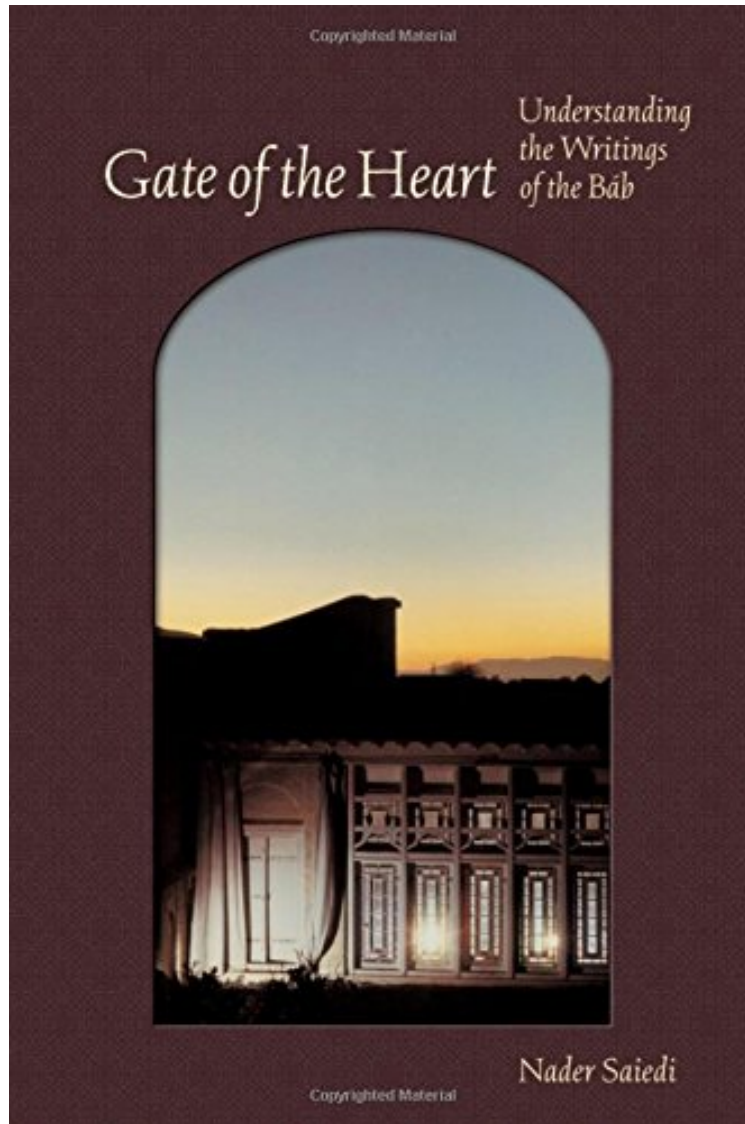


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Gate of the Heart: Understanding the Writings of the Bb (Bah Studies)

Nader Saiedi

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Nader Saiedi : Gate of the Heart: Understanding the Writings of the Bb (Bah Studies) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gate of the Heart: Understanding the Writings of the Bb (Bah Studies):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Well researched history of "The Promised One".By Joel Q. CottenThe picture on the cover of this book is the beautiful home of the Bab in Shiraz, destroyed by a sacerdotal order

which still holds political sway over Iran. Foolish, little-minded people, who thought by destroying a physical edifice, they could destroy the spirit of the man whose ideas are so powerfully and accurately advanced by the author of this book. A timely religious history, which should be studied by anyone with an open mind. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A most wonderful book By William Slatter A book that has confirmed my belief. A book that explains many misunderstandings. A book I would like to see the whole world buy and study. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Customer Important and articulate explanation of the evolving process of religion.

