

An Essay on Baha'i Philosophy

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We do not currently possess an explicit philosophy within the Bahá'í Faith. This is due to the Faith's youthful and evolving nature. Philosophy traditionally emerges in religious traditions as they transition from dynamic developmental phases to scholastic eras. This is not a denial of the Faith's rich philosophical background but an acknowledgment that the development of knowledge in a faith tradition typically follows a process of expansion and consolidation. As faith traditions move beyond periods of heroism and persecution, establishing a foundation of authority, the sense of urgency and mission is replaced by a more serene environment conducive to intellectual discourse.¹

However, this general statement should not be misconstrued as a suggestion that Baha'is must await a golden age to formulate their philosophical thinking. On the contrary, if philosophy involves engaging in higher reflective considerations, solid reasoning, a sense of inquiry, and the ability to synthesize and integrate, then the need for philosophy is paramount in the present. Care is essential to prevent prematurely identifying any system of thinking with the potential characteristics of a comprehensive model of Bahá'í philosophy destined to fully develop in the future.

The Bahai writings underscore the pivotal role of religion in catalyzing positive change in the world, emphasizing a belief in the dynamic nature of existence. According to Abdul Baha, religion is the outer expression of the divine reality and must be living, vitalized, and progressive to reflect the divine life; otherwise, it becomes stagnant and lifeless.² This perspective challenges

¹ This concept was thoroughly expounded upon by Dr. Alimorad Davoudi, a Baha'i philosophy professor at Tehran University. Following the Islamic Revolution in Iran, he was abducted due to his beliefs and is presumed to have been later murdered.

² Religion is the outer expression of the divine reality. Therefore, it must be living, vitalized, moving and progressive. If it be without motion and nonprogressive, 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 reformation. 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

the notion of religion as a static entity and instead posits it as a dynamic force capable of influencing the evolving world.

The divine philosophy inherent in Bahai teachings is geared towards fostering the oneness of humankind and cultivating a bond of love among human hearts. It underscores that philosophy, in order to be truly alive, must move in tandem with the currents of history and not be treated as a mechanical object. Consequently, Bahai philosophy advocates for an integrated approach where religion, philosophy, and science converge to lay the groundwork for a new understanding of the world and the dynamics of its transformation.³

The Bahai principle of independent investigation of truth reinforces this perspective, encouraging a unified exploration of the interconnected realms of religion, philosophy, and science. Rather than divorcing religion from philosophy, Bahai philosophy seeks to define religion as a living phenomenon, integrating it into a renewed philosophical discourse. In doing so, it offers a

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 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 suns and planetary systems? Would the mask of obscurity which beclouded medieval centuries meet the demand for clear-eyed vision and understanding which characterizes the world today? Will the despotism of former governments answer the call for freedom which has risen from the heart of humanity in this cycle of illumination? It is evident that no vital results are now forthcoming from the customs, institutions and standpoints of the past. 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. *Abdul Baha, in the Promulgation of Universal Peace.*

³ If we adapt Karl Marx's well-known words, "*Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it,*" in the context of the Bahai Faith, we can articulate it as follows: *The Bahai philosophy aspires to recontextualize the world, changing it into an entirely novel design.*

framework that aligns with the ever-changing nature of the world, fostering a comprehensive and dynamic approach to understanding and guiding human progress.

An appreciation of philosophy can enhance our understanding of the Bahá'í Faith, and a deeper understanding of the Faith can facilitate the reinterpretation of philosophical ideas in a new light. Two critical points should be closely integrated into our thinking. Firstly, we must remember that ideas have historical backgrounds and do not emerge from intellectual vacuums. Thus, it is crucial to recognize that many teachings of the Bahá'í Faith have a philosophical origin. Secondly, caution is warranted to avoid fixating on the past. Ideas from previous eras, when viewed in the context of the Bahá'í Faith's philosophical system, can acquire new meaning and vitality. As we explore how Bahá'í teachings open up possibilities for new meanings within past philosophical discourses, it is equally important to contemplate how a historical synthesis among conflicting schools of philosophy might evolve.

Religion, in its broadest sense, encompasses a comprehensive philosophy that addresses various aspects of human existence. It formulates propositions concerning the nature of reality, encompassing both the physical and metaphysical realms (ontology). Furthermore, religion delves into the nature and organization of knowledge (epistemology). It offers insights into social organization, political life, and the quest for justice (political philosophy). Additionally, religion originates and advocates for a system of ideal conduct, constituting moral philosophy and ethics. Lastly, it aspires to find beauty in the order and design of the universe, striving for nobility (aesthetics). Religion, much like philosophy, endeavors to synthesize diverse ideas coherently and serves as a complementary force with science.

