Spiritual Cosmopolitanism, Transnational Migration, and the Bahá'í Faith[1]

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Abstract
Scholars have wrestled with the question of how people can be persuaded to extend feelings of kinship beyond their own ethnic or national groups. This article identifies spiritual cosmopolitanism, whose principles of universal love and harmony can be found in the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith, as key to such borderless solidarity. Drawing on data gathered from interviews with Iranian refugees who have settled in the United States, the article demonstrates how cosmopolitan principles shape the worldviews of Bahá'ís. Through this case study, spiritual cosmopolitanism's potential to enrich public arguments for the inclusion of Others such as immigrants becomes apparent.

Résumé
Des chercheurs se sont penchés sur la question de savoir comment persuader les gens d'étendre leur sentiment de parenté à des personnes qui ne sont pas de leur propre groupe ethnique ou de leur propre pays. L'auteure de cet article identifie le cosmopolitisme spirituel, dont les principes d'amour universel et d'harmonie se retrouvent dans les enseignements de la foi bahá'íe, comme pouvant être la clé d'une telle solidarité sans frontières. En s'appuyant sur des données recueillies lors d'entretiens avec des réfugiés iraniens qui se sont établis aux États-Unis, l'auteure montre comment les principes cosmopolites influencent les bahá'ís dans leur vision du monde. Cette étude de cas met en évidence le fait que le cosmopolitisme spirituel peut enrichir le discours public en faveur de l'inclusion d'autres personnes, comme les immigrants.

Resumen
En el ámbito académico se ha tratado de resolver la cuestión de como hacer que el sentido de consanguinidad que tiene la gente, se extienda más allá de sus propios grupos étnicos y nacionales. Este artículo identifica al cosmopolitismo espiritual, cuyos principios de amor universal y armonía se pueden encontrar en las enseñanzas de la fé bahá'í, como clave para esta solidaridad sin fronteras. Basándose en los datos recopilados de entrevistas con refugiados iraníes quienes han llegado a radicar en los Estados Unidos, este artículo demuestra como los principios cosmopolitas forman los la visión del mundo de los bahá'ís. Por medio de este estudio, se volverá evidente el potencial del cosmopolitismo espiritual para enriquecer el impulso social que existe para promover la inclusión de los grupos enajenados, tales como los migrantes.

Imagine seeing our planet from space. The only borders are those where land ends and water begins; the national boundaries we know so well are invisible. As we look down, we can see

1 To all those who helped improve this article, including Dr. Cheryl Glenn, Michael Sabet and other *Journal of Bahá'í Studies* editors and reviewers, and many others, I extend my gratitude.

hints of motion in the whorled clouds adorning the globe; we may imagine the movement of people, invisible to us from this height, as equally serene and unimpeded. Is this borderless world not ideal? This question animates the philosophy known as cosmopolitanism, born (so the story goes) when the Greek philosopher Diogenes proclaimed himself a citizen of the world. At its most basic, cosmopolitanism asserts that every human has obligations to every other human, regardless of differing group affiliations.

On the ground, however, we can see what was hidden to us from space: the vastness and complexity of human mobility. Recently, the coronavirus pandemic has brought humanity's transnational movements into sharper relief than ever, as the virus rapidly spread from its point of origin to the entire world, affecting every country within mere months. This global crisis unmistakably confirms that humanity is intricately interconnected, regardless of the borders that purport to separate nations from each other. A virus respects no such divisions. Nevertheless, many political leaders worldwide have used it to stoke their constituents' fear of outsiders and have blamed other countries instead of collaborating with them. The consequences can be quantified in the ever-rising death toll, which would indubitably be lower if a concerted international response had been devised. Planetary catastrophes such as the pandemic and climate change underscore the urgency of humanity adopting a cosmopolitan vision—the prerequisite to decisive worldwide action. But for this to happen, humanity, steeped in an us-versus-them mindset, must be persuaded that cosmopolitanism is a better approach than nationalism and its attendant factionalisms.

For the resources to construct a persuasive cosmopolitanism, I look to spirituality, rooted in the understanding and practice of religion. Though every world religion can furnish some resources for this project, the Bahá'í Faith, founded in the era of nationalism, provides the most elaborated perspective on cosmopolitanism. While its ideas have yet to attain mainstream uptake, they have gained a fervent following worldwide, inspiring Bahá'ís ranging from novelists to refugees to forge transnational and intercultural connections. In this article, I theorize spiritual cosmopolitanism through the lens of the Bahá'í Faith. I emphasize migration as a crucible in which cosmopolitan ideals are tested and refined, for in the integration of migrants the imperative to build harmony without erasing difference meets a major challenge: the tendency of the majority to overrun minorities.

To elucidate spiritual cosmopolitanism, I first address the tension inherent in appealing to religion as a source for cosmopolitanism. I then provide some background on secular cosmopolitan theory and on its spiritual counterpart in Bahá'í teachings. As a scholar situated in the field of rhetoric, with its focus on how people employ language to spark action, I am interested in how believers understand and communicate about scripture, so my next move is to

investigate how rank-and-file Bahá'ís interpret the teachings. The writings of contemporary Bahá'í author Bahiyyih Nakhjavani form a launchpad for examining the perspectives of Iranian Bahá'í refugees, an examination I conduct by presenting the results of interviews. Having been forced to cross national borders and join a new society, my interviewees share perspectives informed by their firsthand experience with navigating difference. Overall, this article demonstrates that spiritual cosmopolitanism, motivated by a divine mandate for universal love and harmony, has the potential to enrich public arguments for the inclusion of Others such as immigrants.

Cosmopolitanism and Faith

At first glance, religion may seem like a strange place to ground a cosmopolitan worldview. Not only do many religious communities in practice tend towards insularity and even outright xenophobia, but the nationalism that opposes cosmopolitanism itself relies on deep-seated faith concepts with strong religious resonance, such as destiny, providence, and dominion. Before considering how cosmopolitanism, too, can draw strength from faith, it will be fruitful to look at an example of religious arguments being used to reinforce a nationalistic worldview.

