

Giuseppe Robiati

Economy for a new world order



To those who do not have a global  
vision

## Foreword

### (To the first edition)

Nowadays world is facing an ever deeper crisis. The more we come closer to the XXI century, the more we approach another era with a different kind of organization and a different way of operating. This new era could represent a chance of improvement in comparison with the end of the XX century, or, it could represent a descent towards violence and chaos. On the eve of such critical events new ideas and new visions are of the utmost importance. Robiati describes a new vision inspired by the Baha'i Faith and pictures human society of the XXI century based on social, political and especially economical principles. Robiati's vision is evolutionary and optimistic, but not naive. The author doesn't support the concept of history as a linear, granted progress. The author sees, and I think he is correct, encouraging signs even in deepest crisis. Dawn comes just when night is darker. In this folk saying there is a glimpse of truth. The progress of history is not linear. It is irreversible as a whole. It often has periods of standstill and, sometimes, even of regress. As Robiati explains, this assertion is made by Baha'u'llah (1817-1892), the founder of the Baha'i Faith. Anyway this claim should give us the courage and will to face the upcoming crisis, knowing they are the prelude of a new era, perhaps better than the one we live in. Only in a non linear perspective the assertion according to which "peace in the world is not only possible but absolutely inevitable" is no longer paradoxical; even if we are going through a period where differences and bonds, traditionally cause of conflicts, are strongly increasing. Only in this light the idea of being at the threshold of a unified world society makes sense. Even now that, on a national level, we are going through times of conflicts and desegregation. Utopia is always justified when the prevailing order reaches a point of non-return. It is not interpreted as a certitude, but as a desirable, realistic possibility. In a critical situation the chaotic states dynamics comes into play. It means that at first powerless "floating" can modify the dominant structures of the system and create entirely new kinds of organization and ways of operating. The Baha'i vision, explained by Robiati, referring in particular to economics problems and potentialities, involves this kind of "flotation" concept. Just in time of turbulence and general transition this vision is gaining importance in millions of people's mentality and that could influence society with important consequences. The cardinal principle of this vision is unity in diversity in the utmost respect of nature and other human beings. This perspective is a reason for us of encouragement and joy. The contribution given by Robiati is based on explaining this vision using thermodynamics principles in order to describe economical processes. This concept is simple and clear. All processes are based on labour of any kind: human, natural, and mechanical. Energy is needed for any form of labour. On the other hand energy, though infinitely convertible, is not available at infinity. As labour is carried on, freed energy is no longer available. So, it becomes scattered energy. Waste energy. This simple phenomenon has been for long disregarded by economists, politicians and managers focused only on the increase of potentialities. This led to the conversion of precious resources, often not renewable. Uncontrolled dispersion of energy led to serious social injustices either within the same nations or among different ones. Moreover it

produced a serious impoverishment of nature. The original introduction of thermodynamics principles into economical and political systems is gaining more and more consent, although it is still rarely placed in the wider context of "historical tendency". The author uses these principles that, although apply to the values of his religious creed, deserve to be seriously analysed. The vision described by Robiati echoes the contemporary "sciences of complexity" that are the holistic and evolutionary base for a new vision of the world. If we overcome the crisis we are facing, by now at the threshold of the next century, the holistic vision deriving from the principles of the Baha'i Faith- supported by the complex systems of thermodynamics theory- it could let us progress in harmony with the urgent rhythms of universal evolution. According to my evolutionary interpretation of the world, I think we are increasing speed towards a global society characterized by: even bigger dimensions and complexities, growing levels of organizations, more dynamism, closer and more harmonious interaction with environment. The future era, if we ever can get there, will probably be global. Namely it will be characterized by the tendency to encourage differentiation in integration, unity and diversity. This is what we can affirm by catching a glimpse of the evolutionary tendency. We still have to see how society as a whole will be able to manage dimension, complexity, organizational levels, dynamism, and interaction with environment, all of which are increasing. Robiati's book draws out some perspectives and opens up to critics and debates. In my opinion Robiati undertakes a useful and very important task. A task that the author, as others, will have to deal with more in detail and from more points of view. Anyhow this text, though remaining within the limits of an introduction to the problems of our contemporary economy in the evolutionary light of the Baha'i Faith, offers a great opportunity for reflection and deserves a wide number of readers.

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## Introduction

Every morning the world looks more confused and in disarray than the one we left the evening before. Nothing seems to go in the right direction. The dynamics of life are represented by continuous repair jobs which each of us are constantly trying to somehow patch up. Everybody, without exception, complains. When we think we have taken the right steps to overcome a crisis, we realize the crisis remains and the measures we adopted have generated new problems: greater than those initially faced.

Governments of various tendencies and colors are always in crisis and just like a sleeping body; sometimes they wake up, but without obtaining any results. In fact inflation grows, productivity and employment decrease, and the danger of a nuclear war is becoming greater. In the end, we feel the impulse to barricade the windows and give in to despair.

As nothing is done to find a remedy, we get upset at economists, intellectuals, politicians and at anybody else whom we can make the object of our attacks by holding them responsible for all evils. Yet things are getting worse and worse. If we look around we see the accumulation of waste and pollution fouling the rivers, the lakes, the seas, the air and man. Eyes burn, skin becomes diseased, lungs are poisoned, illnesses and conflicts increase and the only solution we can come up with is just to lock ourselves inside our houses and close the windows and doors.

Whoever we turn to for help finds us stuck on a waiting list, neglected. Everything around us gains speed and it's difficult to say where we are going to end up. Every once in a while, we suddenly stop and feel the need to trample down whatever we find in our way, leaving disorder behind. If we look at other industrial societies some of them seem to do worse, others a little better, but all of them, be they a popular, socialist, capitalist or a democratic political structure seem to be afflicted by a common disease: the same relentless process of degradation.

It seems fruitless to hold responsible the ideologies, which have inspired and continue to inspire the actions of the ruling class. Of course there are individuals that have better ideologies than others. Yet all of them are involved in a restricted and unhealthy vision of the world and are incapable of proposing and carrying out solutions on a global level for solving the serious crisis in progress.

It is necessary to draw up an analysis of the evolution of past ages to understand the essential aspects that, reposed in a new line of action and in harmony with the times, can offer a new solution for the lives of individuals and nations.

The aim of this book is to undertake this analysis drawing inspiration from Baha'u'llah's writings. Baha'u'llah is the founder of the widespread world international community based on religious principles and which today is known as the Baha'i community. It is a source of life for a new way to understand the world in its various social, economical, political and religious contents.

The goal pursued by this doctrine is to make humanity understand that this is the time for world unity: "One God, one religion, one earth, one humankind."

"The Great Peace towards which people of good will throughout the centuries have inclined their hearts, of which seers and poets for countless generations have expressed their vision, and for which from age to age the sacred scriptures of

mankind have constantly held the promise, is now at long last within the reach of the nations. For the first time in history it is possible for everyone to view the entire planet, with all its myriad diversified peoples, in one perspective. World peace is not only possible but inevitable. It is the next stage in the evolution of this planet--in the words of one great thinker, "the planetization of mankind."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of World Peace*, page 1.

## **Chapter 1**

### **The point**

How many writings, analyses, debates. One issue. One project. A dream that seemed to become a reality.

So, for many years we have been waiting for this prophetic appointment. Round tables, newspapers, radio, television: every occasion seemed a good one to talk about the new world order; towards the end of '92 can be considered as the turning point in this direction.

And yet, here they are, half the world's politicians putting together the pieces of a never completed project, which perhaps started after the Second World War. Ideas initiating a process of peace, as history shows, is difficult to put into practice. Difficulties become of such entity and so many that sometimes they seem insuperable, especially in reference to the framework of international relations. Relations among nations can be incredibly problematic because of ethnic interrelationships in territories where for many years different people willingly or compellingly coexisted.

In the current historical context it is not easy to outline the scene of international relations. Their components are so many, so disordered and often contrasting.

In September 1990 the President of the United States on the wave of the success attained in the Gulf War, with more than forty allied nations involved, had announced the understanding among these nations as the beginning of the realization of a "new world order".

In the short time that has passed since then, we already sense some perplexity about it. There are, in fact, references to the "new world disorder" or, more dramatically, to the "end of history".

It seems to me that the task we have to devote ourselves to today is to extrapolate from the bulk of the different events that swarm on the international scene, those useful elements that allow an objective evaluation of the current general situation, without indulging in excessive hopes or in dangerous skepticism. To such end it seems proper to outline some fundamental premises. First and foremost, the interdependence among nations seems inescapable especially in the field of economy where the growth of international trade, the integration of financial markets, the development and interrelationships of technologies, the common activity in medical research and techno-scientific laboratories, space expeditions and new sources of energy converge.

Another indisputable phenomenon is the internationalization of problems due, in part, to the pressures of developing countries on the rest of the world, We must take into consideration the demographic pressures and consequent massive immigration fomented by the mythical paradise of the whites, the dangers of extremist religious conflicts (not only Muslim), the proliferations of nuclear fission, the spread of drug abuse and infective diseases not yet conquered by medical science.

What we should watch with trepidation is the degree of reliability of some international institutions that should be the driving forces of international order.

They should guarantee better control over interracial and religious phenomenon, intervene with new methods where men don't succeed in creating dialogue thereby causing, evidently, weighty conflictual situations and great suffering for the people involved.



In this perspective the situation is, to say the least, disappointing. It is undeniable that, after the end of the cold war, encouraging examples of activities occurred on the part of the United Nations.

However, it would be wrong and misleading to indulge in feelings of satisfaction for what has been accomplished so far. In fact, even before considering maintenance, we should aim at attempting to create the premises for peace and safety.

The United Nations, in spite of the various initiatives undertaken in different countries, is far from being able to answer the needs that are manifested throughout the planet.

The danger caused by some transgressions originating from the charter is undeniable, such as the right of veto of the main five Nations, the inequity in voting, the right of non intervention, etc... which effect the decisional powers and consequent follow up of the Organization and compromise possible positive results.

On one hand the Organization still reflects the system born from the outcome of a world war, while what we observe today is the crumbling of that system. On the other hand the fact that many emerging conflicts are not among Nations but involve non-state needs, such as ethnic groups or minorities or religious differences that make the activity of the United Nations more difficult. Apart from the United Nations and its agencies (UNICEF, FAO, ECOSOC etc...), other institutions that operate in the Western world are still in search of a clear definition of their field of action and responsibilities regarding safety, coordination, economics and health care. This is the case of NATO, UEO (Western Europe Union) and UNA (African Nations Union), of PA (Andean Pact) MERCOSUR (South-Middle American Nations), of ASEAN (Far East Nations Union) of NAFTA (United State, Canada, Mexico), of GATT, today's WTO (World Trade Organization) etc. Even the perspectives presented by CSCE (Conference on Safety and European Cooperation, with the participation of USA and Canada), at the time of its creation (1978), have not brought great results, particularly concerning respect of human rights, thought and religion.

The situation we are in now, then, is that of a confused assemblage of institutions, which even member Nations themselves can't rely on for concrete interventions. We should also not disregard the amazing accelerations with which events occur.

The fact is that the US-USSR duopoly (that led the world's destinies for forty years), has not been replaced by an equally determined center of world power even if, doubtless, the United States has this potential. Yet the current conditions in the United States don't allow it to undertake the task of being the world's gendarme. In these conditions it is difficult to assume that the American President can work on the realization of a "New World Order"

The world has seen in the last ten years, a speed of change which finds no comparison with any period of time in the past. The war defending the people, autonomous democracy and autodetermination of Kuwait had already been a major shock for the planet's inhabitants. The pros and cons were clear to all, but no one would have ever thought that what was to follow in our society was far stronger in intensity.

The situation has worsened: the war in Afghanistan, an increase in the number of terrorist acts in the entire world, the terrible attack to the New York Twin Towers, the war in Iraq, the heightened tension in Palestine, the amazing increase in suicide bombings, the tensions and conflicts in Africa bringing about the elimination of millions of people have perhaps made us think that God has grown tired of this humanity and that He may have

put His interests elsewhere. The fact is that the inhabitants of this earthly globe, are far more scared than ever before. And if in the early 90s we could have thought that the situation would evolve towards a condition of peace, nowadays this has become more of a distant thought. The consequences are even worse than the events: human beings have perhaps lost their hope and have no longer any idea of what lies in front of them. On the one side pacifist movements are walking the streets asking for peace, probably creating other and new problems, on the other hand organizations concentrating on peace no longer know how to proceed. We have perhaps lost the sense of history.

It is easier to believe that the President of the United States of America become the “guardian of the world” but that is not the position which people recognise as true, on the contrary they strongly oppose it. The opposition movements do not, however, offer solutions as an alternative to this position, they are therefore left to a position of protest creating higher tensions and insecurity. The inhabitants of the planet are aligning along three different positions: “those in favour”, “those against” and “those in a neutral position”. But none of the three categories offer solutions other than the “come and join my group”. Religions and its “leaders” do not provide a great deal of help in creating a different vision from that which they impose upon each one of their faithful. A partial vision, stating that the entire and complete truth is only held by each one of them and that others are only semidivine or human expressions. This exclusivist vision brings about the creation of fronts made up of millions of people confronting fronts made up of other millions resulting in the development of the idea of a titanic clash between the great religions for the possession of the truth and of the masses of this planet. Amongst these individuals belonging to religious communities the idea is taking ground that satan is getting hold of part of the world and that this part of the world has to be punished. Religious extremism, wherever it comes from, only creates a greater divide which in turn, is the only truth and that all other truths need to be deleted even if it means using violence and bringing about death. I believe that the period which we will face will see a recrudescence of mass violence and the increase of terrorism, under all of its forms, including that of terrorist attacks of great impact. Huge countries are bordering into this state of being. India has by now overtaken the billion mark in terms of its population and sees such a high number of its citizens in such a state of abject poverty that many organizations have given up their task, but the demographic increase in this country is quite extraordinary and no solutions can be found. China is the largest country in terms of population with over one billion and two hundred million individuals, after having abandoned the agricultural and cultural revolution of the 60s, it has taken the direction of a competition which sees it in front of all countries in terms of economic growth. In these last few years with a breathtaking growth of over 8% per year, when the great economies of the west cannot do any better than a 2% at best. China will certainly be a force to be reckoned with by the entire planet as it could become the largest capitalist country on the planet, with its low cost of labour, if we do not find solutions where material and financial growth are not the only objectives, determined by the influence of the western development model, but rather we include the awareness of a different kind of growth where spiritual and interior values of these masses of individuals are developed and safeguarded. The heads of state of this first millennia are being confronted by great

problems and even greater decisions. But the greatness of the decisions taken with common sense must be accompanied by the greatness of ideals.

In reality it is necessary to understand that in the current phase there are two apparently opposite forces: the first one, in some ways pacific, is represented by the tendency toward integration, forced by the formation of new regional economical and political agreements. For example, the agreements promoted by the world community with the countries of Eastern Europe, with the European Economical Union, The second one, in contrast to the former, is the fragmentation of existing aggregations (alliances, Countries, Nations, Unions); in conjunction with this second force an attempt exists to recognize ethnic and sub-national groups. Both forces have in common the disregard for borders between nations. What follows is the serious weakening of human, national, ethnic, religious rights and the rights of international law, thereby using all legal and illegal means in order to get what is wanted and thus provoking tremendous deaths and ceaseless disasters.

Continuing our reflection in light of the interdependence and globalization of problems, we can't ignore phenomenon such as the fall of the Berlin Wall. This extraordinary historical event affects the international order, which until yesterday was sustained by the freezing caused by the cold war, namely: risks of massive immigrations, the aspirations of minority groups, the self-determination of people, the fading away of frontier regulations, the spread of financial crime and political immorality, the renewal of persecutions and religious conflicts.

By now, it is clear that even common people are beginning to think this new world order is really a utopia; as either the currently most powerful nation (USA) or other countries that would aspire to represent an alternative are not able to pursue it. Perhaps all this would lead us to think that a new world order can't be born from a political action promoted from top levels. Therefore we should really start reasoning from a grassroots level. And in order to reason, we should have a clear vision of the historical moment we live in and of the direction towards which society is moving. Without this visions any assertion on the issue become pure abstraction.

This book is an attempt to help the "common" reader to understand this moment in history and to give him some key literature regarding the times to come.

## **Chapter 2**

### **History and evolution**

During the course of history human beings have always felt the need to have a point of reference from which to derive inspiration for their lives, a model that could, above all, give an answer to the “Hows” and “whys” of their existence.

Usually individuals are not aware of these models and of the way they help us to interpret reality. The majority of people today, in spite of the continuous progress of human knowledge, sees the future of the world as being obscure. It is commonly thought that the individual is an independent reality, nature has its own independent order, scientific discoveries are objective, valid and unique, competition among men and nations is a natural and inevitable fact. Obviously this is not so. Past civilizations would not be able to comprehend ideas which our new mental structure is able to express today.

The roots of our “modernity” draw their nourishment from past centuries. The Age of Enlightenment and the philosophy of Positivism were important movements for the evolution of thought. Another particularly important impulse was given by the science of Newton and quantum physics.

Not everybody, though, understands the influences of such impulses on the mechanistic conception of everyday life. Historians and anthropologists have tried for a long time to explain the reasons why, in the course of history, a specific idea of the world gains acceptance at a specific time and in a specific place. According to the ancient Greeks, history was a process of continuous degradation that included five ages: Gold, Silver, Bronze, Copper and Iron. Each of them became more degraded and unrefined than the previous one. The Golden Age represented the apex: a period of abundance and of divine origin; the Iron Age, on the contrary, lay at the bottom.

Therefore history was a process through which the original order of things was perfectly maintained only in the Golden Age. In the course of succeeding ages, decadence set in and when, in the end, the universe neared final chaos, the divinity intervened to restore the initial conditions of perfection and then the whole process began again.

History, therefore, according to the ancient Greeks, was a continuous removal from the original state of perfection. The road to pursue was to reduce to the maximum this process of degradation, thereby passing on to succeeding generations a world as secured as possible against the risk of change.

For Christians the concept of history is still one according to which life in this world is just a passage, a preparation for the next life. In Christian theology history is defined by a beginning, a development and an end. Respectively: creation, redemption, Final Judgement. Life as a whole is seen as a struggle between the forces of good and evil.

Our nineteenth century has been the scene of movements that have driven history along different paths and destinies. Many of them were apparently successful, but today they are almost dying. Others were born in silence, but, like embers under ashes, they have maintained their energies unaltered. They are beginning to manifest these energies today.

One such of these movements was born in the second half of last century, from a personality known as Baha'u'llah. He gave rise to a new concept of history and set out the first important anticipation of the "theory of evolution" and of a systematic vision of the world. Baha'u'llah asserted that history proceeds in a discontinuous ascending line and every new historical phase has represented an advancement compared with the previous one. History is, therefore, both cumulative and progressive. It undergoes constant change and movement. He emphasizes that everything is relative and progressive and that humanity, slowly but relentlessly, proceeds towards a general global improvement in life. For the last century this concept was daring and prophetic. Such foresight was considered heretical and dangerous.

Therefore, Baha'u'llah was forced to roam from prison to prison for forty years: until His death in Palestine in 1892. During His long imprisonment Baha'u'llah personally addressed tablets and epistles to the most important rulers and heads of state of the age. He sent letters to Queen Victoria of England, to Zar Alexander II of Russia, to Kaiser William I of Germany, to Franz Joseph, powerful Emperor of Austria and, through his wife Elizabeth, to the Empire of Hungary, to Pope Pius IX (who, besides being the charismatic head of Christianity, ruled the Vatican states) and in the end even twice, to the Great Napoleon III, Emperor of the French. Furthermore, He conveyed copious messages to the two great rulers of the East: Sultan Abdul Aziz, undisputed head of the enormous Ottoman Empire and the very powerful Shah of Persia Nasiridin, King of Kings, descendant of the Sasanid dynasty. In these letters Baha'u'llah proclaimed His principles and invited the potentates of the world to arrange a "a great assembly" so as to establish the basis of new rules bound to the new historic course toward world unity. These letters were sent in vain. The main rulers of the Earth continued negligently, on the road to conquests, content only with their personal power, with expanding their territories and with increasing their war arsenals.

Baha'u'llah, constantly in exile, as a prisoner in the big fortress of Akka, in Palestine, was deprived of His properties. His family was decimated. Twenty thousand of His disciples were persecuted and killed in the most atrocious ways. He Himself was tortured and beaten. He ended His life as a prisoner, in May 1892. Only today His works, His life, His principles are becoming known.

A fascinating individual! Wonderful writings in style and content, denote an extraordinary personality, as exceptional as are His writings and His interpretation of History. His vision of the world as a common nation of people and as one family is certainly a forerunner of our time. Often progress, in order to assert itself, finds nourishment in sufferings, victims and blood.

Unlike Greek philosophy and Christian theology, Baha'u'llah asserts that the history of our planet evolved through ever widening and complex social aggregations. In the beginning only couples existed. These couples, aggregating with others to better cope with problems related to survival, became tribes. Then, stimulated by commercial trade, they again developed into villages. The need to defend themselves from enemies, from predators, from hostile nature and from the increasing population created the premises to turn villages into cities. Cities, through military conquests and new social structures, became city states (initially

dependent, then independent). Subsequently they grew into territories, regions and nations. Diagram number 1 briefly shows the evolution of human society as a whole.

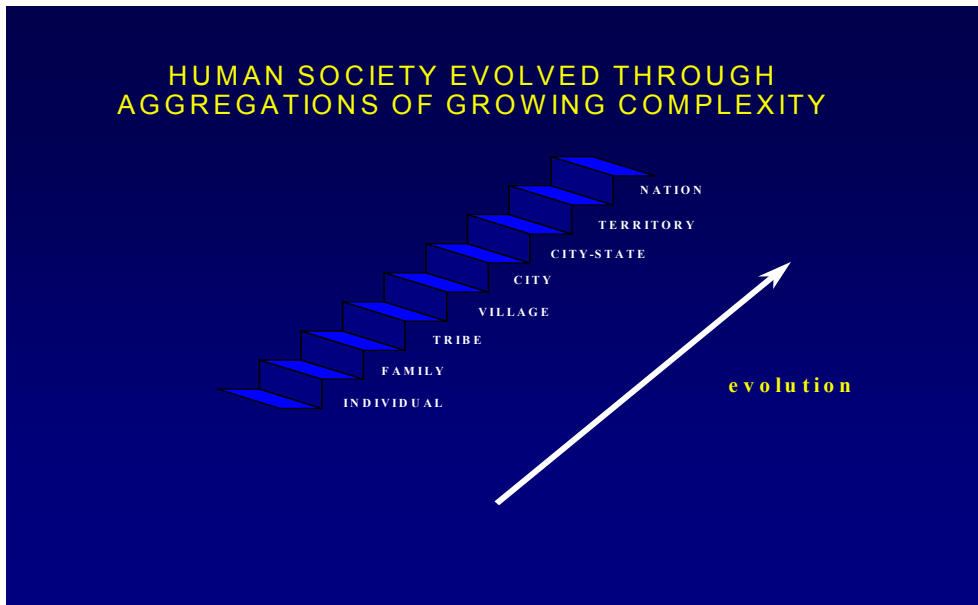


Diagram n. 1

What is described above occurred everywhere on Earth, though in different evolutionary times and rhythms, according to the size of the territory, to the different social, political, and economical contexts belonging to different cultures and religions. Usually the passage from a traditional to a more modern aggregation derives from a profound crisis that involves values, religion, political and economical organizations.

