

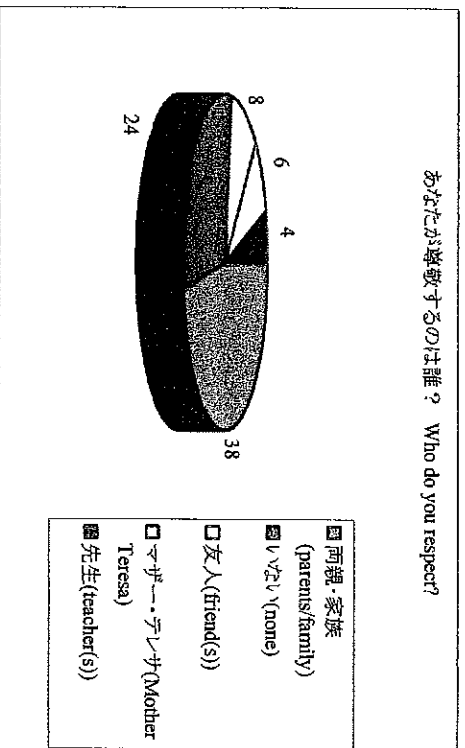
Revival of True Heroism: A Baha'i Perspective¹

Nozomu Sonda

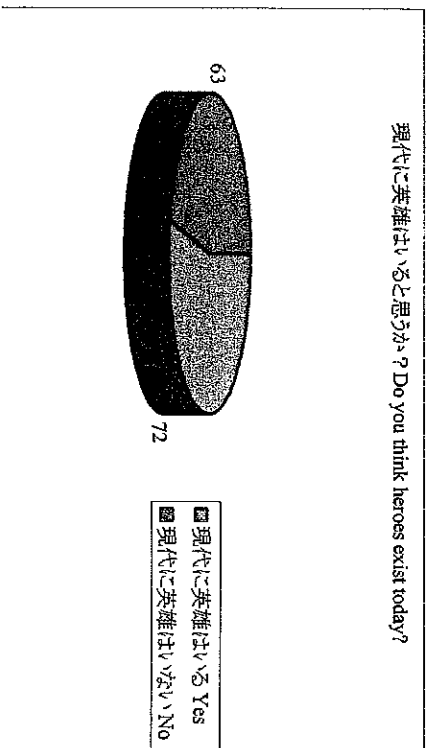
Introduction

Research Findings²

あなたが尊敬するのは誰？ Who do you respect?



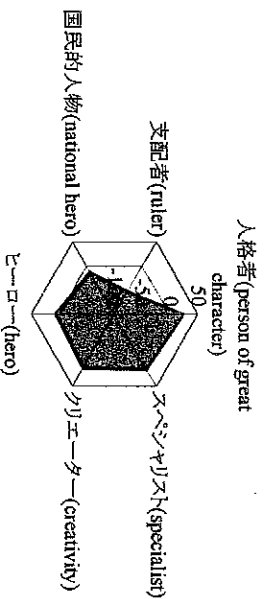
現代に英雄はいると思いませんか？ Do you think heroes exist today?



¹ This report contains the OHP materials used during the presentation and is only a summary of the presentation.

² Taken from "A Study on the Awareness on Heroism: In Search of Ideal Person of Modern Age," Research Group of Heroism, Area Study, Science Division, Department of Humanities, Kumamoto University, March 1999.

「理想的人物」に求める要素 Qualities sought for in "an ideal person"



Time 100: 100 Greatest Persons of the Century by Times³

(1) Person of the Century:

Albert Einstein

(2) Heroes and Icons

Emmeline Pankhurst

Helen Keller

Charles Lindbergh

Bill Wilson

The American G.I.

Jackie Robinson

Anne Frank

Billy Graham

Edmund Hillary

& Tenzing Norgay

Rosa Parks

Che Guevara

Marilyn Monroe

The Kennedys

Muhammad Ali

Bruce Lee

Pekeacute;

Harvey Milk

Mother Teresa

Diana,

Princess of Wales

Andrei Sakharov

Sigmund Freud

Leo Baekeland

Wilbur &

Orville Wright

Albert Einstein

Alexander Fleming

Robert Goddard

Jonas Salk

Edwin Hubble

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Jean Piaget

Enrico Fermi

Louis, Mary

& Richard Leakey

Philo Farnsworth

Kurt Gönldel

Rachel Carson

William Shockley

Alan Turing

John Maynard

Keynes

James Watson

& Francis Crick

Tim Berners-Lee

(3) Scientists & Thinkers:

(4) Builders & Titans:

