

RELIGION AND SCIENCE IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD

A Collective Monograph

GLOBAL FAITH BOOK SERIES

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IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD**

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Edited by Mikhail Sergeev



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Editor: Mikhail Sergeev, *University of the Arts (Philadelphia)*

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FROM THE EDITOR

Religion in the Globalized World: Philosophical Reflections

MIKHAIL SERGEEV

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

When discussing religion in the globalized world, scholars usually operate under several standard assumptions. First, they proceed from the modern supposition that religion should be separated from the state and, therefore, should not engage in public discourse but rather limit its sphere of influence to personal spirituality and salvation. Second, they usually discuss well-established religious traditions that have been evolving for centuries while paying less attention to new religious movements since their membership is relatively low and so, as they think, is their impact on the global stage. Third, those scholars focus their analysis on the “religious disruptors,” i.e., those sects and groups that defy social norms and represent a threat to civilization. As a result, examining Islamic terrorism or various apocalyptic cults often stands at the center of religious studies in the global context.

It is easy to show that all those assumptions largely oversimplify the role religion and religious beliefs play in society, whether on a local, national, or global level. Catholic views on the death penalty and abortion, for instance, are an inalienable part of public discourse on governmental policy in the United States. Modern religious movements, like Mormonism, with its almost two hundred years of existence and now more than sixteen mil-

lion adherents worldwide,¹ have a growing impact in society's life. An American politician, businessman, and an LDS minister, Mitt Romney was the Republican Party's nominee for President of the United States in the 2012 election. Finally, in our global world, torn apart by cultural divisions and prejudice, religious scholars should undoubtedly pay closer attention to the unifying and value-oriented aspects of spiritual teachings rather than their harmful and militant elements.

There is one more factor that implicitly influences the discussion of religious issues in the contemporary era. It is the collapse of the USSR that took place several decades ago and was entirely unexpected for both the communist bloc countries and their liberal democratic opponents. The whole past century passed under the banner of God's "death," which resulted in the collapse of organized religion and the flourishing of secular culture. Religious scholars of the twenty-first century talk instead about the resurrection of faith and "post-secular age." However, no one seems to propose a plausible explanation for the seventy-five years of the existence of the Soviet Union — the only irreligious empire in the entire human history. Theodore Adorno famously remarked about the Nazi Holocaust's horrors that "to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric."² Then what about pursuing theological studies after the Gulag? After all, the Soviet atrocities vastly surpassed the crimes of the Nazi regime. Yet, the existential mystery of the atheist outburst in Russia did not receive, in my opinion, adequate and exhaustive explanation both in its native land and the rest of the intellectual world.

RELIGION AFTER THE GULAG

Contemporary Russian philosophers are well aware of this problem since Russia's national identity in the post-Soviet times is

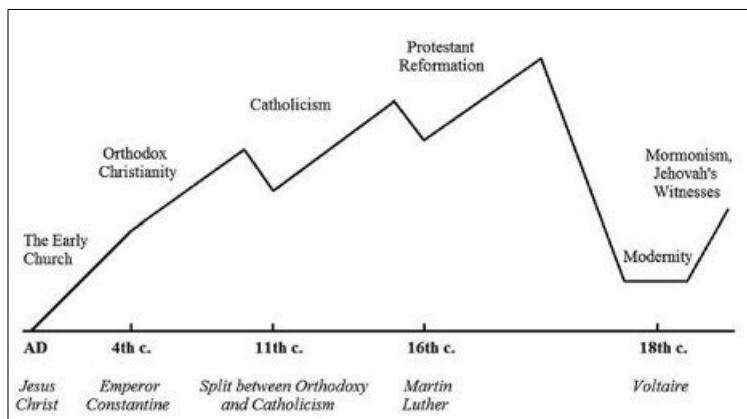
¹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints: Fact and Statistics, <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/facts-and-statistics>.

² Theodore Adorno. "Cultural Criticism and Society." *Prisms*. Trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1967, p. 34.

directly related to it. The solutions they proposed are fourfold. Russian communists, who survived the USSR's downfall and reorganized under Marxist-Leninist banners, regard the Soviet period mostly with pride and promote the advantages of the planned socialist economy. On the contrary, Orthodox nationalists view the communist theory and practice as a social disease that Russia contracted from the degrading West, which is rapidly moving toward its own and inevitable decline. In contrast to communists and nationalists, postmodernists in Russia look at the Soviet ideology as the Grand Narratives' last bastion. Their final demise signified the victory of irreducible human diversity and pluralism. Finally, Russian globalists argue that the Soviet experiment, although it ultimately failed, was one of the first practical attempts to create a planetary human society.

All those approaches, in my opinion, vastly underestimate the spiritual dimension of the Soviet period in Russian history, which I explore through the prism of my theory of religious cycles.³ According to my hypothesis, religion is an organic system that, in the course of its evolution, passes through six typical phases — formative, orthodox, classical, reformist, critical, and post-critical. A particular correlation between any religious system's fundamental components — its sacred scriptures and sacred tradition — characterizes each of those steps or stages. A misbalance between the two elements leads to a structural crisis of religion marked by the doubt in the sacred tradition(s). Such a situation results in novel branches' appearance within the established faith and signals its transition to a new development stage. Unlike the structural problem that transforms the sacred tradition but leaves untouched the holy scriptures, the systemic crisis of re-

³ What follows is a summary of my interpretation of the evolution of religions and the Soviet Union phenomenon. For a detailed exposition of my theory of religious cycles, please see my article "The model of religious cycle: theory and application" in *SENTENTIA. European Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(2017), pp. 71–92, URL: http://e-notabene.ru/psen/article_23930.html; or my book *Theory of Religious Cycles: Tradition, Modernity, and the Bahá'í Faith* (Brill, 2015).



The religious cycle of Christianity

ligion questions the system's very foundation by casting doubt in its scriptural texts. The creation of new religious movements within their mother-faith usually resolves this matter.

Christianity serves as the best illustration of the religious cycles' model. The formative, orthodox, classical, reformist and critical phases are expressed in the Church early, Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant, and modern forms of Christianity accordingly. Let us specifically focus on the European Enlightenment of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, which laid the foundation for the Christian Church's modern period and marked the beginning of the systemic crisis of Christianity. Whether critically-minded theologians, deists, agnostics, or atheists, the Enlightenment thinkers questioned the Bible's absolute authority. For the first time in European history, they conceived an all-embracing worldview that was not of divine but purely human origin.