Diagram number 2 shows, at the end of every phase, the increase in distances between peaks, followed by a leap from one stage to the one immediately following it. The maximum expansion of oscillations represents the intensity of the state of crisis that leads to the “leap forward”. The amplification of oscillations, together with the last period of every phase is the sign that precedes the leap to the phase immediately following. According to the most recent concepts about the evolution of the world, history runs on a progressive line driven by continuous inventions and new technologies.

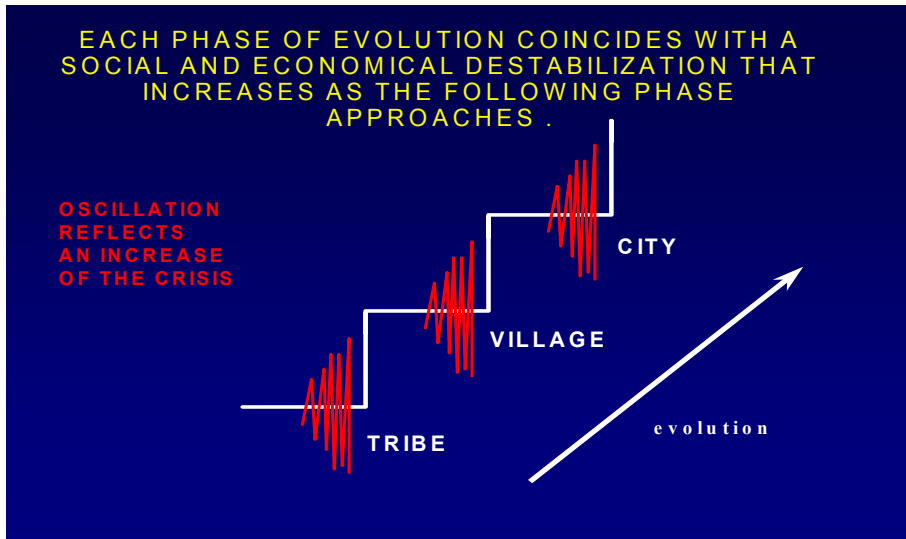


Diagram n.2

What results is the increase in goods that altogether definitely contribute to a better quality of life. This mechanism is continuously improved along the way and from this process our lives become more and more commonplace. It's no wonder that the world that surrounds us is gloomier and gloomier. Instead it would be more desirable if history developed in just the opposite way. The present crisis that involves each of us is due to those impulses that push humanity to leap towards the next level of evolution: from the current one, based on the individuality of nations, to the next one, which is probably transnational and international. The world is giving birth to a new model of life: "The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens"<sup>2</sup>; "Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch"<sup>3</sup>.

As in any birth, the new world order causes labor pains: the crises in progress are the symptoms. Studying the economic development and the evolutionary phases of man, we can note that the moment that signals a change of a system of life has had a K constant in common with all the other passages in history. This K constant is recognizable in resources. Generally in a society where resources abound, there is no development, and life proceeds at an ever faster rate of consumption of the available assets. As soon as the resources begin to become scarce, a new climate of preoccupation takes over and leads individuals to first struggle to hoard for social-economic survival, and then to understand how this situation began. It's just through these difficulties and sufferings that a new process of maturation initiates and leads society to vibrate in order to make it "leap forward".

In this way relationships change between individuals and the society, between the society and the environment, between the community and the economy, between consumption and resources. In this way, during a certain lapse of time, society modifies previous laws and finds solutions to problems, making the whole society move forward one level. The personal history of an individual is not very different

<sup>2</sup> Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 150.

<sup>3</sup> Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 147

from the history of society. In both cases the absence of problems marks amorphous periods, while crisis signals inventive periods. Primitive people, for example, were involved in hunting and began to work the land only to satisfy their pressing need for food. Lacking rational organization and planning, animals and eatable plants became more and more scarce; indiscriminate exploitation caused scarcity of resources which resulted in a crisis that forced them to try out new systems so that, little by little, agriculture and cooperation among villages replaced the system based on the individual and founded on hunting. The same occurred in other societies with different social organizations. Past history shows that big changes occurred not after the establishment of a situation of abundance, but as the consequence of dissipation of existing resources. Exactly as it happens today. In fact our twenty first century society is coming out of a period of extreme waste of resources and is entering a period of enormous scarcity. During the last 50 years the advanced masses of humanity have wasted large quantities of energy and resources at an insane rate, very often it has been useless consumption as an end in itself. Today we are, on the threshold of the third millenium, in a transitional period. Problems are overwhelming a humanity that finds it difficult to come up with a suitable solution.

Furthermore, the last 150 years have been characterized by the growth of international organizations which have allowed for the improvement of life both quantitatively and qualitatively. In the last decades these "national" organizations have outlined the problems of a rapidly changing society, problems that the current political systems based on "national" management are not able to deal with and solve. This is, in fact, the critical point of transition that the old system displays in all its weakness. This requires a leap in quality. Therefore, it seems clear that there exists a direction of development from the stone age to modern society, from micro-systems to macro-systems, from nomadic societies to city states, principalities, monarchies, and nations, towards a concept of life organized according to more and more complex macro-systems<sup>4</sup>.

Hence one can theorize that the world will overcome this "bottleneck" not by perpetuating previous political forms or already experimented economical systems. Only through the adoption of new, adequate, social, economical, and spiritual doctrines, will the world come up with the necessary changes.

"Certainly, there is no lack of recognition by national leaders of the world-wide character of the problem, which is self-evident in the mounting issues that confront them daily. And there are the accumulating studies and solutions proposed by many

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<sup>4</sup> "Baha'u'llah wrote more than one century ago: "The well-being of mankind, its peace and security are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established." In observing that "mankind is groaning, is dying to be led to unity, and to terminate its agelong martyrdom", Shoghi Effendi further commented that: "Unification of the whole of mankind is the hallmark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation- building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life."

The Universal house of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 13.



concerned and enlightened groups as well as by agencies of the United Nations, to remove any possibility of ignorance as to the challenging requirements to be met. There is, however, a paralysis of will; and it is this that must be carefully examined and resolutely dealt with. This paralysis is rooted, as we have stated, in a deep-seated conviction of the inevitable quarrelsomeness of mankind, which has led to the reluctance to entertain the possibility of subordinating national self-interest to the requirements of world order...”

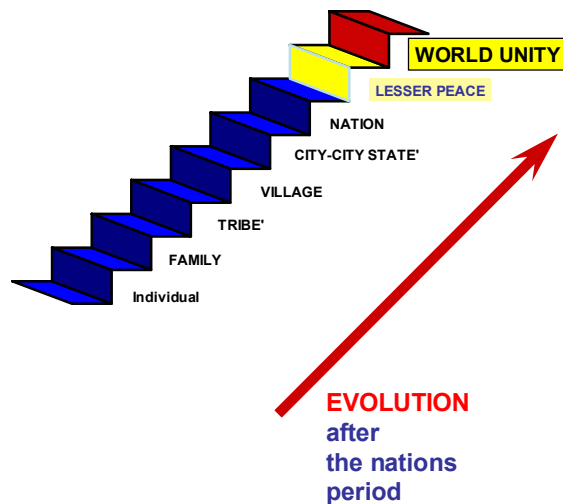
“The time has come when those who preach the dogmas of materialism, whether of the east or the west, whether of capitalism or socialism, must give account of the moral stewardship they have presumed to exercise. Where is the "new world" promised by these ideologies? Where is the international peace to whose ideals they proclaim their devotion? Where are the breakthroughs into new realms of cultural achievement produced by the aggrandizement of this race, of that nation or of a particular class? Why is the vast majority of the world's peoples sinking ever deeper into hunger and wretchedness when wealth on a scale undreamed of by the Pharaohs, the Caesars, or even the imperialist powers of the nineteenth century is at the disposal of the present arbiters of human affairs?”<sup>5</sup>

“Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Universal house of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 13.

<sup>6</sup> Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, page 202.



It is interesting to note that the necessity of having a global, interdependent vision of problems exists in all other human activities, beginning with science and continuing with the social, economic, geographical, political, linguistic and spiritual fields.

In ancient times the first sciences attempted to penetrate the complexity of phenomena through intuition and speculation. The theories elaborated were ingenious and sometimes inspired, but they could hardly stand up to a confrontation with empirical experiences. Modern sciences are based only on the demonstration of theories, thus invalidating those considered inconsistent with the explanation of phenomena. As only simple interactions could be verified with certainty, science developed along the lines of Galileo and Newton. It could deal with relatively simple relationships between forces and bodies and present a vision of the world and of a universe that is reduced to those simple relationships in all their essential aspects. Newtonian science considered the physical universe as a huge mechanism that obeyed the deterministic laws of motion. The complex sets of events could be understood by this science only if they were brought back to their elementary interactions.

Therefore, the world was conceived as a mechanism made of a large number of components that acted independently and uniformly.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw the collapse of the mechanistic theory, even in physics (where it was born). Sets of interacting relationships now occupy the center of attention and appear to be of such a disconcerting complexity, that

even within a simple physical entity like the atom; the explanatory capacity of Newtonian mechanics has been seriously questioned.

Relativity disrupted the field of physics, and the science of the quantum theory that of microphysics. The development of research in other sciences followed parallel paths. Laws of classical physics were not sufficient to explain the complexity of living organisms and, therefore, new laws have been postulated, not the laws of vital forces, but those of interactive wholes, acting as such. Just as the science of classical economy revealed its incapability to explain the growth of share prices on the basis of the brokers' and the public's individual personalities, so the science of biology was not able to explain the self-preservation of animal organisms by applying the physical laws that rule the behavior of their atoms and molecules. New laws have been postulated that don't contradict but instead integrate the laws of physics.

These laws have shown what sets of highly complex things do together: each of those sets are subject to fundamental laws when they interact with each other. In light of these parallel developments, in physics, chemistry, sociology, economy, etc...all branches of science have become sciences of complexity, namely the sciences of systems.

Man is a highly structured complex system (thought, spirit, etc); he is a mine of various gems as are his societies and his environment. Because of this, his ontogenesis and phylogenesis should be observed within a new, global, systemic vision.

It is necessary to achieve a unified vision of human society in all its aspects (scientific, social and spiritual). Baha'u'llah's writings lead man to conceive and take into consideration a global vision of this kind.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **The Old Order**

If we consider, even superficially, the current world organization, we notice that the Earth is geographically divided into national areas. There are small countries and big countries, but still nations, and each of them has been formed throughout the centuries by aggregations of micro-systems such as cities, regions, communities, ethnic and religious groups. To every nation belongs its own territory, people, resources, customs, government, institutions, language and history. Every government administers its own national affairs using a different system. The attempt remains for each one to independently solve the problems afflicting that nation. Every day the news broadcast by the media says the world is immersed in a general state of dissatisfaction. Of course the voices originating in each part of the world have a different echo depending on the freedom allowed by various governments. However, the problems that afflict nations are common all over the world.

For reasons relating to my professional life I have traveled almost everywhere in the world: North America, China, Africa, Central America, Asia, South America, Australia, numerous oceanic islands, and Europe. I have been able to see for myself that, though those countries were very different (with varying degrees of civilization, with governments and political forms, with people, often very distant in their evolutionary development, with traditions, customs, and religion), they are all afflicted by the same problems. The attentive eye of an analytic visitor together with a dynamic study of various situations help to see that the nations of the world, not only suffer from the same problems, but that none of them is able to solve them. At a first glance furthermore, we can see that the problems are always independent of the reigning political system. In fact there are in the world, besides mixed forms, various types of governments: capitalist, liberal, communist, democratic and monarchic or mixtures of these. People belonging to a country often agree with the political choices made in other states and would prefer to live in other lands. In the same way, however, the very same people envied by those mentioned above, are also unsatisfied with living in their own systems and look with greater hope and faith to other life systems of other peoples. It seems that nobody understands the actual reality which different countries live in. In fact unemployment, terrorism, moral and environmental decline are evils shared everywhere on Earth. The abuse of the working classes exists everywhere in the world. Different degrees of technological progress, that varies in each country, aggravate the situation even more: the Western world often uses low cost labor coming from low income nations. Through this artifice, goods are produced at a very low cost and are transported and sold to high income markets that benefit entrepreneurs with enormous profits. This exploitation, apart from the moral question, is often a negative for high income countries: the failure to use their own workers, which is too expensive, causes unemployment. Youth protest-one of the major expressions of the general feelings of dissatisfaction-is present not only in poor countries or in those where there is a government on the right or in the center, but it is diffused in

every nation of the world. Organized crime, as we know, has spilled over the borders of single nations, and has become a multinational.

Pollution of seas, air, water, lakes, rivers is not limited to a few secluded areas of the planet. The destruction of woods which produce oxygen is not a sporadic event occurring only in Europe. Industrial elimination of agricultural fauna and flora, due to the constant use of powerful insecticides and artificial fertilizers, destroys the harmony of nature and pollutes fresh water stratum. This is not a phenomenon limited to some civilized countries.

Urbanization and expansion of big cities all over the world provoke ecological and human disasters. It is not news that the most important cities – the megalopolises – are in deep trouble. Statistics say the percentage of the entire world population residing in these large urban areas today is increasing; in conformity with what has been said, cities are spreading in a disorderly fashion for hundreds of square kilometers and have millions of residents. Consequently the city bureaucracy increases excessively imposing high costs which are no longer sustainable. These kinds of cities, having already exceeded the productive capacity of local alimentary potentials, are extremely vulnerable and, even more, are about to collapse as soon as problems arise such as in public transportation or in supplying that which they depend on.. Where do the food supplies of New York, Sao Paulo or Tokyo come from? Certainly not from the surrounding agricultural areas. In fact as a consequence of disordered urban and suburban development, about ten millions of hectares of potentially high productive soil to produce food, were covered with cement, plastic and steel. It follows that in these cities life has become unbearable. By now serious forms of maladjustment, loneliness, fear and abandonment have become part of us and cause, together with pollution and emerging diseases (especially pulmonary and cardiac diseases) difficulties, hostility and selfishness. There are countless cases of people suffering from schizophrenia and personality disorders who are seeking help from psychiatric institutions. This is not a phenomenon limited to this or that country. Besides, in large cities, grass roots opinions and participation on the part of the individual have no outlet for expression. Urban life tends to disintegrate effective individual participation regarding political or social choices. In small communities, on the contrary, it is still possible to contact local authorities responsible for solving problems. Of course the resources given to cities successively reappear in form of waste. Dumps, where urban waste is deposited, are about to overflow. New ones could be built, but given the constant expansion of metropolitan areas with ever growing population density, they would spring up where other thousands of people live. Our shared desire is that our own waste be eliminated far away from our own homes. In the face of this problem, city authorities can choose between two options: burning the waste thus polluting the environment even more or transporting it to controlled dumps in deserted areas at considerable cost eventually recovering the money through increasing taxes which is surely unwelcome and contested.

All this without even considering the harmful influence solid, liquid and gaseous waste has on health. Man is part of the natural ecosystem and when some imbalance occurs, he pays the consequences. In recent years, means of transportation have progressively improved all over the world, creating new

possibilities for faster and more comfortable movement. Those who travel realize that the above mentioned problems are the same the world over. Healthcare systems of single nations have suffered from operative difficulties for a long time. There isn't any healthcare system that is not in deficit. Centralization of large hospital conglomerations creates disorder. The great majority of those in need of medical care receive superficial treatments that are often limited to curing the symptoms more than the causes. Numerous times medicine intervenes with medications that give temporary but prompt relief. Perhaps, suffering a little bit more and giving the organism more time to heal would permanently solve many clinical cases. It is surely difficult to know exactly the degree and the consequences of this abnormal system of care. In nature there are close relationships binding people, animals, plants and water. The equilibrium of this relationship changes when lands are "eliminated", forests are cut and the erosion of soil increases. Emerging diseases are often the result of the imbalance created in the natural ecosystem. Furthermore national healthcare systems have consigned the family doctor to an absolutely marginal role, he who instead was once very important, above all for establishing a relationship with patients.

Education everywhere is misleading. It is, in fact, confused with instruction that is, in turn, confused with communication, which again is confused with information. Today we are continuously bombarded with information; technology makes possible the instant transmission of data and news in every corner of the Earth. Advertising through mass media continually transmits to us thousands of messages. All day long we are assailed by a mass of information from which we try to defend ourselves. In no other field, but in the school system, has the effect of this bombardment and the confusion of information been demonstrated to be so harmful.

The world's school systems (no nation excluded) have followed the same destiny as many other centralized institutions: smaller schools have been incorporated into larger conglomerations. Uprooting of children from their environment, increase in bureaucratization and excessive specialization have subsequently caused alienation of students and a lack of discipline together with motivation to study. Personally I think we are raising a generation to whom education only means to passively absorb messages. Baha'u'llah in His numerous writings on the issue considers man a "mine of gems" and education the tool to open this coffer and to reveal these gems<sup>7</sup>.

Furthermore He proclaims that an important principle in education is the "free and independent search for truth" in every aspect of life. As the need for this principle is coherent with our time, students understand its importance, but as they can't put it into practice in schools and universities, they are in turmoil. They refuse to be considered as machines, fit only to absorb sometimes old and useless messages without any interaction.

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<sup>7</sup> "Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess... Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom". Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, n. 161:3

Unfortunately while students protest against the current school system, the majority of us don't even realize what is going on in the third world countries. More than a billion human beings survive in conditions of absolute poverty. Every year, millions of people die from malnutrition and many of them are children. This situation will go on until the "evolved" countries continue to consume more than 80% of the available resources. Furthermore, technologically advanced nations assume the right to impose their own economic model on other people. It is a cruel deceit to let developing countries place their trust in western-like growth. Unfortunately many of them model their economy on European, Northern American or other schemes of civilized countries. Consequently by the year 2000 some of the third world nations will have built a massive industrial infrastructure and they will find they cannot assure the necessary quantity of energy, the spare parts and the specialists able to make the new economic machine run. Generally when the western kind of progress arrives in a third world nation, there is an instantaneous increase in poverty and an immediate rise in the cost of living. The main reason for this is that western-like industrialization encourages settling more in cities than in rural areas, and besides, strongly automated and centralized production certainly doesn't increase human labor. At the same time, excessive mechanization even in agriculture marginalizes the work of farmers who, besides depriving themselves of contact with nature, are forced to move into cities to look for jobs. As a consequence, on the one hand urbanization grows, even if owning a house in town has become unaffordable for many people and living costs are high; on the other hand the reduction of cultivated land diminishes agricultural production. It is clear that the third world nations need to find forms of development that differ from those in use in the industrialized west. They should abhor high energy consuming centralized technology in favor of an intermediary technology that makes possible an intensive use of hand labor to move toward a "coherent development". In this way massive emigration of rural communities into squalid and overpopulated cities would be avoided.

According to Baha'u'llah writings, "The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture"<sup>8</sup> and only when this occupies its proper place in society, world affairs can improve. In fact: "the peasant class and the agricultural class exceed other classes in the importance of their service"<sup>9</sup>, because it is mainly through agriculture that we get basic consumer goods, but nations are far from modifying their economic politics and continue to promote agreements to draw on resources as fast as possible in order to achieve more and more progress. In over 50 glorious years of the neocapitalistic "bell époque", roughly from the 50's until now, big economic variables (growth, production, productivity, salaries) increased more or less constantly and proportionally. More growth in production meant more productivity, but also more work, higher salaries and more consumption. And of course it meant more available income to redistribute through the tax system for market activities and for social uses. Consequently more space emerged for the welfare state.

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<sup>8</sup> `Abdu'l-Baha, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, Page 217.

<sup>9</sup> `Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, Page 39.

Over the last decades a breakdown occurred in this vicious circle.

Internationalization of capitalistic markets and the introduction of new nonmaterial electronic-information technologies have put competitive pressure on companies, forcing them to restrain costs by increasing productivity and saving on labor costs. When productivity grows so do profits. But salaries and employment decrease. If workers want to grow in number or just preserve their jobs, they have to diminish the cost of their work, which means: working more and earning less. This flexibility explains that if the economy has to grow, we should adapt to earning less. So then : why and for whom is it necessary that the economy grows? The answer from the classic economic world is that growth in productivity and profits makes for new investments that in turn create new possibilities for raising income and employment. But in reality this is not so. In fact a rise in productivity doesn't translate into extensive investments that increase production and employment, but rather in intensive investments in financial activities: shares, obligations, bonds: namely in those activities that greatly determine the movement of wealth and income towards those who don't work and produce, thus operating a socially perverse redistribution. In parallel, socially fair distribution is restricted; namely: expenses for public investments destined to health care, to social protection, to the common good.

Should we be surprised if societies that, on the average, become richer and richer then manifest signs of uneasiness, frustration and, often among the most disadvantaged social classes, even despair?

When the growth of gross national income is not accompanied by growth in employment and salaries, young people look to the future with dismay and the middle classes, the grass roots, fall into a distressing condition of insecurity, that in turn determines a more accentuated political instability.

To square the circle we need to break this perverse logic. The ever-increasing fruits of productivity should not stagnate in a competitive economy as an end in itself, and should not be wasted in the virtual economy of speculative finance; they should be invested in increasing quantity in activities that are freed from the rigid logic of the competitive market; they should satisfy the even more pressing collective needs of the of the environmental, social and cultural well-being. It is only in these terms we can find a logical solution to the problem of unemployment and social degradation.

To carry out and finance this process of decanting we need to invent new methods of redistributing the fruits of productivity. The traditional one based on withholding taxes and national expenditures is no longer sustainable in a richer, ever more restless and frightened society. It is clear therefore that the classic economic theory is no longer able to solve the growing disarray in the world.

Economists continue to conceive the system as a mechanic process where supply and demand are like oscillations in a pendulum. It is enough to consult any text on economics to understand that the economy, in brief, is a "giving" and "taking" process based on curves of supply and demand. When the demand of a certain good or service increases, the price rises. When it rises too high and the demand weakens either it concentrates on other goods and services, or the price lowers.



Furthermore, advertising stimulates desires in people pointing them in the direction of acquiring certain goods for the purpose of stimulating the demand.

For the most part, these goods are useless and frivolous and, in the long term, create dissatisfaction.

In the course of the years this concept has been modified and perfected but the basic idea of the mechanism on which our economy is based has remained unchanged. Many nations even destroy excessive production rather than diminish its price. In spite of it all, few people realize that today we live in a transitional period dominated by the old nationalistic systems of government and economics. With the fall of the Berlin Wall which nobody had believed could happen in such a short time, the problems facing nations have enormously increased.

The duopoly US-URSS, that guided the world's destiny for more than forty years, was not followed, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, by an equally determined and alternative center of world power even if, doubtless, the United States has this potential.

Precisely because internationalization and globalization prevail in the world, phenomena, with the fall of the Berlin Wall, have become disturbing elements of the world order which until yesterday were sustained by the freezing of the cold war, namely: dangers of massive immigrations, the aspirations of minority groups, the self-determination of people, the fading away of border regulations, the spread of financial crime and political immorality, the renewal of persecutions and religious conflicts.