To gain a better understanding of the prevailing dichotomy in human perceptions of reality, a brief exploration of the origins of Western philosophy is beneficial. The roots of philosophical and scientific ideas in the West can be traced back to the philosophical tradition of ancient Greece. The ideas and writings of pivotal figures such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle inaugurated the origins of scientific disciplines and various manifestations of Western culture and civilization.

A Philosophical Hindsight

Socrates, in contrast to the materialistic ideas of his predecessors, championed the supremacy of the mind over matter. He emphasized the study of human subjectivity as the core of all studies and discoveries. Socrates held beliefs in life after death and the indestructibility of the human spirit. His endeavor was to develop a common moral philosophy that could be acceptable to both idealists and materialists.

Plato, a distinguished student of Socrates, expanded upon the ideas and methodology of his mentor. He established a comprehensive system of philosophy grounded in a cognitive and subjective consciousness of the world. According to Plato, the reality of existence is comprised of ideas and the organizing principles that govern and regulate the function and interaction of these ideas. Ideas, in Plato's worldview, manifest an ideal pattern for the unfolding of things to come. He argued that only ideas possess universality and are thus worthy of contemplation. Plato's philosophy, known as idealism, became a major branch of philosophical thought, influencing both scientific and artistic pursuits.

In contrast to Plato, Aristotle, a prominent student of Plato, laid the foundation of his philosophy on objective and palpable observations of reality. He heavily relied on experimentation and empirical analysis. Aristotle challenged the genuineness and usefulness of ideas, asserting that they exist only in the mind of the philosopher. In his philosophical pursuits, Aristotle employed logical reasoning to study the nature and relations of perceptible and observable phenomena, establishing the basis of his philosophy, known as realism. For centuries, Aristotle's philosophy provided a conceptual framework for the development of ideas in the Western intellectual tradition. During the Middle Ages, his thoughts fueled the fermentation of scholasticism in Europe. In the thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas integrated Aristotelian philosophy with Christian ideology and moral philosophy, resulting in the formation of a broad and influential philosophical framework for Western thought until the dawn of the Renaissance.

Even after the scientific revolution, Aristotle's ideas on associationism and empiricism, along with his method of logical reasoning known as syllogism, continued to be valid and were

wielded as powerful tools for scientific development. Consequently, he earned the title of the *father of science*.

Plato and Aristotle, despite employing two different methods of cognition, viewed reality as a unified entity in their philosophical systems. They systematically and logically combined various branches of human knowledge—such as the physical sciences, mathematics, medicine, aesthetics, ethics, and metaphysics—into a cohesive philosophical framework. Aristotle, being an empiricist, did not exclude theology, ethics, and value-laden questions from the broad scope of philosophy. In the Middle Ages, Aristotelian cosmology provided Christian doctrine with a robust scientific foundation, leading to the establishment of a comprehensive system of thought comparable to Greek culture in the fourth and fifth centuries BC.

Around the early sixteenth century, as Christian-based medieval culture waned and modern science emerged, liberated minds began questioning the existence of a world beyond direct human experience. This period marked the foundation of a sense-based, empirical pattern of thought and interpretation. Over time, religious values were criticized for contributing to the Inquisition and the systematic suppression of human thought and progress. As Christian doctrine solidified into dogmatic thinking, science and philosophy found themselves compelled to perceive reality through objective and *this-worldly* interpretations.

The onset of modern times ushered in a significant transformation in the realm of philosophy. Philosophy, once holding a broad domain of influence with the term *philosopher* referring to a generalist whose subject matter encompassed the entire universe, faced challenges. The expansion of human cognition, the dominance of empirical research, and the separation of scientific thinking from theological domains led to the disintegration of the classic form of philosophy. In its place, various independent scientific disciplines emerged. The vast body of knowledge about physical and social reality created by scientific developments could no longer be adequately contained within the traditional boundaries of philosophy. The evolving landscape favored specialized disciplines to organize and advance knowledge, leading to the fragmentation of the once-unified field of philosophy.

