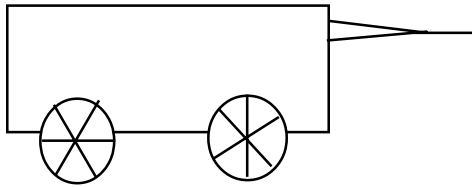


\* we tried unhooking the cart from the horse<sup>12</sup>

*both will take you someplace*

*human technology/craftmanship  
our creation*

*may not end up where you hope to*



physical and material well-being

### SCIENCE (mind)

the instrumentality through which the human mind explores and is able to exert its influence ever more precisely over the phenomenal world

assists in their attainment

*organic life  
God's creation*

*relatively lonely ride*

*(pretend there's  
a horse here)*

spiritual and moral development <sup>12</sup>

### RELIGION (heart)

discerns and articulates the values unfolding progressively through Divine revelation

defines the goals that serve the evolutionary process

dual knowledge system impelling the advance of civilization <sup>43</sup>

“The gross materialism that engulfs the entire nation at the present hour; the attachment to worldly things that enshrouds the souls of men; the fear and anxieties that distract their minds; the pleasure and dissipations that fill their time, the prejudices and animosities that darken their outlook, the apathy and lethargy that paralyze their spiritual faculties -- these are among the formidable obstacles that stand in the path of every world-be warrior in the service of Bahá'u'lláh, obstacles which he must battle against the surmount in his crusade for the redemption of his own countrymen.”

(Shoghi Effendi: Citadel of Faith, p. 149)

# Historical Context

*“O Lovers of Worldly Desire!  
...Ye bow the knee before your  
vain imagining, and call it truth.”*  
PHW #45

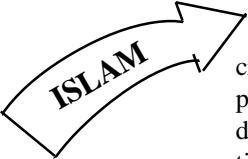
read also:  
CofL  
WOB  
ADJ  
MT by PK

reason  
pursuit of happiness  
individualism  
progress  
freedom

\* ENLIGHTENMENT \*

## 18th century

critical examination of  
previously accepted  
doctrines and institu-  
tions from point of  
view of rationalism



individualist &  
rationalist culture  
growth of science  
Industrial Revolution  
rise of capitalism &  
constitutional  
democracy

\* MODERNISM \*

## 19th century

Newtonian view of the  
world as a vast clock-  
work system CoL p.5

## 20th century

In a period of history dominated by the surging  
energy of adolescence, it is difficult to grasp the  
distinguishing elements of the mature society to  
which Bahá'u'lláh beckons all humanity.  
(U.H.J. IRF, p. 6)

S.E. quote re:  
“gross materialism”

*Century  
of Light*  
twin  
processes  
chart

- reality (human & evolution process) is essentially material in nature
- goal of human life is satisfaction of material needs and wants (individualism)
- society exists to facilitate this quest
- collective concern of humankind should be on-going refinement of system<sub>3</sub>

infancy - period of exploration

childhood - vigorous growth  
& learning; construction

civilization is a spiritual process WWF pg.5

Divine Authority

civilizing of human  
nature violently

wrenched out of orbit<sub>2</sub>

adolescence  
science alone  
\* MATERIALISM \*  
reduces man  
to an animal  
PUP

Africa, Latin America, Asia => human nature spiritual<sub>4</sub>

religion alone  
**SUPERSTITION**  
religious leaders cling tenaciously  
to outer forms (dogmas, rites &  
ceremonies) A.B., PT pg.143

blind  
imitation

“Imitation destroys the  
foundation of religion,  
extinguishes the spirituality  
of the human world...” PUP p.161

blind ←

→ requires exercising one's reasoning powers

## OBEDIENCE

Ian Semple  
26 July 1991

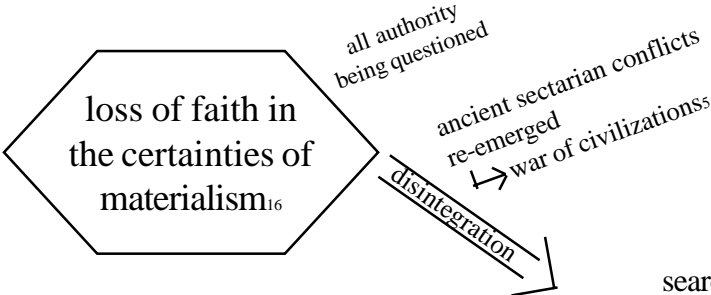
① accept oneself as ultimate source of authority

← Historical Context

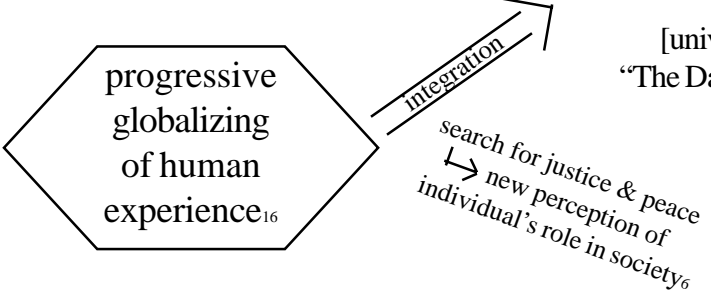
Religion  
what is it &  
how is it one?