Regained freedom in Eastern European Countries after half a century of dictatorship, the desire of these same countries to organize their own internal affairs independently from each other, the astonishing thirst for autonomy and independence of different ethnic groups kept together for many years by the threat of terror, have all caused conflict and war among peoples who treated each other as brothers until yesterday; without any national or international organization being able to stop or to control them. Wars and conflicts have caused new suffering for those who had already suffered, have caused millions of dead, have completely destroyed cities and territories.

After fifty years of economic and cultural seclusion, the idea of quickly assimilating and imitating the experience of Western countries, their economy, their material wealth, their way of living, has created in those people, at long last liberated from the proletariat dictatorship, a state of great excitement for sudden change, worsening the internal condition of those countries. Executive and legislative chaos of newly elected parliaments, internal struggles and wars, massive emigration towards those false paradises of the white race, total inexperience in conducting public affairs have determined such a unbalanced situation that many western countries have been forced to physically close their borders in order to prohibit the entrance of millions of desperate people in search of work, food, and housing, so erroneously publicized on their televisions which show unreal pictures of a rich, comfortable and absolutely untrue lifestyle in western countries. Finding themselves in a foreign country, unwelcome, unwanted, deprived of the minimum for their survival, has exacerbated relations between local residents and immigrants to such an extent that organized groups were formed for the sole purpose of physically eliminating these desperate people who come from various poor countries. All these problems are general and, even if a single nation could solve them, problems would remain, because as the above analysis has pointed out, the issue is

transnational. It is like a small ball that tries to escape from an iron circle placed on a flat surface. Any direction, north, south, east or west, would confine the ball within the border. The ball is in difficulty because it is only moving on a flat surface and can't escape. The only possible solution is to move from the flat surface into space. Only by lifting the ball into the third dimension will give it a chance to come out. In like manner, nations inundated and distraught with similar problems, attempt to solve them within the confines of the iron circle of their own borders and their own national politics, without realizing that the problem can only be solved by "leaping" from the national into the international dimension.

Baha'i writings say that: "World peace... is the next stage in the evolution of this planet"<sup>10</sup> ... "To choose such a course is not to deny humanity's past but to understand it. The Bahá'í Faith regards the current world confusion and calamitous condition in human affairs as a natural phase in an organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet. The human race, as a distinct, organic unit, has passed through evolutionary stages analogous to the stages of infancy and childhood in the lives of its individual members, and is now in the culminating period of its turbulent adolescence approaching its long-awaited coming of age. A candid acknowledgement that prejudice, war and exploitation have been the expression of immature stages in a vast historical process and that the human race is today experiencing the unavoidable tumult which marks its collective coming of age is not a reason for despair but a prerequisite to undertaking the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world. That such an enterprise is possible, that the necessary constructive forces do exist, that unifying social structures can be erected, is the theme we urge you to examine"<sup>11</sup>.

Not adapting to this historical process is like living in our time ruling with systems that were in use when nations were divided in small states or city-states.

"Acceptance of the oneness of mankind is the first fundamental prerequisite for reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind. Universal acceptance of this spiritual principle is essential to any successful attempt to establish world peace. It should therefore be universally proclaimed, taught in schools, and constantly asserted in every nation as preparation for the organic change in the structure of society which it implies... World order can be founded only on an unshakeable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species, albeit infinitely varied in the secondary aspects of life. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment of prejudice--prejudice of every kind--race, class, colour, creed, nation, sex, degree of material civilization, everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others.<sup>12</sup> Disunity is a danger that the nations and peoples of the earth can no longer endure; the consequences are too terrible to contemplate, too obvious to require any demonstration"<sup>13</sup>.

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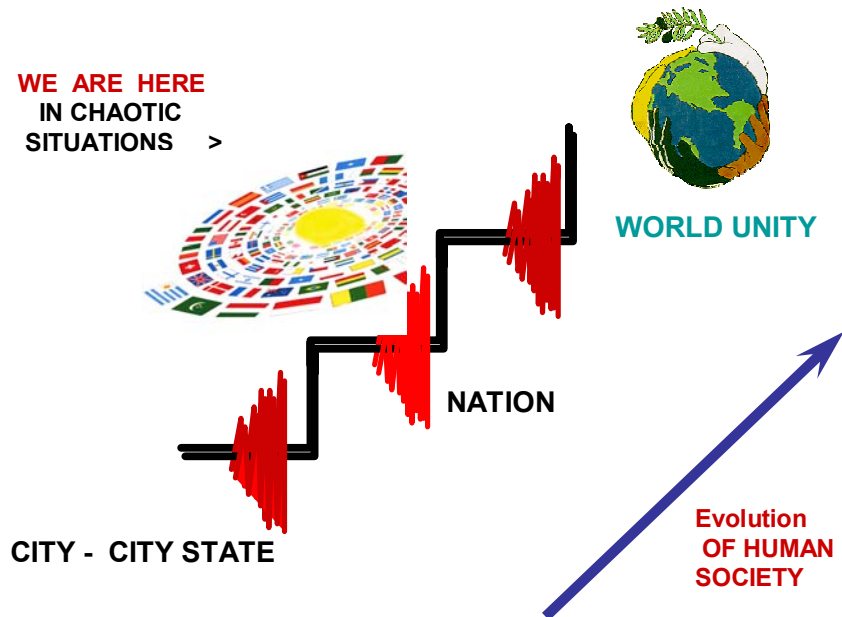
<sup>10</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 1.

<sup>11</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 2.

<sup>12</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 10.

<sup>13</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 13.

Which means that it is necessary to reemphasize that history has demonstrated the hypothesis according to which the direction followed by historical progress from the stone age to modern society, from micro systems to macro system, from nomadic societies to city states, principalities, monarchies, states and nations, through crucial epochs, clearly indicates that the future will be organized in more and more complex macro systems.



It is clear then that it is not through renewing obsolete political forms or economic systems already in use, that the world will overcome the current bottleneck, but only by adopting new spiritual, economic and social doctrines, adequate for the future: in other words through the adoption of a new world order that considers our Planet as a “common home”. From a purely individualistic point of view we face a completely different interpretation of human anthropology. From the pure Marxist vision that regards man as a producer, consumer and worker who lives life as a struggle for his own physical survival throughout a thousand year history of exploitation, we find ourselves faced with a vision of man that lives to distinguish himself in the world of creation for his inner qualities and to develop his potentials; potentials and qualities that have been forgotten during the last part of history but that now begin to reemerge. Moral qualities of service, justice, abnegation that shape a new vision of man as a human being. In a perspective of global growth we can’t ignore these latent qualities that are reawakening, not by chance, in a period of crisis. Despair in developing countries emphasizes even more the explosive

emergence of this new human reality, kept hidden due to an erroneous education. Inner realities and qualities, like a coffer of gems, are beginning to reveal their splendor after difficulties and sufferings have begun to lift the lid.

This has given rise to a new man who abandons individual conflict and international competition as a way to live and adopts individual service and international collaboration as an alternative.

This is what we see, looking out of the window of the world, giving a quick glance, without lingering on the numerous details that would need a deeper analysis. In order to consider the world as one country, however, it is necessary to explain to the peoples of the world that different ways of living have been necessary phases for growth and that "unity in diversity" should become the key word of the future. In order to have a united world, it is necessary that the various peoples acquire the concept of the existence of one God for everybody, a God that in history has been given different names and has been worshipped with different rites, but is still the same God.

This God has sent many "teachers" that have educated humanity under the names of different religions, all coming from the same source; religions that have diversified themselves according to the maturity of the people to whom they spoke. And now we can understand that in order to build a new world order it is necessary to renew the concept of God and His oneness.

Therefore, the concept of a new world order is born from a spiritual perspective. It is certainly not by imposing new economic or social laws or through political negotiations among nations or presidents of republics, or among monarchs and parliaments of more or less powerful nations that prejudices of race, faith, history, culture and power will be eliminated. On the contrary this will occur only through a new process that requires the willing and unconditional acceptance of the spiritual principle of the "unity of human kind".

Only one human species exists, though infinitely diversified in secondary aspects of life. This is the basis for the building of a new world order. These concepts were expressed more than 100 years ago by He Who was the forerunner of world unity: Baha'u'llah (1817-1892). In one of His books He wrote: "Soon...will the present day Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead".<sup>14</sup>

For the reason of what He wrote to rulers, presidents, men of religious and political power, Baha'u'llah was exiled, imprisoned and persecuted for 40 years. Today His writings have been translated into every language of the world and His followers are scattered to the four corners of the Earth. The great Tolstoy wrote about

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<sup>14</sup> "Soon," Baha'u'llah's own words proclaim it, "will the present day Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead. Verily, thy Lord speaketh the truth and is the Knower of things unseen." "By Myself," He solemnly asserts, "the day is approaching when We will have rolled up the world and all that is therein, and spread out a new Order in its stead. He, verily, is powerful over all things." "The world's equilibrium," He explains, "hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this Most Great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System, the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed." "The signs of impending convulsions and chaos," He warns the peoples of the world, "can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing Order appeareth to be lamentably defective." Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, Pages 161-162.

Him, Who died as a prisoner: “We waste our lives intent on revealing the mysteries of the universe, but a Prisoner exists, Baha’u’llah, Who possesses the key.”

## Chapter 4

### Economy, energy, entropy

Currently energy is the basis of every economic activity. In order to understand the meaning of the interrelationship between economy and energy we need to clarify what the word energy means. To do so, we need to turn to physics.

Thermodynamics teaches us that energy can't be created or destroyed but only transformed from one state to another. Let's consider, for example, the engine of a car. The energy contained in the petrol is equal to the labor performed by the engine of a car plus the energy present in the waste products. Everything in existence is made up of energy. The appearance, the state, the movement of any existing thing are in reality only one of the diverse transformations and concentrations of energy: for example a person, an object, a car, a flower or a piece of fruit. When a house is built or a flower is born, that happens thanks to the energy captured somewhere (workers, materials, crane, fertilizer, farmers, ploughs) and when the house is destroyed or the flower dies, the energy contained in them doesn't disappear. It goes back into the environment. The molecules we breathe are the same ones which were once breathed by Jesus.

If we only considered just this one principle called the "first law of thermodynamics", there would not be any problems of any kind, and we could continue to use energy without ever exhausting it. But this is not so. For example if we burn a piece of coal, the energy used is transformed into heat, carbon dioxide and other gases that are dispersed into the atmosphere. Therefore, that energy has not been lost, but we can't burn the same piece of coal again to obtain the same result.

The scientific explanation of this phenomenon is found in the second law of thermodynamics according to which each time energy is transformed from one state to another, it is necessary to pay a price, represented by a loss in the quantity of energy which remains available. In fact, in the example mentioned above, this is verified by the impossibility to obtain other equal heat from the already burnt coal. According to thermodynamics principles this price is called entropy, which in simple words is the measure of the quantity of energy that cannot be converted into labor.

Water falling from a dam, if it is channeled into canals to produce electricity or to rotate a mill wheel, won't be able to perform labor once it reaches the bottom of the valley. The energy given to that water was used to produce power or to rotate the mill wheel.

Every time a certain quantity of energy is depleted, it is no longer available and is called "dispersed energy". A rise of entropy, then, means a decrease of available energy.

In summary: the first law of thermodynamics says that the total quantity of energy and of matter is fixed and it cannot be created or destroyed but only transformed; the second law of thermodynamics says that energy and matter can be transformed only in one direction, from an available state to a non available state or better still from a usable state to a non usable state.

Every time energy is extrapolated from the environment and elaborated by society, a part of it is dispersed, lost and rejected by each successive state, until all this energy is transformed into scrap at the end of its use.

This means that there has been an increase of dispersed energy which is no longer usable, that is an increase of entropy.

The total amount of energy is always the same, while that part of energy no longer usable has increased. This concept is briefly expressed by physicists with a brief statement: "The quantity of energy in the universe is constant while total entropy is continuously increasing".

An example of this dispersed energy is what is commonly called pollution, which many consider as a by-product of the processes of productivity, while on the contrary it is the sum of all energy, which has been transformed and is no longer available. Therefore, solid and liquid waste is visible dispersed energy, gas waste is invisible.

The common man normally doesn't take in this simple concept because he is tied to the belief that human labor, added to natural resources, creates something of more value, and that is also true, but what is not grasped is that only evident resources of available energy can be transformed from a usable state to a dispersed one, and therefore only temporary use is the result.

Economists take into account only the unlimited and permanent process and are tenaciously clinging to the idea that human labor and machines only create things of greater value. However, everybody knows that even valuable things end up as some kind of waste and as dispersed energy. Therefore, there is no material progress in the sense of accumulation of a permanent reserve of utilized goods, because such accumulation is partly annihilated by the dispersion of energy. At this point let's analyze the consequences.

In the meantime, the old Newtonian concept which considers all phenomena as isolated expressions of matter or of fixed quantities, has been replaced by the idea that every thing is part of a dynamic cycle.

Consequently, things don't exist as isolated, fixed quantities. They are part of a continuous and dynamic process of evolution, which is none other than the manifestation of the principle of entropy. Mechanistic science has been replaced by entropic science based on the comprehension of dynamic flow and on the flotation concept. Let's now consider, in light of what has been described, the concept of productivity as the basis of the current economy.

Modern economic systems define productivity as speed per production unit. That is, importance is given to the rapidity of the execution of a determined job. For example, according to a study done some years ago, it was determined that the quantity of energy utilized to build a car was far superior to that which was strictly necessary. For what reason? To enable the finished product to leave the assembly line as fast as possible.

A driver traveling with an almost empty tank has two possibilities: either to drive faster to reach the petrol station earlier, risking, though, to be left without fuel, or to drive slowly compensating a lesser speed with a longer distance. In the first case entropy would increase giving advantaging to speed; in the second case entropy would diminish to the detriment of speed. In the latter case, however, this driver would have more of a chance to reach the petrol station.

Therefore, until productivity is measured in terms of speed per production unit, a greater quantity of energy is needed than what is necessary.

This concept needs to be reformulated to adapt it to a process of energy efficiency and to establish that what is produced is based on the production of entropy per production unit. We should also remember that until there was abundant availability of low price fuels, it seemed logical to adapt productivity to the speed of production. Now that the reserve of matter-energy is diminishing and has reached high costs, the expressed logic needs to be modified remodeling the economy on a new system.

Many economists, politicians and administrators don't seem to grasp the concept that the law of entropy is the fundamental physics coordinate of scarcity and there is no other case in which this is so obvious as in balancing the budget.

While in general it is understood that a society can't continue to consume faster than what it produces, economists continue to ignore that a definitive balancing of the budget should not be done within the society but between society and nature. In the incapacity to comprehend the wider environmental context within which economic activity takes place, it is possible to find the key to why classic economic theory is not able to cope with the problem of deficits.

In order to balance the budget, society mustn't consume more than what nature produces. The functioning of eco-systems is similar to that of a stationary state. To keep the ecological cycle in equilibrium we need to re-absorb and re-cycle the waste. As a 100% re-cycle is impossible, it will be sufficient to support eco- systems with a state of balance between production and consumption. Thus, economic activity represents the human interval in the ecological cycle and, as such, it should attempt not to create more disorder in the environment; that is, it should reduce the use of unrenovable resources and employ more renewable resources at the same pace with which they are restored by nature.

Only in this way it is possible to reduce the deficit between the consumption of society and the reproduction of nature. This concept challenges the way we have looked at the world over the past centuries, which principles centered around the concept of repetition of observation and reversibility of processes. Instead, in the real world nothing is mechanic, repeatable and reversible. That is why it is not possible to apply Newtonian mechanic principles to today's world.

It should be clear by now that if we continue on in this way, in the future it won't be possible to satisfy the next generations' needs.

As everybody only worries about the present it is obvious that whoever comes after us will have to begin again in poorer conditions as regards natural residual resources.

Society needs to pattern itself on a well-balanced life style based on low entropy, which is definitely contrary to the system of vast waste in use today.

In the future the illusion of continual material progress will be even more misleading, unless man revises his own ideas about the current historical moment and acquires the awareness that he must invest in spiritual, political and economical global unity characterized by low entropy.



The way a civilization organizes its own physical reality and the importance given to the material level of existence determine the impulses to search for a way to live and grow spiritually<sup>15</sup>.

When the concept of the world tends toward the material aspects of life there is less inclination to create impulses toward global and spiritual growth. The less a civilization is attached to the physical realm, the more the community strives for the transcendental and spiritual which embraces all things.

The relationship between the physical world and the spiritual world is the relationship between a small part and a wider “whole”, within which the first is unfolded.

The impulses which tend towards this role come from the degree of importance given to the way of conceiving and living life; and, undoubtedly, technological and scientific progress, like a true revolution, induces man to exalt materialistic aspects of life beyond the limits of moderation to the detriment of those that are spiritual. This has played and still plays, in this sense, a predominant role. By the same token it is thought that the more man addresses himself to the materialistic aspects, the more difficult it is for him to understand the importance of spirituality. Fortunately this is not so, because, in reality, the closer we come to the bottom, the more we want to reemerge.

The Chinese theory of “Ying” and “Yang” (the two opposites) asserts that when one reaches the maximum, the other automatically appears, confirming what has just been said.

It is particularly in the exaltation of mere materialistic goals, at once the source and the common trait of all these ideologies, that we return to the nourishing sources of that mendacious concept that regards human being as incorrigibly selfish and aggressive. We have to free ourselves from this idea if we want to build a new world fit for our descendants<sup>16</sup>.

The fact that, in the light of experience, materialistic ideals have failed to satisfy the needs of the human race, invites an honest recognition that we must make an attempt to find the solution to the tormented problems of the planet.

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<sup>15</sup> “ The time has come when those who preach the dogmas of materialism, whether of the east or the west, whether of capitalism or socialism, must give account of the moral stewardship they have presumed to exercise. Where is the "new world" promised by these ideologies? Where is the international peace to whose ideals they proclaim their devotion? Where are the breakthroughs into new realms of cultural achievement produced by the aggrandizement of this race, of that nation or of a particular class? Why is the vast majority of the world's peoples sinking ever deeper into hunger and wretchedness when wealth on a scale undreamed of by the Pharaohs, the Caesars, or even the imperialist powers of the nineteenth century is at the disposal of the present arbiters of human affairs?”

Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 5.

<sup>16</sup> “O son of spirit! Noble have I created thee, yet thou hast abased thyself. Rise then unto that for which thou wast created”

“O son of man! Upon the tree of effulgent glory I have hung for thee the choicest fruits, wherefore hast thou turned away and contented thyself with that which is less good? Return then unto that which is better for thee in the realm on high”.

Baha’u’llah, *Hidden words*, n.22, 21 from Arabic.

A sign of the common failure of those ideals is the intolerable condition of today's society; a circumstance that tends to reinforce, instead of mitigating, the fury on both sides.<sup>17</sup>

A common restoring effort is urgent and first of all, a change of mental attitude is required. Will humanity persevere in its obstinacy, continuing to cling to obsolete concepts and useless theories? Those who care for the future of the human race may well ponder this advice. "If long-cherished ideals and time-honored institutions, if certain social assumptions and religious formulae have ceased to promote the welfare of the generality of mankind, if they no longer minister to the needs of a continually evolving humanity, let them be swept away and relegated to the limbo of obsolescent and forgotten doctrines. Why should these, in a world subject to the immutable law of change and decay, be exempt from the deterioration that must needs overtake every human institution? For legal standards, political and economic theories are solely designed to safeguard the interests of humanity as a whole, and not humanity to be crucified for the preservation of the integrity of any particular law or doctrine."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> "It is, therefore, preferable for moderation to be established by means of laws and regulations to hinder the constitution of the excessive fortunes of certain individuals, and to protect the essential needs of the masses".

Abdul'Baha', *Some answered questions*, pages 271-275.

<sup>18</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 6.

"The courage, the resolution, the pure motive, the selfless love of one people for another -- all the spiritual and moral qualities required for effecting this momentous step towards peace are focused on the will to act. And it is towards arousing the necessary volition that earnest consideration must be given to the reality of man, namely, his thought".

Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, pages 11-12.

"Bahá'u'lláh wrote more than a century ago, "its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established." In observing that "mankind is groaning, is dying to be led to unity, and to terminate its agelong martyrdom", Shoghi Effendi further commented that: "Unification of the whole of mankind is the hallmark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life."

Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, pages 1-2.

## Chapter 5 Economy for a new era

In the previous chapter we have seen that in a high entropy culture the prevailing aim in life is to maximize the use of energy resources to create abundance and to satisfy every conceivable human desire; thinking that human freedom coincides with the accumulation of ever greater riches.

The present economic system, having banished the concept of God from life, has attempted, and still attempts, to create heaven on Earth. Man and woman have placed themselves at the center of the universe and have identified the ultimate goal of life as satisfying every possible material need. Reality has been limited to what can be measured, quantified, verified, forgetting spiritual and quality values<sup>19</sup>. By doing so we have degraded families, community, true friendship, absolute feelings and values. Only blind faith in our physical and intellectual capacities remains.

Now, these concepts and the related social system which we live in are becoming victims of their own future. Thus we continue to struggle just to save ourselves at any cost in the growing chaos, and by doing so, we have enabled man to overpower man. But, as we have all been created from the same dust so that no one can prevail over another<sup>20</sup>, we must achieve, without a doubt, an imposing institutional modification. Our social structure, in its present state, can't resist for much longer<sup>21</sup>.

Therefore the most urgent necessity of our time still consists in the need to "rebuild" man.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> "The time has come when those who preach the dogmas of materialism, whether of the east or the west, whether of capitalism or socialism, must give account of the moral stewardship they have presumed to exercise. Where is the "new world" promised by these ideologies? Where is the international peace to whose ideals they proclaim their devotion? Where are the breakthroughs into new realms of cultural achievement produced by the aggrandizement of this race, of that nation or of a particular class? Why is the vast majority of the world's peoples sinking ever deeper into hunger and wretchedness when wealth on a scale undreamed of by the Pharaohs, the Caesars, or even the imperialist powers of the nineteenth century is at the disposal of the present arbiters of human affairs?"  
Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 5.

<sup>20</sup> "O Children of men! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory". Baha'u'llah, *The hidden words*, from Arabic, n. 68.

<sup>21</sup> "The winds of despair", Bahá'u'lláh wrote, "are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divides and afflicts the human race is daily increasing. The signs of impending convulsions and chaos can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing order appears to be lamentably defective." Bahá'u'lláh quoted in *The promise of world peace*, Universal House of Justice, page 1.

<sup>22</sup> "The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war. Few societies have dealt effectively with this situation. The solution calls for the combined application of spiritual, moral and practical approaches". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 8.

On one hand people from all nations proclaim not only their availability, but also their desire for peace and harmony and to end the agonizing restlessness that afflicts their daily existence.

On the other hand, however, they uncritically sanction the assumption according to which the human being, incorrigibly selfish and aggressive, is incapable of constructing a social system both progressive and peaceful, dynamic and harmonious, a system that, though promoting individual creativity and initiative, is based on cooperation and reciprocity.