The specialization of human knowledge, an inevitable consequence of rapid expansion in various scientific domains, became pronounced as individuals found it practically impossible to master even a fraction of a sub-branch within a discipline. While specialization was a result of scientific progress, it came at a cost. In the pursuit of specialized knowledge, a philosophical outlook that transcends parochial and fragmented sciences, fostering a universal and integrated vision of the world along with insights into the purpose and meaning of life, was lost. While specialization is crucial for delving into different branches of the physical sciences, an understanding of the philosophy of life and essential human values is a universal necessity and should not be confined to a specialized few.

Modern developments introduced a perspective that embraced reductionism and specialization. From this viewpoint, the schema of the sciences appeared as vertically fragmented domains of knowledge. The scientific specialist, in turn, lost sight of a coherent world, dismissing any subject matter not studied in this specialized manner as unscientific and speculative.

With the rise of independent scientific disciplines, classical philosophy gradually relinquished its role as the unifying frame of reference for all the sciences. If modern philosophy aspires to reclaim its past glory, it must align itself with the historical forces shaping the emergence of a new reality. This philosophical paradigm should seamlessly integrate mental and philosophical perspectives with analytical and scientific descriptions. It should serve as the foundation for a new scientific framework, where matter and mind, physical and human sciences, and the realism of Aristotle and the idealism of Plato are incorporated into a coherent model of reality. Additionally, it must develop a theory of human nature that unites inner human experience with external reality.

Bridging Plato's Idealism and Aristotle's Realism through a Bahá'í Perspective

A review of the Bahá'í perspective reveals a potential philosophical bridge between Plato's idealism and Aristotle's realism, offering a speculative framework that could transcend the historical divide between these two schools of thought. At this preliminary stage of inquiry, the Bahá'í approach, particularly as articulated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Some Answered Questions*, seems to acknowledge both Plato's emphasis on a transcendent spiritual reality and Aristotle's assertion

that form and matter are inseparably linked. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s exploration of the nature of the spirit suggests a synthesis, recognizing the independent, immaterial essence of the spiritual realm—akin to Plato’s Forms—while also affirming Aristotle’s view that spiritual essence becomes manifest through the material world. This dual vision offers a speculative perspective where the spirit is both transcendent and immanent, existing independently of the physical world while simultaneously engaging with and manifesting through material conditions.

The Bahá’í view harmonizes two seemingly contrasting principles: the autonomy of the spirit, echoing Plato’s idealism, and the unity of form and matter, aligned with Aristotle’s realism. The spirit is posited as an independent, immaterial reality that transcends the physical realm, much like Plato’s Forms, but it also emerges through the organization of material elements, gradually developing its latent capacities, reflecting Aristotle’s view that essence is inherent within matter.⁴ While this integrated vision provides a holistic outlook, where the material world is essential to spiritual development, it is important to recognize that this synthesis remains a speculative and evolving discourse within Bahá’í thought. It raises important questions about the relationship between the material and spiritual realms, inviting further examination and dialogue to fully articulate the extent to which this perspective can reconcile the philosophical divide between idealism and realism.⁵

⁴ Please see this author’s article on Abdul-Baha’s epistemology for further discussion of this subject: https://www.academia.edu/107925541/Bahai_Epistemology_from_the_Perspective_of_Abdul_Baha

⁵ This perspective can be enriched if other views are brought into the picture as it is the case with Mulla Sadra, a prominent Persian philosopher of the Islamic Golden Age and philosophical implications of Modern physics Uncertainty Principles.

Mulla Sadra offers a perspective that shares similarities with the speculative synthesis we can find in the Bahá’í approach. Mulla Sadra’s philosophy, particularly his concept of **transcendent theosophy (al-hikmat al-muta‘aliya)**, is known for integrating elements of both **Plato’s idealism** and **Aristotle’s realism** into a unified metaphysical framework. His philosophical system also bears resemblance to the synthesis of transcendence and immanence of the spirit, akin to what we outlined in the Bahá’í perspective.

One of Mulla Sadra’s key contributions is his doctrine of **the unity of existence** (wahdat al-wujud) and **substantial motion** (al-harakat al-jawhariyyah), which parallels the idea of spirit as both transcendent and immanent. He posited that all existence is a manifestation of a single reality, which is dynamic and constantly evolving. According to Sadra, this process of evolution occurs in both the spiritual and material realms. Much like Aristotle, he saw the material world as a locus for the actualization of potentiality, but he also believed that this process leads to higher spiritual realities, akin to Plato’s realm of Forms.

