we must take an unflinching look at slavery and at what the ideals of the Union might mean for us today. [96]

Although she does not use the term "myth" directly, Manning does so implicitly. She takes to task her peers (such as influential Civil War historians Bruce Catton, Shelby Foote, Walter McDougall, John Neff, Gary Gallagher, David Goldfield, Gordon, and Sutherland) for having "trotted out the old 'North fought for the Union and didn't care about slavery' line" [97] and whose views "the men who fought in blue would not recognize…in that interpretation."[98] Clearly, there are competing "myths" of the Civil War and Emancipation.

`Abdu'l-Bahá's "myths" of the Civil War and Emancipation arguably resonate with the views of Manning, who suggests that the sacrifice of "hundreds of thousands of casualties" aimed to achieve "ideals such as liberty and equality" that were "inextricably bound up with emancipation, and marked the redemption and transformation, not simply conservation, of the United States."[99]

Although `Abdu'l-Bahá's remarks are in stark contrast to the received historical views of the Civil War that have predominated—and that continue to be debated even today—those remarks find strong support in the letters of Union soldiers, preserved in historical archives, that Manning has cited as her direct evidence.

And so it is that `Abdu'l-Bahá tasked the whites with a mission equal to the objectives of the Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction in achieving what was (and is) still undone, to "endeavor to promote your [i.e. African Americans'] advancement and enhance your honor." Such interracial unity entails more than fostering interracial camaraderie. Advancement is required. Actual progress must be fostered, for it is this "advancement" that "will be the cause of love *(sabab-i maḥabbat)*." In other words, doing "good" (by tangible actions) is a precondition for "goodwill" (as an intangible feeling). This, indeed, was the mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded in 1909, as an interracial endeavor.[100]

The advancement of African Americans was an integral element in the progress of America as a nation, and so there is a strong argument that the development of its own social capital was in the nation's enlightened self-interest. Here, `Abdu'l-Bahá's rhetorical strategy was to establish a clear basis, anchored in American history, for overcoming entrenched antagonisms in favor of reciprocal appreciation in the interests of interracial harmony and cooperation. In that sense, the accuracy of `Abdu'l-Bahá's historical generalizations is quite beside the point, as the focus was on fostering racial healing and solving America's racial crisis.

It is important to note that `Abdu'l-Bahá's message was to *all*. In other words, it was a message to America. As Guy Mount also notes in chapter 4 of this book, he charged whites, as a whole, to work toward the advancement of African Americans, and for reciprocal goodwill. That message included American Bahá'ís within its scope. Space does not permit a summary of the subsequent efforts by Bahá'ís to promote "race amity" (as later encouraged by `Abdu'l- Bahá himself) and "race unity." Suffice it to say that the Bahá'í efforts have not gone unappreciated. Such efforts have attracted recognition and high praise. On February 1, 2012, Cornel West, professor of African American Studies and Religion, Princeton University, expressed his appreciation of the Bahá'í efforts to foster ideal race relations: "When you talk about race and the legacy of white supremacy, there's no doubt that when the history is written, the true history is written, the history of this country, the Baha'i Faith will be one of the leaven in the American loaf that allowed the democratic loaf to expand because of the anti-racist witness of those of Baha'i faith."[101] West here recognizes the leavening influence of the Bahá'ís in the history of race relations in America.[102]

`Abdu'l-Bahá's 1912 Howard University speech was *for* them then, yet it has a message for us now as well: It could be said that in his Howard speech, `Abdu'l-Bahá invited his audience *to build on history by making history*, in commencing a new era of global solidarity.[103]