It is clear, then, that only a new well-balanced environment, that is, one of low entropy, fostered by the awareness of our potential reality, can help man understand that the essence of civilization consists in the moderation of our necessities<sup>23</sup> and therefore in the willing and spontaneous reduction of needs. Furthermore we must answer the questions which emerge from our inner selves such as who we are, where we are going, and why we exist.<sup>24</sup>

Today, these problems are not normally discussed or they are even neglected because they are not part of our daily existence. Yet, in the low entropy world, towards which we are tending, these fundamental problems are destined to reemerge.

In previous chapters we have said that economy is energy, or better, that there is no economy without energy. But now we say there is no economy without needs. Or better still, that there is a good economy only if needs are well-balanced: cultivating or increasing needs is the antithesis of wisdom, as well as of liberty and peace. Any spasmodic increase of these needs only augments our dependence on external forces. Solely by maintaining our needs within the limits of moderation can we promote a well-balanced, low entropy model of life, thus reducing those tensions that are among the primary causes of wars and conflicts.

In this entropic model excessive wealth is seen as an irreversible decrease in precious world resources. Frugality becomes the key word. Human needs and not extravagant or selfish desires of individuals or communities are satisfied<sup>25</sup>.

Arbitrary consumption and attachment to goods is discouraged. However it is clear that Baha'u'llah does not exalt miserable and forced poverty, but rather He highlights the social and moral necessity to redistribute wealth so that everybody can live with dignity.

Furthermore He emphasizes restraint, simplicity and limits. He warns us that the goods we possess possess us. We fear they may be taken away and we define ourselves not for who we are but for what we have. Baha'u'llah says: "Rejoice not

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<sup>23</sup> "In all matters moderation is desirable. If a thing is carried to excess, it will prove a source of evil". Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 69.

<sup>24</sup> "O Son of man! I loved thy creation, hence I created thee. Wherefore, do thou love Me, that I may name thy name and fill thy soul with the spirit of life". Baha'u'llah, *The hidden words*, from Arabic n. 4.

<sup>25</sup> "Then rules and laws should be established to regulate the excessive fortunes of certain private individuals and meet the needs of millions of the poor masses; thus a certain moderation would be obtained". Abdul'Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 274.

in the things ye possess; tonight they are yours, tomorrow others will possess them”<sup>26</sup>.

Within this diverse concept of life, work and production must acquire a diverse meaning. Work must not be regarded as a necessary evil, a burden to carry only to obtain what we want, but a spiritual act of service, and production must be regulated to fairly satisfy needs. In an entropic culture work and production thus become necessary activities to reach the right balance in life the same as sleeping, playing and praying<sup>27</sup>.

Without working man is incomplete: Baha’u’llah says, “Arts, crafts and sciences uplift the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation.

The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred.. We have exalted your engagement in such work to the rank of worship of the one true God.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Baha’u’llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, page 33.

<sup>27</sup> “In most of contemporary thinking, the concept of work has been largely reduced to that of gainful employment aimed at acquiring the means for the consumption of available goods. The system is circular: acquisition and consumption resulting in the maintenance and expansion of the production of goods and, in consequence, in supporting paid employment. Taken individually, all of these activities are essential to the well-being of society. The inadequacy of the overall conception, however, can be read in both the apathy that social commentators discern among large numbers of the employed in every land and the demoralisation of the growing armies of the unemployed. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is increasing recognition that the world is in urgent need of a new "work ethic". Here again, nothing less than insights generated by the creative interaction of the scientific and religious systems of knowledge can produce so fundamental a reorientation of habits and attitudes. Unlike animals, which depend for their sustenance on whatever the environment readily affords, human beings are impelled to express the immense capacities latent within them through productive work designed to meet their own needs and those of others. In acting thus they become participants, at however modest a level, in the processes of the advancement of civilization. They fulfil purposes that unite them with others. To the extent that work is consciously undertaken in a spirit of service to humanity, Bahá'u'lláh says, it is a form of prayer, a means of worshipping God. Every individual has the capacity to see himself or herself in this light, and it is to this inalienable capacity of the self that development strategy must appeal, whatever the nature of the plans being pursued, whatever the rewards they promise. No narrower a perspective will ever call up from the people of the world the magnitude of effort and commitment that the economic tasks ahead will require”. Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá’í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

<sup>28</sup> Baha’u’llah, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, page 26, Baha’u’llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, page 30.

“Waste not your hours in idleness and sloth, but occupy yourselves with what will profit you and others.”<sup>29</sup>

Work must then be finalized to existence and in order to do that it must have a human dimension suitable to allow man to use and develop his capacities without alienation.

Work itself and not the product of that work must be appreciated. Furthermore any worker, who uses either his mind or his hands must feel part of the community where consultation among peers makes him a protagonist on the scene of production and not, as happens today, a passive spectator in a system dominated by relationships based authority, that impede him from demonstrating his potentials and creativity and closes him in a shell in which he has to be subjected to a degraded environment 8 hours a day like a robot. In the present-day concept, the concept of work has been reduced to that of a mere profitable occupation which serves to acquire means for the consumption of available goods. The system is circular: acquisition and consumption enable the maintenance and expansion of production of goods, and consequently, the subsidizing of paid employment. Each of these activities, if considered singularly, is essential for the well-being of society. But the inadequacy of the global concept can be seen in the apathy that social commentators notice in every country among the masses of those who have a job and in the demoralization of the growing ranks of those who don't have one. No wonder if there is an increasing recognition that the world is urgently in need of a new work ethic. Even here, only intuitions generated by the creative interaction between the two systems of knowledge: scientific and religious, can produce a so fundamental reorientation of habits and attitudes. Contrary to animals that draw their nourishment from what the environment easily supplies them, human beings are forced to express their immense latent capacities in a productive job designed to satisfy their needs and those of others. By acting in this way, they become participants, though on a modest level, to the progress of civilization and achieve goals that unite them to others. To the extent that work is performed on a conscious level in the spirit of service to humankind, it becomes a form of worship. Each individual has the capacity to consider himself in this light and the strategy for development has to appeal to this inalienable capacity, regardless of the nature of the pursued plans and the promised rewards. Any narrower perspective will never evoke in the people of the world, from the worker to the manager, the enormous effort and the immense dedication that future economic enterprises will require. It is fair to consider that in a well-balanced, low entropy society self managed enterprises, cooperative companies and decentralized organizations are preferred,

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<sup>29</sup> “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. Reflect, O people, on the grace and blessings of your Lord, and yield Him thanks at eventide and dawn. Waste not your hours in idleness and sloth, but occupy yourselves with what will profit you and others. Thus hath it been decreed in this Tablet from whose horizon hath shone the day-star of wisdom and utterance. The most despised of men in the sight of God are they who sit and beg. Hold ye fast unto the cord of means and place your trust in God, the Provider of all means. When anyone occupieth himself in a craft or trade, such occupation itself is regarded in the estimation of God as an act of worship; and this is naught but a token of His infinite and all-pervasive bounty”.

Baha'u'llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, pages 26/30.

where everybody can be considered as a partner of the company with all the beneficial consequences that can derive from this<sup>30</sup>. In such a culture the concept of private property remains for the consumption goods and for those necessities of life for the individual, not for the large non renewable and renewable resources.

The accepted custom of modern economy based on the exploitation of national resources is replaced by the concept of public international custody<sup>31</sup>. The fallaciousness of theories based on the belief that the capacity of nature to satisfy any human need is unlimited is today coldly demonstrated. "A culture which attaches absolute value to expansion, to acquisition, and to the satisfaction of people's wants is being compelled to recognise that such goals are not, by themselves, realistic guides to policy. Inadequate, too, are approaches to economic issues whose decision-making tools cannot deal with the fact that most of the major challenges are global rather than particular in scope."<sup>32</sup>

Individual rights are protected, but are no longer regarded as the main reference point on which to judge society. Instead the concept of responsibility and public duties again gains consideration as the prevailing social motivation.

In this new model, the concept of man and woman separate from the mechanisms of the ecosystem is replaced by a holistic comprehension of the interconnections of all phenomena. This new kind of culture highlights the fact that man and woman are part of nature and are not separate from it; therefore nature will no longer be a tool of manipulation, but a source of life to preserve unchanged and pure in all its manifestations.

Moreover man and woman are like wings of a dove: flight takes place only if both wings are equally developed and move in harmony. It is then clear that recognizing their equal rights and opportunities is a sign of an advanced social maturity.

A world economy will be possible only when the almost three billion women that live on the planet will obtain this recognition<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> "Every factory that has ten thousand shares will give two thousand shares of these ten thousand to its employees and will write the shares in their names, so that they may have them, and the rest will belong to the capitalists. Then at the end of the month or year whatever they may earn after the expenses and wages are paid, according to the number of shares, should be divided among both".  
`Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 43.

<sup>31</sup> "This commonwealth must...ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples".  
Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, page 203

<sup>32</sup> Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

<sup>33</sup> The emancipation of women, the achievement of full equality between the sexes, is one of the most important, though less acknowledged prerequisites of peace. The denial of such equality perpetrates an injustice against one half of the world's population and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations. There are no grounds, moral, practical, or biological, upon which such denial can be justified. Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavour will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge" Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 8-9.

In a low entropy society, the concept of conquering nature is then replaced by the idea of harmony with the environment and other creatures as a whole.

"Consider the flowers of a garden. Though differing in kind, colour, form and shape, yet, inasmuch as they are refreshed by the waters of one spring, revived by the breath of one wind, invigorated by the rays of one sun, this diversity increaseth their charm and addeth unto their beauty. How unpleasing to the eye if all the flowers and plants, the leaves and blossoms, the fruit, the branches and the trees of that garden were all of the same shape and colour! Diversity of hues, form and shape enricheth and adorneth the garden, and heighteneth the effect thereof".<sup>34</sup>

Similarly, so it is for men on Earth. Only the law of unity can bring harmony among different races and peoples of Earth.

In a low entropy society centralized complex techniques at high energy and capital density are put aside to the advantage of a decentralized intermediate appropriate technology of low energy consumption.

The low entropy era toward which we are heading will require a rebalancing of the world's population. The impressive explosion of world population really becomes inconceivable if we consider it in terms of entropy.

Thus it seems clear, after the various references that passing to a low entropy system will transform our values, our culture, our political and economic institutions and every day life; but this transition won't take place easily and the establishment of a new well-balanced system of low energy consumption will require an impressive turmoil in the current order of things. Baha'u'llah affirms: "The signs of impending convulsions and chaos," He warns the peoples of the world, "can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing Order appeareth to be lamentably defective."<sup>35</sup>

The new world order that is coming into being, the establishment of which will enable the general crisis that involves all humanity to be overcome, will doubtless require sacrifices and hard work on the part of everybody; world unity will replace the current system based national unities.

Man will have to acquire the awareness that the wellbeing of humanity, its peace,<sup>36</sup> its security won't be achieved unless and until its unity will be firmly established.

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<sup>34</sup> Shoghi Effendi, *Calls to the nations*, Part III

<sup>35</sup> "Soon," Bahá'u'lláh's own words proclaim it, "will the present day Order be rolled up, and a new one spread out in its stead. Verily, thy Lord speaketh the truth and is the Knower of things unseen." "By Myself," He solemnly asserts, "the day is approaching when We will have rolled up the world and all that is therein, and spread out a new Order in its stead. He, verily, is powerful over all things." "The world's equilibrium," He explains, "hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this Most Great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System, the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed." "The signs of impending convulsions and chaos," He warns the peoples of the world, "can now be discerned, inasmuch as the prevailing Order appeareth to be lamentably defective."

Shoghi Effendi, *Calls to the nations*, Part III

<sup>36</sup> "The time must come when the imperative necessity for the holding of a vast, an all-embracing assemblage of men will be universally realized. The rulers and kings of the earth must needs attend it, and, participating in its deliberations, must consider such ways and means as will lay the foundations of the world's Great Peace amongst men." Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, pages 11-12



It is not possible to escape from the law of Unity, because it is a universal law and as history follows a one-way street passing from elementary forms of unity to more and more complex forms, in this day we must courageously pass on to the Unity of all mankind. The nationalistic iron circle has to be replaced by a new dimension: the world of international unity<sup>37</sup>.

“The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture...the peasant class and the agricultural class exceed other classes in the importance of their service.”<sup>38</sup> and

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<sup>37</sup> a) “The Tabernacle of Unity...has been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers.... Of one tree are all ye the fruit and of one bough the leaves.... The world is but one country and mankind its citizens.... Let not a man glory in that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.” Baha’u’llah quoted in *Call to the Nations* by Shoghi Effendi, Part III.

b) “Unbridled nationalism, as distinguished from a sane and legitimate patriotism, must give way to a wider loyalty, to the love of humanity as a whole. Bahá’u’lláh’s statement is: “The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.” The concept of world citizenship is a direct result of the contraction of the world into a single neighbourhood through scientific advances and of the indisputable interdependence of nations. Love of all the world’s peoples does not exclude love of one’s country. The advantage of the part in a world society is best served by promoting the advantage of the whole. Current international activities in various fields which nurture mutual affection and a sense of solidarity among peoples need greatly to be increased”. Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 8.

c) “The well-being of mankind,” Bahá’u’lláh wrote more than a century ago, “its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.” Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 13.

d) Unification of the whole of mankind is the hall-mark of the stage which human society is now approaching. Unity of family, of tribe, of city-state, and nation have been successively attempted and fully established. World unity is the goal towards which a harassed humanity is striving. Nation-building has come to an end. The anarchy inherent in state sovereignty is moving towards a climax. A world, growing to maturity, must abandon this fetish, recognize the oneness and wholeness of human relationships, and establish once for all the machinery that can best incarnate this fundamental principle of its life. Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha’u’llah*, page 202.

e) “Acceptance of the oneness of mankind is the first fundamental prerequisite for reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind. Universal acceptance of this spiritual principle is essential to any successful attempt to establish world peace. It should therefore be universally proclaimed, taught in schools, and constantly asserted in every nation as preparation for the organic change in the structure of society which it implies... World order can be founded only on an unshakeable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species, albeit infinitely varied in the secondary aspects of life. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment of prejudice--prejudice of every kind--race, class, colour, creed, nation, sex, degree of material civilization, everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others”. Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 10.f) “Disunity is a danger that the nations and peoples of the earth can no longer endure; the consequences are too terrible to contemplate, too obvious to require any demonstration”. Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 13.

<sup>38</sup> “The fundamental basis of the community is agriculture...”

’Abdu’l-Baha, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 217.

“The peasant class and the agricultural class exceed other classes in the importance of their service”.

’Abdu’l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 39.

social economic reforms will have to start right from agriculture that instead today is neglected in favor of industry.

The market from producer to consumer will gradually replace the current organization of sale based on intermediaries and at high energetic consumption. This will require a vast movement of people from cities to agricultural areas. Industrial production will be decentralized, brought to a local level, managed and organized democratically<sup>39</sup> favoring forms such as self-managed cooperatives. This passage towards local economies will mean the end of the control of monopolies and multinationals<sup>40</sup>.

The work of man and woman will be reorganized and will have to highlight its potentialities and creativity<sup>41</sup>. Some concepts imposed by the old educational system will have to change. Prejudices of class, color, religion and culture will have

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<sup>39</sup> “That is to say, a man's capacity for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation”.

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 217.

<sup>40</sup> “No more trusts will remain in the future. The question of the trusts will be wiped away entirely”.

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 43.

<sup>41</sup> a) In most of contemporary thinking, the concept of work has been largely reduced to that of gainful employment aimed at acquiring the means for the consumption of available goods. The system is circular: acquisition and consumption resulting in the maintenance and expansion of the production of goods and, in consequence, in supporting paid employment. Taken individually, all of these activities are essential to the well-being of society. The inadequacy of the overall conception, however, can be read in both the apathy that social commentators discern among large numbers of the employed in every land and the demoralisation of the growing armies of the unemployed. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is increasing recognition that the world is in urgent need of a new "work ethic". Here again, nothing less than insights generated by the creative interaction of the scientific and religious systems of knowledge can produce so fundamental a reorientation of habits and attitudes. Unlike animals, which depend for their sustenance on whatever the environment readily affords, human beings are impelled to express the immense capacities latent within them through productive work designed to meet their own needs and those of others. In acting thus they become participants, at however modest a level, in the processes of the advancement of civilization. They fulfil purposes that unite them with others. To the extent that work is consciously undertaken in a spirit of service to humanity, Bahá'u'lláh says, it is a form of prayer, a means of worshipping God. Every individual has the capacity to see himself or herself in this light, and it is to this inalienable capacity of the self that development strategy must appeal, whatever the nature of the plans being pursued, whatever the rewards they promise. No narrower a perspective will ever call up from the people of the world the magnitude of effort and commitment that the economic tasks ahead will require. Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá'í International Community, *The Prosperity of humankind*.

b) “The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds. Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian n. 82

c) “It is enjoined upon every one of you to engage in some form of occupation, such as crafts, trades and the like. We have graciously exalted your engagement in such work to the rank of worship unto God, the True One. Ponder ye in your hearts the grace and the blessings of God and render thanks unto Him at eventide and at dawn. Waste not your time in idleness and sloth. Occupy yourselves with that which profiteth yourselves and others. Thus hath it been decreed in this Tablet from whose horizon the day-star of wisdom and utterance shineth resplendent. The most despised of men in the sight of God are those who sit idly and beg. Hold ye fast unto the cord of material means, placing your whole trust in God, the Provider of all means. When anyone occupieth himself in a craft or trade, such occupation itself is regarded in the estimation of God as an act of worship; and this is naught but a token of His infinite and all-pervasive bounty”. Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 26.

to disappear<sup>42</sup>. Forces of science and religion, the two most powerful forces of human life, will have to reconcile, cooperate and develop harmoniously<sup>43</sup>. From the point of view of today's way of living, the changes that will have to be made in the current system can appear undesirable to us, because the majority of us, living in an era of rampant consumerism, indoctrinated by the current educational system, by television and commercials is, although on various levels, hedonistic. Will we be able to get rid ourselves of the current concept of the world? Will humanity listen to a program that involves a reduction in the accumulation ego-centric comforts?

If we won't do it, we will encounter grave suffering because disunity is the symbol of degradation and unity is the alternative to self-destruction.<sup>44</sup> What we will need to do will become more and more evident as little by little we succeed in ridding ourselves of the mechanistic concept of the world and only when we put aside forever the old ways of thinking and behaving, and entered into the new unity concept of the world, will we be ready to continue our path and to renew our culture.

On the other hand, human sciences such as anthropology, physiology, psychology recognize the existence of one human species, though infinitely diversified in the secondary aspects of existence<sup>45</sup>.

The first and fundamental prerequisite in order to reorganize and administer the world as one country is the acceptance of the unity human kind. And because

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<sup>42</sup> "Racism, one of the most baneful and persistent evils, is a major barrier to peace. Its practice perpetrates too outrageous a violation of the dignity of human beings to be countenanced under any pretext. Racism retards the unfoldment of the boundless potentialities of its victims, corrupts its perpetrators, and blights human progress. Recognition of the oneness of mankind, implemented by appropriate legal measures, must be universally upheld if this problem is to be overcome". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 7-8.

<sup>43</sup> "In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop." Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part V.

<sup>44</sup> "Disunity is a danger that the nations and peoples of the earth can no longer endure; the consequences are too terrible to contemplate, too obvious to require any demonstration... Whether peace is to be reached only after unimaginable horrors precipitated by humanity's stubborn clinging to old patterns of behaviour, or is to be embraced now by an act of consultative will, is the choice before all who inhabit the earth. At this critical juncture when the intractable problems confronting nations have been fused into one common concern for the whole world, failure to stem the tide of conflict and disorder would be unconscionably irresponsible". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 13 and 1.

<sup>45</sup> "World order can be founded only on an unshakeable consciousness of the oneness of mankind, a spiritual truth which all the human sciences confirm. Anthropology, physiology, psychology, recognize only one human species, albeit infinitely varied in the secondary aspects of life. Recognition of this truth requires abandonment of prejudice--prejudice of every kind--race, class, colour, creed, nation, sex, degree of material civilization, everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others" Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 10.

universal consensus on such a spiritual principle is indispensable for the success of any effort proclaimed to the entire world, it must be taught in schools and constantly sustained in every nation, in preparation for that organic change in the social structures that are implied it.

“In the Bahá’í view, recognition of the oneness of mankind "calls for no less than the reconstruction and the demilitarization of the whole civilized world--a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life, its political machinery, its spiritual aspiration, its trade and finance, its script and language, and yet infinite in the diversity of the national characteristics of its federated units”<sup>46</sup>

It is very interesting to quote a Baha’i writing known as “the tablet of the seven lights”, written in 1909<sup>47</sup>. This tablet can be considered as a “charter of world peace”, one that clearly outlines the vision of the future of the world and the phases that will be necessary to attain world unity, the ultimate goal of Baha’u’llah’s mission. Each light represents a different step in the building of the process of peace. They illumine the reader on the path of progress and evolution of our society. They are the key reading of what humanity has to face.

Obviously Baha’i teachings affirm that humanity is involved in a process of growth that can’t be just biological, social or political, but that the majority of its evolution should be referred to that spiritual process that is part of man’s inner reality which has been atrophied over centuries. Aiming at renewing this inner reality of humanity, now and then God sends His Teachers, Teachers who also have the task of assisting the social growth of humanity with laws and principles suited to the coming times. In order of time, Baha’u’llah is the Teacher for today and reveals laws and principles suitable to the current historical reality and today’s world problems. The World Order He gives to humanity is part of His task, in aiding a humanity that has lost its judgment and that has to set out to build a new world, a unified world, socially economically and spiritually.

The tablet of the seven lights is a brief document, but contains the essential points of the “charter of the evolution” of humanity. It was written in 1909 before the world wars, before the founding of the United Nations, before any thought or scientific achievement was globalized, before the concept of freedom was clarified, before the full and actual sovereignty of the nations of the world was attained. “Hence the unity of all mankind can in this day be achieved. Of this past ages have been deprived, for this century--the century of light--has been endowed with unique and unprecedented glory, power and illumination... . The first candle is unity in the political realm, the early glimmerings of which can now be discerned. The second candle is unity of thought in world undertakings, the consummation of which will ere long be witnessed. The third candle is unity in freedom which will surely come to pass. The fourth candle is unity in religion which is the corner-stone of the foundation itself, and which, by the power of God, will be revealed in all its splendor. The fifth candle is the unity of nations--a unity which in this century will be securely established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as

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<sup>46</sup> Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 10

<sup>47</sup> Abdul’Baha’s letter to Mrs. Whyte in Edinburgh.

citizens of one common fatherland. The sixth candle is unity of races, making of all that dwell on earth peoples and kindreds of one race. The seventh candle is unity of language, i.e., the choice of a universal tongue in which all peoples will be instructed and converse. Each and every one of these will inevitably come to pass, inasmuch as the power of the Kingdom of God will aid and assist in their realization.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Abdul Baha' in *The world order of Baha'u'llah* by Shoghi Effewndi, page 39.

## Chapter 6

### A new world order<sup>49</sup>

“The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Baha'u'llah, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. 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

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<sup>49</sup> “The unity of the human race, as envisaged by Baha'u'llah, implies the establishment of a world commonwealth in which all nations, races, creeds and classes are closely and permanently united, and in which the autonomy of its state members and the personal freedom and initiative of the individuals that compose them are definitely and completely safeguarded. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system. A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will act as the nerve center of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate. A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind. In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop. The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated.