Abdu'l-Bahá wrote: "Know that there are two kinds of knowledge: the knowledge of the essence of a thing and the knowledge of its attributes. The essence of each thing is known only through its attributes; otherwise, that essence is unknown and unfathomed." In the context of Aristotelian and Scholastic philosophy on form and essence, this passage emphasizes that essence is inaccessible without attributes, as attributes provide the means through which we experience and understand it. Philosophically, the assertion that "the essence of each thing is known only through its attributes" holds significant epistemological implications. It suggests that our knowledge of the world is inherently indirect—we cannot access a thing's essence directly but can only apprehend it through its manifestations or attributes. This idea mirrors Kant's concept that we can never perceive the "thing-in-itself" (the essence) but only encounter things through their attributes or phenomena. In modern philosophical discourse, particularly in phenomenology (e.g., Husserl) and existentialism (e.g., Heidegger), similar concepts emerge—beings reveal themselves through their attributes, with a focus on the lived experience of these qualities.

For Plato, the Idea or Form of a thing represents its true, eternal essence, existing independently of the material world. In Platonic thought, the material world is an imperfect reflection of these perfect Forms. Abdu'l-Bahá echoes this sentiment, writing: "This present life is even as a swelling wave, or a mirage, or drifting shadows. Could ever a distorted image on the desert serve as refreshing waters? No, by the Lord of Lords! Never can reality and the mere semblance of reality be one, and wide is the difference between fancy and fact, between truth and the phantom thereof. Know thou that the Kingdom is the real world, and this nether place is only its shadow stretching out. A shadow hath no life of its own; its existence is only a fantasy, and nothing

The principle of uncertainty, commonly associated with Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle in quantum mechanics, highlights the inherent limitations of human knowledge in observing the material world. Specifically, it demonstrates the impossibility of precisely measuring certain physical properties, such as position and momentum, at the same time. This challenges the deterministic, empirical approach of classical physics, aligned with Aristotle's realism, while echoing Plato's notion that the material world is inherently imperfect and cannot be fully understood through sensory experience alone.

Quantum uncertainty can be seen as supporting the idea of interconnectedness between different layers of existence, emphasizing that the material world might reflect deeper, unseen dimensions. Concepts such as substantial motion, which suggest that all things are in a state of constant transformation, align with the dynamic and unpredictable nature of existence proposed by the Uncertainty Principle. This perspective underscores that the relationship between various realms of existence is not fully deterministic, inviting a deeper appreciation for the complexity and unpredictability that characterizes reality.

more; it is but images reflected in water, and seeming as pictures to the eye." However, while Plato argued that true knowledge comes from contemplating the eternal Forms in the intelligible realm, Abdu'l-Bahá's statement that "the essence of a thing can only be understood through its attributes" suggests a broader framework.

The Bahá'í perspective introduces a more holistic approach to knowledge. 'Abdu'l-Bahá outlines four criteria for knowing: sense perception, sacred traditions, reason, and the Holy Spirit. This combination offers a more complete understanding, suggesting that while Plato's intellectual emphasis remains relevant, it is complemented by other dimensions of knowing. In the Bahá'í context, if Plato's realm of Ideas is analogous to a spiritual realm, the key question becomes: how can this spiritual realm be known? Bahá'í philosophy offers a unique contribution by depicting the spiritual realm not as static but as a living, evolving reality—a reality that unfolds through the Manifestations of God.

In this framework, the Forms—abstract, perfect, and unchanging—are comprehended through a dynamic, civilizational process, inaugurated by world religions, where spiritual meanings and values form the core of societies. These civilizations have developed an evolving structure that integrates reason, empirical inquiry, tradition, and spiritual renewal, all working together in a continuous process of growth. This ongoing integration enables both intellectual and spiritual advancement, creating a harmonious balance between the material and transcendental aspects of human existence.

Empirical observation serves as the tangible foundation for reason, while spiritual renewal provides a source of transcendence, amplifying the depth and scope of reason. Echoing Platonic Idealism, this perspective suggests that essence, while partially accessible through its attributes, remains "unknown and unfathomable" to some degree. Yet, through this integrated and evolving approach, the attributes of essence can be progressively understood over time, deepening our connection to both the material and spiritual dimensions of reality.