Notes

1. "Interracial emancipation" is not a new term, but it is an unfamiliar one. Thomas F. Jackson has coined the expression, "interracial emancipation," in connection with economic justice. See Thomas F. Jackson, *From Civil Rights to Human Rights Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Struggle for Economic Justice* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 225. I employ the term "interracial emancipation" more broadly. Here, the term presupposes the idea that the mind of the slave master is itself enslaved. With physical and mental chains, respectively, both slave and slaver are in the throes of reciprocal thralldom. Emancipation, from this perspective, frees humanity from a great social evil. Yet the legacy of slavery persists in the historical and social aftermath of slavery, to the extent that racism still exists and inequality persists today. Matters have improved over time, but are far from ideal.
2. Abdul Baha Abbas, "America and World Peace." *The Independent* 73.3328 (New York, September 5, 1912): 606–609. Reference courtesy of Payam Afsharian (February 13, 2011).
3. See Guy Mount, "A Troubled Modernity: W. E. B Du Bois, 'The Black Church,' and the Problem of Causality" (chapter 4 in this book); Christopher Buck, "The Interracial 'Bahá'í Movement' and the Black Intelligentsia: The Case of W. E. B. Du Bois." *Journal of Religious History* 36.4 (December 2012):

541–561 (special issue on Bahá'í history, guest-edited by Todd Lawson); Buck, "The Baha'i 'Race Amity' Movement and the Black Intelligentsia in Jim Crow America: Alain Locke and Robert S. Abbott." *Bahá'í Studies Review* 17 (2011): 3–46; Buck, *Alain Locke: Faith and Philosophy* (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 2005).

4. As Mina Yazdani notes in the final chapter of this book, "tablet" is a translation for "*lawh,*" an Arabic "term used distinctively in the Baha'i writings as part of the title of individual compositions of Bahā'u'llāh addressed to individuals or groups of individuals." See *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, s.v. "LAWḤ."
5. This Tablet—rediscovered by Mr. Behrooz Ghaemmaghami and sent to the present writer on August 19, 2012—is published in the Persian pages (called *Najm-i Bākhtar*) of the American Bahá'í magazine, *Star of the West*, vol. 3, no. 2 (April 9, 1912), 2. Online at http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/vol4/starwest/SW030202.gif. This Tablet has not been published elsewhere. Provisional translation by Omid Ghaemmaghami, PhD candidate, Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, University of Toronto.
6. See Gayle Morrison, "Gregory, Louis George (1874–1951)," *Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project*, http://www.bahai-encyclopedia-project.org (accessed August 19, 2012).
7. Gayle Morrison, *To Move the World: Louis Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America* (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982/1999), 51.
8. *The Chicago Defender* (Big Weekend Edition, May 4, 1912).
9. "To Break The Color Line: Abdul Baha, the Great Persian Philosopher and Teacher, Aims to Unite the Peoples of All Races and Creeds in One Great Bond of Brotherhood." *The Chicago Defender* 7.18 (Big Weekend Edition, May 4, 1912), 3.
10. "Bahai Leader at Howard University: Head of Oriental Religious Sect Delivers Lecture to the Student Body. Freedom Here Brought Freedom Elsewhere. The Effect Of Freedom In This Country Reacted All Over The World." *The Afro-American Ledger* (Baltimore, April 27, 1912), 1. This story erroneously reports the date as April 25, rather than April 23, 1912.
11. Zarqani and his chronicle is discussed in depth in Mina Yazdani's chapter in this book.
12. Mírzá Maḥmúd Zarqání, *Maḥmúd's Diary: The Diary of Mírzá Mahmúd-i-Zarqání Chronicling `Abdu'l-Bahá's Journey to America*. Translated by Mohi Sobhani (Oxford: George Ronald, 1998), 55–56. For more on Zarqani, see Mina Yazdani's chapter in this book.
13. Howard University had two successive presidents in 1912: Wilbur P. Thirkield and Stephen M. Newman. Both were white presidents of this predominantly African American university. Since the former's presidency lasted from September 1, 1906 to June 30, 1912, it was surely Thirkield who introduced `Abdu'l-Bahá. See Rayford W. Logan, *Howard University: The First Hundred Years 1867–1967* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 141.
14. Logan, *Howard University*, 168.