Co-published with the Association for Bah Studies In 1844 a charismatic young Persian merchant from Shiraz, known as the Bb, electrified the Shih world by claiming to be the return of the Hidden Twelfth Imam of Islamic prophecy. But contrary to traditional expectations of apocalyptic holy war, the Bb maintained that the spiritual path was not one of force and coercion but love and compassion. The movement he founded was the precursor of the Bah Faith, but until now the Bbs own voluminous writings have been seldom studied and often misunderstood. Gate of the Heart offers the first in-depth introduction to the writings of the Bb. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, the author examines the Bbs major works in multifaceted context, explaining the unique theological system, mystical world view, and interpretive principles they embody as well as the rhetorical and symbolic uses of language through which the Bb radically transforms traditional concepts. Arguing that the Bb movement went far beyond an attempt at an Islamic Reformation, the author explores controversial issues and offers conclusions that will compel a re-evaluation of some prevalent assumptions about the Bbs station, claims, and laws. Nader Saiedis meticulous and insightful analysis identifies the key themes, terms, and concepts that characterize each stage of the Bbs writings, unlocking the code of the Bbs mystical lexicon. Gate of the Heart is a subtle and profound textual study and an essential resource for anyone wishing to understand the theological foundations of the Bah religion and the Bbs significance in religious history.

“The writings of the Bb are like a giant puzzle in which we continually come across words and phrases that seem obscure; but if one persists the key to deciphering them can be found in a different part of the same work or even in another work of the Bb. Through his perseverance in finding these codes and putting them to use in reading key texts, Saiedi has enabled us to take a major step forward in understanding the Bb's works.” (Moojan Momen Religion, Vol. 40, 2010) “The Baha'i Faith, a religion that is growing steadily around the world, claims two prophet-founders: the Bab and Baha'u'llah. While Baha'u'llah's teachings and works supersede those of the Bab and are most authoritative for Baha'is, the Bab's works retain scriptural status. For a fugre who started a revolutionary new religion in Persia (Iran) in the first half of the nineteenth century and soon commanded thousands of devoted followers, a large number of whom were tortured and killed for their adherence to the new faith, who produced an extraordinary volume of treatises (some 27 works) of profound theological depth and subtlety, and whose own life was cut short at the age of 32 by the orders of the Shah, it is surprising that there is so little scholarship in English on the works of Siyyid Ali-Muhammed Shirazi, known as the Bab or 'gate' (though Todd Lawson's work in this area is notable). Thus, Saiedi's erudite and illuminating exposition of the Bab's writings is indeed welcome.... His analysis tends to be careful, balanced, and compelling.... The Gate of the Heart is ... not only for those interested in Babi studies, or in the Qur'anic interpretation or Shi'i theological debates, but also for anyone willing to consider some truly novel ways of understanding the grand tableau of religious history from the perspective of a faith that calls humanity to reconsider the conceptual basis upon which we will shape our common future.” (Anne M. Pearson Studies in Religion, 39 (1)) “A pioneering and groundbreaking work ... provides fundamental keys for understanding some of the distinctive features of the writings of the Bb.” (Vahid Rafati) “With special emphasis on the Bb's symbolism and logic, Gate of the Heart is based on meticulous scholarship and profound spiritual understanding. At the same time, it elucidates both the historic significance and contemporary relevance of the Bb's writings. Written in a clear and engaging style, Gate of the Heart is a welcome contribution to Bah' Studies, the study of World Religions, and the study of Spirituality.” (Tamara Sonn) “The author successfully embeds the discourse of the Bb in both nineteenth-century and contemporary thinking. His sociological approach does not rob these Writings of their revelatory grace, nor does his faith in those Writings preclude a detailed analysis of their significance for society. Students of religion, society, hermeneutics, and history of religion will welcome Gate of the Heart as a bridge between religion and social science. It offers a fine example of how others might approach an analysis of revelatory writing.” (Will C. van den Hoonaard) “Gate of the Heart will doubtless be much appreciated by those seeking an introduction to the life and writings of the Bab, the Sayyid of Shiraz, who gave his life in promoting a new sacred book and a new religious law for the revolutionary transformation of humankind. In this way it is a worthwhile volume that contributes significantly to the neglected field of Babi-Baha'i studies.” (Stephen N. Lambden Journal of the American Oriental Society, 130.2, 2010) About the Author Nader Saiedi was born in Tehran, Iran, and received his masters degree in economics from Pahlavi University in Shiraz and his PhD in sociology from the University of Wisconsin. He is a professor of sociology at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. His most recent book is Logos and Civilization: Spirit, History, and Order in the Writings of Bahiullh

(2000).