It must be emphasized that the significance of philosophy and the potential of the Bahá'í worldview to open a new realm of thinking and discourse, leading to a unified milestone in philosophical thought, goes beyond a mere theoretical attempt to construct a universal vision for

the future. The importance of philosophy in this context extends further because, after all, the Bahá'í Faith is a religion, not a philosophical tradition. The value of a unifying Bahá'í philosophy lies in its religious foundation, which transcends a purely rational framework. Due to its spiritual and moral nature, this unifying structure has the potential to exert a broader and deeper impact on the development of a global civilization, influencing behavioral change and ethical decision-making in ways that purely philosophical systems may not.

A Brief Review of the Harmony between Science and Religion

The foundation of knowledge and civilization in the Bahá'í Faith is rooted in the eradication of the dichotomy between scientific facts and religious values, emphasizing the reconciliation of the two. From a Bahá'í perspective, the critical issue lies in recognizing the elements that have historically separated religion and science.

In both science and religion, absolutist positions and authoritarian attitudes from knowledge gatekeepers have obscured people's clarity of vision, hindering the union of these essential facets of human life. According to the Bahá'í view, universal religious teachings should be interpreted within the context of the relativity of human comprehension and the historical nature of knowledge. In essence, while the direction of acquiring infinite knowledge of God is universal, the process of attaining such knowledge is relative and conditioned by the parameters of time and place.

Religious leaders often assert an absolute version of religious truth, adopting a dogmatic stance that contradicts the central mechanisms of life—change and evolution—resulting in a static and frozen interpretation of religion. In contrast, science has positioned itself as a cure-all for human ills, giving rise to a new form of dogmatism. The Bahá'í Faith seeks not merely a superficial union of science and religion but advocates for liberating religion from superstition and science from materialism. It contends that this liberation will naturally draw the two together as integral pillars of civilization.

Recognizing the complexity of this to applying the scientific method to subjective domains of reality, including religion requires expanding the definition of the scientific method beyond the narrow confines of empirical methodology. This gradual configuration of a new frame of

reference⁶ includes the properties of consciousness, demanding patience, humility, and open-mindedness from empiricists and spiritualists alike. In doing so, the process requires a balanced approach as a reminder to avoid being pulled to one side by the gravitation of an idea. Ignoring scientific vigor may lead to a potentially lethargic way of thinking, risking mediocrity and emotional/popular-based rationalization. Additionally, there is a danger of reverting to magical thinking and mythologizing the emerging frame of reference. In the present era, marked by the failure of scientism and materialistic philosophies, there is a rise in dogmatism, fetishism, and mythmaking. A world wearied by materialism is witnessing the ascent of religious fundamentalism. Amid scientific progress, there is a critical counterpoint in the resurgence of superstitions, unconventional blends of science and science fiction, astrology, magic, primitive religions, lifestyles, and nostalgic sentiments toward Dark Age doctrines.

Examining a case from modern medicine underscores the challenge of reconciling science and religion. Traditional Western medicine faces a formidable challenge from alternative modalities focused on health and healing. These alternatives critique traditional medicine for prioritizing disease over prevention and overlooking the interrelationships between physical, mental, and emotional faculties, advocating for a holistic approach to well-being. Additionally, they propose methods to reintegrate biological and spiritual elements of health, supported by scientific evidence. Nevertheless, an alternative to health and healing cannot claim exclusivity and disregard the successes of modern scientific medicine in disease eradication and the application of principles from the physical and biological sciences. For alternative medicine to gain broader recognition, it must shed its marginalized image, undergo rigorous research, and acknowledge the validity of certain premises in traditional medicine. This collaborative effort aims for greater reconciliation and, ultimately, a merger in a unifying frame of reference.

Empirical methodology, while occasionally effective, falls short when applied to the study of consciousness-related phenomena. This limitation becomes pronounced in subjective disciplines, where it not only proves inadequate but also risks shaping their character, techniques, and goals through a narrow materialistic lens. Recognizing this shortfall, scientific inquiry must transcend empiricism, marking the emergence of a new scientific thinking culture that extends beyond the

⁶ Please see the author's article on Abdul-Baha's epistemology.

materialistic and deterministic perspectives of past centuries. Both religious truth and scientific knowledge are relative phenomena conditioned by the constraints of time and space, unfolding in accordance with the stages of human development. This acknowledgment underscores the dynamic nature of knowledge and spirituality, recognizing that their manifestations evolve alongside human progress.

Bahá'u'lláh's proclamation of universal truth harbors a profound aspiration: the eradication of division and separation that has marred human history. Over the ages, division has given rise to antagonism, unleashing waves of pain and suffering upon humanity. In response, Bahá'u'lláh provides a comprehensive framework, a visionary guide to transcend contradiction and cultivate authentic universality.