Henry Ford

³ time.com/time/time100/

David Sarnoff
Charles Merrill
Wills Carrier
Lucky Luciano
William Levitt
Leo Burnett
Ray Kroc
Pete Rozelle
Sam Walton
Louis B. Mayer
Arnado Giannini
Stephen Bechtel
Walt Disney
Juan Trippe
Walter Reuther
Thomas Watson, Jr.
Estee Lauder
Akio Morita
Bill Gates

Eleanor Roosevelt
Adolf Hitler
Mohandas Gandhi
David Ben-Gurion
Ho Chi Minh
Martin Luther King
Ayatullah Ruhollah
Khomeini
Margaret Thatcher
Lech Walesa
Ronald Reagan
Mikhail Gorbachev
Pope John Paul II
The Unknown Rebel
Nelson Mandela

(5) Artists & Entertainers:

Pablo Picasso
Martha Graham
Le Corbusier
Igor Stravinsky
Coco Chanel
James Joyce
T. S. Eliot
Louis Armstrong
Charlie Chaplin
Marlon Brando
Rodgers &
Hammerstein
Frank Sinatra
Lucille Ball
The Beatles
Bob Dylan
Aretha Franklin
Jim Henson
Steven Spielberg
Bart Simpson
Oprah Winfrey

(6) Leaders & Revolutionaries:

Theodore Roosevelt
Vladimir Ilyich Lenin
Margaret Sanger
Mao Zedong
Winston Churchill
Franklin Delano
Roosevelt

The World's 100 Greatest People

1Socrates	35Sigmund Freud	69Lao-tzu
2Plato	36Marie Curie	70Buddha
3Aristotle	37Albert Einstein	71Confucius
4Francis Bacon	38Alexander Fleming	72Jesus Christ
5Rene Descartes	39Jonas Salk	73The Apostle Paul
6John Locke	40Sophocles	74Saint Augustine
7Voltaire	41Virgil	75Muhammad
8Jean Jacques Rousseau	42Dante Alighieri	76Thomas Aquinas
9Adam Smith	43Geoffrey Chaucer	77Martin Luther
10Immanuel Kant	44William Shakespeare	78John Calvin
11Karl Marx	45John Milton	79Joseph Smith
12Friedrich Nietzsche	46Charles Dickens	80Constantine the Great
13Marco Polo	47George Eliot	81Charlemagne
14Christopher Columbus	48Leo Tolstoy	82Queen Elizabeth I
15Vasco da Gama	49Emily Dickinson	83Oliver Cromwell
16Ferdinand Magellan	50Mark Twain	84Benjamin Franklin
17James Cook	51Leonardo da Vinci	85Catherine the Great
18Roald Amundsen	52Raphael	86George Washington
19Archimedes	53Michelangelo	87Thomas Jefferson
20Johann Gutenberg	54Rembrandt	88Abraham Lincoln
21Eli Whitney	55Claude Monet	89Susan B. Anthony
22Thomas Edison	56Vincent van Gogh	90Mahatma Gandhi
23Alexander Graham Bell	57Pablo Picasso	91Winston Churchill
24Henry Ford	58Johann Sebastian Bach	92Franklin D. Roosevelt
25The Wright Brothers	59George Frideric Handel	93Martin Luther King
26Guglielmo Marconi	60Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	94Alexander the Great
27Galen	61Ludwig van Beethoven	95Julius Caesar
28Nicolaus Copernicus	62Frederic Chopin	96William the Conqueror
29Galileo	63Richard Wagner	97Genghis Khan
30Issac Newton	64Johannes Brahms	98Napoleon Bonaparte
31Charles Darwin	65Peter Tchaikovsky	99Robert E. Lee
32Louis Pasteur	66Claude Debussy	100Dwight Eisenhower
33Gregor Mendel	67Abraham	
34Joseph Lister	68Moses	

A Baha'i View: An Outline

Baha'i View of Heroism

1. Spiritual and moral in nature
2. Must be in accordance with the Teachings, Will and Purpose of God
3. Concepts of generalist and specialist
4. Selfless service, not for fame (“nameless” and spiritual leadership)

5. Animated by spirit of sacrifice

The Meaning of Sacrifice

1. Sacrifice is a mystery
2. To conform one's will to the Will of God
3. Four kinds of sacrifice
4. Three kinds of martyrdom
5. Three kinds of attachment
6. Two kinds of "self"
7. The meaning of self-forgetfulness and self-renunciation
8. Virtues are many: balance, tact and wisdom are needed
9. Harmony with science
10. Infinity of sacrificial spirit and the observance of moderation:
"Sacrifice is inexhaustible, and yet if one can observe moderation, he is worthy of the title 'man.'"