15. See Christopher Buck, *Alain Locke*. Of Locke, `Abdu'l-Bahá wrote in 1921: "Dr. Locke, this distinguished personage, deserveth every praise. I implore the Kingdom of God to grant him a special confirmation." *(ḥaḍrat-i Dr. Locke īn shakhṣ-i jalīl fī al-ḥaqīqih sazāvār-i har sitāyish ast. taḍarruʿ bi-malakūt-i ilāhī mīnamāyam kih taʾyīdī makhṣūṣ bi-ū farmāyad.)* Tablet of `Abdu'l-Bahá to Agnes Parsons, July 26, 1921. Facsimile of Persian original from The Original Tablets from `Abdu'l-Bahá Collection, National Bahá'í Archives, United States. Digital copy of Persian original courtesy of Roger M. Dahl, Archivist, National Bahá'í Archives, United States. Provisional translation by Omid Ghaemmaghami, Leone Barnitz Papers, Box 17: Agnes Parsons corr espondence/`Abdu'l-Bahá; and Leone Barnitz Papers, Box 19: Translations of Tablets/Agnes Parsons. Courtesy of Lewis V. Walker, Archivist, National Bahá'í Archives, United States.
16. Joseph H. Hannen, "Abdul-Baha in Washington, D. C." *Star of the West,* vol. 3, no. 3 (April 28, 1912), 6–24 [7]. Vols. 3–4 of *Star of the West* are available online via Google Books, at http://books.google.com/books?id=rw4YAAAAYAAJ&dq=%22Star%20of%20the%20West%22&pg=PT719#v=onepage&q&f=false (accessed February 12, 2011). See also http://en.bahaitext.org/Star_of_the_West/Volume_3/Issue_3.
17. "Persian Savant to Give Last Lecture." *The Washington Times*, 7463 (April 26, 1912). "At Howard University an audience of about 1,000 persons crowded Rankin Chapel and listened to the Persian speaker expound the doctrine of the oneness of the human races."
18. See the report in *Najm-i Bākhtar*, the Persian section of the American Bahá'í publication, *Star of the West*, vol. 3, nos. 3, 4 and 5 (June 7, 1912), 5. Online at http://www.h-net.org/~bahai/areprint/vol4/starwest/SW030305.gif.
19. `Abdu'l-Bahá, "11 May 1912: Talk at 227 Riverside Drive, New York," *The Promulgation of Universal Peace* (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982), 111–113 [112].
20. Agnes Parsons, *`Abdu'l-Bahá in America: Agnes Parsons' Diary, April 11, 1912–November 11, 1912, Supplemented with Episodes from Mahmúd's Diary*, ed. and annotated by Richard Hollinger (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 1996), 29. See also Dr. Zia Bagdadi, "`Abdu'l-Bahá in America: Chapter II—Washington, D. C," *The Bahá'í Magazine* [*Star of the West*] vol. 19, no. 3 (June 1926), 87–92 [89]. For more on Agnes Parsons, see also Negar Mottahedeh's Introductorty chapter in this book.
21. Gayle Morrison, *To Move the World*, 51.
22. Harlan F. Ober, "Louis G. Gregory," in *The Bahá'í World: A Biennial International Record, Volume XII, 1950–1954*, comp. National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States (Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1956), 666–669 [668].
23. "Abdue Baha: Revolution in Religious Worship," *The Washington Bee* 32.51 (May 25, 1912), 3. The Library of Congress archive, "The Washington Bee. (Washington, DC) 1884–1922."
24. "Bahai Leader Due Here: Head of Religious Unity Movement to Arrive Early in April," *New York Times* (March 4, 1912), 8.