Nationalism and Faith

At the federal courthouse in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in May 2019, several dozen immigrants from an array of countries, together with their family members, gathered for a naturalization ceremony. My husband, Sergey, who is from Moldova, was there, along with me. As part of this ceremony, the presiding judge gave a speech on American exceptionalism, which, as he explained, means that the United States is distinguished from other nations by a special mission. He related how this mission, in the form of Manifest Destiny, drove the nation's westward expansion in the nineteenth century, and how it has made the United States a protagonist in international politics, as it seeks to spread democracy around the world. What the judge did not mention were the violent consequences of American exceptionalism for the indigenous people exterminated and displaced in the name of Manifest Destiny, for the enslaved Africans who powered the country's expansion, and for the denizens of countries ranging from Chile to Vietnam that have been subject to U.S. intervention or invasion.

In the judge's talk were entwined immigration, nationalism, and—implicitly—religion. His audience was immigrants being welcomed into the citizenry of an "exceptional" nation and, at the same time, also being educated about the "proper" disposition toward the United States: one of awe at the singular accomplishments of this country. Exceptionalism of the kind promoted by the judge is intensely nationalistic, since it sets this nation apart from, and above, the rest of the world. Its rationale, exposed by the judge's

reference to Manifest Destiny, is fundamentally religious.

Manifest Destiny stems from dominion theology, a strain of U.S. Christian thinking that envisions church and state joining forces to make the United States into the Kingdom of God (Crowley). The term "manifest destiny" was coined in 1845 by a writer who proclaimed Americans' "manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions" (qtd. in Wilsey 3). "Providence" denotes a divine plan—a God-ordained destiny. Thus, Manifest Destiny, along with its corollaries of expansionism and exceptionalism, rests on the faith that divine providence propels the growth and power of the United States. Supporters of this belief cite a Bible passage as justification: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28). By a leap of logic (and faith), dominion theology links God's mandate to the first humans to the political destiny of the United States.

Given the religious background of Manifest Destiny, the judge's argument—while not mentioning religion—rests on the assumption that God has mandated the United States to lead the world. Whether the judge's lesson was persuasive to the new citizens arrayed before him in pew-like benches, I cannot say, but his choice of topic indicates the enduring ascendancy of exceptionalism with its almost religious reverence for the United States. The invocation of American exceptionalism to solemnize the conversion of immigrants into citizens was not without irony, given that this same exceptionalist ideology undergirds nativism: if the nation is special, those with roots therein are also special, and all outsiders are inferior.[2]

Is religion, then, naturally suited to serve nationalist ideology? I will argue that both the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith and the dispositions of those whose worldview is consciously shaped by those teachings, tell a different story: religion can be a powerful motivator for a cosmopolitan outlook. Spirituality lends cosmopolitanism rhetorical force. Before considering the evidence for this claim, a review of cosmopolitanism is in order.

Cosmopolitanism, Secular and Spiritual

For most of its life in the European philosophical tradition, from the Greek Cynics to the Roman Stoics to the early

2 It is important to note that 'Abdu'l-Bahá Himself affirms that America has a unique spiritual destiny, but the character of its distinctiveness—a topic too lengthy to be explored here—centers on its role in shedding light on the whole world, rather than on nationalistic ideas. Shoghi Effendi has also elucidated the nature of the spiritual destiny of America. See, for instance, *Tablets of the Divine Plan* and *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*.

and medieval Christians, cosmopolitanism has upheld an ethical stance for realizing universal obligations and thus questioning intergroup prejudice—an alternative to identity categories that demand primary allegiance and imply that ethical obligations stop at the border of the tribe, the polis, the country. In the 1700s, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant transmuted cosmopolitanism into a political theory of international relations, which continues to generate discussions among political scientists. For my purposes, however, the *ethical* stance is of greater interest because of its applicability to rhetoric, so I will not review the ever-growing scholarship on political cosmopolitanism. Ethical cosmopolitanism can be boiled down to the following principle: regardless of identity differences, every human has obligations to every other human. This principle has major implications for arguments over immigration.

Today, various thinkers see migrants as the vanguard of cosmopolitanism (Pollock et al.; Bhabha). Failed by capitalism and nationalism, refugees and other immigrants who move because of global inequities have an urgent impetus to push against these systems and the divisions they rely upon. Moreover, as they seek entry to wealthier countries, migrants present the paramount test of cosmopolitan ethics, compelling their destinations to decide between nativist exclusion and hospitable reception (Derrida). Indeed, public discourse about immigration is reducible to the question of whether we have an obligation to admit anyone of another nationality, resembling the question of universal obligations at the heart of cosmopolitanism. At least one rhetoric scholar, Alessandra Von Burg, has applied cosmopolitan theory directly to immigration rhetoric, considering cases in the European Union (Muslim immigrants in "Toward a Rhetorical Cosmopolitanism" and Roma nomads in "Stochastic Citizenship"). Much remains to be said about immigration rhetoric from a cosmopolitan perspective, especially within the unique context of the United States, which, unlike nations in the European Union, has been populated almost entirely by immigrants from overseas. The study of Iranian refugees presented later in this article seeks to contribute to this conversation—and, moreover, to illuminate the nexus of migration, cosmopolitanism, and religion.

Cosmopolitanism and Religion

Cosmopolitanism has a long relationship with religion. While in the crucible of Stoic philosophy, cosmopolitanism was influenced by a new religion, Christianity; a millennium later, progressive Christian thinkers like the School of Salamanca mulled over cosmopolitan ideas (Brown and Held). Moreover, cosmopolitanism's global scope reflects the global vision inherent in most world religions, which perceive universal principles uniting all humanity. Admittedly, outside the abstract realm of theory and theology,

cosmopolitanism and religion are not always friendly bedfellows; religious affiliation can defy cosmopolitanism by encouraging exclusive attachments to doctrines, coreligionists, and places of worship (Elshtain). Despite the shortcomings in how followers implement religious teachings, religion still offers resources to cosmopolitanism.

