



**Speaker:** In the early 20th Century, like the two previous centuries, innovation in the arts, music, and theater were not directly sponsored by churches like they had been during the Renaissance and Baroque eras. There were some themes in religion, however, that had an impact upon society, which in turn, indirectly affected the arts.

As more and more northern cities in both the United States and Europe became industrialized, people in rural areas, as well as other countries, emigrated to these population centers in hopes of improving their life, particularly, economically. They brought with them their cultures and traditions, and they also brought with them their religious viewpoints, which were not always in line with the predominant Protestant social network that was already in place. Even Catholicism seemed different and strange to some groups of the established order. Of course, there were immigrants from all over the the globe, from Asia, India, and as well as the Middle East. They all brought their religious concepts with them.

Now, some in these northern cities in America and Europe embraced with open hearts their religious ideas and concepts brought by the immigrant populations. For example, one of the founding figures of the Bahá'í Faith, `Abdu'l-Bahá, was greeted warmly in America. His trip to the United States was covered in the *New York Times* in 1912, and it included his simple quote translated from Persian, that, "To be a Bahá'í, simply means to love all the world, to love humanity and try to serve it."

Now, as logical as this message seems to me, the same message was outrageous to others. This created a fundamentalist movement in both America and Europe. No matter what brand of fundamentalism that's being practiced, whether it's Christian or Taliban, a fundamentalist viewpoint feels very threatened by diverse religious perspectives, as well as scientific perspectives. Fundamentalism can provide fertile ground for genocide. In Europe, the seeds for the anti-Jewish movement were being planted in the early part of the 20th Century.

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