The rational approach to nature and social reality signaled the dawn of modernity, eventually leading to the establishment of democratic political institutions, the spread of secular culture, and the momentous rise of scientific and technological innovations. The Enlightenment paradigm proved so vital and appealing that it conquered the hearts and minds of people all over the globe in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Regrettably, the modern way of life is at best neutral and at worst suspicious of, if not entirely opposed to, religion. Members of modern societies often regard religious beliefs as old, pre-scientific, and outdated prejudices. As a result, the collapse of traditional moral values and the steady decline of religious affiliation and practices often accompany the advantages of political, social, and cultural modernization.

Not being confined to the Christian confession sphere of influence, its systemic crisis deeply affected other cultures and world religions, most notably Hinduism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Islam. In the twentieth century, it already became a full-blown crisis of religious consciousness, which led to the Soviet Union's establishment. This atheist empire aimed to exterminate religious beliefs in general and persecuted traditional and modern religious groups and sects. The Soviet system's subsequent collapse significantly changed the political, economic, and social situation in the countries involved and in the whole world. But it did not resolve the spiritual dimension of the crisis that is still deepening and producing religious tensions and threats of a different kind. According to my theory, religion's systemic problems are resolved only with the appearance and maturation of new religious movements capable of regenerating former spiritual traditions. We know from the history of religions that this is a long process, usually up to four centuries. That is why, being at the epicenter of profound religious transformation, we have to consider globalization's spiritual dimension, which is as complicated as its economic, political, or social components.

CULTURE VS. CIVILIZATION

One of the leading contemporary Russian specialists in Global Studies, Alexander Chumakov, in the second of his trilogy of monographs devoted to the subject, *Metaphysics of Globalization*, discussed the philosophical aspects of this worldwide process from the standpoint of two basic categories — “culture” and “civilization.” According to Chumakov, “every human being, every

community of people, be it a certain group, state, or public association, including global humanity, represents a unique cultural-civilizational system.”⁴ Those two components, which are always interlaced with and tied to each other, perform, as he argues, quite different functions. Religious beliefs, traditional customs, and standard language usually constitute the foundation of every cultural entity. But it is precisely because of their social nature that cultures are inherently distinctive and varied. As Chumakov puts it,

all human beings and their communities are special, different from other cultural formations that produce, separate, and make them unique and inimitable. [These] are the natural roots of that cultural diversity and religious pluralism with which we are dealing in reality.⁵

In contrast to various and unique cultures, the civilizational component of human societies, as Chumakov posits, represents a real and effective instrument of achieving a unity of opposing and even conflicting cultural formations. Chumakov’s position here is apparently at odds with that of an American political philosopher Samuel Huntington and his assertion of the irreducible diversity not only of cultures but of different civilizations as well. According to Huntington, the Western civilization, with its focus on parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, individual rights, and freedoms, is unique to the West. It cannot, and should not, be exported to other civilizational regions like those of Islam, China, or Russia, for instance. Huntington writes:

Some Americans have promoted multiculturalism at home; some have promoted universalism abroad, and some have done both. Multiculturalism at home threat-

⁴ Chumakov, Alexander and Sergeev, Mikhail (2018) “Religion and Globalization: Crossroads and Opportunities,” *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 38: Iss. 5, Article 7, p. 112. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol38/iss5/7>.

⁵ Ibid, p. 111.

ens the United States and the West; universalism abroad threatens the West and the world. Both deny the uniqueness of Western culture. The global monoculturalists want to make the world like America. The domestic multiculturalists want to make America like the world. A multicultural America is impossible because a non-Western America is not American. A multicultural world is unavoidable because global empire is impossible.⁶

Another American political philosopher and Huntington's famous opponent, Francis Fukuyama, argues the opposite in his volume *The End of History* precisely. Fukuyama analyzes the twentieth-century political and military battles and the post-soviet world's prospects in terms of the Hegelian view of history. According to Hegel, universal human history consists of the progress toward a fully realized freedom. In "the universal and homogenous state" of the future, he believed, "the contradiction that existed in the relationship of lordship and bondage [is fully reconciled] by making the former slaves their own masters...each individual, free and cognizant of his own self-worth, [will recognize] every other individual for those same qualities."⁷ For Fukuyama, we may as well be living at the peak of this historical process. The closest to the Hegelian idea humanity ever stood is in western republican societies. As he put it, the

two parallel historical processes, one guided by modern natural science and the logic of desire, the other by the struggle for [equal] recognition...conveniently culminated in the same end point, capitalist liberal democracy.⁸

⁶ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011, p. 318. Huntington often uses the terms "culture" and "civilization" interchangeably, and when he writes about American or Western cultures, he assumes that civilizational institutions represent an inalienable part of their cultural identity.

⁷ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: Free Press, 2006, 1st ed. 1992, p. 300.

⁸ Ibid, p. 289.

In his take on cultural and civilizational identities, Alexander Chumakov is much closer to Fukuyama than Huntington. While accepting the unique cultural-civilizational systems in the world, Chumakov argues that they produce “opposition and conflict...due to the discrepancy of cultures” but may reach “agreement and mutual understanding on civilizational grounds.” By “civility and civilization,” he means, of course, not something abstract but very specific features of modern western societies, which holds universal value in Chumakov’s estimation. Namely, “the recognition and respect for human rights, tolerance, separation of powers, the rule of law and the equality of all before the law.” As he emphasizes, “the higher the level of civility of the interacting parties and the more of common experience they share, the more effective and fruitful will be mutual understanding and cooperation.”⁹

In this ongoing dialogue between the proponents of the uniqueness of western civilization and those who emphasize its universality and applicability to all cultures, the author of this essay would maintain the middle ground’s position. I would agree with Huntington that western civilization, like any other civilizational construct, is unique to the West and would face enormous challenges and difficulties when imposed by force on non-western cultures. The outside powers should not compel any governmental system, including democracy, which usually grows from the inside, on other sovereign states. Otherwise, it would seldom take roots on the foreign soil. The latest historical examples that readily come to mind are the results of the American invasion and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

At the same time, I would agree with Fukuyama, and Chumakov for that matter, in their assertion of the universal value of western civilization. Capitalist democracy is indeed the most efficient economic and political system humanity was able to develop in several thousand years of its history. The ideology

⁹ Chumakov, A. and Sergeev, M. (2018) “Religion and Globalization: Crossroads and Opportunities,” p. 112.

of the European Enlightenment, which laid the foundation for western liberalism, was formulated as a purely rational enterprise that could successfully be applied to all of humanity in theory.