One way it can do so is by helping to decolonize cosmopolitan theory. The traditional canon of cosmopolitan philosophy has been dominated by European thinkers, with its trajectory traveling steadily north and west, from Diogenes in ancient Greece to Kant in seventeenth-century Prussia. But Europe does not hold a monopoly over cosmopolitanism. Looking beyond the Global North, particularly to religions from the East, might help to revive and enhance this ancient mindset by locating alternatives to the imperialistic undercurrents that muddy its European manifestation—the colonial tendency to dictate how the rest of the world should operate (Mignolo). Such a broadened cosmopolitanism could remedy the Eurocentric version's tendency toward a bloodless academicism that is unpalatable to most (Nussbaum). Indeed, Ananta Kumar Giri sees Kant's cosmopolitan theory as overly rational because it disdains the passions. In contrast, Giri recommends imbuing it with the emotional processes of self-development and self-transformation promoted by Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Learning from spiritual traditions beyond Judeo-Christianity can help cosmopolitan thinkers avoid the pitfall of Eurocentric imperialism, Giri contends.

As Giri has mined the religions of the Indian subcontinent for cosmopolitan lessons, I turn to a religion born in Iran, the Bahá'í Faith. The Bahá'í Faith arguably provides the most developed vision of cosmopolitanism of any world religion. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh address the political context in which He lived, an era of nationalism and economic globalization—a milieu much different from that of earlier Prophets such as Jesus and Muhammad. Therefore, He laid out not only spiritual principles for unification but also practical guidance on a world federation that would remedy the excesses of nationalism.

I explore the cosmopolitan resources found in the Bahá'í Faith from three perspectives. I first look at scholarship on the topic of the Faith's cosmopolitan orientation, before considering the writings of Bahiyyih Nakhjavani, a Bahá'í author who is herself an Iranian émigré and whose works of fiction can be viewed as a deliberate exploration of the cosmopolitan question. Finally, I will examine findings from interviews with eight Iranian Bahá'í immigrants to the United States. By featuring the voices of "everyday" Bahá'ís in this way, I align with a recent shift in cosmopolitan theory toward vernacular practices, balancing the traditional focus on great intellectuals with attention to cosmopolitanism from below (Robbins).

Cosmopolitan Principles of the Bahá'í Faith

Previous scholarship has begun fleshing out the nexus of Bahá'í belief and cosmopolitan theory. For example, social scientist Ruth Williams characterizes the Bahá'í Faith as a "cosmopolitan religion" because its members identify as "citizens of the world"; conscious of their participation in a global religious community, their faith identity takes priority over ethnic and national memberships (221). I draw from the research of political scientist Nalinie Mooten to describe how this religion advances cosmopolitan thought.

Bahá'í cosmopolitanism has its basis in scripture, according to Mooten. Indeed, many passages in the religion's holy writings imply that the foundation of a lasting world peace must be laid within the hearts of individuals. For instance, Bahá'u'lláh declared, "Ye are the fruits of one tree, and the leaves of one branch. Deal ye one with another with the utmost love and harmony, with friendliness and fellowship. . . . So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth" (132:3). Bahá'u'lláh also counseled humanity to expand its perspective beyond local concerns to encompass the entire planet: "Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self" (43:5). Indeed, one of the most renowned passages of Bahá'u'lláh advises, "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"—a precept supporting the "citizen of the world" identity (117:1). As Bahá'u'lláh rejected divisive nationalism, He also prohibited religious antipathy: "Consort with the followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and fellowship" (43:6).

Paired with the "ethics of oneness" established in Bahá'í scripture is a practical vision of global governance (Mooten 6)—that is, Bahá'ís see cosmopolitan consciousness as eventually having political effects. In the Bahá'í view of humanity's evolution, unity has rippled out from family to tribe to city-state to nation (22). Nation-based unity is showing strain, however, since realms such as the economy are already globalized. Bahá'u'lláh arrived in this tense era, which Bahá'ís consider humanity's turbulent adolescence. As nationalism staggers forward in spite of globalization, old structures are falling apart, ideally making way for new ones better suited to global unity (25). Indeed, Bahá'ís see worldwide unity as the telos of human history (23). In fact, whereas some religions foretell humanity meeting its end with an apocalyptic Last Judgment from which the faithful will be sent to paradise, Bahá'ís anticipate establishing a paradise here on earth through humanity's unification and consequent peace and prosperity.

The form of global governance anticipated by Bahá'ís is an international federation, which, rather than abolishing nation-states, joins them together for the common good. While the idea of world government often evokes dystopian nightmares of totalitarian

rule, the "Bahá'í model . . . is holistic and based on grassroots values, [and] calls for the principle of 'subsidiarity' and 'decentralisation' in international affairs" (Mooten 38). Such a model does not forbid "sane patriotism" (Shoghi Effendi qtd. in Mooten 46), but it does limit the autonomy of individual nations, which should expect international intervention if they violate human rights (24). Bahá'ís see the League of Nations and the United Nations as steps along the way to effective international governance and have participated in their efforts (21). Bahá'í principles may even have influenced the creation of the League of Nations (Pearsall). When the United Nations took over from its failed forerunner, the Bahá'í international community gained representation there starting in 1948 (BIC).[3]

Doctrinal attention to global governance is one unique aspect of Bahá'í cosmopolitanism; Mooten points out some other noteworthy elements. For one, the Bahá'í Faith, as an Eastern religion, complements the Western perspectives that have dominated most cosmopolitan thought (6). For example, where secular cosmopolitanism à la Kant relies solely on human agency, Bahá'í teachings mesh human action with divine revelation (68). In this view, "without recognizing that oneness has a spiritual source, cosmopolites will struggle to transcend the myriad material distinctions between humans in developing their universal love" (Miron, "Laura Barney's Discipleship," 16). For another, the Bahá'í principle of unity in diversity supports "the 'sensitive turn' taken by cosmopolitanism, which stresses diversity, in the sense of abandoning a domineering and homogeneous universalism" (Mooten 65). By promoting collaboration rather than competition between local and global interests, Bahá'í teachings could reconcile postmodernism's wariness of homogeneity with cosmopolitanism's end goal of international unity (68).