National rivalries, hatreds, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and cooperation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear. The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race.

A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by its allegiance to one common Revelation - such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving”.

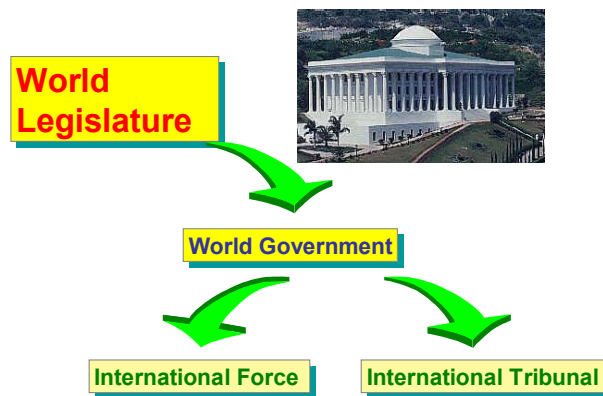
Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, pages: 203-204.

maintaining internal order within their respective dominions. This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples. A world executive, backed by an international Force, will carry out the decisions arrived at, and apply the laws enacted by, this world legislature, and will safeguard the organic unity of the whole commonwealth. A world tribunal will adjudicate and deliver its compulsory and final verdict in all and any disputes that may arise between the various elements constituting this universal system. A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity. A world metropolis will act as the nerve centre of a world civilization, the focus towards which the unifying forces of life will converge and from which its energizing influences will radiate. A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind. In such a world society, science and religion, the two most potent forces in human life, will be reconciled, will cooperate, and will harmoniously develop. The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples. The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated. National rivalries, hatreds, and intrigues will cease, and racial animosity and prejudice will be replaced by racial amity, understanding and cooperation. The causes of religious strife will be permanently removed, economic barriers and restrictions will be completely abolished, and the inordinate distinction between classes will be obliterated. Destitution on the one hand, and gross accumulation of ownership on the other, will disappear. The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race. A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet, a system in which Force is made the servant of Justice, whose life is sustained by its universal recognition of one God and by

its allegiance to one common Revelation - such is the goal towards which humanity, impelled by the unifying forces of life, is moving”.<sup>50</sup>

The schematic functioning of the system through which the Supreme State will function is indicated in the diagram.

## World organization the super state



The Supreme State is the whole of the four organisms indicated in the diagram.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>a) Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part V.

b) “The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples”.  
Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part V.

c) “In this Day the secrets of the earth are laid bare before the eyes of men. The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing”.  
Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, pages 39-40.

<sup>51</sup> “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. 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. A world community in which all economic barriers will have been permanently



Some of its functions are of fundamental importance to the world economy. One of the most important aspects that the world is missing today is the lack of an international law that regulates important relations among nations.

We already know that the lack of common international rules allows that ecological, financial, terrorist, economical, and political crimes are very often left unpunished, because those who commit them, profit from the freedom of action in those countries from where they can't be extradited or profit from other nations known as fiscal and financial paradises, where particular laws and regulations are in force. In fact there are nations that live on the abuse of these situations that damage states and individuals and put into question very serious issues such as justice and morality. Therefore issuing an international code of laws meant to regulate life, to satisfy needs, to discipline relations among nations and to have these laws respected<sup>52</sup> is one of the main tasks of the Supreme State, through its world legislature and executive bodies.

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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 Baha'u'llah, an Order that shall come to be regarded as the fairest fruit of a slowly maturing age". Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, Pages 40-41.

<sup>52</sup>)a) "...a single code of international law - the product of the considered judgement of the world's federated representatives - shall have as its sanction the instant and coercive intervention of the combined forces of the federated units".

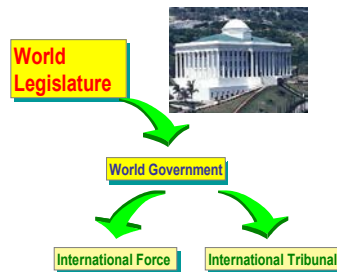
Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part III.

b) "If this be done, the nations of the world will no longer require any armaments, except for the purpose of preserving the security of their realms and of maintaining internal order within their territories. This will ensure the peace and composure of every people, government and nation".

Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, Page 165.

## Functions of the super state

- 1.- World legislative body
- 2.- world executive body
- 3.- world tribunal
- 4.- international police
- 5.- world metropoli



The markets of goods, of machined products, of agricultural products, transportation and raw materials as they function today, through the stock exchange, allow for incredible inequalities damaging the many and being advantageous to the few. Besides, the continuous sudden changes of the prices of primary goods of first necessity that go up and down in a world where 75% of its people suffers from malnutrition, creates motivation for social rebellion and massive speculation for profit on the part of those few opulent persons.

A renewed world legislation can also avoid serious speculation going on in the labor market, where labor is considered on the same level as goods.

If we reflect on the nature of labor as goods, we notice that what the worker offers as exchange goods is his professional capacity and the buyer, once he possesses it, uses it as he thinks best, as he would do with any other goods he buys.

Professional capacity, as exchange goods sold on the market and therefore, put at the buyer's disposal for a certain period of time, is called labor force; its price, that therefore has a necessary temporal dimension, is called salary.

Today even these "goods" are regulated by the law of supply and demand and it means that the labor market decreases its price when there is a lot of supply.

An immediate speculation is thereby created where entrepreneurs look for manpower in those countries where there is a lot of offer and therefore low prices. For example a European entrepreneur that acquires a order in Libya, instead of using European manpower at high cost, looks for the same kind of manpower in China or in a similar country where, as there is a large supply of manpower, the prices are low.

This allows the entrepreneur to obtain more profits; at the same time we can highlight two consequences: on the one hand, there is speculation on men of very low income, and on the other hand the non-use of European labor that creates still more unemployment. It seems clear this scourge can be eradicated only through a new international legislation

that regulates, among other things, this relationship in terms of equity of salaries and worker safety.

And we can't forget that only by issuing one international law can we solve the problems of pollution of seas, air and soil, that can't be controlled by partial laws of some good willing nations, considering that, waters and air move and go through countries bringing with them polluting substances.

We could go on analyzing all aspects of life that necessitate international laws, but I think that the expressed thought is sufficiently clear.

The Supreme State will also have total control of world resources (energy sources, raw materials etc.), which will no longer be a prerogative of nations<sup>53</sup>.

This is an extremely important novelty for a macro-economy and world politics. This new concept is destined to upset classical laws of economy and to eliminate the arrogance and military political power of those nations that are rich in resources. If we can remember history of even the more recent colonialism, we can't ignore that the true aim of colonial invasions, was nothing less than the possibility of taking possession of the riches of those colonized countries, such as petroleum, gold, precious metals, coal. But other riches also exist that produce industrial and power colonialism; territorial strategies, predominant positions, gas, uranium, energy, seas, forests, agriculture<sup>54</sup>. Baha'u'llah provides for this through a new law: that the Earth's resources be managed by the Supreme State so that by removing them from the iniquitous rule of the strong, conflicts for their possession are eliminated, minimum levels of dignity are established in order to abolish extremes of wealth and poverty and there is a more fair distribution of riches.

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<sup>53</sup> "This commonwealth must, as far as we can visualize it, consist of a world legislature, whose members will, as the trustees of the whole of mankind, ultimately control the entire resources of all the component nations, and will enact such laws as shall be required to regulate the life, satisfy the needs and adjust the relationships of all races and peoples".

Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part V.

"Two points bear emphasizing in all these issues. One is that the abolition of war is not simply a matter of signing treaties and protocols; it is a complex task requiring a new level of commitment to resolving issues not customarily associated with the pursuit of peace. Based on political agreements alone, the idea of collective security is a chimera. The other point is that the primary challenge in dealing with issues of peace is to raise the context to the level of principle, as distinct from pure pragmatism. For, in essence, peace stems from an inner state supported by a spiritual or moral attitude, and it is chiefly in evoking this attitude that the possibility of enduring solutions can be found". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 9.

<sup>54</sup> "Banning nuclear weapons, prohibiting the use of poison gases, or outlawing germ warfare will not remove the root causes of war. However important such practical measures obviously are as elements of the peace process, they are in themselves too superficial to exert enduring influence. Peoples are ingenious enough to invent yet other forms of warfare, and to use food, raw materials, finance, industrial power, ideology, and terrorism to subvert one another in an endless quest for supremacy and dominion. Nor can the present massive dislocation in the affairs of humanity be resolved through the settlement of specific conflicts or disagreements among nations. A genuine universal framework must be adopted". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 6.

This structure, therefore, will have the task of organizing resources, developing them and using them in such a way that all countries can profit from them and so that nothing is wasted, always keeping in mind the future of humanity.

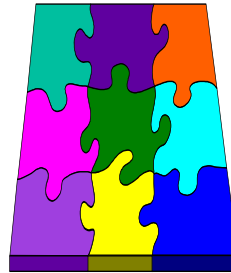
It is obvious that this new way of conceiving property of vast resources will be opposed by those who possess the key to their access.

Those who have lived for many years with enormous quantities of energy and resources supplied and stolen from the third world will easily be led to feel resentment for the restrictions imposed by this brilliant and new law.

Furthermore it should be observed that developed nations continuously increase the rhythm of transforming resources into economic goods and this greater transformation into consumer goods is often unnecessary in order for people to live a normal life. But the dominant concept of economics, pushing the limits of “need”, lead men towards greater consumption: this, according to the prevailing doctrine, produces economic wealth.

## Qualities of the super state

- **1.- International intercommunication system**
- **2.- world writing and literature**
- **3.- universal measurement system**
- **4.- universal monetary system**
- **5.- universal press system**
- **6.- universal calendar**
- **7.- universal educational system**
- **8.- universal taxation system**
- **9.- one code of laws for individuals**
- **10.- world resources regulation system**

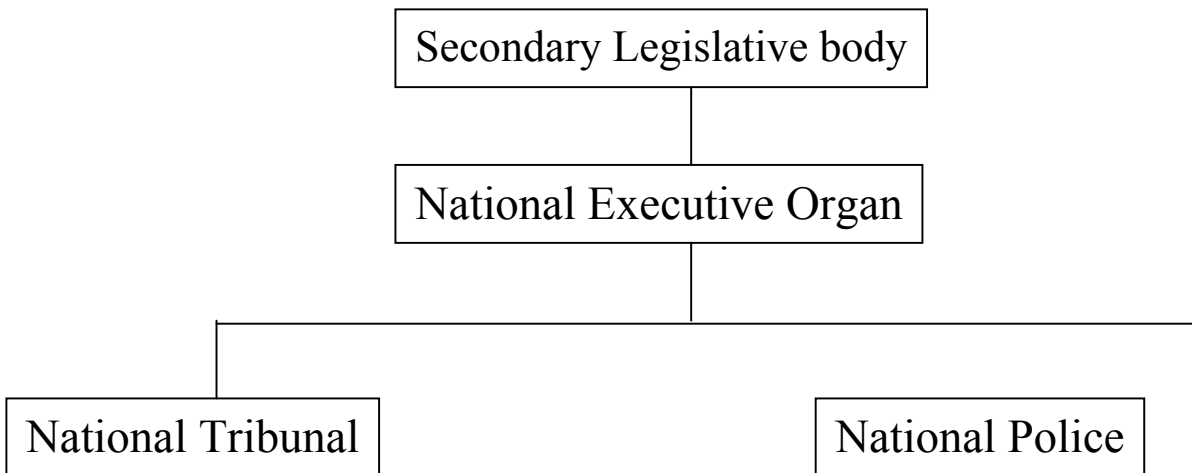


If we assume this reality as the main principle of international economic development, we shouldn't be surprised that this reality is falling apart at such a rapid pace. Therefore, if we are committed to transforming our planet, we have to begin now, to limit our needs and to replace the concept of nationalist property and exploitation of resources with the concept of international public custody, trying, on an individual level, to reduce as much as possible the indiscriminate use and abuse of “false goods”, which, after having given ephemeral and temporary happiness, are promptly eliminated, immediately becoming part of the polluting materials in our dumps.

Thus, each state of the world Confederation will have the same rights of equal distribution, both in giving and receiving.

It is obvious that the Supreme State will deal only with what concerns it as an international agency.

The system proposed by Baha'u'llah also involves a general reorganization of nations; perhaps theoretically it would be a structure of internal management similar to that of the Supreme State.

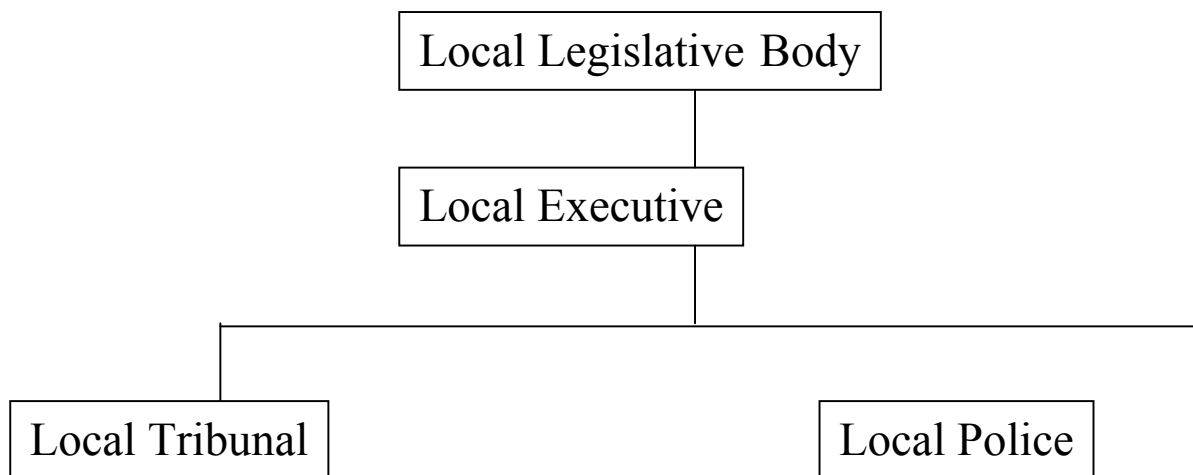


Each country could have an identical national and local organization. And this could be expressed with another model on a national level thus described<sup>55</sup>:

In fact, Baha'u'llah doesn't mean to create a flat, average, sameness everywhere, but to establish a system based on the concept of unity in diversity. In truth, just as it is necessary to have a structure and a world law that unites, through general laws, the states of the future confederation, it is also fundamental that each country maintains its own characteristics and can legislate, without contradicting the Supreme Agency, in its own territory, in any case, maintaining its own roots and diversities.

Each country could have its own national legislative body, executive body, national police and tribunal. Equally this model could be mirrored by each locality of the nation: cities, villages, and regions. Each local community will have agencies in charge of issuing local laws without contrasting the law of the national and international legislative body.

The local legislative body, assisted by the executive, by the local tribunal and police, will have the power to legislate and control what is necessary, so that local life is regulated and respected, necessities are met and relations among people are disciplined.



This model, which is just an embryo of the future world order, gives an idea of the new system which is completely decentralized as regards local and national autonomies, but it's sufficiently clear that it is necessary that countries, cities, villages, localities and communities have to conform to the great world laws emanated by the Supreme State for the protection of the people of all the world. In the Baha'i writings, the basic concept with which these new institutions work is called "consultation".

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<sup>55</sup> "It should be carefully borne in mind that the local as well as the international Houses of Justice have been expressly enjoined by the Kitab-i-Aqdas; that the institution of the National Spiritual Assembly, as an intermediary body, and referred to in the Master's Will as the "Secondary House of Justice," has the express sanction of Abdu'l-Baha; and that the method to be pursued for the election of the International and National Houses of Justice has been set forth by Him in His Will, as well as in a number of His Tablets". Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, pages 5-6.

This system is based on the cooperation of ideas, on their dissociation from those who have formulated them, on the elimination of the concept of groups and majorities around those same ideas.

In a not too remote past, alliances of political or party majorities and minorities have caused damage, after granting powers to groups, privileges to a few and after using individuals as pure numerical elements.

Central to the task of reconceptualising the system of human relationships is the process that Bahá'u'lláh refers to as consultation. "In all things it is necessary to consult", is His advice.<sup>56</sup> . . . "The maturity of the gift of understanding is made manifest through consultation." The standard of truth seeking this process demands is far beyond the patterns of negotiation and compromise that tend to characterise the present-day discussion of human affairs. It cannot be achieved -- indeed, its attainment is severely handicapped -- by the culture of protest that is another widely prevailing feature of contemporary society. Debate, propaganda, the adversarial method, the entire apparatus of partisanship that have long been such familiar features of collective action are all fundamentally harmful to its purpose: that is, arriving at a consensus about the truth of a given situation and the wisest choice of action among the options open at any given moment. What Bahá'u'lláh is calling for is a consultative process in which the individual participants strive to transcend their respective points of view, in order to function as members of a body with its own interests and goals. In such an atmosphere, characterised by both candour and courtesy, ideas belong not to the individual to whom they occur during the discussion but to the group as a whole, to take up, discard, or revise as seems to best serve the goal pursued. Consultation succeeds to the extent that all participants support the decisions arrived at, regardless of the individual opinions with which they entered the discussion. Under such circumstances an earlier decision can be readily reconsidered if experience exposes any shortcomings. Viewed in such a light,

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<sup>56</sup> "Central to the task of reconceptualising the system of human relationships is the process that Bahá'u'lláh refers to as consultation. *"In all things it is necessary to consult,"* is His advice. *"The maturity of the gift of understanding is made manifest through consultation."* The standard of truth seeking this process demands is far beyond the patterns of negotiation and compromise that tend to characterise the present-day discussion of human affairs. It cannot be achieved -- indeed, its attainment is severely handicapped -- by the culture of protest that is another widely prevailing feature of contemporary society. Debate, propaganda, the adversarial method, the entire apparatus of partisanship that have long been such familiar features of collective action are all fundamentally harmful to its purpose: that is, arriving at a consensus about the truth of a given situation and the wisest choice of action among the options open at any given moment. What Bahá'u'lláh is calling for is a consultative process in which the individual participants strive to transcend their respective points of view, in order to function as members of a body with its own interests and goals. In such an atmosphere, characterised by both candour and courtesy, ideas belong not to the individual to whom they occur during the discussion but to the group as a whole, to take up, discard, or revise as seems to best serve the goal pursued. Consultation succeeds to the extent that all participants support the decisions arrived at, regardless of the individual opinions with which they entered the discussion. Under such circumstances an earlier decision can be readily reconsidered if experience exposes any shortcomings. Viewed in such a light, consultation is the operating expression of justice in human affairs". Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

consultation is the operating expression of justice in human affairs". During Baha'i consultation the group doesn't exist and the individual cannot associate with other individuals, to create appointed or pre appointed majorities. In a low "entropy", high "values" society the concept of public responsibility and duties is highlighted as the dominant social motivation. A logical consequence is that the Supreme State controls public resources: air, water, soil, that today are so little respected because governments, blinded with their own progress at any cost, irremediably destroy precious resources such as forests, large producers of oxygen, rivers and seas, large reserves of food. The issue of wasting resources leads us to reflect on armed conflicts which causes often have roots in the attempt to defend or to secure resources, that, in this new world order, will be kept in public custody, therefore eliminating the necessity to declare war<sup>57</sup>.

War, as history demonstrates, represents, even in its preparatory phase, a form of high-density entropy; in fact, the more armaments become complex and the more military forces expand in the world, the more energy is used. Moreover, recent years have shown that a missile or a nuclear warhead can only do two things: create super destruction or create storage of nuclear stockpiles until they become obsolete and must be eliminated. Actions such as banning nuclear devices, prohibiting the use of poisonous gas or eradicating bacteriological war will not eliminate the root causes of war. Although these practical measures are important elements in moving towards peace, they are, in themselves, still too superficial to exercise a lasting influence. Are men ingenious enough to create other forms of conflicts and consequently use food, raw materials, money, industrial power, ideology, terrorism, to fight each other in a never-ending search for supremacy and dominion? Neither is it possible to reconcile enormous upheavals by solving specific conflicts and disagreements among single nations. We will need to adopt a structure which is authentically universal.

It may be interesting, before we continue our analysis, to examine the content of some letters in which two of the greatest personalities of our century put into question the world order, war and the unity of the planet: Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud. Following an initiative of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Paris, aimed at stimulating an exchange of ideas among eminent people in the world on the greatest problems facing human cohabitation, Albert Einstein addressed an open letter to Sigmund Freud informing him of an "issue that in current circumstances, seems the most important in the field of civilization..." "does or does not a means exist to free men from the threat of war?"<sup>58</sup>

Einstein wrote to Freud because in those years Freud published "the design of civilization" in which he predicted a particular perspective for man with these words: "Men have gained such a power over the forces of nature that now, using them, they could easily exterminate

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<sup>57</sup> a) "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." Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, Pages 40-41.

b) A world federal system, ruling the whole earth and exercising unchallengeable authority over its unimaginably vast resources, blending and embodying the ideals of both the East and the West, liberated from the curse of war and its miseries, and bent on the exploitation of all the available sources of energy on the surface of the planet..."  
Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, pages: 203-204.

<sup>58</sup> Franco Fornari, *Psicoanalisi della situazione atomica*.



themselves. They know it and their current anxiety, unhappiness and worry derive from this awareness”.

In the same letter Einstein explicitly suggested as a means of avoiding war "the advent of a new law that would deprive nations of their national sovereignty in order to initiate a international juridical organization, that would create conditions to solve all conflicts that may arise among Nations".

Einstein attributed the main obstacle to this law to the political ambitions of the ruling classes in various nations and especially to that group in the heart each country, which is always not very numerous, and which is composed of well-determined individuals who consider war a good occasion to realize profits and to expand their personal power.

Freud answered by confronting the relative problem of claiming rights as a tool to oppose violence: rights, that is, as the force of the collectivity. And again " violence of the collectivity, however, would be powerless to maintain legal status if community interests didn't determine ties of a sentimental (spiritual) nature, feelings of communion on which is based the collective strength."

Regarding the international juridical organization called for by Einstein, Freud replied: "Two necessities become fundamental: first, that of establishing a supreme court; second, that of assuring it has adequate force. Without the second the first is completely useless.

Baha'u'llah formulates market economical problems in such terms that theories of well known economists such as Say, Keynes, Malthus, Smith become obsolete.

Normally, when an economical crisis occurs in the market, the most relevant phenomenon is represented by sellers who aren't able to find buyers to acquire all the goods currently on the market at remunerative prices.

Say tried to demonstrate that, in spite of appearances, a similar deficiency of demand is really impossible, because the monetary value of the demand in an economical system and the monetary value of the overall supply are always equal and any possible deficiency of demand regarding the overall supply is always equal and any possibility of insufficient demand regarding supply remains so excluded.

This law could have been valid when it was enunciated at the end of 1700, but it can no longer be true today, because money is used as capital, besides being a means of exchange. After selling his goods a capitalist has a certain quantity of money at his disposal that enables him not only to build the capital up again, but to increase it. Therefore the re conversion of money into goods is tied to the predictability of profitability.

If these predictions are not favorable, the conversion into goods will not occur and the selling /buying circuit will be interrupted; in this way producers of goods will be left with unsold products, this will lead to a decrease in prices that in turn will decrease the demand of means of production that, again, will cause a reduction of labor and unemployment through a chain reaction capable of putting the entire economy into a state of crisis.

