

Big History
Threshold 9
The Appearance of Digital Technology
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Society and Culture

1. The civilization, so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men.
Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 342
2. All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. The Almighty beareth Me witness: To act like the beasts of the field is unworthy of man. Those virtues that befit his dignity are forbearance, mercy, compassion and loving-kindness towards all the peoples and kindreds of the earth. Say: O friends! Drink your fill from this crystal stream that floweth through the heavenly grace of Him Who is the Lord of Names. Let others partake of its waters in My name, that the leaders of men in every land may fully recognize the purpose for which the Eternal Truth hath been revealed, and the reason for which they themselves have been created.
Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 215
3. ...Honesty, virtue, wisdom and a saintly character redound to the exaltation of man, while dishonesty, imposture, ignorance and hypocrisy lead to his abasement. By My life! Man's distinction lieth not in ornaments or wealth, but rather in virtuous behaviour and true understanding....
Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 184
4. Through the power of the words He hath uttered the whole of the human race can be illumined with the light of unity, and the remembrance of His Name is able to set on fire the hearts of all men, and burn away the veils that intervene between them and His glory....
Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 286
5. Know thou that We have annulled the rule of the sword, as an aid to Our Cause, and substituted for it the power born of the utterance of men....
Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, pp. 303-304
6. Conflict and contention are categorically forbidden in His Book. This is a decree of God in this Most Great Revelation. It is divinely preserved from annulment and is invested by Him with the splendour of His confirmation. Verily He is the All Knowing, the All Wise.
Bahá'u'lláh: *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 221
7. The sixth Ishraq is union and concord amongst the children of men. From the beginning of time the light of unity hath shed its divine radiance upon the world, and the greatest means for the promotion of that unity is for the peoples of the world to understand one another's writing and speech....
Bahá'u'lláh: *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 127-128

8. Exalted, immensely exalted is He Who hath removed differences and established harmony. Glorified, infinitely glorified is He Who hath caused discord to cease, and decreed solidarity and unity.

Bahá'u'lláh: Compilation of Compilations, Vol II (Women), p. 357

9. O MY SERVANT! 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....

Bahá'u'lláh: The Hidden Words, Persian #82

10. It is incumbent upon every man, in this Day, to hold fast unto whatsoever will promote the interests, and exalt the station, of all nations and just governments.

Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 87; Gleanings, p. 94

Put Knowledge Into Action

11. Were man to appreciate the greatness of his station and the loftiness of his destiny he would manifest naught save goodly character, pure deeds, and a seemly and praiseworthy conduct. If the learned and wise men of goodwill were to impart guidance unto the people, the whole earth would be regarded as one country....

Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 172

12. O friends! Be not careless of the virtues with which ye have been endowed, neither be neglectful of your high destiny. Suffer not your labors to be wasted through the vain imaginations which certain hearts have devised. Ye are the stars of the heaven of understanding, the breeze that stirreth at the break of day, the soft-flowing waters upon which must depend the very life of all men, the letters inscribed upon His sacred scroll. With the utmost unity, and in a spirit of perfect fellowship, exert yourselves, that ye may be enabled to achieve that which beseemeth this Day of God.

Bahá'u'lláh: Gleanings, p. 196

13. O people of God! Do not busy yourselves in your own concerns; let your thoughts be fixed upon that which will rehabilitate the fortunes of mankind and sanctify the hearts and souls of men. This can best be achieved through pure and holy deeds, through a virtuous life and a goodly behaviour. Valiant acts will ensure the triumph of this Cause, and a saintly character will reinforce its power....

Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Baha'u'llah, p. 86; Gleanings, pp. 93-94

14. It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action. That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race. The Great Being saith: Blessed and happy is he that ariseth to promote the best interests of the peoples and kindreds of the earth. In another passage He hath proclaimed: It is not for him to pride himself who loveth his own country, but rather for him who loveth the whole world. The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.

Bahá'u'lláh: Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 115-116; Gleanings, p. 250

15. Say: This is the Day of meritorious deeds, did ye but know it. This is the Day of the glorification of God and of the exposition of His Word, could ye but perceive it. Abandon the things current amongst men and hold fast unto that which God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting, hath enjoined upon you. The day is fast approaching when all the treasures of the earth shall be of no profit to

you. Unto this beareth witness the Lord of Names, He Who proclaimeth: Verily, no God is there besides Him, the Sovereign Truth, the Knower of things unseen.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 232