Overall, Bahá'í teachings support the traditional concerns of cosmopolitanism—"the promotion of the common good, the need for more global and peaceful forms of communities, and [the rejection of] the view that human nature is inherently belligerent" (Mooten 68). They also make unique contributions: a vision of an international federation, a focus on unification as a spiritual, not just a political, process, and an emphasis on unity in diversity. To begin the exploration of the links between Bahá'í cosmopolitan thought and transnational migration that will occupy the rest of this article, I now turn to the views of a contemporary adherent who has had firsthand experience with the crossing of borders: Bahiyyih Nakhjavani. Through her writing, Nakhjavani shows how Bahá'í cosmopolitan principles can be brought to bear upon contemporary public discourse.

3 For more information about Bahá'í involvement in the United Nations, see Berger.

"A Wandering Alien" Advocating Bahá'í Cosmopolitanism

Bahiyyih Nakhjavani (b. 1948) is a Bahá'í writer who was born in Iran, grew up in Uganda, and has lived her adult life in the United Kingdom, the United States, and France. Like many Bahá'í writers before her, such as Laura Barney and Martha Root,[4] Nakhjavani has taken inspiration from the life of the Bábí heroine Táhirih. *The Woman Who Read Too Much* (2015), Nakhjavani's work of historical fiction based on Táhirih's final years, raises a number of questions about cosmopolitanism through its representation of nineteenth-century Anglo-Persian relations (Miron, "A Persian Preacher's Westward Migration"). Nakhjavani features Lady Sheil, wife of the British envoy to Iran, as a prominent character. In interacting with the shah's court, Sheil finds the Persians rude and backwards; the Persians find her awkward and foreign. These tensions encapsulate Persian resentment about British interference, which burst into war in 1856. While Nakhjavani exposes cultural and political barriers to transnational cooperation, she also provides a kernel of hope by paralleling Sheil with a Persian princess: both women, dependent on their politicking male kin, separately try to prevent Táhirih's execution. Admiration for Táhirih crosses lines of identity, Nakhjavani shows—as she writes in the afterword, "Tahirih has become a universal figure. She is the first modern Iranian woman to belong to the world" (*Woman* 317).

Nakhjavani has pursued such explorations of the promises and perils of transnational relations, evoking the Bahá'í principle of global unity, in other writings. In 2017, her fourth novel, *Us&Them*—about contemporary Iranian immigrants in the West—was published. Reflecting on her book in an essay titled "A Wandering Alien," she shares her perspective on immigration: "There is no 'us' and 'them'—we're aliens when we can't identify with others." The Bahá'í tenet of universal love for humanity permeates her essay. Regarding the polarization of immigration discourse, she argues that "immigration does not need to be either a threat or banishment. A diaspora community can also be enriching to all concerned. It can widen perspectives; it can help to overcome prejudice and transcend fear." For example, she contemplates how, in becoming minorities in the West, Iranian immigrants can gain awareness about their own (mis)treatment of minorities in their homeland. She also asserts that all humans are complex, requiring both stability and freedom. Her encouragement to find the commonalities beneath superficial differences, especially beneath the label of "alien," resonates with Bahá'í teachings on the spiritual oneness of humanity. As she observes, "We are all settlers and simultaneously nomads, bound to a loved land and breathing

4 In previous articles, I have treated Barney's and Root's relationship with Táhirih. See Miron, "Laura Barney's Discipleship to 'Abdu'l-Bahá" and "Martha Root's Interwar Lectures."

the air. Deep down in every one of us, there is an exile, a wanderer looking for that eternal home."

Nakhjavani is one of millions of Iranians living outside their homeland; for instance, my maternal grandfather moved from Iran to the United States in 1955 in pursuit of medical education. The Iranian diaspora swelled after 1979, when the Islamic Revolution installed a theocratic government that persecuted political dissidents and religious minorities—especially Bahá'ís—pushing many to seek more liberal environs. Today, Iranian immigrants comprise a sizeable portion of the U.S. Bahá'í community. In the next section, I present the perspectives of eight Iranian-American Bahá'ís to complement those of Nakhjavani, thereby showing how contemporary believers take up religious principles to forge cosmopolitan dispositions, especially regarding immigration.

Perspectives of Iranian Bahá'í Refugees in the United States

Before outlining my own research with Iranian Bahá'í refugees, it is worth briefly reviewing the findings of Ruth Williams, who studied the experiences of seven Bahá'í refugees who had immigrated to Australia from Iran several decades earlier, in the 1980s. Williams aimed to understand how their faith affected their integration. In interviews, the refugees indicated that a number of cosmopolitan Bahá'í principles and practices helped them adjust. For example, Bahá'í principles urge everyone to get involved in society through education and work. Since work done in the spirit of service is seen as worship, gaining employment and volunteering are important; advancing one's education is also valued. Such involvement provides a pathway toward integration. Marriage between people of differing backgrounds is also celebrated in the Bahá'í Faith, which might encourage immigrants to forge familial relationships outside their ethnic community. Indeed, Bahá'í institutions ask Iranian refugees to avoid congregating in enclaves. Overall, Williams concludes that the religion helps immigrating believers become active members of their adopted societies by reason of its cosmopolitan principles and practices. In my interviews with Iranian Bahá'í refugees, I explore questions similar to Williams's about faith and integration, while also investigating my respondents' views on immigration itself.