Furthermore modern financial science teaches the use of currency to buy other currency that will never circulate thus creating a closed circuit of high value currency exchanges managed by a minority of entrepreneurs, who, by not affecting industrial and productive sectors will give profits and earnings only to the few people involved. This system will cause unemployment and will decrease actual salaries. In fact currency, as goods, has a

price. The interest of those who possess it will most certainly be felt, whenever they sell it to others.

When the price reaches a certain level considered to be too low, the transfer of currency will cease in order to avoid the further lowering of value, or it will be used to buy currencies of other countries.

We should also keep in mind that the purchase or the selling of a currency, often only on paper, is considered by modern investors as one of the most profitable sectors. By playing in the stock exchanges of four countries in the world, by exchanging currencies, gold and shares, speculations and interesting earnings can easily be obtained. All those who play this "game" know that the currency exchange in a country is often inversely proportional to the increase in the stock exchange. Let's take an example: the stock exchanges of New York, Frankfurt, Tokyo and Zurich .

In New York they use dollars, in Frankfurt Germany Euro, in Tokyo yen and in Zurich swiss franks . An investor based in Geneva, following the value of the above currencies, stock exchange quotations, time changes and gold quotations, with the use of an intercontinental phone a personal computer and a video terminal can earn a lot of money. With the dollar down, the New York stock exchange index rises because investments come from abroad. But, if the dollar decreases, the euro and gold automatically increase in value. The rise of the euros leads investors in euros to buy stock exchange shares of other nations. There is therefore a flow of euros towards other foreign markets or towards the purchase of gold. As a consequence of this flow, there is a lowering of Frankfurt stock and a rise in the price of gold. In the meantime, those who have invested in the New York stock exchange, that has risen thanks to the investments in euros , sell shares and gold and buy dollars. This implies a variation in the New York stock exchange and a rise of the international value of dollars. Those who find they have dollars of greater value, invest abroad, where, in the meantime, the value of dollar has increased, for example, in the Tokyo or the Zurich stock exchanges.

This flow of dollars invested abroad reduces investments in the New York stock exchange, which therefore decreases while Zurich and Tokyo rise. The intervention of Central banks of different countries to defend their own currency excludes the speculative game that often leads to the process of devaluation of the currency. And another cycle takes off again. The turnover is dizzying, but leads to huge profits, if one is unscrupulous, if information is known in real time, and if one acts in terms of monopoly. The most amazing element is that not one penny has moved throughout the exchanges. The only movement is done by orders of buying/selling and of exchanges on paper, through computer messages. All the money has remained in the respective countries. As a consequence of this way of proceeding, international cracks occur, even those of important banks. This can happen when orders of international purchases are not supported by real money and comes to the fore when, after stopping the game once a month for example, for payments and compensations, those who bought without having the necessary funds, cannot pay. As a consequence even small investors, encouraged by publicity and dazzled by easy earnings and who had invested their own hard-earned savings, are damaged.

In some countries stock exchange commissions have set up some rules and slight limitations, but, often, the immorality of brokers have made these precautions useless.

Often the activities of controlling commissions in charge of regulating transactions are made useless by the manipulation of information on the part of dishonest operators or by tip-offs of "insider trading".

Baha'u'llah eliminates all this chaos by proclaiming the necessity of "one world monetary system" and "the prohibition of gambling"<sup>59</sup>. Third world countries will profit from this solution as well, those countries whose currencies are continuously depreciated compared to strong western currencies, thus exposing them to continuous crises provoked by the fact they have to return the sums they borrowed increased by continuous depreciations of their value and relevant interests.

Parallel to one international currency one can foresee one system of weights and measurements. In this new world system multinationals that monopolize the market imposing high prices, eliminating competition and influencing economical and social politics of various governments even the manipulation of information "will be completely swept away"<sup>60</sup>.

It should be noted how harmful the influence of multinationals and monopolies is on social and political government politics, clearly in contrast to the interests of the masses, to equal distribution of resources and to respect of freedom and citizens' rights.

After the fall of the Berlin wall the idea of dictatorship of the proletariat and of the economic system set up in the eighteen hundreds by Marx and Lenin, also known as "socialist economical system" has definitely waned.

Half of the world's population has been obliged to be a protagonist of this economical system that in some spots on the planet has been so hard as to put to the test the life of people residing there. However, those who believe in the Western capitalistic economical system can't cry victory either.

Even this system based on the principle of free market economy is suffering from chronic diseases and tumors that are leading it to make mistakes capable of shaking its foundations.

When, in an economy, the fundamental goal is profit for the sake of profit, a series of components that make up the human being are abandoned which slowly remove him from that economical system. It is furthermore important to notice that the economic value of "things" should not always be reduced only to "money" or to "pure profit", but to other elements that make up the life of a man.

In a new economic system, such as the one we are outlining here, other values will have to be jointly introduced together with profit and the law of the market: service to community, respect for the ecosystem, protection and conservation of natural resources, a more equal distribution of primary resources, the quality of work and life, excellence of

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<sup>59</sup> a) "A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind". Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, page 203.

b) "Gambling...have been forbidden unto you". Baha'u'llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, page 75.

<sup>60</sup> "No more trusts will remain in the future. The question of the trusts will be wiped away entirely". 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 43.

products (this latter is commonly called “quality”, managed through the “product quality control” process).

As for excellence, today’s tendency is to verify only the quality of the product as it leaves the production unit, however, although that is already a good step ahead, is not sufficient. It is, in fact, necessary to widen the concept of quality control to everything else, namely: the influence of industrial manufacturing on the quality of the environment, the quality of the relations between employees and employers, the quality of relations among managers, the quality of work, the quality of life; and the quality of relations between companies and markets. Though control on the above listed contents is still far in the future, we are moving toward that “excellence in all things” that is clearly indicated in Bahá’u’lláh’s texts and what the contemporary world calls “total quality”<sup>61</sup>. It is only through matured awareness of the strong link between total quality and global well-being that we will contribute to consolidate this activity and to make it ever more present in our professional lives. Awareness refers to that spiritual value derived from the new educational system that teaches “collaboration” and “service” instead of competition and struggle among interdependent forces and fluctuations that rule the life of humanity.

The kind of nationalistic society we come from is based on individual struggle and global competition. Instead, the new world system we are facing is based on individual service and international collaboration. Profit and interest will have to be guaranteed but they won’t be the only objectives of the company. Companies should try to enter in the idea that they must be responsible for social development ( CSR – Corporate Social responsibilities. The Universal House of Justice , the world Baha’i Council writes, through the Baha’I International Community ,in one of His messages that :

**The most important role that economic efforts must play in development lies, therefore, in equipping people and institutions with the means through which they can achieve the real purpose of development: that is, laying foundations for a new social order that can cultivate the limitless potentialities latent in human consciousness**

( Prosperity of humand kind chapt V )

Describing in brief the diversities between the life style which currently inspires us and the one proposed as possible in the future, we can say that in this period of transition we should learn to adapt the concept of “ loving things and using people” to the opposite of “loving people and using things”.

World ethics will involve the issuing of new laws that will no longer pay attention to the color of skin, the nation of origin, class or party, military or financial power, or belonging to a religion. Laws will have to aim at the protection of humanity and prevent the entrepreneurial system from striving towards its only goal, profit at any cost. In short, economy and enterprises will be at the service of man and not man at the service of economy. Ethics at the service of the enterprise meant as a qualitative improvement of production and of earning and not as a means in itself. Ethics as a way of living and working in day-to-day business and not only on Sundays. Ethics as coherence in every

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<sup>61</sup> “...In every art and skill, God loveth the highest perfection”.  
Bahá'u'llah, *Bahá'i Education*, page 249.

day work activities. Ethics as methodology at work and in the relations among different professional categories. Ethics in the new paradigm of financial and company management of assets and tools, where work becomes a means to service, almost to the rank of “worship” when it is performed in the spirit of service for the betterment of society. Ethics as excellence in all things.

The term “ethics” deriving from the Greek “habit, way of life” “entered in common use with Aristotle who titled in this way his treatise of philosophy in practice” (Guido Calogero, *Enciclopedia Italiana* 14 [Treves, Treccani, Tumminelli, 1932]: 447, s.v. “etica”). Since then the term has remained an acquired term within philosophy, just like that part of philosophy “that after logic, doctrine of knowledge, and physics, doctrine of reality, established how mankind had to practically behave vis a vis this new reality” (ibid.). The term, often also identified as morality, has there been “consecrated as a technical term for the designation of every doctrine that is speculatively elaborated around the problem of the practical behaviour of mankind” (ibid.). Therefore we can mean by the term ethics that area of moral philosophy that studies human behaviour, the science of habits and of social relationships.

We ask ourselves if together with this definition, there exist possible modifications of the meaning of ethics in this modern world characterized by rapid changes. The personal choice that directs the behaviours in specific social situations is generally based upon moral principles of a religious kind, that differ in the different regions of the planet. For example in the West a behaviour is considered as ethical if it is in harmony with some of the laws deriving from the Jewish-Christian behavioural codes of the Old and New Testament, as per the example of the ten commandments. In Muslim countries the ethical behaviour depends on the coherence with the laws of the Koran, the sacred book of the Muslims, and so on in the various parts of the planet. In the West another generic “good ethical behaviour” has been come about, meant as “good human behaviour”, independently of moral considerations of a religious kind linked instead to the “common sense of the father of the family.” An innovative structure of ethics can be found in the writings of Bahá’u’lláh. He wrote many pages on many subjects, from which one can note that

### **Ethics derives from justice.**

Therefore to examine the field of ethics, we need to first examine, that of justice. Therefore the study of ethics can be divided into two specific fields:

### **Justice at individual level And collective justice.**

The need for this distinction arises from the difference between ethics at the individual level and ethics at the collective or group level. We can now deepen together the main definitions of justice, and of ethics, where it stems from, in the light of Bahá’u’lláh’s writings:

## A. At the individual level

At the individual level, justice is that faculty of the human soul that enables each person to distinguish truth from falsehood. In the sight of God, Bahá'u'lláh avers, justice is “the best beloved of all things” since it permits each individual to see with his own eyes rather than the eyes of others, to know through his own knowledge rather than the knowledge of his neighbor or his group. It calls for fair-mindedness in one’s judgments, for equity in one’s treatment of others, and is thus a constant if demanding companion in the daily occasions of life (Bahá’í International Community, “The Prosperity of Humankind,” *The Bahá’í World 1994-5. An International Record* [Bahá’í World Centre, Haifa 1996] 279).

In order to make possible the realization of the conditions outlined in the definition of justice at the individual level (“faculty of the human soul that enables each person to distinguish truth from falsehood”) it is necessary to be in possession of the necessary means in order to “distinguish truth from falsehood.” These means are available, but need to be developed. Therefore justice implies a “research,” that is at personal level a “free and independent search for the truth” through the two instruments available to human beings: the intellectual abilities (intelligence, knowledge) and the interior abilities (talents and spiritual qualities).

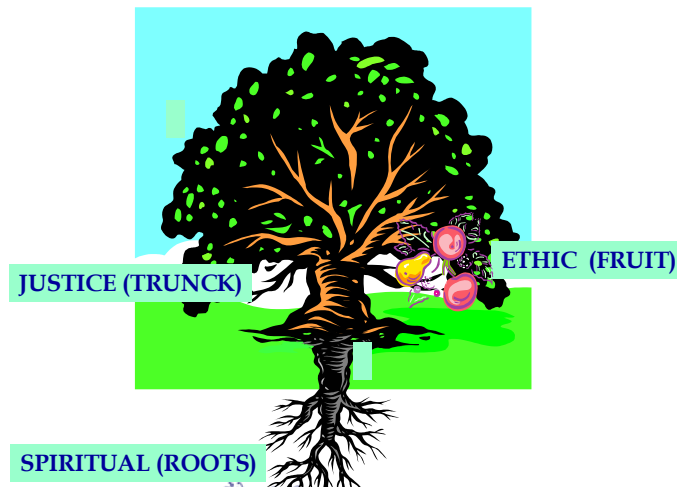
In the Seven Valleys, one of His Writings that outlines the synthesis of the seven stages that each human being goes through in his search for the objective of life, until he reaches the ocean of his “true knowledge,” Bahá'u'lláh describes as the first stage of this voyage “the Valley of Search,” Without this valley, and without exercising patience in this search, “the wayfarer on this journey will reach nowhere and attain no goal” (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Seven Valleys and The Four Valleys*, rev. ed. [Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1991] 5). In this phase the “the seeker reacheth a stage wherein he seeth all created things” (ibid. 5). It is at this stage that the ability of the human soul that allows each person to distinguish between “true and false” starts to bear its fruits. In this phase, the human being starts to “know ignorance and knowledge,” “doubt and certitude” arriving, at the same time to distinguish between “the morn of guidance from the night of error” (ibid. 8). Proceeding then through the other valleys he will start to “to come out of doubt into certitude” (ibid. 11), which is what will allow him to be able to distinguish between “true and false.”

With time, those who walk this journey and who start to use this “faculty” gain a very powerful instrument, the “true knowledge,” that will allow them to distinguish between “true and false.” They therefore become “aware” and know how to decide between true and false in their daily actions. In this way they acquire the ability to adopt a personal behaviour that is ethically correct. If we want to use a metaphor, we can say that the roots of a plant, well planted in the ground and well nourished, will produce a strong tree and therefore tasty and nourishing fruits. Well, the roots are the “spiritual faculty of justice at the individual level,” the trunk is the faculty to “distinguish between right and false” and the fruit is the “individual ethical behaviour.” The fruit is excellent if the entire structure

of the plant is harmonious and complete. Therefore we can conclude that ethics at the individual level is the first fruit of justice. And in turn, justice is an attribute of God. Baha'u'llah says in the Hidden words:

“ O son of spirit! The best beloved of all things in My sight is justice, turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour...”

*(Baha'u'llah : Hidden words from Arabic n.2 )*



the diagram of the metaphor

He who has acquired the personal ability to distinguish between true and false, that is, justice, can be defined as an ethical person. Wherever one operates, in their personal life, in the family, in the company where he works, in society at large, this person will behave in an ethical manner producing positive actions and events that promote the wellbeing of the society that surrounds it. But the choice of making this journey can only be voluntary and personal.

B. at the collective level.

From the writings of Bahá'u'lláh we can deduce the following definition of justice at collective level:

At the group level, a concern for justice is the indispensable compass in collective decision making, because it is the only means by which unity of thought and action can be achieved. Far from encouraging the punitive spirit that has often masqueraded under its name in past ages, justice is the practical expression of awareness that, in the achievement of human progress, the interests of the individual and those of society are inextricably linked. To the extent that justice becomes a guiding concern of human interaction, a consultative climate is

encouraged that permits options to be examined dispassionately and appropriate courses of action selected . . . Concern for justice protects the task of defining progress from the temptation to sacrifice the well-being of the generality of humankind -- and even of the planet itself -- to the advantages which technological breakthroughs can make available to privileged minorities. In design and planning, it ensures that limited resources are not diverted to the pursuit of projects extraneous to a community's essential social or economic priorities (Bahá'í International Community, "The Prosperity of Humankind," *Bahá'í World 1994-5* 279).

If from the Baha'i writings we deduce that "At the group level, a concern for justice is the indispensable compass in collective decision making, because it is the only means by which unity of thought and action can be achieved," as a consequence we need to examine what is "the group," what does this "collective" term and specifically what does "collective" mean today and how this concept of "collective" has taken shape over the centuries. Examining the thinking of Bahá'u'lláh we can say that He intended the "theory of collective evolution" and of the systemic vision of the world, as to say the unification of the entire humankind.

As we have seen, the promotion of an individual ethical behaviour, even though necessary, can nonetheless be considered as insufficient, on its own, for an effective promotion of an ethical group behaviour, able to change the aspect of life for the inhabitants of the planet. It is indispensable to integrate ethics at the individual level with ethics at the collective level, involving the consciences of each human being and, necessarily, underlying in any case the inherent dignity of each individual without distinctions, realising his intrinsic value and innate abilities. And given that this is applicable for each human being, we can declare that this perspective is in line with the principle of the unity of the human race, the fundamental principle for anything relating to ethics and to justice.

The principle of the unity of the human race, far from being a mere rhetorical enunciation for utopian hopes, is shaping current education and is destined to increasingly inspire educational and ethical projects and programs. The only guiding principle that can guide our concrete replies to this fundamental question is the principle of the unity of the human race, that forms the basis of the fact that all human beings belong to the same human species representing to a maximum extent its system of aggregation where the concept of unity in diversity finds its maximum realisation.

Adhering to the principle of the unity of the human race means recognising today that human beings are essentially spiritual beings and therefore the spiritual aspect of human reality, when considered of utmost importance, is the best basis to pursue the balance between the material aspects of life. It is evident that the forces that are pushing progress towards world unity induce us not only to continue in the knowledge and application of the interior virtues at a personal level, but also to give particular relevance to the qualities that come into play in the relationships between the components of different groups and different interests that each one of those components represents. It therefore becomes



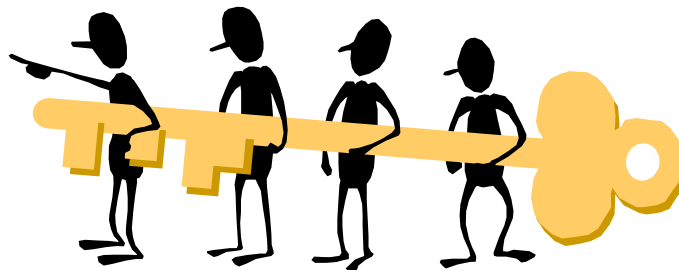
evident how the two poles of “individual” and “collectivity” (and as a consequence the two ethics, personal and collective) are intrinsically linked and will never reach a sustainable development, if the two ethics will not march side by side: individual awareness and sustainable development.

In the light of this new paradigm, even the conception of leadership is destined to be affected by a deep transformation. Talking of “ethical leadership” nowadays appears as a contradiction, given the heightened state of corruption in the political, business, religious fields in every part of the world. Leadership has been thought of, for far too long, as a means of power and control over others and has operated in that sense centralizing the decision making power and forcing others to uniform themselves to it, assuming a number of such expressions that include for example autocracy, paternalism, totalitarianism, the manipulation of mass-media or of the positions of “expertise.”



Graph .6

The new paradigm of leadership, on the contrary, means that the leader, today, must be concerned above all with the aim of serving the community, rather than creating the maximum possible short term return for himself or for his own ideas or for his own career and personal privileges. His main duty has to be that of serving in the best possible interests of the entire system, rather than of a single ideology, side, party, company, nation.



Graph n.7

But this will only occur when everyone will have understood the true meaning of individual ethics and collective ethics passing through the search for truth, described at the beginning of this article, and through the vision of the collective process that in the words of Bahá'u'lláh expresses itself with these words written more than a century ago:

The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established (Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings* 286).

Signs of this kind of renewal appear almost everywhere, even if it is still in a speculative sense.

The speculative movement goes hand in hand with the transformation of the international and national economic world which is turning more and more to complex organic forms where the individual tends to disappear. In this system the organism replaces the individual and therefore collaboration must be replaced by anarchy and the violent struggle of unscrupulous competition.

This doesn't mean competition should be eliminated from this new life and from the new economic science. On the contrary, its fundamental importance has never been felt as it has today, but we begin to understand that even competition is only a tool on the way to reaching a common goal and it should be used within the limits imposed by the discipline of quality control.

But above and beyond such economic unity, the demand for another unity, deeper and historically unmistakable from others asserts itself: The state, within which individual life resumes, no longer conceived according to the creed of Enlightenment.

The nation that in its evolution has gone from simple to more and more complex forms in order to achieve its more important form: the World State.

In an effort to better explain with a few examples, we should say that the dramatization of the energetic problems is often attributed to the interests of these trusts that monopolize the sources of raw materials.

Among the several problems governments are incapable of solving overwhelmed by the influence of the multinationals, there is, for example, that of nuclear energy. Given that the issue is not solvable within independent and separate national politics (but involves choices burdening the entire world population), we should remember that on Earth there are sources of energy that are not yet fully utilized.

For example there are some rivers that have unlimited storage of clean hydroelectric power, but the nations that have those resources lack international agreements, and it is difficult for them to get the necessary finances to invest in the full exploitation of the latent resources they possess.

It is natural that when the sources of energy currently in use are on the way to being exhausted and it will be necessary to turn to new sources, such as nuclear power, only a

world strategy based on the cooperation of scientists from all the countries of the world, no one excluded, can guarantee the establishment of reliable and safe installations. Furthermore, thanks to this same cooperation those choices can be made which are capable of solving the problem without neglecting psychological and physical impact. The discovery and employment of not completely controllable forms of energy and the use of unreliable installations (from processes conflicting with nature that are also at high risk for irremediable environmental pollution) make us rethink about an extract from Baha'u'llah 's writings in which He stated in the last century: "Strange and astonishing things exist in the earth but they are hidden from the minds and the understanding of men. These things are capable of changing the whole atmosphere of the earth and their contamination would prove lethal"<sup>62</sup>.

"Scientific discoveries have greatly increased material civilization. There is in existence a stupendous force, as yet, happily, undiscovered by man. Let us supplicate God, the Beloved, that this force be not be discovered by science until Spiritual Civilization shall dominate the human mind. In the hands of men of lower material nature, this power would be able to destroy the whole earth!"<sup>63</sup>

It is in the interest of the entire human race that energetic research should be based on the principle of entopic harmony, through an international coordination of the Supreme State. Moreover, it is foreseen in a world so formulated the expansion of an efficient and rapid general system of transportation and communication, that promotes the economic development of all the countries of the world which are still behind<sup>64</sup>.

National and International executives will supervise freedom and impartiality of the press, the only channel that can offer everyone the necessary information, without restrictions or manipulation on the side of party interests.<sup>65</sup>

"The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing"<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>62</sup> Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 69.

<sup>63</sup> Abdul' Baha in *The Baha'i World*, vol.VI, page 657.

<sup>64</sup> "A mechanism of world inter-communication will be devised, embracing the whole planet, freed from national hindrances and restrictions, and functioning with marvellous swiftness and perfect regularity". Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the nations*, Part V.

<sup>65</sup> "The press will, under such a system, while giving full scope to the expression of the diversified views and convictions of mankind, cease to be mischievously manipulated by vested interests, whether private or public, and will be liberated from the influence of contending governments and peoples". Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the nations*, Part V.

<sup>66</sup> "In this Day the secrets of the earth are laid bare before the eyes of men. The pages of swiftly-appearing newspapers are indeed the mirror of the world. They reflect the deeds and the pursuits of divers peoples and kindreds. They both reflect them and make them known. They are a mirror endowed with hearing, sight and speech. This is an amazing and potent phenomenon. However, it behoveth the writers thereof to be purged from the promptings of evil passions and desires and to be attired with the raiment of justice and equity. They should enquire into situations as much as possible and ascertain the facts, then set them down in writing". Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, pages 39-40

School and educational systems will go through radical changes as well. In fact education will be compulsory for all the children of the Earth at the expense of the Supreme State whenever families can't afford to sustain it<sup>67</sup>.