God is One  
Religion is  
One

TWIN PROCESSES:



both are undermining humanity's misconceptions about reality<sup>13</sup>



search for meaning;  
longing to understand the purpose of existence<sup>16</sup>

[universal upheaval]  
"The Day of Resurrection"

both artificial & self-inflicted<sup>22</sup>

but we're not turning to God/scriptures for guidance<sup>18</sup>

- materialism • loss of faith in traditional religion<sup>19</sup> (inability to see relevance)
- globalization • questioning dogmas of superiority & exclusivity --> questioning religious guidance<sup>20</sup>

read 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Address to the Jews", Oct. 12, 1912

"...people are wandering in the paths of delusion..."  
Tablet of Ahmad

\*VEILS\*  
have to remove them so we can go forward

"new eyes" will SEE:  
unity of purpose and principle<sup>39</sup>

- move beyond veils by:
- seeing parallels between cultural and spiritual evolution<sup>32</sup>
  - distinguishing between eternal and transitory features<sup>34</sup>
  - understanding causes of denial<sup>35</sup>
  - jettisoning theological authority<sup>36-7</sup>
  - recognizing sacred texts place the drama of salvation in the context of history<sup>69</sup>

meditate  
ponder  
reflect<sup>22</sup>

what IS religion?!

22-30

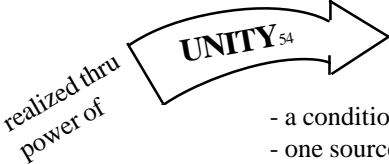
difficult due to VAST misconceptions about human nature and social evolution and all aspects of religion<sup>22</sup>

② recognize one's own insufficiency (-> search for truth)

③ validate a source of authority outside oneself

**Implications  
for Our Behavior**

Bahá'u'lláh's principles are widely accepted, but we still lack the moral conviction to implement them<sup>51</sup>



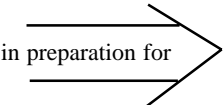
- a condition of the human spirits<sup>55</sup>
- one source = restoration of religion's influence in human affairs<sup>55</sup>
- requires self sacrifice<sup>61</sup>  
ego undermines => evil



**understand the station of Manifestations**  
*("the spiritual Educators of history, as the animating forces in the rise of the civilizations thorough which consciousness has flowered."<sup>44</sup>)*  
**and religion**<sup>71</sup> (*successive revelations of the Divine*<sup>42</sup>)

- **guiding souls**  
 (spirit of reverence - love Them to love God; honor Them thru submission to God's will and service)<sup>44</sup>
- **enhancing process of civilization**
  - moral sense<sup>45</sup>
  - relationships between societies<sup>46-8</sup>

*"For this reason Jesus Christ said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." By this Christ meant that unless man is released from the material world, freed from the captivity of materialism and receiving a portion of the bounties of the spiritual world, he shall be deprived of the bestowals and favors of the Kingdom of God, and the utmost we can say of him is that he is a perfect animal."*  
 ('Abdu'l-Bahá, PUP, p. 303)



religion's goal:  
**Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh**

*a new creation of a global community that would reflect the oneness of humankind*<sup>56</sup>

**laying the foundation of the Kingdom of God**

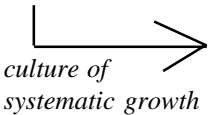
*"a universal civilization shaped by the principles of social justice and enriched by achievements of human mind and spirit beyond anything the present age can conceive."*<sup>71</sup>



Bahá'ís vindicate His mission thru the example of unity His teachings have produced<sup>56</sup>:

- a single body of people in:
- understanding
  - devotion
  - commitment<sup>58</sup>

to be a living example, we must grow and diversify our resources and talents<sup>65</sup>



STAY TUNED!!

④ understanding the requirements of that source of authority (in order to obey)

⑤ role of judgement in carrying out these requirements; the foundation for all development is to know oneself and to accept one's own responsibility for one's own life