25. "Leader of Bahai Movement Coming to Capital Soon: Abdul Baha Abbas Will Explain His Philosophy Here." *The Washington Times* (Friday, April 5, 1912), 8.
26. "News From The Nation's Capital." *The Afro-American Ledger* 20.22 (Baltimore, January 27, 1912), 1.
27. "Bahai Leader May Address Bethel Literary," *The Washington Bee* 32.43 (March 30, 1912), 2.
28. "Abdul Baha on Religious Unity," *The Washington Bee* 32.47 (April 27, 1912), 1.
29. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (Greenwich, CT: Fawcett, 1961 [1903]), 13.
30. "Question Evaded by Abdul Baha: Oriental Seer Fails to Make Direct Reply to Missionary's Charges." *Washington Herald* (Thursday, April 25, 1912). Note that reference to "yesterday afternoon" is incorrect. Courtesy of Lewis Walker, Archivist, Bahá'í National Archives (email to author,).
31. Abdul Baha Abbas, "America and World Peace." *The Independent* 73.3328 (New York, September 5, 1912), 606–609.
32. Ibid., 606.
33. Ibid.
34. Booker T. Washington, "The Religious Life of the Negro." *North American Review* 181 (July 1905): 20–23 [21].
35. `Abdu'l-Bahá to Andrew Carnegie (January 10, 1913). Translation published in "Abdul Baha's Tribute to Mr. Carnegie: Famous Persian Prophet Praises the 'Gospel of Wealth' and Tells When the Rich May Give to the Poor." *New York Times* (February 9, 1913).
36. Abdul Baha Abbas, "America and World Peace," 606. For an analysis of the international impact of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, see the section, "Historical Influence of the Emancipation Proclamation," below.
37. "Address of Abdul-Baha at Howard University, April 23, 1912. Translated by Dr. Ameen U. Fareed and taken stenographically by Joseph H. Hannen." In Joseph H. Hannen, "Abdul-Baha in Washington, D. C." *Star of the West,* vol. 3, no. 3 (April 28, 1912), 6–24 [14–15].
38. "Abdue Baha: Revolution in Religious Worship," *The Washington Bee* 32.51 (May 25, 1912), 3.
39. Stenographic notes of the contemporaneous English translation were taken down by Joseph H. Hannen and appear on pp. 41–43 in the first edition of *The Promulgation of Universal Peace: Discourses by Abdul Baha Abbas During His Visit to the United States in 1912* (Chicago: Executive Board of Bahai Temple Unity, 1921–1922). On July 20, 1919, `Abdu'l-Bahá approved (but did not review, except for the English "Introduction" by the compiler, Howard MacNutt) the publication of the English translations, instructing that the compilation be entitled, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*. See Vol. 1, p. vii.
40. The translator, Amin Banani, is Emeritus Professor of History and Persian Literature at UCLA and former chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and acting director of the Center for Near Eastern

Studies. See `Abdu'l-Bahá, "23 April 1912 Talk at Howard University, Washington, D.C," translated by Amin Banani, in `Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace: Discourses by Abdul-Baha Abbas during His Visit to the United States in 1912* (Chicago: Bahá'i Publishing Committee, 1925/Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1982), 44–46. Original stenographic notes.