Programs of study will gradually have to become uniform in all Nations, and through the teaching of one auxiliary international script and language in addition to their own<sup>68</sup>, the men and women of the world could finally clearly understand one another, maintaining at the same time their own peculiar diversities.

This principle of compulsory universal education will allow optimizing the use of all the potential at the disposal of human kind: the force and the capability of intellect. The fundamental causes of the current and very severe disparities in the distribution of wealth among the people of the world lie in the wide differences which exist in the level of instruction<sup>69</sup>.

But Baha'u'llah's concept of education is not just imposing learning on a child, as is today's practice, but to unveil his potentialities<sup>70</sup>.

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<sup>67</sup> a) "In keeping with the requirements of the times, consideration should also be given to teaching the concept of world citizenship as part of the standard education of every child"  
Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 9.

b) "Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing and in all that hath been laid down in the Holy Tablet. He that putteth away that which is commanded unto him, the Trustees are then to take from him that which is required for their instruction, if he be wealthy, and if not the matter devolveth upon the House of Justice". Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 128.

<sup>68</sup> a) "Among the things which are conducive to unity and concord and will cause the whole earth to be regarded as one country is that the divers languages be reduced to one language and in like manner the scripts used in the world be confined to a single script. It is incumbent upon all nations to appoint some men of understanding and erudition to convene a gathering and through joint consultation choose one language from among the varied existing languages, or create a new one, to be taught to the children in all the schools of the world. The day is approaching when all the peoples of the world will have adopted one universal language and one common script. When this is achieved, to whatsoever city a man may journey, it shall be as if he were entering his own home. These things are obligatory and absolutely essential. Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, pages 165-166.

b) "A fundamental lack of communication between peoples seriously undermines efforts towards world peace. Adopting an international auxiliary language would go far to resolving this problem and necessitates the most urgent attention". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 9.

c) "A world language will either be invented or chosen from among the existing languages and will be taught in the schools of all the federated nations as an auxiliary to their mother tongue. A world script, a world literature, a uniform and universal system of currency, of weights and measures, will simplify and facilitate intercourse and understanding among the nations and races of mankind". Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, page 203.

<sup>69</sup> "The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war. Few societies have dealt effectively with this situation. The solution calls for the combined application of spiritual, moral and practical approaches".  
Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 8.

<sup>70</sup> "Man is the supreme Talisman. Lack of a proper education hath, however, deprived him of that which he doth inherently possess... Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom".  
Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 162 and 161.

This way, through proper world legislation no person will be found without an education, incapable of doing work useful to him and to humanity<sup>71</sup>. Through the same programs of study, an equal diffusion of culture will be assured among all the men and women on Earth. Schools so organized will work, with families, not only on general training, but also on the moral education of children and youth. The new educational system, besides collecting, storing, and using cultural reserves of isolated facts will stimulate the analysis of fluctuations of phenomena that can connect them, because the world will be no longer seen as a series of isolated casual relationships but as a broader weaving of dynamic phenomena, linked to one another.

Therefore, study will mostly be finalized as a tool for understanding the world of nature we belong to, and learning as progress will be replaced by an on going process of becoming, focusing on fluctuations of the metaphysical world, through the principle Baha'u'llah calls religious, economical, social, scientific "free and independent search for truth"<sup>72</sup>. Energy and human resources, which come from every corner of the planet, will be available in order to be used in various scientific fields and not to be wasted in wars and in social and economic disorganization. In this way, it will be easier to broaden scientific research, to improve the level of health, to prolong the duration of life, to refine and perfect the mind, to improve the quality of productivity, to discover and use with intelligence the resources of the planet as yet undiscovered and unused and to sponsor any achievement which can stimulate the spiritual, moral and intellectual life of humanity<sup>73</sup>.

According to this concept of the world, the reason of State will no longer be permitted as a way of justifying on a political level any behavior that is contrary to the moral code of the supreme state. Moreover there will be international laws that will regulate capital-work and the organization of resources<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>71</sup> "The cause of universal education, which has already enlisted in its service an army of dedicated people from every faith and nation, deserves the utmost support that the governments of the world can lend it. For ignorance is indisputably the principal reason for the decline and fall of peoples and the perpetuation of prejudice. No nation can achieve success unless education is accorded all its citizens".

Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 9.

<sup>72</sup> "O My brother! When a true seeker determineth to take the step of search in the path leading unto the knowledge of the Ancient of Days, he must, before all else, cleanse his heart, which is the seat of the revelation of the inner mysteries of God, from the obscuring dust of all acquired knowledge, and the allusions of the embodiments of satanic fancy. He must purge his breast, which is the sanctuary of the abiding love of the Beloved, of every defilement, and sanctify his soul from all that pertaineth to water and clay, from all shadowy and ephemeral attachments. He must so cleanse his heart that no remnant of either love or hate may linger therein, lest that love blindly incline him to error, or that hate repel him away from the truth".

Baha'u'llah, *Gleanings*, page 264.

<sup>73</sup> "The enormous energy dissipated and wasted on war, whether economic or political, will be consecrated to such ends as will extend the range of human inventions and technical development, to the increase of the productivity of mankind, to the extermination of disease, to the extension of scientific research, to the raising of the standard of physical health, to the sharpening and refinement of the human brain, to the exploitation of the unused and unsuspected resources of the planet, to the prolongation of human life, and to the furtherance of any other agency that can stimulate the intellectual, the moral, and spiritual life of the entire human race". Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the nations*, Part V.

<sup>74</sup> "The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated". Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part V.

Preparing the basis for a world civilization demands the creation of laws and institutions that have universal authority and characteristics. This venture can only begin when the concept of the unity of human kind will be completely accepted<sup>75</sup>.

Justice is the only force that can transform the awareness of the dawning of the unity of human kind into a collective willingness thanks to which the necessary structures of a world community life can be faithfully erected. An era that sees the people of the world easily obtaining more and more access to any kind of information and to a large variety of ideas will see justice as the dominant principle of a profitable social organization. Ever more often, any proposal meant to bring development to the planet will have to undergo the clear scrutiny demanded by justice. On an individual level, as we said, justice is that faculty of the human soul that allows each person to distinguish truth from falsehood. It requires impartiality in judgment, equity in dealing with others, and it is therefore a constant, and yet demanding, companion in daily happenings.

On a group level, respect for justice, as we said, is an indispensable compass in the collective decision-making process, because it is the only tool for attaining unity of thought and action. Far from encouraging that punitive spirit that often in past eras was disguised under its name, justice is the practical expression of awareness that, in the pursuance of human progress, the interests of the individual and of society are inseparably linked.

Insofar as justice becomes the fundamental principle of human interaction, this encourages a consultative atmosphere that allows an impartial examination of options and a choice of the most proper courses of actions. In this climate the probabilities that the perennial tendencies towards manipulation and the spirit of side-taking can lead the decision-making process astray are sharply reduced. The implications in terms of economic and social development are profound. Respect for justice is a protection against defining progress as the temptation to sacrifice the well-being of the majority of humankind and of the planet for the advantages that technological victories can put at disposal of privileged minorities. In designing and planning, respect for justice assures that resources, already limited, are not diverted towards the pursuit of projects extraneous to the essential social or economical priorities of the community. Above all, only development programs that are considered adequate to the needs of the masses of humanity and which are just and equal in their goals can hope to attain the commitment of those masses on which their application depends<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> "Laying the groundwork for global civilization calls for the creation of laws and institutions that are universal in both character and authority. The effort can begin only when the concept of the oneness of humanity has been wholeheartedly embraced by those in whose hands the responsibility for decision making rests..." Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

<sup>76</sup> "Justice is the one power that can translate the dawning consciousness of humanity's oneness into a collective will through which the necessary structures of global community life can be confidently erected. An age that sees the people of the world increasingly gaining access to information of every kind and to a diversity of ideas will find justice asserting itself as the ruling principle of successful social organisation. With ever greater frequency, proposals aiming at the development of the planet will have to submit to the candid light of the standards it requires. At the individual level, justice is that faculty of the human soul that enables each person to distinguish truth from falsehood. In the sight of God, Bahá'u'lláh avers, Justice is *"the best beloved of all things"* since it permits each individual to see with his own eyes rather than the eyes of others, to know through his own knowledge rather than the knowledge of his neighbour or his group. It calls for fair-mindedness in one's judgements, for equity in one's treatment of others, and is thus a constant if demanding companion in the daily occasions of life. At the group level, a concern for justice is the indispensable

With such affirmations, the driving force of evolution, which has historically been considered as the economy, is redefined. All progress in our evolution, until today, has basically been driven by the economy. Today we replace economy with justice. It is justice that today becomes the driving force of evolution. We must turn to it in the leap towards world unity. Human qualities such as honesty, willingness to work and spirit of collaboration will be profitably used for the realization of highly demanding common goals, only when each member of society can faithfully expect protection and can enjoy benefits that are equal for everybody.

Elaboration of this strategy requires that each human being can benefit from the necessary freedom of thought and action for his own spiritual growth without, however, leading the individual to the cult of individualism nor deifying the state as the source of all progress. Only in a consultative framework, made possible by the awareness of the oneness of mankind, will all related members, in respect of human rights, find legitimate creative expression. Therefore universal education, freedom of movement, access to information and the possibility of taking part in political life are only one part of the aspects that require an explicit guarantee on the part of the international community.

It is obvious that in this world of confederated states, educational, cultural, and customs barriers won't exist and in order to obtain this, an equal distribution of wealth will not only be necessary, but it will also be crucial to reviewing the system of taxation<sup>77</sup>.

The method anticipated by Bahá'u'lláh is based on the increase of wealth; and that is each citizen will have to pay not on the basis of his income, but on the basis of how much is left after deducting the expenses that he sustains in order to live<sup>78</sup>.

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compass in collective decision-making, because it is the only means by which unity of thought and action can be achieved. Far from encouraging the punitive spirit that has often masqueraded under its name in past ages, justice is the practical expression of awareness that, in the achievement of human progress, the interests of the individual and those of society are inextricably linked. To the extent that justice becomes a guiding concern of human interaction, a consultative climate is encouraged that permits options to be examined dispassionately and appropriate courses of action selected. In such a climate the perennial tendencies toward manipulation and partisanship are far less likely to deflect the decision-making process. The implications for social and economic development are profound. Concern for justice protects the task of defining progress from the temptation to sacrifice the well-being of the generality of humankind -- and even of the planet itself -- to the advantages which technological breakthroughs can make available to privileged minorities. In design and planning, it ensures that limited resources are not diverted to the pursuit of projects extraneous to a community's essential social or economic priorities. Above all, only development programmes that are perceived as meeting their needs and as being just and equitable in objective can hope to engage the commitment of the masses of humanity, upon whom implementation depends". Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

<sup>77</sup> a) "Then rules and laws should be established to regulate the excessive fortunes of certain private individuals and meet the needs of millions of the poor masses; thus a certain moderation would be obtained". Abdul'Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 274.

b) All must be producers. Each person in the community whose need is equal to his individual producing capacity shall be exempt from taxation. But if his income is greater than his needs, he must pay a tax until an adjustment is effected. That is to say, a man's capacity for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation. If his production exceeds, he will pay a tax; if his necessities exceed his production, he shall receive an amount sufficient to equalize or adjust. Therefore, taxation will be proportionate to capacity and production, and there will be no poor in the community. 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, page 217.

<sup>78</sup> "Tax must be levied in proportion to the excess of the income over the needs of the person taxed. If a man has an income of 2,000 \$ and expenses of 2,000\$, he shall not be taxed at all. But if he has an income of 10,000 \$ and

In other words, each one will pay taxes on the excess money earned in proportion to his own needs. It is clear that the application of this concept requires two fundamental conditions: the first one is that each citizen is honest towards the government in declaring how much is left or how much he has saved, namely, the actual taxable income; the second one is that each citizen respects the entropic concept of balance and frugality and therefore doesn't consume all of what he earns, only in order not to pay taxes to the government. The economist Kalecky, in his 1937 essay entitled "theory of taxes on consumer goods, on income and on capital" separately examines the effects that taxes on consumer goods, taxes on income and taxes on capital have on the economy of a nation, on employment and on distribution of income to determine whether such fiscal measures reach the target of improving the level of well-being among the people in the country. Generally economists study models that should contribute to the improvement of living conditions and investigate strategies to pursue the objective of full employment.

However, in the science of economics, several unexpected variables interact, so that, as Keynes JM affirms in his basic text "General theory of employment, interest and currency", it is often impossible to submit one's own ideas to a conclusive test, either formal or experimental, as occurs in such exact sciences such as chemistry, mathematics and physics. However one can formulate, as much as possible, theoretical models of reference aimed at representing reality.

In any case, it is true that it is not possible to simulate theories in order to analyse their correctness and truthfulness. Kalecky's study analyses the effect of taxes on consumer goods, taxes on income and taxes on capital, which are the three taxes most in use in several countries and are applied by governments in different forms, amounts and conditions.

For those who are not experts in the field, applying taxes on consumer goods means taxing sales; a current example is the value added tax. Tax on income means taxing base salaries and wages of individuals or company profit using increased percentages, regardless of consumption or of living costs. Tax on capital means applying a taxation system on the properties of individual citizens and societies.

Currently none of these three systems applied singly or together satisfies governments and, even less, citizens.

The government is not content with the quantity of money that the three cumulative taxes give to it: it is not guaranteed, in fact, that everybody pays equally. Besides, this procedure continually requires new and ever more complex rules and laws to control what each citizen pays. The citizens think they are taxed three times more than what is due when they pay the three or more taxes or that they pay unfairly, when they have low income, no properties and small consumption.

The system prospected by Baha'u'llah through the payment of one tax: Huququ'llah (the right of God)<sup>79</sup>, implies the secret and voluntary payment of a tax on the increase of

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expences of 2,000 \$ or 5,000 \$, he shall be taxed on the amount left from his expences...If a man has expences of 2,000 a year and his income has been cut down to one, he draws the necessary surplus from the common funds, until his affairs are adjusted and he in turn has a surplus."

Abdul'Baha, *The economic teachings of Abdul'Baha, Star of the West*, Vol. V, 21st March 1917, page 12.

<sup>79</sup> "Should anyone acquire one hundred mithqals of gold, nineteen mithqals thereof are God's and to be rendered unto Him, the Fashioner of earth and heaven".  
Baha'u'llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, page 55.



wealth: “ what is left after deducting expenses”. According to studies carried out on mathematical models based on those used by Kalecky, it is shown that a taxation system similar to Huququllah has greater advantages, because it produces benefits that will return to the same individuals, through their personal voluntary donations. As this method doesn't foresee the request of mandatory payment of the Huquq, each individual is free to give the sum in the most favorable period for him, thus respecting one of the classical principles already supported in 1776 by the famous economist Smith, namely that “ each tax should be collected in whatever time and way is probably more convenient for the taxpayer”.

This principle is not observed by governments that have to deal with the pressing and continuous financial demands of public affairs, at the same time generating discontent in the taxpayer who sees himself as being persecuted and sometimes fined if he doesn't live up to the expected requirements in terms of sums and times of payment.

It is interesting to study further the system formulated by Baha'u'llah, because it can be called innovative: in fact it is not modeled on the basis of patterns currently in use. Moreover it incorporates, reconciles and assimilates the healthy elements that can be found in each of these. The advantage of Huquq, compared to the three above-mentioned taxes, represents a minor sacrifice, inasmuch as only those who benefit from an increase in wealth are called upon to contribute to the happiness of others. It is very important to observe the new spirit with which this law upsets the entire coercive fiscal system now existing in the world. It is interesting to mention, on this subject, the famous economist Keynes' opinion on acceptance of new ideas without prejudices: “ the difficulty doesn't lie in the new ideas, but to avoid old ones which, for those who have been so educated as the majority of us have been, branch out into every corner of our minds”.

This new taxation system, for fairness sake, also foresees that any citizen who is found, because of accidental circumstances and independent from his will, with an income insufficient to cover his living expenses, will have the right to withdraw the money he needs from government funds within the limits of moderation. This is a far more progressive system than the concept of poverty, unemployment and disability allowances. However, this is a system that requires a much more civic and spiritual maturity than that which the average citizen demonstrates today. Expenses that local institutions will have to deal with through their citizens' taxes will all be local. In addition, education for all resident children, the amounts due to all of those that, in spite of their commitment at work, don't make enough to live on, the amounts to support the disabled and orphans will be guaranteed. Again, amounts for the support of the severely handicapped who are not able to work, expenses for local public safety, local public hygiene, reclamation, investments in favor of institutions necessary to guarantee a decent quality of life for all resident citizens will be guaranteed<sup>80</sup>.

Health-care systems, moreover, won't be concentrated in large national units but will be locally organized, eliminating the huge high entropy and energetic waste of mega organizations. A cozier environment and the role of the good family doctor will be rediscovered<sup>81</sup>.

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■ . The economic resources of the world will be organized, its sources of raw materials will be tapped and fully utilized, its markets will be coordinated and developed, and the distribution of its products will be equitably regulated

<sup>81</sup> Baha'u'llah, *Kitab-i-Aqdas*, page 54.

If, at the conclusion of a local yearly administrative cycle, expenses should be inferior to profits, what is left could be deposited in national institutions. The functioning is the same as that which has already been explained for the local institution. At the same rate, it will be possible to help local institutions that might turn out with a negative balance. In like manner, a national institution, at the end of its administrative cycle, will deposit its extra funds in the Supreme State, that will apply the same principle on a world level, contributing to those national institutions in trouble. In this way there will be more fairness in taxation in various localities: the richer ones will pay more taxes than those that are less wealthy and less fortunate. This kind of organization has the advantage of favoring at any level, individual, local or national, an equal distribution of protection to all those who, though working with dignity, might find themselves in need and to guarantee basic services.

Therefore the future world won't favor the development of high entropy, large metropolises, but will give more importance to local economy, allowing it to be more autonomous than it is now.

The Baha'i social-political system will also include a transformation of national governments: many of their prerogatives will be voluntarily surrendered<sup>82</sup>, partly to the supreme state and partly to the local institutions, that, as we have said, will have greater autonomy, while national institutions will have the job of coordinating and organizing local institutions and acting as intermediaries among the latter and the international institutions described in previous outlines. It won't be an impersonal and anonymous world, where the value of the individual can get lost in the intricacies of bureaucracy and disorganization as occurs today, or be stuck in the conspiracy of silence for the sake of already existing interest groups, factions, and parties.

There will be much higher probabilities that the dignity and the value of each individual will be brought to light, in an organization that expresses in the same principle the maximum of decentralization. Each Baha'i month the entire community is invited to a meeting during which citizens will hear a detailed report on what has been or hasn't been done in the community throughout the previous month and eventually, each of them will be able to freely express his own opinions on topics that are of common interest and offer those suggestions he deems useful. These suggestions, if accepted by the entire assembly or by the majority, will be properly presented to the local institutions that, elected every year by all citizens, among all citizens, without candidatures and propaganda, will discuss the issues and will make proper decisions<sup>83</sup>.

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<sup>82</sup> "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".  
Shoghi Effendi, *World Order of Baha'u'llah*, Pages 40-41.

<sup>83</sup> a) The chief opportunity which the friends have for discussion on administrative questions is during the Nineteen Day Feasts, at which time the members of the Assembly can meet with the body of the believers and discuss in common the affairs of the Cause, and suggest new policies and methods. But even then no reference to individuals should be made.  
Shoghi Effendi, *Nineteen Day Feast*, page 452.

b) So they (members) must confer and consult in such a way that neither disagreement nor abhorrence may occur. When meeting for consultation, each must use perfect liberty in stating his views and unveiling the proof of his demonstration. If another contradicts him, he must not become excited because if there be no investigation or

Through this system, in small groups, even in large cities, not only will bureaucracy, administrative privileges, individual and collective local powers be eliminated, but the active participation of individuals will increase, so that through their ideas they will contribute to solving the problems in their community. The ideas and proposals of a citizen, once accepted by the majority and having become public won't be the possession of those who have expressed them, but of the entire assembly. This detail eliminates praise and criticism, victory and defeat, prestige and contempt, power and authority to those who have brought up the proposal, thus avoiding the formation of winning or opposing groups so diffused nowadays and extremely harmful to a good social politic in favor of people. While it will be possible, through proper international legislation, to eliminate economic differences among states, it will be impossible to obtain the same for individuals, through the emanation of a law. It is not through compulsion that the submission to a law and its application on the part of citizens will be reached. Legislative compulsion, meaning obliging the rich in the name of the law to limit their wealth in favor of the less fortunate, or obliging a people to limit their needs in favor of a more equal distribution of resources, can only nurture that conflict and animosity that are so detrimental to equilibrium and peace. This goal can only be attained through the decision of an individual to willing submit to laws whose main purpose is the equal distribution of resources and wealth<sup>84</sup>.

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verification of questions and matters, the agreeable view will not be discovered neither understood. The brilliant light which comes from the collision of thoughts is the "lightener" of facts.

'Abdu'l-Baha, *Baha'i World Faith*, page 406.

c) "Consultation, frank and unfettered, is the bedrock of this unique Order".  
Shoghi Effendi, *National Spiritual Assembly*, page 104.

d) "The Baha'is must learn to forget personalities and to overcome the desire - so natural in people - to take sides and fight about it. They must also learn to really make use of the great principle of consultation. There is a time set aside at the 19 Day Feasts for the Community to express its views and make suggestions to its Assembly..."

Shoghi Effendi, *Light of Divine Guidance Vol.1*, page 152.

<sup>84</sup> a) "...the Teachings of Baha'u'llah advocate voluntary sharing, and this is a greater thing than the equalization of wealth. For equalization must be imposed from without, while sharing is a matter of free choice. Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely-chosen expending of one's substance, leadeth to society's comfort and peace. It lighteth up the world; it bestoweth honour upon humankind".

'Abdu'l-Baha, *Selections from the writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha*, page 115.

b) "But in the divine teachings equality is brought about through a ready willingness to share. It is commanded as regards wealth that the rich among the people, and the aristocrats should, by their own free will and for the sake of their own happiness, concern themselves with and care for the poor. This equality is the result of the lofty characteristics and noble attributes of mankind".

'Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 44.

c) "Is it possible that, seeing one of his fellow-creatures starving, destitute of everything, a man can rest and live comfortably in his luxurious mansion? He who meets another in the greatest misery, can he enjoy his fortune? That is why, in the Religion of God, it is prescribed and established that wealthy men each year give over a certain part of their fortune for the maintenance of the poor and unfortunate".

'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 277.

Private property will not be eliminated in the system we have been outlining, nor will free initiative or the lawful loaning of money at interest<sup>85</sup>; on the contrary, Baha'u'llah affirms that to violate the property of others is an infraction of spiritual laws<sup>86</sup> and affirms that man must place his own ingenuity at the service of humanity, pursuing his vocation with dedication and spending his own money, earned by work, on himself, his family and his fellow creatures<sup>87</sup>.

In this new kind of culture, the concept of private property is preserved for consumer goods, for services and for those things necessary for a dignified life; but, as has already been said, not for renewable resources and underground wealth.

Individual rights are protected by a world legislature, but they are no longer considered the exclusive point of reference for judging society. The orthodox economic concept for which the private interests of each individual, when added one to the other, always serve the good of the community is looked upon with suspicion.

