

Crete

Europe: Greece

Teaching the Bahá'í Faith

Bahá'í Geography - Crete

Crete

Crete is the largest of the Greek islands well south of the mainland. Its capital and largest city is Heraklion or Iraklion on the north shore. It achieved independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1898 and joined Greece in 1913. It is mountainous, with 30 summits of over 2,000 metres. Its population today is over 600,000.



Crete



Heraklion, Crete



Crete



Crete



Crete

Tablets of the Divine Plan - Europe

Show ye an effort and after this war spread ye the synopsis of the divine teachings in the British Isles, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Portugal, Rumania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Monaco, San Marino, Balearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, **Crete**, Malta, Iceland, Faroe Islands, Shetland Islands, Hebrides and Orkney Islands.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan*. Tablet to the Bahá’ís of the United States and Canada, 11 April 1916)

Knight of Bahá'u'lláh

Rolf Haug (b. 1933) was a German youth of 20 when he arrived in Iraklion on the island of Crete on 6 October 1953 and was given the title of Knight of Bahá'u'lláh. He had attended the Stockholm Intercontinental Teaching Conference in July 1953.

Rolf Haug



Rolf Haug

“The Conference itself was for me a deep spiritually moving experience, so that I spontaneously rose when the call was raised for pioneers to Greece. Greece was always a country which attracted me.... But in such a situation the actual motive is the wish to serve the holy Faith, and to put your whole trust in the Guidance of God. At such a moment one does not give one thought to the possible difficulties that may lie ahead or the problems that could arise for work or residence permission. One relies entirely on Bahá'u'lláh's promise in His Writings.”

Rolf Haug

After being guided to Crete instead of mainland Greece, Rolf went by train to Athens and spent two days with American pioneers Sheila and Amin Banani before continuing on to Iraklion. The next day he rented a room with an elderly couple, and the following day found work.

Rolf Haug

“ I could hardly believe it... in a Foreign land, on an Island which during World War II had suffered a great deal under the German occupation. I soon realized that I had come to the right town and the right company. Normally it was impossible for a German to receive a permission to stay or even a permission to work.”

Rolf Haug

“A young man stopped me on the street. I was surprised. He knew a little German. He told me of a dream, in which he saw an exalted Person, who told him to request a book from me, and to read it. Overjoyed, I took him to my room. As he came into my room and saw the portrait of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on the wall: ‘It is him who appeared to me in my dream. Who is it?’, was his spontaneous question. I told him. ‘And the book?’, was his second question. Yes, I had a Greek edition of Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era which the couple Banani had entrusted to me.”

Rolf Haug

The man's name was Manolis. "He took the book with great joy and very soon had read and studied it.... I have just passed through the great significance of this time spent in spirit and prayer when I dared to ask (a friend) the glorious question: 'Do you wish to become a Bahá'í?' One cannot measure the rapture that seized us, when, after an affirmative answer, we united in prayer and begged for steadfastness and guidance."

(Rolf Haug, quoted in Earl Redman. 2017. *The Knights of Bahá'u'lláh*. Oxford: George Ronald, p. 373)



Rolf Haug, Waltraub Weber and Manolis 1954

Teaching

Manolis became the first Cretan Bahá'í on 26 August 1954. Rolf married a Cretan girl in 1956, became the German Honorary Council of Iraklion for 33 years, and remained the rest of his life of more than 60 years on Crete.

(based on Earl Redman. 2017. *The Knights of Bahá'u'lláh*. Oxford: George Ronald, p. 373)

Youth Prayer

O Lord! Make this youth radiant, and confer Thy bounty upon this poor creature. Bestow upon him knowledge, grant him added strength at the break of every morn and guard him within the shelter of Thy protection so that he may be freed from error, may devote himself to the service of Thy Cause, may guide the wayward, lead the hapless, free the captives and awaken the heedless, that all may be blessed with Thy remembrance and praise. Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.

(‘Abdu'l-Bahá in *“Bahá’í Prayers”*)