41. `Abdu'l-Bahá, *Majmū'ih-yi Khiṭābāt Ḥaḍrat-i `Abdu'l-Bahā fī Ūrūpā va Āmrīkā* ("Collected Talks of `Abdu'l-Bahá in Europe and America"), Vol. 2 (Tehran: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, BE 127/1970–71; reprinted in one vol., Hofheim-Langenhain, Germany: Baha'i-Verlag, 1984), 39–43. Online beginning at http://reference.bahai.org/fa/t/ab/KA2/ka2–44.html#pg39.
42. Franklin Lewis, "Discourses of Knowledge." *Search for Values: Ethics in Bahá'í Thought*, ed. John Danesh and Seena Fazel. Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions, 15 (Los Angeles: Kalimát Press, 2004), 47–78 [57].
43. Volume 1 is prefaced by this note of the compiler, Maḥmúd Zarqání: "Praised be God, the Glory of Glories! Through the grace and loving-kindness of the Center of the Covenant, this lowly servant has succeeded in collecting the talks delivered by `Abdu'l-Bahá during the course of His first trip to Europe in 1320AH/1912CE. All of the talks have been approved by `Abdu'l-Bahá' and are published at His request. His lowly servant, Maḥmúd Zarqání." Translated by Omid Ghaemmaghami, December 26, 2011.
44. See Note 38, *supra*.
45. This information was provided by Omid Ghaemmaghami, August 19, 2012.
46. `Abdu'l-Bahá, "23 April 1912 Talk at Howard University Washington, D.C.," 44.
47. Excerpts from `Abdu'l-Bahá, "23 April 1912 Talk at Howard University Washington, D.C.," 44–45. For the "curse of Ham" myth, see Christopher Buck, *Religious Myths and Visions of America: How Minority Faiths Redefined America's World Role* (Westport, CT: ABC-CLIO/Praeger, 2009), 37–40.
48. `Abdu'l-Bahá, "23 April 1912 Talk at Howard University Washington, D.C.," 45–46. Transliteration of selected terms and phrases in the original Persian provided courtesy of Omid Ghaemmaghami (Personal communication, March 17, 2011).
49. Francis Joseph Steingass, *a Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary, including the Arabic Words and Phrases to Be Met with in Persian Literature* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1892), 42.
50. Ibid.,42.
51. Ibid., 75 and 110.
52. Ibid., 110.
53. Omid Ghaemmaghami, Personal communication, March 19, 2011.
54. See Christopher Buck, "Plessy v. Ferguson." *Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society*, ed. Richard T. Schaefer (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2008), 1048–1051.
55. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 562 (1896) (Mr. Justice Harlan dissenting).

56. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537, 557 (1896) (Mr. Justice Harlan dissenting).
57. Steingass defines *taraqqī* as "Ascending, rising step by step; advancement, elevation, promotion; progress, improvement; proficiency; augmentation, increase; climax." Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 295.
58. R. W. Thompson, "News Notes of the Nation's Capital." *The Chicago Defender* (Big Weekend Edition, September 28, 1912), 5.
59. "President Taft Praises Emancipator: Says 'That It Is Right That Lincoln Should be Held Up in History as the Man Chiefly Responsible for the Freedom of the Negro.'" *The Chicago Defender* (September 28, 1912), 2.
60. See Harold Hölzer, Edna Greene Medford, and Frank J. Williams, *The Emancipation Proclamation: Three Views*. Foreword by John Hope Franklin (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).
61. Buck, *Religious Myths and Visions of America*, 186–187.
62. David Turpie, *The Congressional Globe*, N. S., no. 50 (February 9, 1863), 50. See also Allan G. Bogue, *The Earnest Men: Republicans of the Civil War Senate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009 [1981]), 186.
63. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 121.
64. Buck, *Religious Myths and Visions of America*, 188.
65. E. J. Dionne, Jr., "Don't spin the Civil War." *The Washington Post* (December 26, 2010). Online at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/26/AR2010122601696.html (accessed February 13, 2011).
66. Christopher Clausen, "America's Changeable Civil War," *The Wilson Quarterly* 34.2 (Spring 2010): 30–35.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
70. Christopher Ewan, "The Emancipation Proclamation and British Public Opinion," *The Historian* 67.1 (March 2005): 1–19 [2].
71. Richard Carwardine and Jay Sexton, eds., *The Global Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). See also John Drinkwater, *Lincoln: The World Emancipator* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1920).
72. Richard Carwardine et al., "Interchange: The Global Lincoln," *Journal of American History* 96 (September 2009): 462–499 [499].
73. Henry Adams to Charles Francis Adams, Jr., London, January 23, 1863. In *A Cycle of Adams Letters 1861–1865*, ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford, vol. 1 (Boston & New York: Hough Mifflin Company, 1920), 243.
74. Dean B. Mahin, *One War at a Time: The International Dimensions of the American Civil War* (Dulles, VA: Brassey's, 2000), 267.
75. Paul E. Lovejoy and Jan S. Hogendorn, *Slow Death of Slavery: The Course of Abolition in Northern Nigeria, 1897–1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
76. Anthony A. Iaccarino, "Atlantic Abolitionist Movement," *Slavery in the United States: A Social, Political, and Historical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1., ed. Junius P. Rodriguez (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1997), 178–180 [179].
77. Ibid., 179.