In fact, Baha'u'llah indicates a system for an equal redistribution of wealth in the laws of inheritance<sup>88</sup>.

Owners of large companies will have to leave a large part of their industrial patrimony to their employees and workforce who contributed to create their wealth<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>a) "One can seldom find a person who would manifest such consideration towards his fellow-man, his countryman or towards his own brother and would show such tender solicitude for him as to be well-disposed to grant him a loan on benevolent terms. Therefore as a token of favour towards men We have prescribed that interest on money should be treated like other business transactions that are current amongst men".  
Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 133.

b) "Thus, now that this lucid commandment hath descended from the heaven of the Will of God, it is lawful and proper to charge interest on money, that the people of the world may, in a spirit of amity and fellowship and with joy and gladness, devotedly engage themselves in magnifying the Name of Him Who is the Well-Beloved of all mankind. Verily He ordaineth according to His Own choosing. He hath now made interest on money lawful, even as He had made it unlawful in the past...However, this is a matter that should be practised with moderation and fairness".  
Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 133-134.

<sup>86</sup> "That is: no man should enter the house of his friend save at his friend's pleasure, nor lay hands upon his treasures nor prefer his own will to his friend's, and in no wise seek an advantage over him".  
Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian n.43.

<sup>87</sup> a) "The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds".  
Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian, n. 82.

b) "The most despised of men in the sight of God are those who sit idly and beg".  
Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 26.

c) "The basest of men are they that yield no fruit on earth. Such men are verily counted as among the dead...".  
Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian, n. 81.

<sup>88</sup> Baha'u'llah, *Kitab-i-Aqdas*, page 27.

<sup>89</sup> "A law will be made something like this, that he must leave one quarter only of his property to his family and the other three quarters must go to the factory workers who have created his wealth."  
Abdul'Baha, *The economic teachings of Abdul'Baha, Star of the West*, Vol. VIII, n.1 page 11.

This new way of viewing inheritance aims at avoiding the formation of family monopolies and the accumulation of huge sums of money in the hands of a few. The long accepted custom of privately exploiting “natural” resources will be replaced by the concept of public custody, large companies will be organized in a democratic way and the workforce and the employees will have the right to have a fair salary<sup>90</sup>. The fairness of salary is surely a very important concept, however, companies will have to pass part of the profits<sup>91</sup> on to workforce, besides paying a salary to their employees, fully respecting future international and national legislations, and allow a consultative participation in management. This is the best practical system to bind capital and labor in mutual collaboration, and at the same time avoid that the owners become extremely rich to the detriment of the workers as it is happening in industrial society. In this way the concept of collaboration will replace that of competition or of conflict regarding the relationship between capital and labor that throughout history has caused suffering and social lacerations<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>90</sup> a) “workmen should receive wages which assure them an adequate support and, when they cease work, becoming feeble or helpless, they should have sufficient benefits from the income of the industry; or the wages should be high enough to satisfy the workmen with the amount they receive so that they may themselves be able to put a little aside for days of want and helplessness”.

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 275.

b) “For instance, the manufacturers and the industrialists heap up a treasure each day, and the poor artisans do not gain their daily sustenance: that is the height of iniquity, and no just man can accept it. Therefore, laws and regulations should be established which would permit the workmen to receive from the factory owner their wages and a share in the fourth or the fifth part of the profits, according to the capacity of the factory; or in some other way the body of workmen and the manufacturers should share equitably the profits and advantages”.

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 274.

<sup>91</sup> “Also, every factory that has ten thousand shares will give two thousand shares of these ten thousand to its employees and will write the shares in their names, so that they may have them, and the rest will belong to the capitalists. Then at the end of the month or year whatever they may earn after the expenses and wages are paid, according to the number of shares...”

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 43.

<sup>92</sup> a) “God is not partial and is no respecter of persons. He has made provision for all. The harvest comes forth for everyone. The rain showers upon everybody and the heat of the sun is destined to warm everyone... we are all inhabiting one globe of earth. In reality we are one family and each one of us is a member of this family. We must all be in the greatest happiness and comfort, under a just rule and regulation which is according to the good pleasure of God, thus causing us to be happy, for this life is fleeting”.

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, page 41-42.

b) “though the body politic is one family yet because of lack of harmonious relations some members are comfortable and some in direst misery, some members are satisfied and some are hungry, some members are clothed in most costly garments and some families are in need of food and shelter. Why? Because this family lacks the necessary reciprocity and symmetry. This household is not well arranged. This household is not living under a perfect law. All the laws which are legislated do not ensure happiness. They do not provide comfort. Therefore a law must be given to this family by means of which all the members of this family will enjoy equal well-being and happiness”.

‘Abdu'l-Baha, *Foundations of World Unity*, pages 38-39.

c) “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”.

Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 167.

All possible divergences won't be dealt with by resorting to trade unions, which are always special interest organizations and are influenced by political parties, nor will they be dealt with by strikes and certainly not by conciliatory lockouts, but through direct agreement among the parties involved, without intermediaries or through legal and executive bodies which will solve the problem through an arbitrary procedure which each opponent will have to adhere to<sup>93</sup>. It would be utopian thinking that the goal of social justice can be reached rapidly and easily. First, a process of collective and individual education and maturation will be necessary and perhaps the fear of other world wars will encourage the acceptance of this new world model.<sup>94</sup>

This situation won't be determined miraculously but only through the conscious effort made by humanity in this direction. It will be the fruit of a long and surely demanding evolution which might begin with the moment many of us realize the advantages that all will have, even according to the selfish terms in use today and which we don't seem to want to give up, by favoring the social and economic development of other less fortunate peoples. It is foreseeable that the advantages deriving from this behavior will be such and so many as to change the course of human affairs, and the economic and social development that today seems to be at a dead end and which requires new methods and strategies will again rapidly resume progress in a positive direction.

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<sup>93</sup> a) "You have questioned me about strikes. This question is and will be for a long time the subject of great difficulties. Strikes are due to two causes. One is the extreme greed and rapacity of the manufacturers and industrialists; the other, the excesses, the avidity and intransigence of the workmen and artisans. It is, therefore, necessary to remedy these two causes. But the principal cause of these difficulties lies in the laws of the present civilization; for they lead to a small number of individuals accumulating incomparable fortunes, beyond their needs, while the greater number remain destitute, stripped and in the greatest misery. This is contrary to justice..."  
'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 273.

b) "But the mutual and reasonable rights of both associated parties will be legally fixed and established according to custom by just and impartial laws. In case one of the two parties should transgress, the court of justice should condemn the transgressor, and the executive branch should enforce the verdict; thus order will be reestablished, and the difficulties, settled. The interference of courts of justice and of the government in difficulties pending between manufacturers and workmen is legal..."  
'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 276.

<sup>94</sup> "Adversity, prolonged, world-wide, afflictive, allied to chaos and universal destruction, must needs convulse the nations, stir the conscience of the world, disillusion the masses, precipitate a radical change in the very conception of society, and coalesce ultimately the disjointed, the bleeding limbs of mankind into one body, single, organically united, and indivisible. To the general character, the implications and features of this world commonwealth, destined to emerge, sooner or later, out of the carnage, agony, and havoc of this great world convulsion, I have already referred in my previous communications. Suffice it to say that this consummation will, by its very nature, be a gradual process, and must, as Bahá'u'lláh has Himself anticipated, lead at first to the establishment of that Lesser Peace which the nations of the earth, as yet unconscious of His Revelation and yet unwittingly enforcing the general principles which He has enunciated, will themselves establish. This momentous and historic step, involving the reconstruction of mankind, as the result of the universal recognition of its oneness and wholeness, will bring in its wake the spiritualization of the masses, consequent to the recognition of the character, and the acknowledgment of the claims, of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh - the essential condition to that ultimate fusion of all races, creeds, classes, and nations which must signalize the emergence of His New World Order". Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nation*, Part VI.

This is the direction in which differences among people remain, but in which no one lives in conditions of unacceptable excesses of wealth and in conditions of intolerable poverty as now happens<sup>95</sup>; a society in which the honor and dignity of the human being are always and in any case respected, independent from his social position and the economic prestige he possesses. This is a direction in which work is understood as service and an act of worship<sup>96</sup>. This is a new model; in which what matters is not what a man does, but the spirit and the intention with which he does it.

In light of the purpose for which he was created, for man, working is a vital way to personally contribute to the well-being and progress of society, work that besides developing man's own potentials, will use the kind of technology that allows the evolution of critical aspects both in metaphysical and thermodynamic terms<sup>97</sup>.

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<sup>95</sup> a) "Then rules and laws should be established to regulate the excessive fortunes of certain private individuals and meet the needs of millions of the poor masses; thus a certain moderation would be obtained".  
'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 274.

b) "However, absolute equality is just as impossible, for absolute equality in fortunes, honors, commerce, agriculture, industry would end in disorderliness, in chaos, in disorganization of the means of existence, and in universal disappointment: the order of the community would be quite destroyed. Thus difficulties will also arise when unjustified equality is imposed. It is, therefore, preferable for moderation to be established by means of laws and regulations to hinder the constitution of the excessive fortunes of certain individuals, and to protect the essential needs of the masses".  
'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 274.

c) "It would be well, with regard to the common rights of manufacturers, workmen and artisans, that laws be established, giving moderate profits to manufacturers, and to workmen the necessary means of existence and security for the future".  
'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions*, page 275.

<sup>96</sup> "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".  
Baha'u'llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, pages 26/30.

<sup>97</sup> "With reference to Baha'u'llah's command concerning the engagement of the believers in some sort of profession; the teachings are most emphatic on this matter, particularly the statement in the Aqdas to this effect which makes it quite clear that idle people who lack the desire to work can have no place in the new World Order. As a corollary of this principle, Baha'u'llah further states that mendicity should not only be discouraged but entirely wiped out from the face of society. It is the duty of those who are in charge of the organization of society to give every individual the opportunity of acquiring the necessary talent in some kind of profession, and also the means of utilizing such a talent, both for its own sake and for the sake of earning the means of his livelihood. Every individual, no matter how handicapped and limited he may be, is under the obligation of engaging in some work or profession, for work, especially when performed in the spirit of service, is according to Baha'u'llah, a form of worship. It has not only a utilitarian purpose, but has a value in itself, because it draws us nearer to God, and enables to better grasp His purpose for us in this world. It is obvious, therefore, that the inheritance of wealth cannot make anyone immune from daily work  
Shoghi Effendi, *Directives of the Guardian*, pages 82-83.

Therefore wealth and poverty, as long as it is kept within the acceptable bounds of moderation, appear as inevitable consequences of life's happenings and of differences in the capacities, gifts and talents which exist among men, but through the abolition of extremes and the extension of a decent quality of life for all people<sup>98</sup>.

Unity is therefore the positive direction that Baha'u'llah indicated to the world and it will work only if we apply principles such as diversity (unity in diversity), interdependence (unity in interdependence), decentralization (unity in decentralization) and metaphysics (unity between science and religion).

Redefining on a radically new basis the relationship between humanity and the rest of creation we can quote Bahá'u'lláh's sentence: "The Earth is but one country and mankind its citizens"<sup>99</sup>

Formal acceptance of this truth won't be sufficient without our constant and continuous commitment to applying it in our individual lives, in society and in institutions. It is an individual and collective responsibility. Responsibility is, in turn, the preliminary phase towards awareness and towards a general conscience of spiritual enlightenment. We should realize that if we exalt the material aspect of life, we degrade spiritual development. We should recognize that throughout the evolutionary process of humanity, social development and spiritual development have pursued opposite routes. These routes can begin to converge only when man abandons his collective and personal desire of dominion and will gain awareness that only unconditional acceptance of the principle of unity of human kind will bring harmony.

It therefore necessary to confirm that in the field of history the principle of an underlying directionality to historical development from the stone age to modern society, from micro

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<sup>98</sup> a) "The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds". Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian n. 82.

b) "The most despised of men in the sight of God are they who sit and beg. Baha'u'llah, *The Kitab-i-Aqdas*, pages 26/30.

c) "The basest of men are they that yield no fruit on earth. Such men are verily counted as among the dead..." Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian, n. 81.

d) "Now the remedy must be carefully undertaken. It cannot be done by bringing to pass absolute equality between men...Even if equality could be achieved it could not continue - and if its existence were possible, the whole order of the world would be destroyed. The law of order must always obtain in the world of humanity. Heaven has so decreed in the creation of man. Some are full of intelligence, others have an ordinary amount of it, and others again are devoid of intellect. In these three classes of men there is order but not equality. How could it be possible that wisdom and stupidity should be equal? Humanity, like a great army, requires a general, captains, under-officers in their degree, and soldiers, each with their own appointed duties. Degrees are absolutely necessary to ensure an orderly organization. An army could not be composed of generals alone, or of captains only, or of nothing but soldiers without one in authority. The certain result of such a plan would be that disorder and demoralization would overtake the whole army". 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Paris Talks*, pages 151-152.

<sup>99</sup> "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". Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 167.



to macro systems, from the passage of nomadic societies to city states, principalities, monarchies, colonizer nation-states, specialized nation-states, dependent nation-states, free nations, sovereign nations, throughout crucial eras, clearly indicates that the future will be organized into more and more complex macro systems<sup>100</sup>.

In spiritual terms this interpretation of the historical evolution of humanity can be called the great plan of God for the education of humanity.

It is therefore clear that it is not through rebuilding previous already experimented political formulas or economical systems that the world will overcome the current bottleneck, but only through the adoption of new social and spiritual doctrines adequate for the times to come.

It is therefore from a spiritual perspective that the concept of a new world order is born. It is surely not through new economical and social laws or political negotiations among states or presidents of republics or agreements among monarchs and parliaments of more or less powerful nations that prejudices and barriers of race, faith, history, culture and power will be eliminated. But it is through a new process that requires willing and unconditional acceptance of the spiritual concept of the unity of humankind: only one human species exists: humanity, though infinitely diversified in its secondary aspects of life.

At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it is no longer possible to still believe that a materialistic view of life regarding the conditions of economic and social development can answer the needs of humanity.

The optimistic previsions on the changes they were supposed to produce faded away in the growing gap, which separates the life style of a progressively diminishing slight minority and the poverty tormenting a huge majority of the world's peoples. This unprecedented economical crisis together with the social ruin it continues to generate, reflects a serious conceptual error regarding human nature. In fact, the response roused in human beings by the incentives of the prevailing order are not only insufficient but appear insignificant in the face of world events. This demonstrates that, if the development of society doesn't find a purpose that transcends the pure and simple improvement of material conditions, even these goals won't be reached.

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<sup>100</sup> "It represents the consummation of human evolution - an evolution that has had its earliest beginnings in the birth of family life, its subsequent development in the achievement of tribal solidarity, leading in turn to the constitution of the city-state, and expanding later into the institution of independent and sovereign nations". Shoghi Effendi, *Call to the Nations*, Part III.

"In all matters moderation is desirable. If a thing is carried to excess, it will prove a source of evil". Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 69.

That purpose has to be sought in spiritual dimensions and motivations of life that transcend an economical panorama in continuous transformation<sup>101</sup>.

Bahá'u'lláh's laws and principles provide an answer to fundamental problems that every culture has had to face in the course of history, in light of an equilibrium and moderation that represent essential elements of existence.<sup>102</sup>

Baha'i writings invite man to view life with a spiritual and global vision, spirituality meaning the moral and social commitment capable of creating justice, harmony and unity among peoples.

It is possible for man to obtain a balance between the material and spiritual aspects through constant effort of transforming virtues into daily reality.

The rearranging of social economy can occur through measures that not only take into account pure and simple technical aspects of the problem, but measures which integrate a well precise vision of the individual's inner life, of the social and political life of local and national communities: the goal will be the prosperity of human kind.

It is, in fact, through the application of many teachings regarding the entire reality of man that can give birth to a new world order in which even economical problems will find a solution. At the basis of this reorganization there is a new concept of education, that in order to achieve an ideal economic maturity, indispensable for the resolution of current problems, this education should contain the spiritual and legal teachings of love and altruism, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, detachment, moderation, wisdom, generosity, frugality, independence, and justice not as the result of a punishing spirit but as the only means to attaining the unity and well-being of the majority of humanity.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> "As the twentieth century draws to a close, it is no longer possible to maintain the belief that the approach to social and economic development to which the materialistic conception of life has given rise is capable of meeting humanity's needs. Optimistic forecasts about the changes it would generate have vanished into the ever-widening abyss that separates the living standards of a small and relatively diminishing minority of the world's inhabitants from the poverty experienced by the vast majority of the globe's population. This unprecedented economic crisis, together with the social breakdown it has helped to engender, reflects a profound error of conception about human nature itself. For the levels of response elicited from human beings by the incentives of the prevailing order are not only inadequate, but seem almost irrelevant in the face of world events. We are being shown that, unless the development of society finds a purpose beyond the mere amelioration of material conditions, it will fail of attaining even these goals. That purpose must be sought in spiritual dimensions of life and motivation that transcend a constantly changing economic landscape and an artificially imposed division of human societies into "developed" and "developing". Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá'í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

<sup>102</sup> "In all matters moderation is desirable. If a thing is carried to excess, it will prove a source of evil". Baha'u'llah, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, page 69.

<sup>103</sup> "Let there be no misgivings as to the animating purpose of the world-wide Law of Bahá'u'lláh. Far from aiming at the subversion of the existing foundations of society, it seeks to broaden its basis, to remould its institutions in a manner consonant with the needs of an ever-changing world. It can conflict with no legitimate allegiances, nor can it undermine essential loyalties. Its purpose is neither to stifle the flame of a sane and intelligent patriotism in men's hearts, nor to abolish the system of national autonomy so essential if the evils of excessive centralization are to be avoided. It does not ignore, nor does it attempt to suppress, the diversity of ethnical origins, of climate, of history, of language and tradition, of thought and habit, that differentiate the peoples and nations of the world. It calls for a wider loyalty, for a larger aspiration than any that has animated the human race. It insists upon the subordination of national impulses and interests to the imperative claims of a unified world. It repudiates excessive centralization on one hand, and disclaims all attempts at uniformity on the other. Its watchword is unity in diversity..."

In the field of business, it is necessary to reaffirm the main objective of companies, which have to share a better use of resources. The social responsibility of companies becomes a necessary tool towards the sustainability of development. As we previously wrote :

**The most important role that economic efforts must play in development lies, therefore, in equipping people and institutions with the means through which they can achieve the real purpose of development: that is, laying foundations for a new social order that can cultivate the limitless potentialities latent in human consciousness.**

(Baha'i International Community, 1995 Mar 03, *The Prosperity of Humankind*)

There are laws in creation, which are indispensable to know in order to apply them. Among these the law of love excels. Love is not anthropic.

It is an act of supreme faith in the process of becoming; this is the reason why the highest form of love is self sacrifice, readiness to renounce, even to renounce our own lives, if it is necessary, to protect life itself. Love is a delicate and sweet force that communicates a feeling of total awareness and integration with universal rhythm, which is the process of becoming.

It recognizes the existence of a higher plan even if the reality hidden in it remains obscure. It is at the same time a declaration of conscious faith and an act of devotion to the rhythmic fluctuation of evolution. Love, then, becomes an experience that gives sense and pleasure to life, and our individual presence should be coherent with the process of becoming<sup>104</sup>.

Conserving in the best way possible the endowment of resources that has been left to us, respecting in the best way and accepting the natural rhythm that rules evolution<sup>105</sup>, putting our talents at the service of others, educating ourselves to the vision of a new world order based on justice first<sup>106</sup> and then on economy, means to express our love for

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Shoghi Effendi, *Calls to the nations*, Part III

<sup>104</sup> "O friend! In the garden of thy heart plant naught but the rose of love..."  
Baha'u'llah, *Hidden Words*, from Persian n.3.

<sup>105</sup> "To choose such a course is not to deny humanity's past but to understand it. The Bahá'í Faith regards the current world confusion and calamitous condition in human affairs as a natural phase in an organic process leading ultimately and irresistibly to the unification of the human race in a single social order whose boundaries are those of the planet. The human race, as a distinct, organic unit, has passed through evolutionary stages analogous to the stages of infancy and childhood in the lives of its individual members, and is now in the culminating period of its turbulent adolescence approaching its long-awaited coming of age. A candid acknowledgement that prejudice, war and exploitation have been the expression of immature stages in a vast historical process and that the human race is today experiencing the unavoidable tumult which marks its collective coming of age is not a reason for despair but a prerequisite to undertaking the stupendous enterprise of building a peaceful world. That such an enterprise is possible, that the necessary constructive forces do exist, that unifying social structures can be erected, is the theme we urge you to examine". Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 2.

<sup>106</sup> "Laying the groundwork for global civilization calls for the creation of laws and institutions that are universal in both character and authority. The effort can begin only when the concept of the oneness of humanity has been wholeheartedly embraced... Justice is the one power that can translate the dawning consciousness of humanity's oneness into a collective will through which the necessary structures of global community life can be confidently

every form of life that has preceded us and every form of life that will follow. Being aware of this double responsibility constitutes the first stage towards transformation, from a “colonization system” to a collaboration system”<sup>107</sup>.

The main players, whom this challenge is addressed to, are all inhabitants of the planet: human kind as a whole, members of government institutions at all levels, those who work in international coordinating bodies, scientists and social thinkers, all people gifted with artistic talent, all those who have access to means of communication, leaders of non governmental organizations and above all, the people on the street, of all streets in the world, those streets crowded with myriads of different people that are the majority of humanity. This responsible challenge is addressed to all of those mentioned above and to you readers. We are the custodians of the world.

“The earth is a fistful of dust, let harmony reign thereon.”

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erected. An age that sees the people of the world increasingly gaining access to information of every kind and to a diversity of ideas will find justice asserting itself as the ruling principle of successful social organisation. With ever greater frequency, proposals aiming at the development of the planet will have to submit to the candid light of the standards it requires”. Universal House of Justice-Office of public information-Bahá’í International Community, *Prosperity of humankind*.

<sup>107</sup> “On the one hand, people of all nations proclaim not only their readiness but their longing for peace and harmony, for an end to the harrowing apprehensions tormenting their daily lives. On the other, uncritical assent is given to the proposition that human beings are incorrigibly selfish and aggressive and thus incapable of erecting a social system at once progressive and peaceful, dynamic and harmonious, a system giving free play to individual creativity and initiative but based on co-operation and reciprocity”.

Universal House of Justice, *The promise of world peace*, page 2.

## **Biography**

Giuseppe Robiati was born in Asmara, Africa, in 1947. He spent his youth in Ethiopia and then moved to Italy to continue his studies, graduating in Engineering from the Polytechnic University of Milan. He spent many years of his professional life in Southern America, The United States, Africa, Asia and Australia, where he had the opportunity to observe the world, especially in the field of economics. He currently lives in Milan and holds managerial positions in several different industrial companies. He is an active member of the Bahá'í world Community, coo- funding member of the EBBF- European Bahá'í Business Forum, and member of the National spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Italy. He is teaching as member of EBBF to Bari University, faculty of economics : “ Ethic and economy : towards a new world Order “ in a semester course.

An acute analysis of the history and economics of the world shows, in light of scientific principles, that a new world order is not only possible but inevitable, for the future of the planet.

The author takes the reader through the various stages of history, economics, energy, entropy and religion to lead them to the concept of World Unity.

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