Four Kinds of Sacrifice

1. From material to material
2. From material to spiritual
3. From spiritual to material
4. From spiritual to spiritual

(Abdu'l-Baha, quoted by Ali Nakhjavani in *The Mystery of Sacrifice*; c.f.,

Abdu'l-Baha, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp.449-452)

Three Kinds of Attachment

1. Attachment to the material things
2. Attachment to reward in the next world
3. Attachment to the kingdom of names

(Baha'u'llah, *Madiyy-i-Asamani*, vol. VIII, p. 26, quoted by Adib

Taherzadeh in *The Revelation of Baha'u'llah*, vol. II, pp. 35-44)

Two Kinds of "Self"

1. The lower, base self, swayed by animalistic instincts
2. The spiritual, exalted, noble self

(Abdu'l-Baha, *Paris Talks* (J), pp.80-81; Letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, Dec. 10, 1947, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 421)

Three Kinds of Martyrdom

1. To die a martyr's death
2. To detach one's heart from this world.
3. To forget one's self and willingly undertake the most difficult task and accept it as if it were the enjoyment whether poor or wealthy...
(Abdu'l-Baha, *Start of the West*, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 16)

A Bahai View of Heroism: Analysis:

Spiritual in Nature

Must be in accordance with the Teachings, Will and Purpose of God

1. Know the purpose of life: Twin duty of recognition and obedience
(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*)
2. Knowledge, volition and action:
3. A righteous action is not perfect unless sustained by the knowledge, love of God and a sincere intention. (Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, p.302) → Necessity to follow the teachings of the Manifestation

Generalist & Specialist

“How is it that a Shepard could acquire al of this knowledge? It is beyond doubt that He must have been assisted by an omnipotent power.” (Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, p.15)

Selfless Service

“Behold how the divine Touchstone hath, according to the explicit

text of the Book, separated and distinguished the true from the false. Notwithstanding, they are still oblivious of this truth, and in the sleep of heedlessness, are pursuing the vanities of the world, and are occupied with thoughts of vain and earthly leadership....

"O Son of Man! Many a day hath passed over thee whilst thou hast busied thyself with thy fancies and idle imaginings. How long art thou to slumber on thy bed? Lift up thine head from slumber, for the Sun hath risen to the zenith; haply it may shine upon thee with the light of beauty.

"Let it be known, however, that none of these doctors and divines to whom we have referred was invested with the rank and dignity of leadership. For well-known and influential leaders of religion, who occupy the seats of authority and exercise the functions of leadership, can in nowise bear allegiance to the Revealer of truth, except whomsoever thy Lord willeth. But for a few, such things have never come to pass. "And few of My servants are the thankful." Even as in this Dispensation, not one amongst the renowned divines, in the grasp of whose authority were held the reins of the people, hath embraced the Faith. Nay, they have striven against it with such animosity and determination that no ear hath heard and no eye hath seen the like."

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Iqán*, pp. 228-229)

Abdu'l-Baha's Reference to the Native Americans: "Nameless Leaders" Sacrificial Spirit

"Furthermore, the sign of truth and falsehood is designated and appointed in the Book. By this divinely-appointed touchstone the claims and pre-tensions of all men must needs be assayed so that the truthful may be known and distinguished from the imposter. This touchstone is no other than this verse: "Wish for death, if ye are men of truth." Consider these martyrs of unquestionable

sincerity, to whose truthfulness testifyeth the explicit text of the Book, and all of whom, as thou hast witnessed, have sacrificed their life, their substance, their wives, their children, their all, and ascended unto the loftiest chambers of Paradise. Is it fair to reject the testimony of these detached and exalted beings to the truth of this pre-eminent and glorious Revelation and to regard as acceptable the denunciations which have been uttered against this resplendent Light by this faithless people, who for gold have forsaken their faith, and who for the sake of leadership have repudiated Him Who is the First Leader of all mankind? This, although their character is now revealed unto all people who have recognized them as those who will in no wise relinquish one jot or one tittle of their temporal authority for the sake of God's holy Faith, how much less their life, their substance, and the like."

(Baha'u'llah, *The Kitab-i-Iqan*, pp. 227-228)

Meaning of Sacrifice

Sacrifice is a Mystery.

"The mystery of sacrifice is a most great subject and is inexhaustible. Briefly it is as follows: The moth is a sacrifice to the candle The spring is a sacrifice to the thirsty one. The sincere lover is a sacrifice to the loved one. The point lies in this: He must wholly forget himself. . . He must seek the good pleasure of the True One; desire the face of the True One ; and walk in the Path of the. . . This is the first station of sacrifice. True One. The second station of sacrifice is as follows : Man must become like unto the iron thrown within the furnace of fire. The qualities of iron, such as blackness, coldness and solidity, which belong to the earth, disappear and vanish) while the characteristics of fire, such as redness, glowing and heat, which belong to the Kingdom, become apparent and visible. Therefore iron hath sacrificed its

qualities and grades to the fire, acquiring the virtues and that element.