However, I would also disagree with Chumakov, who argues that it is not culture but civilization that could bring humanity together. Namely, Western civilization, focusing on liberal democratic values, is the surest way to minimize and eventually exterminate social, political, and economic conflicts that tear humanity apart and pose a real threat to its global survival. My argument refers not to Huntington's position about the irreducible plurality of civilizations and the West's uniqueness. It is about the origin of any civilizational construct, which typically does not come out of nothing.

Civilizations grow and flourish by developing from the seeds sowed by the founders and heroes of cultural revolutions. Contemporary western civilization, for instance, is the product of Christian culture. At the same time, it reflects the crisis of Christianity by being based on pure rationality. When this modern civilization penetrates other cultural formations' strata, let alone imposes itself on them, it strongly undermines those cultures by challenging their intrinsic, and especially moral, values.

Fukuyama believes that humanity has two aspirations — the satisfaction of desires and the yearning for equal recognition. But he completely disregards the third one, which is universal, and lies at the center of any cultural organism — the search for divine liberation, enlightenment, or salvation. Modern western civilization cannot offer any meaningful collective response to the spiritual longing because of its empiricist philosophical and rational scientific foundations. Such a civilizational pattern could be extended to all of humanity, but it will still not be able to satisfy its profound spiritual needs and challenges. That is why, I believe, the global society of the future should be built on cultural foundations rather than civilizational grounds, no matter how progressive and unique they may appear.

GLOBALIZATION AND MODERN RELIGIONS

As a case study of a modern religious movement that promotes the global unity of humankind and the building of an “ever-advancing civilization,” I take the Bahá’í Faith, a religion that was conceived in Persia (nowadays Iran) in the middle of the nineteenth century with the declaration of the Báb, born Siyyid ‘Alí Muḥammad Shírázī (1819–1850) whose prophetic mission lasted for six years. After the Báb’s assassination in 1850 by the Persian authorities, his religion was continued and renewed by Bahá’u’lláh, born Mírzá Ḥusayn-‘Alí Núrí (1817–1892), who proclaimed his divine mission in 1863 in the Najibiyyih gardens of Bagdad.

Since then, the Bahá’í Faith developed into a distinctive and independent religion with millions of adherents worldwide. In 2010, *Encyclopædia Britannica* projected a total of 7.3 million Bahá’ís residing in 221 countries.¹⁰ And in 2020 *The World Religion Database* has assessed a global Bahá’í population at 8.5 million believers.¹¹

Every religion holds a critical notion that is associated mainly with its doctrines. Christianity is known for preaching universal love; Buddhism — for promoting selflessness. Bahá’ís focus on the concept of unity or oneness, which occupies the central position in their teachings. The followers of Bahá’u’lláh differentiate between three levels of unity — those of God, religion, and humanity. Since our creator is one and the purpose of progressive revelation is to bring people together on an ever-increasing scale — from clans and tribes to national and international communities — it has finally come a time for humanity to be integrated on a global scale.

The exposition of various principles, doctrines, and strategies, both individual and collective, that aim to unite humankind into a scientifically and technologically advanced while at the same

¹⁰ “Religion: Year in Review 2010”. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 2010.

¹¹ “Baha’is by Country”. *World Religion Database*. Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs. 2020.

time peaceful, moral, and humane planetary community, constitute the nerve of Bahá'u'lláh's message. I want to explore further in this context some of the themes that run throughout his tablets and epistles. The first one concerns the relationship between the Bahá'í teachings and the ideology of the Enlightenment.

In many important ways, the Bahá'í worldview represents a reaffirmation of most of the Enlightenment ideas but in a distinct religious setting, thus adding a spiritual depth to those theories and transforming modern civilizational practices into genuinely held cultural beliefs and norms. Bahá'ís reassert as sacred such principles as the rule of law, the freedom of conscience and expression, the freedom of association, the advancement of human rights, the equality of men and women, and so on. In "Glad Tidings," Bahá'u'lláh proclaims:

In former religions such ordinances as holy war, destruction of books, the ban on association and companionship with other peoples or on reading certain books had been laid down and affirmed according to the exigencies of the time; however, in this mighty Revelation, in this momentous Announcement, the manifold bestowals and favors of God have overshadowed all men, and from the horizon of the Will of the Ever-Abiding Lord, His infallible decree hath prescribed that which We have set forth above.¹²

In politics, Bahá'u'lláh rejects autocratic and oppressive governments, which he condemns as unjust and unfair to the people. He approves of republican democracies but favors constitutional monarchy as a political system that combines the commoners and aristocrats' interests with the kingship, which represents the divine sanction. In his "Epistle to Queen Victoria" Bahá'u'lláh praises the queen for having

¹² Bahá'u'lláh, "Bishárát (Glad-Tidings)," in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, Bahá'í Reference Library, <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/tablets-bahauallah/>.

entrusted the reins of counsel into the hands of the representatives of the people...for thereby the foundations of the edifice of [her] affairs will be strengthened, and the hearts of all that are beneath [her] shadow, whether high or low, will be tranquillized.¹³

And in “Glad Tidings he counsels political scientists:

Although a republican form of government profiteth all the peoples of the world, yet the majesty of kingship is one of the signs of God. We do not wish that the countries of the world should remain deprived thereof. If the sagacious combine the two forms into one, great will be their reward in the presence of God.¹⁴

When discussing future global government, Bahá'u'lláh does not provide many specifics about the executive and legislative branches except for the general importance of equity and justice, consultation, collective decision making, and so on. His judicial power proposals are much more detailed — perhaps because the independent and fair court system is the backbone of any stable and long-lasting society. Bahá'u'lláh envisions the establishment of the Supreme Tribunal, whose purpose would be to resolve territorial disputes and international conflicts, thus preventing warfare's brutal practice. As the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh and the leader of the Bahá'í Faith after his father's passing, 'Abdu'l-Bahá outlined a concrete plan for the world judiciary, which is yet to be fulfilled by the nations. To form such an organization, he said:

the national assemblies of each country and nation — that is to say parliaments — should elect two or three

¹³ “Epistle to Queen Victoria,” in *The Summons of the Lord of Hosts*, Bahá'í Reference Library, <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/bahauallah/summons-lord-hosts/>.