The Context of Iranian Religious Refugees

As noted earlier, scholars have argued that refugees and other immigrants who move because of global inequities are in the vanguard of cosmopolitanism, for they see through the empty promises of unbridled capitalism and nationalism (Pollock et al.). As of late 2019, the UNHCR counted nearly eighty million people forcibly displaced from their homes worldwide, including twenty-six million refugees.[5] Iranian reli-

5 In its landmark Refugee Protocol,

gious refugees belong to this growing population of displaced people—but unlike many other refugees, they are fleeing not conflict but the status quo of their country, where the government uses sometimes subtle, sometimes violent tactics to push out those who do not adhere to the state-sponsored belief system. This persecution affects Bahá'ís and Christians—who comprise the largest faith minorities in Iran, each community numbering about 300,000 (U.S. Department of State)—as well as Jews, Zoroastrians, and Mandeans. Some seek resettlement through refugee programs designed for Iranian religious minorities; Canada spearheaded the development of such programs in the early 1980s, followed by some twenty-five other countries (Cameron). A U.S. program for Iranian religious minorities, established in 2004, is named after its sponsoring lawmakers, Frank Lautenberg and Arlen Specter.

To apply to the Lautenberg-Specter program, eligible Iranians take a westward path, sometimes with extended waits in Turkey, that eventually culminates in a processing period in Austria. As they wait in Vienna, usually for about half a year, a Jewish refugee organization, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), prepares them for emigration. As the HIAS website notes, since 2001, its Vienna office has served more than twenty-five thousand Iranian religious refugees. The U.S. government's increasing restrictions on immigration have, however, led to an "unprecedented" number of rejected applications in recent years (Parvini). For the Iranian refugees who *do* make it the United States, they join a larger community of about half a million Iranian Americans. Forty percent of this population lives in California, most of them in "Tehrangeles" (Taxin)—the Los Angeles area, that is, which attracts newcomers because of its well-established community of Iranian expatriates and its Tehran-like weather (Etehad).

In the following sections, I first explain the method of my interviews. Next, I describe the participants' motives for leaving Iran and their experiences integrating into the United States. Subsequently, I analyze their responses to questions about their stance on immigration and the influence of Bahá'í teachings thereon. Finally, I consider takeaways from these interviews in terms of how religion affects dispositions toward immigration. Overall, this qualitative study illuminates the potential for cosmopolitan spiritual precepts to influence discourse on borders and migration.

A Note on Methods

Because of California's importance as a destination for Iranian immigrants, including Bahá'í refugees, I chose it

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which encompasses legislation passed in 1951 and updated in 1967, the United Nations defines refugees as having "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of [1] race, [2] religion, [3] nationality, [4] membership of a particular social group or [5] political opinion" (Article I.A.2).

as the setting for my interviews. I developed a research protocol based on the following objective, which I submitted to my university's Institutional Review Board (IRB): "The PI [principal investigator] seeks to learn about two minority religious communities within the Californian Iranian diaspora, Bahá'ís and Zoroastrians, and how they envision their role as migrants in the United States. In particular, the PI would like to learn how they conduct outreach both to educate non-Iranian Americans about their culture and about their religion." (Because of this article's focus on the Bahá'í Faith, I do not discuss the results of my interviews with Zoroastrians here.)

The research process itself was divided into phases of recruitment, interviewing, and analysis. An Iranian friend, Sahar Noroozi, served as my co-researcher, recruiting eight Iranian Bahá'í participants from her social network. In May 2018, we both visited California, traveling from San Francisco to San Diego, and talked to these participants; they are profiled in Table 1.[6] The interviews proceeded according to my questionnaire, which had been approved by the supervising IRB, and which can be found in the Appendix.

6 Research funds for this project were arranged by Dr. Jack Selzer. I am thankful for his financial support, as well as for Sahar's coordination of the interviews.

Table 1: Interview Participant Profiles

Name (pseudonym)	Profession	Year immigrated	Region	Note
Zahra	Architect	2010	Bay Area	Married couple
Shayan	Computer scientist	2003		
Mehri	Schoolteacher	2000	Los Angeles Area	Married couple
Ehsan	Postal worker	2000		
Pegah	Accountant	2011	Los Angeles Area	
Farzaneh	Manager of therapy center	2011	San Diego Area	
Negin	Computer scientist	2011	San Diego Area	
Sepideh	College student	2017	San Diego Area	

After recording the interviews, I made notes on each and transcribed sections I deemed of greatest interest. Then, in a process loosely resembling open coding, I arranged passages from the interviews into themes, which form the basis of the sections below.

An Iranian Bahá'í Diaspora

All the participants had firsthand experience with discrimination, having left Iran because of religious persecution, which stymied their educational and career aspirations. In the interest of grounding their cosmopolitan visions in their lived experiences as refugees, I briefly explain the sociopolitical context driving my participants' migration to the United States. This background demonstrates how spiritual cosmopolitanism emerges at the nexus of principle and practice, of spiritual beliefs and material struggles.

Iranian Bahá'ís underwent violent persecution in the aftermath of the 1979 Revolution: over two hundred were executed or disappeared, students were expelled, cemeteries and holy places were destroyed, property was confiscated, and "virtually all citizenship rights were stripped" away, including the right to leave the country, according to political scientist Geoffrey Cameron. By the 1990s, "while Baha'is were still denied most basic rights, the arbitrary imprisonment and violent persecution had mostly stopped" (Cameron). My participants all left Iran during this ongoing period of subtler discrimination, in which the government marginalizes Bahá'ís primarily through oblique tactics—in particular, the denial of higher education. The Iranian college admissions process requires applicants to disclose their religion, and applications marked "Bahá'í" are rejected. In response, in 1987, the Bahá'ís established their own underground university system, the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, or "BIHE." Most of my participants had studied with BIHE; as interviewees Zahra and Shayan opined, it represents a resilient response to oppression. It also exemplifies a cosmopolitan approach to higher education, as, in addition to faculty within Iran, it has since 2005 embraced a network of volunteer instructors around the world through its online infrastructure (BIHE). Nevertheless, due to its marginality (it faces periodic attacks by the government), it cannot offer students resources commensurate to a traditional university's. Moreover, even with a degree from BIHE, Bahá'ís face limited employment prospects due to discrimination.