78. Christopher Buck, "Thirteenth Amendment," *Encyclopedia of African American History*. Edited by Leslie Alexander and Walter Rucker, Vol 2 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 549–550.
79. Rebecca Jarvis Scott, *The Abolition of Slavery and the Aftermath of Emancipation in Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988), v.
80. Matthew Pratt Guterl, "After Slavery: Asian Labor, the American South, and the Age of Emancipation," *Journal of World History* 24.2 (2003): 209–241 [209].
81. Edward L. Ayers, "The American Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction on the World Stage," *Magazine of History* 20.1 (January 2006): 54–61 [56].
82. Ibid., 59.
83. Douglas R. Egerton, "Rethinking Atlantic Historiography in a Postcolonial Era: The Civil War in a Global Perspective." *Journal of the Civil War Era* 1.1 (March 2011): 79–95 [89].
84. Ewan, "The Emancipation Proclamation," 9–10.
85. Ibid., citing James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 128.
86. Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 2008), 12 and 13. See also Earl J. Hess, *Liberty, Virtue, and Progress: Northerners and Their War for the Union*. 2nd edn. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997). Manning argues that the enlisted men in the Union Army "forged the crucial link between slaves and policy makers."
87. Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over*, 18.
88. Ibid., 6.
89. President Barack Obama, "Presidential Proclamation—Civil War Sesquicentennial" (April 12, 2011) (emphasis added). Online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/04/12/presidential-proclamation-civil-war-sesquicentennial (accessed January 29, 2012).
90. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, 373. It should be noted that Steingass glosses the term, *jān-fishānī*, as "Hard labour; extreme diligence; waste of life in another's service," which meaning is neither supported by the text nor context of `Abdu'l-Bahá's speech.
91. President Barack Obama, "Presidential Proclamation—Civil War Sesquicentennial" (April 12, 2011) (emphasis added). Online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/04/12/presidential-proclamation-civil-war-sesquicentennial (accessed January 29, 2012).
92. Qtd. in Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over*, 155.
93. Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over*, 78.
94. `Abdu'l-Bahá Abbás. *Abdul Baha in Egypt*, trans. Mīrzā Aḥmad Sohrāb (New York: J. H. Sears, 1929), 304–305.
95. Richard W. Thomas, *Understanding Interracial Unity: A Study of U.S. Race Relations*. Sage Series on Race and Ethnic Relations, Vol. 16 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996).

96. Chandra Manning, "All for the Union…and Emancipation, Too: What the Civil War Was About," *Dissent* 59.1 (Winter 2012): 91–95 [95].
97. Ibid., 93–94.
98. Ibid., 91.
99. Ibid.
100. See Thomas, *Understanding Interracial Unity.*
101. "Cornel West praises work of Baha'is in establishing Racial Unity" (February 1, 2012). Online at http://www.bahai.us/2012/02/01/cornel-west-praises-work-of-baha'is-in-establishing-racial-unity (accessed March 17, 2012).
102. See, for example, Christopher Buck, "The Baha'i 'Race Amity' Movement and the Black Intelligentsia in Jim Crow America"; Christopher Buck, "The Interracial 'Bahá'í Movement' and the Black Intelligentsia: The Case of W. E. B. Du Bois." *Journal of Religious History* 36.4 (December 2012): 541–561 (Special issue on Bahá'í history, guest-edited by Todd Lawson).
103. See Buck, *Religious Myths and Visions of America*, 188.