This framework, delineated by Bahá'u'lláh, recognizes that rational discourse alone is insufficient to resolve the inherent contradictions that plague human interactions. Instead, he emphasizes the indispensable role of revealed knowledge, acting as a transformative force to illuminate reason and understanding. Through this, the transformation of separation into unity and wholeness becomes possible.

Moreover, Bahá'u'lláh's vision extends to the resolution of the apparent contradiction between science and religion within the broader context of a material-spiritual civilization. As humanity progresses towards a state of harmonious coexistence, embracing both the material and spiritual dimensions of existence, the tensions and perceived conflicts between these realms are expected to find resolution. This harmonious coexistence is envisioned within the evolving parameters of a civilization that integrates both material progress and spiritual values, fostering a more profound understanding of the interconnectedness between these two essential aspects of human life.

Integration of Facts and Values

The evolving perspectives in research and scholarship propose a harmonious relationship between empirical and normative models. Swedish sociologist Gunnar Myrdal contends that scientific facts aren't inherent entities waiting to be discovered; rather, they are constructed through arbitrary definitions and classifications, inherently value-loaded due to the purposes pursued by society. Myrdal dismisses the notion of a "disinterested social science," asserting that

pure objectivity is unattainable, and any rational thinking must confront, not evade, inherent valuations.⁷

In alignment with this perspective, the Bahá'í Faith assigns paramount value to intellectual activities that contribute to the transformation of the human condition. The Faith underscores that scholarship, when divorced from purposeful human endeavors and the ultimate values of life, degenerates into mere content confined to words. According to the Bahá'í perspective, every branch of knowledge possesses inherent value, holding the potential to contribute to material, intellectual, and spiritual development. However, if these branches lack meaningful purpose, their potential benefits may dissipate, reducing them to mere tools for satisfying the basest human instincts.

Contrary to misconceptions, Bahá'u'lláh does not discourage the pursuit of sciences that "begin with words and end with words." Some interpretations have erroneously suggested that He implicitly discourages the study of philosophy and humanities. However, when Bahá'u'lláh alludes to sciences that "can profit the peoples of the earth," it is not an exclusive endorsement of experimental sciences. He does not categorize any particular scientific domain as unproductive; instead, he highlights the double-edged nature of science, acknowledging its potential as a source of both good and evil.

In the realm of physical sciences, a crisis of values exerts indirect influence on outcomes but does not directly intervene in the information organization and model-building process. Conversely, human, and social sciences are notably sensitive to values, as these values are intricately intertwined with their content. Therefore, a crisis of values may lead to a significant implosion and fracturing of their conceptual foundations.

Conclusion

An integrative approach to the emerging Bahá'í philosophy compels a thorough exploration of the essential unity of knowledge. This aligns seamlessly with the overarching Bahá'í vision of world unity, emphasizing the inherent harmony between the material and spiritual elements of

⁷ Myrdal, Gunnar. 1984. cited in Kim, Samuel S., *The quest for a just world order*. p. 5. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

civilization. It is within this context that the Bahá'í philosophy seeks to transcend traditional boundaries, envisioning a holistic and interconnected worldview.

Within the confines of this analysis, a central tenet emerges—the paramount goal of Bahá'í philosophy is to critically assess not only the reductionist view of human nature and the materialistic conceptualization of reality but also the conventional definition of religion that clings to dogmas, rejecting universality, change, and progress. The Bahá'í philosophy envisions a dynamic, evolving understanding of spiritual truth that accommodates the ever-changing landscape of human consciousness.

In pursuit of this philosophy, a comprehensive exploration is warranted, delving into the dimensions of a new paradigm of knowledge that incorporates consciousness-related phenomena. This paradigm recognizes the intricate interplay between the physical and metaphysical realms, acknowledging the interconnectedness of human experiences. By synthesizing diverse elements of knowledge, the Bahá'í philosophy aims to foster a holistic understanding that transcends reductionism and materialism.

The integrative Bahá'í philosophy seeks to offer a nuanced perspective on the unity of knowledge, serving as a guiding framework for Bahá'í education and scholarship. Its ambitions extend beyond intellectual exercises, striving to contribute meaningfully to the realization of a world characterized by unity, justice, and the harmonious integration of material and spiritual dimensions.

Ultimately, A Bahá'í- inspired philosophy, if distilled into the scheme of the sciences, holds the potential to provide human understanding with a meaningful sense of wholeness.