These are the factors that push some Iranian Bahá'ís to emigrate today—they want to earn advanced degrees and put those degrees to use in their careers. Departure is not a decision taken lightly; as Mehri commented, if her country were a good place, she would rather stay there with her relatives. Sepideh recalled taking five years to decide whether to emigrate. But the desire for an unconstrained education and career can tip the scale. For example, Farzaneh stated that she left because she wanted to earn a graduate

degree in her field, which was unavailable through BIHE at that time. After immigrating, she earned a Master's in psychology and now manages a family therapy center. Pegah confronted not only educational but employment discrimination in Iran; working at a private company, she heard rumors that her employer was planning to fire her because of her religion, so she resigned before he could do so. While the refugees I spoke with were achieving their educational and professional goals in the United States, they often had to play catch-up upon arriving. Sepideh, for instance, was redoing her undergraduate education. Pegah expressed feeling "ten years behind my age": she was thirty when she arrived but felt like she reverted to twenty, perhaps because she was back in school, working on a Master's, rather than established in a career and family like some of her peers. This observation suggests the complexity of integrating into the United States as a refugee.

Integrating as New Americans: "People's Minds Are Changing"

While some participants commented on the challenges of immigrating, many concurred that the United States had been welcoming to them, suggesting that the foundations of cosmopolitanism already exist here. Farzaneh, for example, found the experience of immigration harder than she had expected; yet, after the "Muslim ban"[7] debarred entrants from Iran, she found that "my classmates, a couple of them were asking a question about me, if I have family over there—but those were people who never talked to me about my issues, they never were curious about that—but after that . . . they wanted to tell me that they care . . . I think people's minds are changing." The restrictive policy sparked a new compassion for immigrants in some Americans, she speculated. Zahra also found native-born Americans to be "sympathetic" about the ban; on its first day, not only her coworkers, but also her CEO, asked her how she was faring. Before that, she had also encountered Americans interested in her experience: "When I was in Berkeley, they always wanted to know more about my story, they published it, they interviewed me over and over." Pegah remarked that she had never had a bad experience as an immigrant—and the country's religious liberty enabled her to finally be "a free Bahá'í." Comparing her time spent in Austria to that in the United States, she found adjusting to Los Angeles much easier because of its diversity; the presence of fellow Iranians assuaged her homesickness. Of course, California might be a uniquely cosmopolitan state in terms of its hospitality toward immigrants, as Negin noted; nearly one-third of its residents are foreign-born (Johnson and Sanchez). Yet, even if Iranian Bahá'ís

7 This executive order, initially passed in January 2017, sought to ban entries from seven majority-Muslim countries; though its constitutionality was challenged, a version of it is still in force as of this writing.

settle in an area with few immigrants, if there are some coreligionists present, they can expect at least one welcoming community.

Nearly all the participants affirmed that their local Bahá'í communities had aided with their social integration; this eagerness to welcome newcomers can be linked to the emphasis the religion places on the paradigmatically cosmopolitan concept of world citizenship. Even Sepideh, who does not actively practice the religion or associate with the community, remarked that Bahá'í concepts, especially that of world citizenship, make it easier to live anywhere. In the words of Shayan, Bahá'ís belong to "a worldwide community, and you're connected anywhere you go." His wife Zahra fondly recalled her time participating in San Diego's Bahá'í community; she learned most of her English from friends she made there. Other participants also recalled being welcomed by their new Bahá'í communities. Farzaneh, for example, found that attending community events helped her through her initial homesickness. Negin, lacking friends or family in the area she settled, also found the Bahá'í community an important source of support. Pegah reflected that "the love we get from the Bahá'í community" offsets "the challenges of immigration" by fostering "belonging": "wherever I go, I feel I have family and friends." After her own immigration, she served on a taskforce for welcoming Iranian Bahá'ís to Los Angeles, encouraging them to participate in the community's activities. Larger communities like Pegah's can sustain formal initiatives for Bahá'í immigrants, but often integration happens through casual friendships. For instance, when Mehri and Ehsan arrived, a Bahá'í woman offered them low-cost housing in her home, which they accepted; by living with this local Bahá'í, Ehsan learned English. Thus, when it comes to welcoming immigrants, Bahá'í communities facilitate institutional and personal cosmopolitan practices.

It was not only camaraderie with local Bahá'ís that helped the new immigrants adjust but their own deeply held Bahá'í principles, such as peacemaking, neighborliness, and respect—all of which, by promoting intergroup unity, relate to cosmopolitan ethics. Shayan highlighted the religion's valuation of good citizenship, recounting a story of nineteenth-century Iranian Bahá'í immigrants to Ashgabat who were persecuted by the locals but, rather than retaliating, interceded with the government to ask forgiveness for their attackers. Such a conciliatory disposition might aid in integration even in hostile contexts. Mehri reflected that her family's spiritual disposition helps them befriend the native-born parents who bring their children for playdates; these parents tell her they feel uniquely safe leaving their kids in her household. She believes this feeling of comfort comes from "the Bahá'í spirit in the house." In addition, Ehsan stated that his religious beliefs, especially in the equality of women and men, helped him adjust. He reports to a female supervisor, which inverts the gender dynamic prevalent

in Iran. Yet, the Bahá'í tenet of gender equality made this hierarchy easier to accept. Both the social support offered by the local Bahá'í community and inner reliance on Bahá'í principles aided the interviewees in their integration into the United States. Next, to explore commonplaces of religion that might serve as contributions to cosmopolitanism and correctives to nativism, I turn from participants' personal experiences as immigrants to their reflections on immigration.

Transnational Mobility's Perils and Promises

Though the interviewees were quick to laud the civil rights they had gained by moving to the United States, they also pointed out the downsides of immigration. Leaving home behind is an uncertain undertaking, even when fleeing persecution. In this section, I first present their perspectives on the problems with immigration, then on its benefits; taken together, they offer a balanced perspective on immigration as often driven by social injustice yet potentially enriching for immigrants and receiving countries alike. Such a perspective contributes to a mature cosmopolitan vision that understands transnational mobility as ambivalent rather than as purely liberating.