“Likewise, when the souls are released from the fetters of the world, the imperfections of mankind and the animalistic darkness and have . . . partaken a share from the outpouring of the placeless and have acquired Lordly perfections, they are the “ransomed ones” of the Sun of Truth.” (Abdu’l-Baha, *The Divine Art of Living*, p.73)

Conforming One’s Will to the Will of God.

“By self-surrender and perpetual union with God is meant that men should merge their will wholly in the Will of God, and regard their idle desires as utter nothingness beside His Purpose.” (Bahá'u'llah, *Gleanings*, p. 337)

Two Kinds of “Self”

“... self has really two meanings, or is used in two senses, in the Bahá’i writings; one is self, the identity of the individual created by God. This is the self mentioned in such passages as ‘he hath known God who hath known himself etc.’ The other self is the ego, the dark, animalistic heritage each one of us has, the lower nature that can develop into a monster of selfishness, brutality, lust and so on. It is this self we must struggle against or this side of our natures, in order to strengthen and free the spirit within us and help it to attain perfection.” (From letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, December 10, 1947. *Living the Life*, p. 14)

The Meaning of Self-Forgetfulness and Self-Renunciation

“With reference to what is meant by an individual becoming entirely forgetful of self: the intent is that he should rise up and

sacrifice himself in the true sense, that is, he should obliterate the promptings of the human condition, and rid himself of such characteristics as are worthy of blame and constitute the gloomy darkness of this life on earth not that he should allow his physical health to deteriorate and his body to become infirm." (Abdu'l-Baha, *Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha*, p.180)

"Moderation is necessary in all affairs. Man must take a lesson from divine actions and deeds for God suffers a tree to grow a long time before it attains to perfection. He is able to make a tree grow to fruition in an instant, but wisdom requires a gradual development." (Abdu'l-Baha, *Divine Therapy*, p.163)

"Should a man wish to adorn himself with the ornaments of the earth to wear its apparels or partake of the benefits it can bestow, no harm can befall him if he alloweth nothing whatever to intervene between him and God, for God has ordained every good thing whether created in, the heavens or in the earth, for such of His servants as truly believe in Him. Eat ye, O people of the good things which God hath allowed you, and deprive not yourselves from His wondrous bounties. Render thanks and praise unto Him, and be of them that are truly thankful." (Bahá'u'lláh, in *Advent of Divine Justice*, p.28)

"All that has been created is for man who is at the apex of creation, and he must be thankful for the divine bestowals. All material things are for us so that through our gratitude we may learn to understand life as a divine benefit. If we are disgusted with life we are ingrates, for our material and spiritual existence are the outward evidences of the divine mercy. Therefore we must be happy and spend our time in praises, appreciating all things." (Abdu'l-Baha in *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p.103)

Conclusion

Heroism is Needed

“These, indeed, are the days when heroism is needed on the part of the believers. Self-sacrifice, courage, indomitable hope and confidence are the characteristics they should show forth, because these very attributes cannot but fix the attention of the public and lead them to inquire what, in a world so hopelessly chaotic and bewildered, leads these people to be so assured, so confident, so full of devotion? Increasingly, as time goes by, the characteristics of the Bahá'is will be that which captures the attention of their fellow-citizens. They must show their aloofness from the hatreds and recriminations which are tearing at the heart of humanity, and demonstrate by deed and word their profound belief in the future peaceful unification of the entire human race.” (From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to Mr. Willard P. Hatch, October 26, 1941, *Lights of Guidance*, #1291, 1st edn.)

Implications on How We Must Live

1. Remember the purpose of life on the daily basis:
 - 1.1. Recite daily obligatory prayers.
 - 1.2. Read the Holy Writings every morn and eve, and meditate on how we should live the life.
2. Participate in the process of the Institute.
 - 2.1. Study circles
 - 2.2. Own study plans.
3. Strive to translate the teachings into action.
4. Observe balance and moderation, tact and wisdom.
5. Never forget the power of divine assistance.
6. Live the spiritual life as if we are to die tomorrow, while living the material life as if we live eternally.

Power of Divine Assistance

"There is a power in this Cause ---a mysterious power---far, far, far away from the ken of men and angels; that invisible power is the cause of all these outward activities. It moves the hearts. It rends the mountains. It administers the complicated affairs of the Cause. It inspires the friends. It dashes into a thousand pieces all the forces of opposition. It creates new spiritual worlds. This is the mystery of the Kingdom of Abha!" (Abdu'l-Baha: *Power of the Covenant, Part I*, p. 1)

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⁴ Exceeding the references already given in the previous footnotes.

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