¹⁴ Bahá'u'lláh, “Bishárát (Glad-Tidings),” in *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, Bahá'í Reference Library.

persons who are the choicest men of that nation and are well informed concerning international laws and the relations between governments and aware of the essential needs of the world of humanity of this day. The number of these representatives should be in proportion to the number of inhabitants of that country. The election of these souls who are chosen by the national assembly, that is, the parliament, must be confirmed by the upper house, the congress, and the cabinet and also by the president or monarch so these persons may be the elected ones of all the nation and the government. From among these people, the members of the Supreme Tribunal will be elected, and all [hu]mankind will thus have a share therein, for every one of these delegates is fully representative of his nation. When the Supreme Tribunal gives a ruling on any international question, either unanimously or by majority-rule, there will no longer be any pretext for the plaintiff or ground of objection for the defendant. In case any of the governments or nations in the execution of the irrefutable decision of the Supreme Tribunal be negligent or dilatory, the rest of the nations will rise up against it because all the governments and nations of the world are the supporters of this Supreme Tribunal.”¹⁵

Overall, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá promoted eleven social principles based on the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, which should guide humanity toward a sustainable global civilization. For Bahá’ís those precepts serve as a modern equivalent of the Ten Commandments. And like those earlier divine instructions, they can be fulfilled by anyone, no matter religious affiliation or lack thereof.

Most clearly and systematically ‘Abdu’l-Bahá discussed those teachings during his European missionary journey when he stayed in Paris from October to December 1911. The eleven prin-

¹⁵ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of Abdu’l-Bahá*, no. 227, Bahá’í Reference Library, <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/selections-writings-abdul-baha/>.

ciples that he enunciated during his meeting at the Theosophical Society of Paris are as follows:

1. *The Search for Truth* — “Man must cut himself free from all prejudice and from the result of his own imagination, so that he may be able to search for truth unhindered. Truth is one in all religions, and by means of it the unity of the world can be realized.”
2. *The Unity of Humankind* — “All men are the leaves and fruit of one same tree, they are all branches of the tree of Adam, they all have the same origin...Holy Writings tell us: All men are equal before God. He is no respecter of persons.”
3. *Religion should be the Cause of Love and Affection* — “Religion should unite all hearts and cause wars and disputes to vanish from the face of the earth...If religion becomes a cause of dislike, hatred and division, it was better to be without it, and to withdraw from such a religion would be a truly religious act.”
4. *The Unity of Religion and Science* — “Any religion that contradicts science or that is opposed to it, is only ignorance...Whatever the intelligence of man cannot understand, religion ought not to accept. Religion and science walk hand in hand, and any religion contrary to science is not the truth.”
5. *Prejudices of Religion, Race or Sect destroy the foundation of Humanity* — “The whole world must be looked upon as one single country, all the nations as one nation, all men as belonging to one race. Religions, races, and nations are all divisions of man’s making only, and are necessary only in his thought.”
6. *Equal opportunity of the means of Existence* — “Every human being has the right to live; they have a right to rest, and to a certain amount of well-being...Nobody should die of hunger; everybody should have sufficient clothing; one man should not live in excess while another has no possible means of existence.”

7. *The Equality of Men — equality before the Law* — “The Law must reign, and not the individual; thus will the world become a place of beauty and true brotherhood will be realized.”
8. *Universal Peace* — “A Supreme Tribunal shall be elected by the peoples and governments of every nation, where members from each country and government shall assemble in unity. All disputes shall be brought before this Court, its mission being to prevent war.”
9. *Religion should not concern itself with Political Questions* — “Religion is concerned with things of the spirit, politics with things of the world...It is the work of the clergy to educate the people, to instruct them, to give them good advice and teaching so that they may progress spiritually. With political questions they have nothing to do.”
10. *Education and Instruction of Women* — “Women have equal rights with men upon earth; in religion and society they are a very important element. As long as women are prevented from attaining their highest possibilities, so long will men be unable to achieve the greatness which might be theirs.”
11. *The Power of the Holy Spirit* — “It is only by the breath of the Holy Spirit that spiritual development can come about...for it is the soul that animates the body; the body alone has no real significance. Deprived of the blessings of the Holy Spirit the material body would be inert.”¹⁶

Now, more than a century from the initial unveiling of these principles in Europe, many of them have become the animating spirit behind social progress and change worldwide and an intrinsic part of the fabric of life in Western societies. Of course, those teachings envision such a profound social transformation

¹⁶ ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks: Addresses Given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in 1911*, Bahá’í Reference Library, p. 40, <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/abdul-baha/paris-talks/1#733601770>.

that it will require more time and effort to put them all together in practice. Nevertheless, the ideal image of the future they offer to humanity is so spiritual in quality and global in scope that it has no parallel in world history.

REMARKS IN CONCLUSION

In his work, *The End of History*, Francis Fukuyama argues that “liberal democracy may constitute the ‘endpoint of [hu]man-kind’s ideological evolution’ and the ‘final form of human government,’ and as such constituted the ‘end of history.’”¹⁷ Fukuyama’s position was not based solely on the historical successes of liberal democracy and the collapse of its main rival, the Soviet Union, at the end of the twentieth century. His philosophical inquiry went deeper into the internal worth of a liberal democratic political system coupled with the capitalist free-market economy. Are modern western societies fully satisfying to their citizens, or, maybe, those systems have some hidden defects that will eventually lead to their demise as it had happened with all former cultures? In other words, could Western civilization sustain itself without any external competitors or enemies? Fukuyama answers those questions positively. He writes:

There is no doubt that contemporary democracies face any number of serious problems, from drugs, homelessness, and crime to environmental damage and the frivolity of consumerism. But these problems are not obviously insoluble on the basis of liberal principles, nor so serious that they would necessarily lead to the collapse of society as a whole, as communism collapsed in the 1980s.¹⁸

Bahá’í teachings address the same issue implicitly by distinguishing between the so-called Lesser and Most Great Peace.

¹⁷ Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, p. xi.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. xxi.

The Lesser Peace may come about through political unification of the world. As the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith and leader of the Bahá'í community from 1922 until 1957, Shoghi Effendi wrote: Some form of a world super-state must needs be evolved, in whose favor all the nations of the world will have willingly ceded every claim to make war, certain rights to impose taxation and all rights to maintain armaments, except for purposes of maintaining internal order within their respective dominions.

This global super-state would most likely be built based on modern ideology, including the election of officials, various branches of power, and the separation between religion and politics. As Shoghi Effendi continues:

Such a state will have to include within its orbit an international executive adequate to enforce supreme and unchallengeable authority on every recalcitrant member of the commonwealth; a world parliament whose members shall be elected by the people in their respective countries and whose election shall be confirmed by their respective governments; and a supreme tribunal whose judgment will have a binding effect even in such cases where the parties concerned did not voluntarily agree to submit their case to its consideration.¹⁹

Nevertheless, the cessation of war, however remarkable and progressive it may be, does not equal the establishment of peace among nations, which might still be torn apart by internal strife and conflicts on the ethnic, national, racial, political, social, and religious levels. Hence, the difference between the Lesser and Most Great Peace may be likened to the distinction between external unification and internal unity, a matrimonial arrangement, which is based on convenience or love. In Bahá'í Writings, the Most Great Peace stands as the ideal of spiritual rather than mate-

¹⁹ Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Selected Letters*, Bahá'í Reference Library, pp. 18–19, <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/shoghi-effendi/world-order-bahauallah/1#369510938>.

rial harmony, a cultural rather than civilizational project. Bahá'ís believe that in those distant times, “Bahá'u'lláh's mission will be fully recognized by the peoples of the earth and its principles consciously accepted and applied by the generality of humankind.”²⁰ The ensuing “ultimate fusion of all races, creeds, classes and nations”²¹ will firmly secure the long-term stability and flourishing of global humanity. Shoghi Effendi describes this future civilization as a

world community in which all economic barriers will have been permanently demolished and the interdependence of Capital and Labor definitely recognized; in which the clamor of religious fanaticism and strife will have been forever stilled; in which the flame of racial animosity will have been finally extinguished; in which a single code of international law—the product of the considered judgment of the world's federated representatives—shall have as its sanction the instant and coercive intervention of the combined forces of the federated units; and finally a world community in which the fury of a capricious and militant nationalism will have been transmuted into an abiding consciousness of world citizenship—such indeed, appears, in its broadest outline, the Order anticipated by Bahá'u'lláh, an Order that shall come to be regarded as the fairest fruit of a slowly maturing age.²²

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²⁰ William S. Hatcher, J. Douglas Martin, *The Bahá'í Faith: The Emerging Global Religion*, Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1998, p. 144.

²¹ Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, Bahá'í Reference Library, p. 63, <https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/shoghi-effendi/promised-day-come/1#617979506>.

²² Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 19.

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1945

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1986

H. B. Danesh, *Unity: The Creative Foundation of Peace*, Bahá'í Studies Publication, Ottawa, Canada, 1986.

John T. Dale, "The Semantics of World Government," in *Dialogue magazine*, 1:3 (1986). The concept of "world federation" is tied into a variety of semantic presumptions. The term "self-government" is less authoritarian and individualistic than the term "world government." Includes response by Leonard Godwin.

1987

John Huddleston "Just System of Government: The Third Dimension to World Peace," in *The Bahá'í Faith and Marxism* (1987). Highlights a few points in the Bahá'í approach to government and collective action.

1991

George Starcher, "Toward a New Paradigm of Management," (1991). The fundamental changes taking place in management and organization in reaction to globalization and chang-

ing technology, and the new knowledge and information-based economy.

1994

Udo Schaefer, "Ethics for a Global Society," in *Bahá'í Studies Review*, 4:1 (1994). Addresses the collapse of moral order and value systems in the contemporary world, advocating in response a global ethic based on the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

Gregory Paul P. Meyjes, "Language and Universalization: A 'Linguistic Ecology' Reading of Bahá'í Writings," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 9:1 (1994). How the promotion of linguistic minority rights may coincide with promotion of an International Auxiliary Language, opposing trends toward increased globalization and growing nationalism, and the unregulated global spread of English.

Arthur Lyon Dahl, "Social Crises and Their Connections to Global Ecological Problems," (1994). Global warming and the social roots of environmental problems.

Michael Karlberg, "Toward a New Environmental Stewardship," in *World Order*, 25:4 (1994).

1996

Keith Suter, "Economic Justice and the Creation of a New International Economic Order," in *75 Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Australasia* (1996). The "New Right," history of economic philosophy and the role of the Church in Europe, challenges of the global economy, the failure of the UN to deal with the problems of the globalized economy, and how NGOs and individuals can work for economic justice.

Fazel Naghdy, "The Future of Mankind and the Most Holy Book," in *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas: Studies from the First National Conference on the Holy Book*, vol. 1 (1996).

Noojan Kazemi, "Global Prosperity for Humankind: The Bahá'í Model," in *75 Years of the Bahá'í Faith in Australasia* (1996).

Graham Nicholson, "Towards the New World Order: A Bahá'í perspective," in *Bahá'í Studies in Australasia* vol. 3 (1996).

1997

Mary Fish, "Economic Prosperity: A Global Imperative," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 7:3 (1997). Economic growth does not necessarily enhance human welfare. The Prosperity of Humankind recognizes the role of economics in igniting the capacity of humankind. The Bahá'í concept of human nature opens a dialogue between religion and economists.

Arthur Lyon Dahl, "Sustainable Development and the Environment of the World: An Overview," (1997).

1998

Arthur Lyon Dahl, "Globalization and the Environment," (1998). Some responses to possible problems associated with globalization.

Michael Harris Bond, "Unity in Diversity: Orientations and Strategies for Building a Harmonious Multicultural Society," (1998). Insights from the discipline of psychology can be used to design societies compatible with the exigencies and opportunities provided by the twenty-first century.

1999

Graham Hassall, "Contemporary Governance and Conflict Resolution: A Bahá'í Reading," (1999).

Juan R. I. Cole. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Bahá'í Scriptures." *Occasional Papers in Shaykhi, Babi and Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 3, no. 2 (April 1999).

2000

Holly Hanson, "Global Dilemmas, Local Responses: Creating Patterns of Action that Make the World Different," (2000). Globalization through the metaphor of the world as a body: as a diseased body, as a beautiful but dead body, and of political and social institutions as a growing body.

2001

Human Rights, Faith, and Culture, Association for Bahá'í Studies Australia, (2001). The Association for Baha'i Studies Australia hosted a 50th anniversary conference on the theme of "Hu-

man Rights, Faith and Culture”. It is a theme particularly pertinent to our period of history in which the inter-relationship between belief, culture and human rights is at issue in both positive and negative ways. The papers presented at the conference provide much food for thought on these questions.

Bahá'í-Inspired Perspectives on Human Rights, edited by Tahiriha Tahririha-Danesh. Hong Kong: Juxta Publishing Co., 2001, http://bahai-library.com/tahririha-danesh_perspectives_human_rights.

Dan Wheatley, “International Criminal Court: A Bahá'í Perspective,” in *Associate*, 33–34 (2001). Brief history of the ICC, and Bahá'í support of it.

Holly Hanson, “Living Purposefully in a Time of Violence,” (2001). Contemplation of Bahá'í responses to the global issues raised by 9/11.

Ali K. Merchant, “Religious Challenges in the Twenty-First Century and the Bahá'í Faith,” in *Global Religious Vision*, 1:4 (2001). Why has religion become suspect in present-day society? Do religious traditions help or hinder community? How does the Golden Rule, which exists in all religions, help build global unity?

Eamonn Moane, “Perspectives on the Global Economy at the Dawn of the 21st Century: An Irish Bahá'í View,” in *Solas*, 1 (2001). The state and issues of the global economy, including Ireland, at the start of the twenty-first century. Though not intended to be a general Bahá'í critique of the world economy, the paper concludes with a Bahá'í contribution to the issues raised.

Peter Beyer, “New Religious System for Contemporary Society,” in *Global Religious Vision*, 1:4 (2001). On scholarship and categories of religions in the global society, religion as a function system, and unity in differences. Contains only one passing mention of the Bahá'í Faith.

Arthur Lyon Dahl, “Sustainable Development and Prosperity,” (2001).

2002

Richard Landau, "The Bahá'í Faith and the Environment," in *Encyclopedia of Global Environmental Change volume 5: Social and Economic Dimensions of Global Environmental Change*, ed. Peter Timmerman (2002). Participation of the Bahá'í International Community in UN-sponsored development and environmental initiatives for resolving the difficult challenges before humanity.

2003

Sen McGlinn, "Difficult Case, A: Beyer's Categories and the Bahá'í Faith," in *Social Compass*, 50 (2003). Beyer considers that a religious movement which seeks to have religious norms enshrined in legislation has adopted the 'conservative option' in response to globalization. Is this a useful categorization for a global stage?

2004

Christopher Buck, "Eschatology of Globalization, The: The Multiple Messiahship of Bahá'u'lláh Revisited," in *Numen Book Series: Studies in Modern Religions, Religious Movements and the Babi- Bahá'í Faiths*, ed. Moshe Sharon (2004). This paper argues that Bahá'u'lláh's signal contribution to globalization was to ethicize and sacralize it.

2005

Bahá'í and Globalization (2005). Articles from a conference held at the University of Copenhagen in 2001.

Zaid Lundberg, "Global Claims, Global Aims: An Analysis of Shoghi Effendi's *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*," in *Bahá'í and Globalisation* (2005). What is Shoghi Effendi's discourse on 'globalization' and 'globality', and what are the global claims and aims in *World Order*?

Todd Lawson, "Globalization and the Hidden Words," in *Bahá'í and Globalisation*, ed. Margit Warburg (2005). A philological analysis of Bahá'u'lláh's *Hidden Words*, elucidating the devel-

opment of the global orientation of the Babi- Bahá'í religion in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Baghdad.

John Thelen Steere, "Ecological Stewardship as Applied Spirituality: A Bahá'í Perspective," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 15:1–4 (2005). The significance and dimensions of environmental stewardship — the name given to the emerging practice of habitation restoration, land conservation, resource management, and parks and recreation — and its relationship to the Bahá'í teachings.

Sohrab Abizadeh, "Will Globalization Lead to a World Commonwealth?" in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 15:1–4 (2005).

Stephen Lambden, "The Messianic Roots of Babi-Bahá'í Globalism," in *Bahá'í and Globalisation* (2005). Contrast of the continuity between the globalism of the Bab's Qayyum *al-asma'* and Bahá'u'lláh's globalism, verses breaks between the two, e.g. the abandoning of jihad as a means of promoting a globalization process.

2006

Michael Karlberg and Cheshmak Farhoumand-Sims, "Global Citizenship and Humanities Scholarship: Toward a Twenty-First Century Agenda," in *International Journal of the Humanities*, 2:3 (2006). In this age of global interdependence, the critique of anachronistic social constructs is necessary but insufficient. Scholars must articulate new approaches to globalization. The international Bahá'í community illustrates a constructive, humane approach.

Nalinie Mooten, "The Bahá'í Approach to Cosmopolitan Ideas in International Relations," (2006). A Bahá'í approach to the cosmopolitan tradition in International Relations theory, and what contributions the Bahá'í model can offer to this growing tradition.

Vargha Taefi, "Just War from the Bahá'í Perspective," (2006). A Bahá'í view is that the individual's will is subordinate to society's will. Comparison of this attitude with contemporary

international political theory, and on justifying war as “humanitarian intervention.”

2007

Michael Karlberg, “Western Liberal Democracy as a New World Order?” in *Bahá'í World*, 2005–2006 (2007).

2008

Michael Karlberg, “Discourse, Identity, and Global Citizenship,” in *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice*, 20:3 (2008).

What does it mean to be a “global citizen”? From early Greek times, the concept of citizenship expanded from “inhabitant of a city” to a democratic ideal of self-determination. It now includes global relationships, interdependence, and altruism.

Alain Locke, “Four Talks Redefining Democracy, Education, and World Citizenship,” in *World Order*, 38:3 (2008). The Preservation of the Democratic Ideal; Stretching Our Social Mind; On Becoming World Citizens; Creative Democracy. Includes introduction by Buck and Fisher.

James B. Thomas, “World Peace in a Piecemeal World: An exposition on excerpts from the writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,” (2008). World peace is a challenge facing humankind that must be clearly identified; remedies are put forth for possible solutions in vanquishing the barriers to peace; both secular and religious underpinnings are proposed to support a universal solution for peace.

Chris Jones Kavelin, “Individual Bahá'í Perspective on Spiritual Aspects of Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development: Towards a Second Enlightenment,” in *The International Journal of Diversity in Organizations, Communities, and Nations*, 8:1 (2008). This paper discusses the spiritual value of cultural diversity and explores how such reflection impacts development policy on the local, national, and international levels.

William S. Hatcher, “Achieving Planetary Consciousness: Reality, Reason, and Revelation,” (2008).

2010

Michael Karlberg, "Education for Interdependence: The University and the Global Citizen," in *Global Studies Journal*, 3:1 (2010). This paper advocates the value of an outcomes-based approach to global citizenship education and suggests a framework of core learning outcomes that can guide and inform the development of global citizenship curricula in universities.

Rod Duncan, "Reflections on Climate Change: A Bahá'í Response," in *Interreligious Insight*, 8:1 (2010).

Wolfgang A. Klebel, "The Path of God," in *Lights of Irfan*, Volume 11 (2010).

2011

Julio Savi, "The Duty of Kindness and Sympathy Towards Strangers," in *Lights of Irfan*, 12 (2011). Integrating immigrants into the culture of their new country is becoming a focus in some Western states. In 2007 the Italian government issued a "Charter on the Values and Significance of Citizenship and Integration," which reflects such Bahá'í ideals.

2012

Augusto Lopez-Carlos, "Challenges of Sustainable Development," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 22 (2012). Economic growth contributes to global prosperity, but it may conflict with environmental constraints. The interactions among conservation, technology, international cooperation, and human values can prevent future crises and assist collective evolution.

Ali Nakhjavani, "Supreme Tribunal (*Mahkamiy-i-Kubra*)," in *Lights of Irfan*, 13 (2012). Meaning of "Bahá'í Court" in the writings of the Guardian and how it compares with the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Hoda Mahmoudi, "Human Knowledge and the Advancement of Society," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 22 (2012). Knowledge is the means toward realizing a global civilization. The current Five-Year Plan focuses the Bahá'í community's consultation,

reflection, and global growth, and the individual's applying spiritual and secular knowledge to help this process.

Michael Karlberg, "Reframing Public Discourse for Peace and Justice," in *Forming a Culture of Peace: Reframing Narratives of Intergroup Relations, Equity, and Justice*, ed. Karina Korostelina (2012).

2013

Sovaida Ma'ani Ewing, "Collective Security: An Indispensable Requisite for a Lasting Peace," in *Lights of Irfan*, 14 (2013). The global community must come to collaborative agreements regarding policing, the military, nuclear weapons, and an international court. The Bahá'í Faith can offer much guidance for this process.

Brian D. Lepard, "A Bahá'í Perspective on International Human Rights Law," (2013). Overview of the evolution of modern "secular" systems of international human rights law and their limitations, principles in the Bahá'í Writings relevant to such laws, and implications of these principles for reform of the contemporary legal order.

2016

Rama Ayman, "Addressing the Rising Tide of Globalization and Amorality in the Present World Order and Its Implications on Extremes of Wealth and Poverty," in *Lights of Irfan*, 17 (2016). On inequality within most nations in the world at a time when wealth disparity between nations has been falling; the impact that amorality and globalization have on wealth inequality; Bahá'í teachings on alleviating extremes of wealth and poverty.

Nader Saiedi, "From Oppression to Empowerment," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 26:1–2 (2016). On four contemporary types of oppression: in the international political order, forms of the state, economic structures, and forms of cultural identity; Bahá'u'lláh's personal response to oppression; and a Bahá'í approach to empowerment and liberation.

Nazil Ghanea, “Striving for Human Rights in an Age of Religious Extremism,” in *Journal of Bahá’í Studies*, 26:1–2 (2016). Bahá’í perspectives on global human rights law, community duties, religion as a pillar of justice, and the oneness of humanity.

2018

Hooshmand Badee, “Some Reflections on the Principle of Unity/Oneness,” in *Lights of Irfan*, 19 (2018). Reflections on the message of Bahá’u’lláh creating the oneness of humanity and a global society that is based on unity and love rather than factors such as economic and political gains.

2022

Berger, Julia, *Rethinking Religion and Politics in a Plural World: The Bahá’í International Community and the United Nations*, Bloomsbury Academic (2022).

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Articles and Books on Science and the Bahá'í Faith

1935

John B. Cornell, "Scientific Approach to Moral Conduct," in *World Order*, 12:8 (1946). Comparison of Bahá'í teachings on sexual behavior with those presented by a then-current textbook, *Personality, and the Family* (1935).

1943

Race and Man: A Compilation, by Maye Harvey Gift and Alice Simmons Cox (1943). A collection of words of scientists, sociologists, and educators, arranged to present the problem of race relations in this modern world and the solutions as great thinkers envision them, followed by Bahá'í teachings on the same topics.

1953

Glenn A. Shook, *Mysticism, Science, and Revelation* (1953). The essence of true religion is that feeling which unites man with God. Some mystics believe that man may become one with the Absolute, but this is not scientific. Differences between mystical experience and prophetic religion.

1970

Ali-Akbar Furutan, "Science and Religion," (1970). On the causes underlying the notion of a conflict between science and religion. Prophets have always stressed the need for attaining more knowledge and wisdom, so a divinely-revealed Faith bereft of superstition cannot be opposed to knowledge and reason.

1976

William S. Hatcher, "Science and the Bahá'í Faith," in *Bahá'í Studies*, 1 (1976). Seeing religion and science as in opposition

derives from a conception of science as being too restrictive to apply to religion, and of religion as too subjective to be scientific.

1980

William S. Hatcher, "The Science of Religion," in *Bahá'í Studies*, 2 (1980). Contains three essays: "Science and Religion," "The Unity of Religion and Science," and "Science and the Bahá'í Faith."

1988

Brian Aull, "The Faith of Science and the Method of Religion," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 1:2 (1988).

1990

William S. Hatcher, *Logic and Logos: Essays on Science, Religion, and Philosophy* (George Ronald, 1990).

Keven Brown, "A Bahá'í Perspective on the Origin of Matter," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 2:3 (1990). The origin of matter is spiritual. Science sees that, at its most fundamental level, reality is not particular materials or structures, but probabilities and transformation. The four elements, three-fold structure of being, and balance are also examined.

Paul Hanley, "Agriculture: A Fundamental Principle," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 3:1 (1990).

Gregory C. Dahl, "Evolving toward a Bahá'í Economic System," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 4:3 (1991). Ideals are fruitless if not implemented. There needs to be a balance and an interplay between goals and actions. A "Bahá'í economic system" suggests a number of topics for further research.

Craig Loehle, "On Human Origins: A Bahá'í Perspective," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 2:4 (1990).

1993

Gary L. Matthews, *Challenge of Bahá'u'lláh, The: Proofs of the Bahá'í Revelation* (1993).

Alan Bryson, *Light after Death: The Bahá'í Faith and the Near-Death Experience*, (1993).

William S. Hatcher, "A Scientific Proof of the Existence of God," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 5:4 (1993).

1994

Arthur Lyon Dahl, "Ecological Models of Social Organization: A Bahá'í Perspective," (1994). Natural vs. human social ecosystems and the interplay of natural vs. social systems in the twenty-first century.

1995

Arthur Lyon Dahl, "The Bahá'í Approach: Moderation in Civilization," (1995). Bahá'í approach to nature and ecology.

Rick Schaut, "Toward a Bahá'í Economic Model," (1995). Summary of three positive statements which might form the basis for a Bahá'í economic model.

Robert A. White, "Spiritual Foundations for an Ecologically Sustainable Society," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 7:2 (1995).

1996

Anjam Khursheed, "The Spiritual Foundations of Science," in *Singapore Bahá'í Studies Review*, vol. 1 (1996). In contrast to modern western accounts of science, which reduce it to methods of logic and experiment, the Bahá'í reference point is the spiritual nature of man. The experience of some outstanding scientists of the past supports the Bahá'í view.

Jalil Mahmoudi, "The Institutionalization of Religion: A Sociological Analysis of Religion and Conflict," in *World Order* (1967). The life cycle of a religion can be classified into different phases or stages, such as "cult, sect, denomination, church." Does the Bahá'í Faith fit this schema?

1997

Mary Fish, "Economic Prosperity: A Global Imperative," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 7:3 (1997). Economic growth does not necessarily enhance human welfare. The Bahá'í concept of human nature opens a dialogue between religion and economists.

Keven Brown, "Are 'Abdu'l-Bahá's views on evolution original?" in *Bahá'í Studies Review*, 7 (1997).

Jack Coleman, "Common Grounds between Buddhism, Quantum Physics, and the Bahá'í Faith," (1997). Some parallels and similarities between the Bahá'í Faith, Buddhism, and physics.

Arthur Lyon Dahl, "Environmental Protection from a Bahá'í Perspective," in *Naturopa*, 83 (1997). The place of the natural world in the Bahá'í teachings.

Eberhard von Kitzing, "Is the Bahá'í view of evolution compatible with modern science?" in *Bahá'í Studies Review*, 7 (1997).

2000

Hossain Danesh, *Psychology of Spirituality, The: From Divided Self to Integrated Self*, (2000). Explores what is the nature of human reality, the purpose of human life, transcendence, and whether we have free will, using case histories, in-depth analysis, and practical examples.

Ron House, "Unhealthy Science, Religion, and Humanities: The Deep Connection and What Bahá'u'lláh Had to Say About It," (2000). How the "calamity" mentioned by Bahá'u'lláh manifests in errors in the scientific method; fundamentalism and unbelief; the philosophy of Descartes, Hume, and Kuhn; and the Big Bang.

Behrooz Sabet, "Integrative Approach to Knowledge and Action: A Bahá'í Perspective," in *Converging Realities*, 1:1 (2000). A conceptual base for the development of an integrative approach to the study of the Bahá'í Faith, based largely on the harmony of science and religion.

William G. Huitt, "The Spiritual Nature of a Human Being," in *Educational Psychology Interactive* (2000).

2001

Evolution and Bahá'í Belief: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Response to Nineteenth-Century Darwinism, in *Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, Volume 12 (2001). Includes Eberhard von Kitzing's "Origin of Complex Order in Biology: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's concept

of the originality of species compared to concepts in modern biology."

Keven Brown, "'Abdu'l-Bahá's Response to Darwinism: Its Historical and Philosophical Context," in *Evolution and Bahá'í Belief, Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, vol. 12 (2001). Editor's foreword to the collection of articles *Evolution and Bahá'í Belief*.

Farhad Rassekh, "The Bahá'í Faith and the Market Economy," in *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, 11:3-4 (2001).

Fariborz Alan Davoodi, "Human Evolution: Directed?" (2001). Overview of contemporary biological theories of evolution and some of their failings in the face of a philosophy of evolution guided by God; includes details on photosynthesis, glycolysis, and geological time.

Keven Brown, "The Origin of the Bahá'í Principle of the Harmony between Science and Religion," (2001). On the origin of the principle of scientific/religious harmony in Islamic and Bahá'í Writings, and discussion of a letter by 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the topic.

Ali K. Merchant, "Religion and Science in the New Millennium: A Bahá'í Perspective," in *Global Religious Vision*, 1:3 (2001). An attempt to understand the essential functions of science and religion in human society, building on the work of Stanwood Cobb, William Hatcher and Anjam Khursheed, who have done pioneering research on the unity of religion and science.

2002

Vahid Brown, "The Beginning that hath no beginning: Bahá'í Cosmogony," in *Lights of Irfan*, Book 3 (2002).

Bryan Graham, "Bahá'í Faith and economics: a review and synthesis," in *Reason and Revelation: Studies in the Bábí and Bahá'í Religions*, volume 13 (2002). Review of the secondary literature on the subject and some issues of methodology.

Robin Mihrshahi, "Ether, Quantum Physics and the Bahá'í Writings," in *Australian Bahá'í Studies*, vol. 4 (2002). Analysis of

‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s use of the term “ether”, correlated to His definition of this term as a medium not only for the propagation of electromagnetic radiation, but also for the communication of spiritual impulses to the physical world.

Justin Scoggin, “Forging the Divine Economy,” (2002). Advancing the establishment of Bahá’u’lláh’s divine economy through the operation of community currency.

Robert Sarracino, “The Seven Valleys and the Scientific Method,” in *Lights of Irfan*, Book 3 (2002).

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The book *Religion and Science in the Globalized World* explores contemporary trends in religion, science, and globalization from a Bahá'í perspective. It is divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to Bahá'í approaches to various aspects of globalization. It includes the following chapters: "Global Constitutionalism" by Graham Hassall; "Globalization—The Tangible Expression of Humanity's Journey Towards Unity" by Sovaida Ma'ani Ewing; "Building a Just and Sustainable Global Food System: Some Guiding Principles" by Paul Hanley; "How Can We All Get Along?—A Bahá'í Perspective on Globalization" by Harold Rosen; and "Globalization Requires a Bahá'í Foundation" by Hooshmand Badee.

The book's second part focuses on different issues within the domains of natural and social sciences. The chapters included are as follows: "A Bahá'í View of Human Rights" by Peter Smith; "Prophetic Revelation and Sociocultural Evolution: Some Scientific Perspectives" by Harry P. Massoth and Marilu Jenó; "Plato, Modern Physics, and Bahá'u'lláh" by Vahid Ranjbar; "Iterative Theology: Progressive Revelation as the String Theory of Religious Studies" by Andres Elvira Espinoza; and "The Issue of Self-Identity in Transhumanism and the Bahá'í Writings" by Mikhail Sergeev. The volume ends with two chronologies of articles and books numerous Bahá'í authors wrote on globalization and science from the second half of the twentieth century up to the present day.



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