Perils: Immigration as a Consequence of Injustice

For immigrants who leave home because of oppression or poverty, injustice—whether discrimination at home or the unequal distribution of wealth globally—drives their departure. Zahra noted her hope that, someday, there will be no refugees. Ehsan similarly advocated an end to illegal immigration, which he likened to slavery, with migrants subject to low pay and border violence. He remarked that the United States should help the sending countries to make emigration unnecessary. Likewise, regarding the global refugee crisis, he viewed it as a result of governments' impunity in mistreating their residents. Evoking the Bahá'í vision of a global federation, he envisioned proactive interventions into persecution and conflict that would halt the conditions that produce refugees.

Mass exoduses can lead to suffering not only for immigrants but also for their host countries, in Ehsan's opinion. Uniquely among the participants, Ehsan valorized what he termed the "Anglo-Saxon" political culture of the United States. While acknowledging that immigrants enhance this cultural bedrock, he feared that sudden influxes may erode it. More extreme than Ehsan's view were the cases Negin had witnessed of a few Iranian Bahá'í immigrants touting their support for immigration restrictions, even the Muslim ban. She speculated that maybe these immigrants wanted to display their integration into the United States by siding with nationalist policies. Such resistance to multiculturalism is unusual among Bahá'ís—Ehsan's views were the only conservative ones

on immigration policy among the interviewees, and Negin registered her shock that Bahá'ís, especially immigrants, would support restrictions. These outlier views in favor of restrictionism demonstrate that spiritual cosmopolitanism is never uniform; its expression varies according to the way individuals apply spiritual precepts to material realities.

Promises: Immigration as the Engine of the United States

Most of the interviewees took a cosmopolitan perspective on immigration, celebrating the contributions of immigrants to the United States, which they characterized as a nation built by immigrants (Zahra, Negin), powered by their talents and diversity (Pegah), and made more progressive by their activism for social change (Farzaneh). They noted their own appreciation for their fellow immigrants—an appreciation that, as Mehri noted, is common among Bahá'ís, who tend to enjoy learning from people of other ethnicities (an expression of spiritual cosmopolitanism). Mehri lauded the diversity of her fellow schoolteachers, recounting how she benefits from the different points of view brought by a teacher of Latinx descent or one of European heritage. Her goal is to compile a "multi-culture," taking the best of each culture she encounters—an opportunity she sees as unique to the United States, where one can freely associate with people of sundry nationalities, whereas in Iran, immigrants are more segregated, limited to menial jobs. Mehri concluded that pursuing diversity is inherent to the Bahá'í principle of "race unity," the view that humanity is a single family. This Bahá'í ideal clashes with the antipathy toward cultural and racial Others that was dominating the U.S. political stage at the time of the interviews (May 2018), a milieu that the participants denounced.

Recognizing and Responding to Nativism: Personal Practices of Spiritual Cosmopolitanism

The interviewees, many of whom had benefited from the formerly effective Lautenberg-Specter program for Iranian religious refugees, readily acknowledged the negative consequences of the more restrictive policies that came into effect starting in 2017. The Muslim ban was of particular concern, as it affected their fellow Iranians' ability to enter the United States. Besides critiquing these reversals in immigration policy and the underlying upsurge of xenophobia, they also offered some thoughts on how to constructively respond. This section thus signals the participants' awareness of prejudice and their cosmopolitan vision for combating it.

Critiquing Prejudice Against Immigrants

The Bahá'í principle of global unity has a direct bearing upon immigration, according to Zahra and Shayan, a married couple. Shayan stated that

all Bahá'í concepts "align with this concept of welcoming refugees, welcoming diversity," recalling an admonition by Bahá'u'lláh that "if anyone comes to your country as a refugee, you should accept them." Zahra opined that, per the Bahá'í teaching of "the unity of mankind," people should be free to travel unimpeded by borders or stringent documentation requirements: "You, as a human being, shouldn't be judged and defined and identified based on your geographic identity." If this vision of open borders seems like an unattainable ideal, that is because we still rely on nationalism; she argued that the consequent isolationism is selfish and self-defeating, since internal issues in any country eventually affect the world. So, she concluded, it is time for effective world governance.

Several of the interviewees remarked on the difficulties created by the travel ban, which, though dubbed a *Muslim* ban, also hurt members of minority religions in the targeted countries who had been trying to immigrate to the United States. Rather than simply wanting to travel, as Zahra pointed out, refugees are leaving under duress—a point often lost in nativist portrayals of asylum-seekers as freeloaders. Sepideh, who had spent time in Turkey during her immigration process, expressed concern for the Bahá'ís waiting there for visas, some of whom had already been in limbo for years. Along these lines, Shayan had heard that some refugees processed through HIAS in Vienna were being sent back to Iran. Negin connected the travel ban and the trouble it was causing refugees to a larger deterioration of Americans' "welcoming" attitudes toward immigrants. She, on the other hand, believes in a patently cosmopolitan "world without any border," so she feels hurt when she hears Americans claiming that this country needs to care for its own instead of letting others in. Similarly, Mehri decried the partisan politics that have fomented a disunifying, anti-immigrant atmosphere, which she associated with the valorization of European heritage. She critiqued this White nativism as fallacious, since only indigenous people can claim to be truly "native." Moreover, every culture, including Euro-American ones, contains a mixture of negative and positive qualities, she contended—and immigration, rather than ruining the country, has generated its wealth. Given these participants' strong anti-xenophobia stances, what steps could they take to address the upsurge of prejudice?

