

# Shoghi Effendi – A Transcendent Life



Shoghi Effendi served as Guardian of the Baha'i Faith from 1921-1957. [As we have already seen](#), it was not a role he envisaged undertaking.

It was a role he fulfilled magnificently.

His life's work stands at the sunset of what Shoghi Effendi himself defined as the heroic age of the Baha'i Faith. The time when spiritual heroes such as the Bab, Baha'u'llah, Tahirih, Mulla Husayn, Quddus and Abdu'l Baha walked the Earth and gave birth to a new religion.

Shoghi Effendi guided the Baha'i community through the beginnings of the "Formative Age" – a time when quill and donkey transitioned to typewriter and motorcar. With Shoghi Effendi, we definitively enter the modern world. Even in his dress and appearance modernity arrived. Abdu'l Baha had been known to all as the Master: a bearded and robed figure reminiscent of the prophets of old.

Shoghi Effendi was youthful and western educated.

He would often write personal notes which he would append to official correspondence to Baha'is, signing himself as "Your true and grateful and grateful brother Shoghi".

In Abdu'l Baha's will and testament, Shoghi Effendi was appointed Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, carrying forward the functions that Abdu'l Baha had himself performed. Shoghi Effendi was 24 years of age. Something of what he felt, with the double blow of the loss of his grandfather and the heavy responsibilities he was to face, is recorded in a letter written by Shoghi Effendi quoted in Ruhiyih Khanum's biography of his life.

Moments of gloom, of intense sadness, of agitation I often experience for wherever I go I remember my beloved grandfather and whatever I do I feel the terrible responsibility He has suddenly placed upon my feeble shoulders.[Ruhiyih Khanum, [The Priceless Pearl](#), p43]

Shortly after Shoghi Effendi withdrew to the mountains of Switzerland, appointing his great aunt, Bahiyih Khanum, to care for the Baha'i Faith during his absence.

After his return a few months later, he dedicated his life to leading the Baha'i world. By his passing the Baha'i Faith was firmly established – a global faith. Among the many achievements of his ministry was his patient leadership of the Baha'i community to first multiply local spiritual assemblies and then establish national spiritual assemblies. These were the essential foundation and pillars for the establishment of the Universal House of Justice.

Six years after Shoghi Effendi passed away, the stewards he had appointed, the Hands of the Cause, brought about its election.

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"The troubles of this world pass, and what we have left is what we have made of our souls" Shoghi Effendi

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The video below, accompanying a recording of recollections by Leroy Ioas, beautifully conveys Shoghi Effendi's life.

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*(This article is the 70th in a series of what I hope will be 200 articles in 200 days for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh. The anniversary is being celebrated around the world on 21 and 22 October 2017, The articles are simply my personal reflections on Bahá'u'lláh's life and work. Any errors or inadequacies in these articles are solely my responsibility.)*

**Image Credits:** [Shoghi Effendi as a young man](#). Copyright © Bahá'í International Community