16. Say: Pride not yourselves on earthly riches ye possess. Reflect upon your end and upon the recompense for your works that hath been ordained in the Book of God, the Exalted, the Mighty. Blessed is the rich man whom earthly possessions have been powerless to hinder from turning unto God, the Lord of all names. Verily he is accounted among the most distinguished of men before God, the Gracious, the All-Knowing.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Compilation of Compilations, Vol I* (Huqúqu'lláh), p. 496

Importance of Religion

17. That the divers communions of the earth, and the manifold systems of religious belief, should never be allowed to foster the feelings of animosity among men, is, in this Day, of the essence of the Faith of God and His Religion. These principles and laws, these firmly-established and mighty systems, have proceeded from one Source, and are rays of one Light. That they differ one from another is to be attributed to the varying requirements of the ages in which they were promulgated.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 13

18. That which God hath ordained as the sovereign remedy and mightiest instrument for the healing of the world is the union of all its peoples in one universal Cause, one common Faith. This can in no wise be achieved except through the power of a skilled, an all-powerful, and inspired Physician....

Bahá'u'lláh: *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 62-63

19. It beseemeth all men, in this Day, to take firm hold on the Most Great Name, and to establish the unity of all mankind....

Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, pp. 203-204

20. As to the children: We have directed that in the beginning they should be trained in the observances and laws of religion; and thereafter, in such branches of knowledge as are of benefit, and in commercial pursuits that are distinguished for integrity, and in deeds that will further the victory of God's Cause or will attract some outcome which will draw the believer closer to his Lord.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Compilation of Compilations, Vol I* (Baha'i Education), pp. 250-251

21. O thou that bearest My Name! God grant that everyone may be graciously aided to honour the Huqúq....

Bahá'u'lláh: *Huqúqu'lláh*, #33

22. Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and non-progressive it is without the divine life; it is dead. The divine institutes are continuously active and evolutionary; therefore the revelation of them must be progressive and continuous. All things are subject to re-formation. This is a century of life and renewal. Sciences and arts, industry and invention have been reformed. Law and ethics have been reconstituted, reorganized. The world of thought has been regenerated. Sciences of former ages and philosophies of the past are useless today. Present exigencies demand new methods of solution; world problems are without precedent. Old ideas and modes of thought are fast becoming obsolete. Ancient laws and archaic ethical systems will not meet the requirements of modern

conditions, for this is clearly the century of a new life, the century of the revelation of the reality and therefore the greatest of all centuries. Consider how the scientific developments of fifty years have surpassed and eclipsed the knowledge and achievements of all the former ages combined. Would the announcements and theories of ancient astronomers explain our present knowledge of the sun-worlds and planetary systems? Would the mask of obscurity which beclouded mediaeval centuries meet the demand for clear-eyed vision and understanding which characterizes the world today? In view of this, shall blind imitations of ancestral forms and theological interpretations continue to guide and control the religious life and spiritual development of humanity today? Shall man gifted with the power of reason unthinkingly follow and adhere to dogma, creeds and hereditary beliefs which will not bear the analysis of reason in this century of effulgent reality? Unquestionably this will not satisfy men of science, for when they find premise or conclusion contrary to present standards of proof and without real foundation, they reject that which has been formerly accepted as standard and correct and move forward from new foundations.

'Abdu'l-Bahá: *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 37

23. Say: Teach ye the Cause of God, O people of Baha, for God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of proclaiming His Message, and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds...

Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings*, p. 278

The Future

24. Surely the world, contracted and transformed into a single highly complex organism by the marvellous progress achieved in the realm of physical science, by the world-wide expansion of commerce and industry, and struggling, under the pressure of world economic forces, amidst the pitfalls of a materialistic civilization, stands in dire need of a restatement of the Truth underlying all the Revelation, of the past in a language suited to its essential requirements. And what voice other than that of Bahá'u'lláh—the Mouthpiece of God for this age—is capable of effecting a transformation of society as radical as that which He has already accomplished in the hearts of those men and women, so diversified and seemingly irreconcilable, who constitute the body of His declared followers throughout the world?

Shoghi Effendi: *Peace*: p. 25

25. 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 [p. 41] 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 demolished and the interdependence of Capital and Labor definitely recognized; in which the clamor of religious fanaticism and strife will have been forever stilled; in which the flame of racial animosity will have been finally extinguished; in which a single code of international law—the product of the considered judgment of the world's federated representatives—shall have as its sanction the instant and coercive intervention of the combined forces of the federated units; and finally a world community in which the fury of a capricious and militant nationalism will have been transmuted into an abiding

consciousness of world citizenship—such indeed, appears, in its broadest outline, the Order anticipated by Bahá'u'lláh: an Order that shall come to be regarded as the fairest fruit of a slowly maturing age.

Shoghi Effendi: *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*: pp. 40-41