Productive Responses to Nativism

Farzaneh offered one strategy: her unremitting hope for social change, which she combined with a strong identification with other immigrants in her cosmopolitan vision of advocacy. She expressed an aspiration "to be a voice of new immigrants and refugees," impelled by her belief that immigrants can best help each other because of their shared experiences. But non-immigrants also have a role to play, and she wanted to help them become more hospitable and vocal about

immigrants' rights. She recognized substantial obstacles to this mission, especially the nativism unleashed by the 2016 election. Nevertheless, she tapped into a wellspring of hope—"I believe that it's going to change"—not only for policy change but also for an immigrant rights movement, which she envisions as a successor to the Civil Rights Movement. Her optimism about reform aligns with the Bahá'í vision of a brighter spiritual future for the United States, which she linked to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's talks in the country a century ago, many of which underscored the necessity of eradicating racism. Farzaneh saw the amity between Black and White Bahá'ís as indicating the potential for such social transformation. Drawing faith from the Bahá'í teachings and community that the United States could overcome racism and xenophobia, she imagined her commitment to immigrants as eventually becoming mainstream. This hope, treasured by Farzaneh despite current setbacks, reflects the unremitting faith in divinely ordained social change that characterizes spiritual cosmopolitanism.

In terms of specific advocacy methods, Sepideh and Mehri both offered examples of workplace activism. In addition to being a university student herself, Sepideh teaches Persian in the San Diego area; she said she incorporates the Bahá'í vision of world peace into her lessons. Perhaps this theme could inspire students to think globally, thus practicing cosmopolitanism. Mehri, also a teacher, likewise stated that Bahá'í principles inspire her at work, as exemplified by a pro-immigrant speech she delivered at a school assembly. With the threat of mass deportations looming, anxieties among students with immigrant parents had been running high, so administrators asked some instructors to give speeches affirming the value of immigration following a standard outline: name, origin, and struggles and hopes as an immigrant. Mehri, pondering Bahá'í principles, developed this speech:

> My first name is "Human," and my last name is "Being." Put it together: I'm a Human Being . . . You are asking me where I am coming from . . . As an immigrant, when I stepped in here, they gave me a paper and they put alien number for me. But I'm not coming from another planet. Why do they call the immigrant "alien"? I'm coming from Planet Earth! . . . I have Russian in my background, Turkish in my background . . . Don't we go through the same struggles? We all have fear of failing . . . Imagine all those struggles that everybody goes through. It just doubles for an immigrant. We have insecurity of being an immigrant, not knowing stuff, and fear of failing. And what is my hope? . . . I hope one day we all understand that we are all human beings, we all come from Planet Earth, we all have the same fears and failures, and we all work together to make this planet a better place to live.

Her speech stood out for its creative response to the prompt, and students and staff praised it. Mehri saw it as illustrating how Bahá'ís can apply the tenet of the oneness of humanity (a distinctly cosmopolitan concept) to immigration discourse. She also viewed her own behavior as potentially persuading others of the value of immigration; one coworker told Mehri that she serves as an example of how immigrants contribute to society. So, besides speaking up, another way to promote the principle of unity is to engage with the local community and thus make observers rethink their stereotypes and maybe even take the Bahá'í view that, as Mehri put it, "Earth is just one country." Mehri's border-effacing philosophy, born in the crucible of Bahá'í teachings and her own transnationality, suggests the potency of both religion and migration to (re)construct cosmopolitanism.

Refugees: The Vanguard of Cosmopolitanism?

For Bahá'í refugees, their religion, which marks them for persecution in their homeland, can serve as a springboard into their adopted countries. Regarding my participants' accounts of their integration experiences, my findings align with Williams's, described above. Both her interviewees and mine gained support from their Bahá'í communities, which served as a home away from home. Both groups also tapped into Bahá'í teachings as they worked to integrate into the new society. The commonalities between the two studies, one in Australia with immigrants who arrived in the 1980s, the other in the United States with immigrants who mostly arrived in the 2010s, suggest the consistency of Bahá'í tenets throughout the global community, as well as their applicability to differing eras and locales. Indeed, despite having faced struggles along the way, both groups of participants appeared thoroughly integrated into their new countries.

This integration is no mirage. As Geoffrey Cameron has documented, in the 1980s, the unusual adaptability of Iranian Bahá'í refugees was noticed by the Canadian government, which noted that "the employment record of Baha'i refugees is very impressive. More than 90% find jobs within the first year." Quotas for Iranian Bahá'ís were consequently raised. Evidently, the principles of the Bahá'í Faith, especially its emphasis on the oneness of humanity—on cosmopolitanism—encourage immigrants to make inroads into their new culture, as Cameron's research on Canada, Williams's on Australia, and mine on the United States indicate. Where my study diverges from Williams's is in eliciting participants' views on immigration—as global phenomenon, as policy, as discourse—in addition to their personal experiences. Adding this dimension reveals not only how religion can help newcomers adapt but also how they envision adapting their new society.

The eight Bahá'í refugees I interviewed advocate for a cosmopolitan approach to immigration. They critique

the causes of forced migration and suggest that international cooperation is required to redress them. Despite the unjust circumstances driving much global migration, including their own, they see immigrants as improving their new countries—they credit immigration with the success of the United States. Many Americans apparently do not share this view, given the efficacy of xenophobic arguments in the 2016 election; the interviewees decry the recent surge in nativism. Yet, they hold out hope that this nativism will be conquered by a new social movement for immigrants' rights, and they find ways in daily life to channel the Bahá'í principle of global unity toward this end.

Immigrants, who must acutely observe national borders as they cross or are obstructed by them, have a central role to play in advancing cosmopolitan ideas. Refugees in particular are well-positioned to assess the hospitality of host countries, which, because of conditions in their homelands, they must rely on. My participants had left Iran under duress, blocked there from advancing their educations and careers, and had undergone periods of waiting in countries such as Turkey and Austria before receiving approval to immigrate. These experiences of transnational movement no doubt sharpened their attention to the treatment of immigrants. In combination with the (painful) insights that come from living in between national identities, my participants also had their religion, which guides them to prioritize global unity. Together, these elements informed the philosophies they shared with me, revolving around visions of a more just world, more open national borders, a more hospitable United States—philosophies that find expression in their daily lives, as typified by Mehri's speech at her school's assembly. Their progressive views indicate that cosmopolitanism is not, as the philosopher Martha Nussbaum fears, too elitist and colorless to influence humanity beyond the ivory tower. