

Globalization and Current Events

A Bahá'í Perspective

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New World Order

The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appeareth to be lamentably defective.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 215)

...a House [the Universal House of Justice] which posterity will regard as the last refuge of a tottering civilization.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 89)

Soon will the present-day order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 7)

Universal fermentation

As we view the world around us, we are compelled to observe the manifold evidences of that **universal fermentation** which, in every continent of the globe and in every department of human life, be it religious, social, economic or political, is **purging and reshaping humanity in anticipation of the Day when the wholeness of the human race will have been recognized and its unity established.**

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 169 [1936])

Twofold process

A **twofold process**, however, can be distinguished, each tending, in its own way and with an accelerated momentum, to bring to a climax the forces that are transforming the face of our planet....The **constructive process** stands associated with the nascent Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, and is the harbinger of the New World Order that Faith must ere long establish. The **destructive forces** that characterize the other should be identified with a civilization that has refused to answer to the expectation of a new age, and is consequently falling into chaos and decline.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 169 [1936])

Adolescence passing to maturity

Similarly there are periods and stages in the collective life of humanity. At one time it was passing through its stage of childhood, at another its period of youth, but now it has entered its long-predicted phase of maturity, the evidences of which are everywhere apparent...

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, p. 164-65)

social consensus...is...worn and spent

Over the last year, it has become clearer still that, in different nations in different ways, **the social consensus around ideals that have traditionally united and bound together a people is increasingly worn and spent.** It can no longer offer a reliable defense against a variety of **self-serving, intolerant, and toxic ideologies that feed upon discontent and resentment.** With a conflicted world appearing every day less sure of itself, the proponents of these destructive doctrines grow bold and brazen. We recall the unequivocal verdict from the Supreme Pen: “They hasten forward to Hell Fire, and mistake it for light.”

social consensus...is...worn and spent

Well-meaning leaders of nations and people of goodwill are left struggling to repair the fractures evident in society and powerless to prevent their spread. The effects of all this are not only to be seen in outright conflict or a collapse in order. In the distrust that pits neighbor against neighbor and severs family ties, in the antagonism of so much of what passes for social discourse, in the casualness with which appeals to ignoble human motivations are used to win power and pile up riches—in all these lie unmistakable signs that **the moral force which sustains society has become gravely depleted.**

(The Universal House of Justice, Ridván 2015)

The most practical person in the world

The most practical person in the whole world when Bahá'u'lláh was alive was Bahá'u'lláh Himself... How could He give us a world order designed by almighty God to bring the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and change the whole aspect of the planet if He weren't the most practical man in the world?

(Rúhíyyih Khánum, 3 November 1982, audio recording at dahls.net/historical/general/)

What is defective and what valuable?

Bahá'u'lláh refers to the present order as “lamentably defective”. How defective do we think “defective” really is? Which constituents of the present order are, and are not, defective? Which parts are we to keep, and which are we to reject completely? How deep do we have to go into the foundation of the present order to find the real causes of its defective ways?

(Dr. Farzam Arbab speaking at the Association for Bahá'í Studies Conference 2016)

Spiritual principles

...the primary challenge in dealing with issues of peace is to raise the context to the level of principle, as distinct from pure pragmatism.... There are spiritual principles, or what some call human values, by which solutions can be found for every social problem.

(The Universal House of Justice, *The Promise of World Peace*, October 1985, p. 6)



False dichotomies

...the emphasis [the institute courses] place on **avoiding false dichotomies...** It is essential that ideas forming part of a cohesive whole not be held in opposition to one another.

(The Universal House of Justice, message to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, 28 December 2010, pp. 6-7 and p. 14)

...**apparent dichotomies yield to unexpected insights...**

(The Universal House of Justice, message to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, 29 December 2015, p. 4)

Principles and dynamic coherence

May the friends endeavor to raise the level of discourse by referring to the relevant spiritual and moral principles, avoiding being pulled into dichotomous political or social debates...

(The Universal House of Justice in a letter to a European National Spiritual Assembly regarding migrants and refugees, 1 October 2015)

The oneness of mankind, which is at once the operating principle and ultimate goal of His Revelation, implies the achievement of a **dynamic coherence between the spiritual and practical requirements of life on earth.**

(The Universal House of Justice, message to the Bahá'ís of the World, October 20, 1983)

2. Consultation

The law of consultation, as revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, is a fundamental teaching of the Faith. He tells us that through consultation the “maturity of the gift of understanding” is made manifest. “It is and will always be”, He states, “a cause of awareness and of awakening and a source of good and well-being.” “Consultation bestoweth greater awareness and transmuteth conjecture into certitude”, He further asserts. “It is a shining light which, in a dark world, leadeth the way and guideth.” Consultation paves the path of individual and collective endeavour. The growth, progress, and enduring unity of the community are ensured by its practice. **It is indispensable for the ordering of human affairs.**

(Universal House of Justice to the Believers in the Cradle of the Faith, 19 May 2009)

2. Consultation

...consultation may be seen as collective search for truth. Participants in a consultative process see reality from different points of view, and as these views are examined and understood, clarity is achieved. In this conception of the collective investigation of reality, truth is not a compromise between opposing interest groups. Nor does the desire to exercise power over one another animate participants in the consultative process. What they seek, rather, is the power of unified thought and action.

(“Social Action; A paper prepared by the Office of Social and Economic Development at the Bahá’í World Centre, 26 November 2012, p. 13)

3. Unity, inclusiveness, overcoming prejudices

Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one with another with the utmost love and harmony, with friendliness and fellowship. He Who is the Daystar of Truth beareth Me witness! So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth...

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 14)

3. Unity, inclusiveness, overcoming prejudices

...‘Abdu’l-Bahá expounded, with brilliant simplicity...those basic and distinguishing principles of His Father's Faith...the oneness of the entire human race, the pivotal principle and fundamental doctrine of the Faith ... the condemnation of all forms of prejudice, whether religious, racial, class or national...

(Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 281)

3. Unity, inclusiveness, overcoming prejudices

The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established. This unity can never be achieved so long as the counsels which the Pen of the Most High hath revealed are suffered to pass unheeded. ...Through the power of the words He hath uttered the whole of the human race can be illumined with the light of unity.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 286)

3. Unity, inclusiveness, overcoming prejudices

Nothing can be effected in the world, not even conceivably, without unity and agreement, and the perfect means for engendering fellowship and union is true religion.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, p. 73)

3. Peace requires divine power

Universal peace is an impossibility through human and material agencies; it must be through spiritual power. There is need of a universal impelling force which will establish the oneness of humanity and destroy the foundations of war and strife. None other than the divine power can do this...

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, 1982 ed., p. 109)

The Economist

SEPTEMBER 10TH-16TH 2016

Rodrigo Duterte's guide to diplomacy

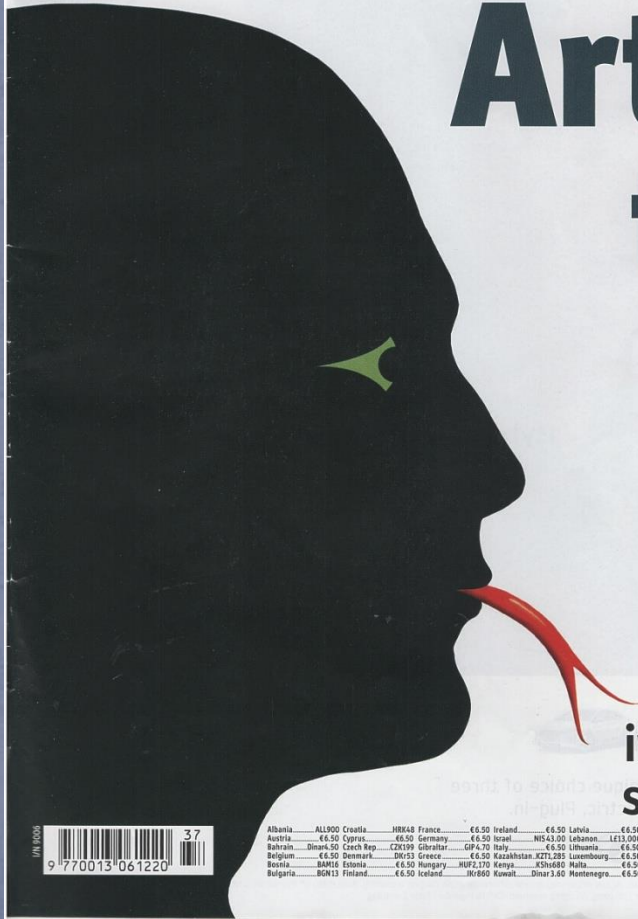
What is Gulenism?

Introverts: overlooked and undervalued

Rise of the wooden skyscraper

Art of the lie

Post-truth politics in the age of social media



Albania... ALL900 Croatia... HRK48 France... €6.50 Ireland... €6.50 Latvia... €6.50 Netherlands... €6.50 Romania... RON29 Spain... €6.50
Australia... €6.50 Cyprus... €6.50 Germany... €6.50 Israel... NIS43.00 Lebanon... LEB1,000 Nigeria... Naira 1,700 Saudi Arabia... SR164 Sweden... SEK64
Bahrain... Dinar4.50 Czech Rep... CZK199 Gibraltar... GIP4.70 Italy... €6.50 Lithuania... €6.50 Norway... NOK66 Serbia... RSD720 Switzerland... CHF10
Belgium... €6.50 Denmark... DKK53 Greece... €6.50 Kazakhstan... KZT1,200 Luxembourg... €6.50 Poland... PLN19 Slovakia... €6.50 Turkey... TL18
Bosnia... BAM10 Estonia... €6.50 Hungary... HUF2,170 Kenya... KSh680 Malta... €6.50 Portugal cont... €6.50 Slovenia... €6.50 UAE... Dirham 45
Bulgaria... BGN13 Finland... €6.50 Iceland... ISK600 Kuwait... Dinar3.60 Montenegro... €6.50 Qatar... Rial45 South Africa... R70.00 UK... £5.00

4. Truthfulness and trustworthiness

...in the sight of God, **trustworthiness is the bedrock of His Faith and the foundation of all virtues and perfections.** A man deprived of this quality is destitute of everything.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, in *Trustworthiness: A Cardinal Baha’i Virtue*, January 1987, Compiled by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, in *The Compilation of Compilations vol II*, p. 339)

“**Truthfulness ... is the foundation of all human virtues. Without truthfulness progress and success, in all the worlds of God, are impossible for any soul. When this holy attribute is established in man, all the divine qualities will also be acquired.**”

(Shoghi Effendi quoting Bahá’u’lláh, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 26)

5. Honesty and moral rectitude

...sense of moral rectitude should stand in clear contrast to “the demoralizing influences which a corruption-ridden political life so strikingly manifests”. The Guardian called for “an abiding sense of undeviating justice” in a “strangely disordered world” and quoted extensively from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, setting the sights of the friends on the highest standards of honesty and trustworthiness.

(The Universal House of Justice, 28 December 2010, pp. 11-12)

5. Honesty and moral rectitude

When will this world-afflicting craftiness be transformed into sincerity?

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 260)

6. Positive attitude

...where there is no light, there will be darkness; when there is no sight, there will be blindness; when there is no life, there will be death; when there is no riches, there will be poverty; and when there is no knowledge, there will be ignorance.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, vol. 3, p. 610)

Keep yourselves entirely clear of the world's conditions of gloom...

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, vol. 2, p. 374)

6. Positive attitude

Beware lest ye harm any soul, or make any heart to sorrow; lest ye wound any man with your words, be he known to you or a stranger, be he friend or foe. ... Beware, beware, lest ye offend the feelings of another, even though he be an evil-doer, and he wish you ill. Look ye not upon the creatures, turn ye to their Creator. See ye not the never-yielding people, see but the Lord of Hosts. Gaze ye not down upon the dust, gaze upward at the shining sun, which hath caused every patch of darksome earth to glow with light.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 73)

7. Moderation

The civilization, so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men. Thus warneth you He Who is the All-Knowing. If carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation.... All other things are subject to this same principle of moderation.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 342-43)

8. Equality

Eight men own the same wealth as the 3.6 billion people who make up the poorest half of humanity.

(Oxfam International, press release 1/16/2017)

Relevant Bahá'í teachings:

- elimination of prejudice, the oneness of mankind, universal education, the equality of men and women, a future world commonwealth, Ḥuqúqu'lláh, the importance of service to others, consultation, prohibition of gambling, etc.

9. Work and jobs

It is incumbent upon each one of you to engage in some occupation -- such as a craft, a trade or the like. We have exalted your engagement in such work to the rank of worship of the one true God.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 30)

See also *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* note 56, pp. 192-93

10. Service, generosity, overcoming ego

That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 249)

Free thyself from the fetters of this world, and loose thy soul from the prison of self. Seize thy chance, for it will come to thee no more.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Persian Hidden Words* #40)

To give and to be generous are attributes of Mine; well is it with him that adorneth himself with My virtues.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *The Persian Hidden Words* #49)

10. Service, generosity, overcoming ego

Make ye a mighty effort: perchance ye can flood this earth with light, that this mud hut, the world, may become the Abha Paradise. The dark hath taken over, and the brute traits prevail. This world of man is now an arena for wild beasts, a field where the ignorant, the heedless, seize their chance. **The souls of men** are ravening wolves and animals with blinded eyes, they **are either deadly poison or useless weeds** -- all except for a very few who indeed do nurture altruistic aims and plans for the well-being of their fellow men: **but ye must in this matter -- that is, the serving of humankind -- lay down your very lives, and as ye yield yourselves, rejoice.**

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 72)

11. The earth is but one country

It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 249)

12. Non-involvement in partisan politics

Let them refrain from associating themselves, whether by word or by deed, with the political pursuits of their respective nations, with the policies of their governments and the schemes and programs of parties and factions. ... Let them rise above all particularism and partisanship, above the vain disputes, the petty calculations, the transient passions that agitate the face, and engage the attention, of a changing world.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 64)

12. Non-involvement in partisan politics

We must build up our Bahá'í system, and leave the faulty systems of the world to go their own way. We cannot change them through becoming involved in them, on the contrary they will destroy us.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 1948, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 449)

12. Non-involvement in partisan politics

The Bahá'í Commonwealth of the future, of which this vast Administrative Order is the sole framework, is, both in theory and practice, not only unique in the entire history of political institutions, but can find no parallel in the annals of any of the world's recognized religious systems. No form of democratic government...can be identified or be said to conform with the Administrative Order which the master-hand of its perfect Architect has fashioned.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 152)

13. Cooperation and reciprocity

...man cannot live singly and alone. He is in need of continuous cooperation and mutual help. For example, a man living alone in the wilderness will eventually starve. He can never, singly and alone, provide himself with all the necessities of existence. Therefore, he is in need of cooperation and reciprocity.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 38)

...cooperation and reciprocity [are] manifestations of the interconnectedness that governs the universe.

(The Universal House of Justice, 28 December 2010, p. 15)

(See also ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the compilation on Ḥuqúqu’lláh, #23)

14. Administering with love

This Wronged One testifieth that the purpose for which mortal men have, from utter nothingness, stepped into the realm of being, is that they may work for the betterment of the world and **live together in concord and harmony.**

Dissension and strife have always been, and shall remain, rejected by God. ...the purpose underlying this most mighty Revelation is none other than the rehabilitation of the world and its nations; that **perchance the power of utterance may prevail over the power of arms, and the world's affairs be administered through the potency of love.**

(Bahá'u'lláh, "Trustworthiness" compilation, *Compilation of Compilations*, vol II, p. 331)

14. Administering with love

Administrative efficiency and order should always be accompanied by an equal degree of love, of devotion and of spiritual development.

(From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, December 10, 1933, in *Lights of Guidance*, p. 35)

Principles

1. Acting on principle
2. Consultation
3. Unity, inclusiveness, overcoming prejudices
4. Truthfulness and trustworthiness
5. Honesty and moral rectitude
6. Positive attitude
7. Moderation
8. Equality
9. Work and jobs
10. Service, generosity, overcoming ego
11. The earth is but one country
12. Non-involvement in partisan politics
13. Cooperation and reciprocity
14. Administering with love

15. Learning from tests

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My calamity is My providence, outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and mercy.

(Bahá'u'lláh: *Arabic Hidden Words*, #51)

The mind and spirit of man advance when he is tried by suffering.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 178-179)

These tests, even as thou didst write, do but cleanse the spotting of self from off the mirror of the heart, till the Sun of Truth can cast its rays thereon...

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, p. 182)

15. Learning from tests

Could anything less than **the fire of a civil war** with all its violence and vicissitudes -- a war that nearly rent the great American Republic -- have **welded the states**, not only into a Union of independent units, but **into a Nation**, in spite of all the ethnic differences that characterized its component parts?

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, p. 45 [1931])

15. Learning from tests

The **flames** which His Divine justice have kindled **cleanse** an unregenerate humanity, and **fuse** its discordant, its warring elements as no other agency can cleanse or fuse them. It is not only a retributory and destructive fire, but a **disciplinary and creative process, whose aim is the salvation, through unification, of the entire planet.** **Mysteriously, slowly, and resistlessly God accomplishes His design.... God's purpose is none other than to usher in, in ways He alone can bring about, and the full significance of which He alone can fathom, the Great, the Golden Age of a long-divided, a long-afflicted humanity.**

(Shoghi Effendi, *The Promised Day is Come*, pp. 115-116 [1941])

15. Learning from tests

Many and divers are the setbacks and reverses which this nation, extolled so highly by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and occupying at present so unique a position among its fellow nations, must, alas, suffer. The road leading to its destiny is long, thorny and tortuous. The impact of various forces upon the structure and polity of that nation will be tremendous.

Tribulations, on a scale unprecedented in its history, and calculated to purge its institutions, to purify the hearts of its people, to fuse its constituent elements, and to weld it into one entity with its sister nations in both hemispheres, are inevitable.

(Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith*, pp. 36–37 [1947])

15. Learning from tests

Progress is achieved through the dialectic of crisis and victory, and setbacks are inevitable.

(The Universal House of Justice, 28 December 2010, p. 4
[referring to the activities of the Bahá'í community])

Globalization

How striking that, amid the cacophony of fixed opinions and opposing interests that grows everywhere more fierce, you are focused on drawing people together to build communities that are havens of unity. Far from disheartening you, let the world's prejudices and hostilities be reminders of how urgently souls all around you need the healing balm that you alone can present to them.

(The Universal House of Justice, Ridván 2016)

Ours is the duty to ponder these things in our heart, to strive to widen our vision, and to deepen our comprehension of this Cause, and to arise, resolutely and unreservedly, to play our part, however small, in this greatest drama of the world's spiritual history.

(Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, p. 26)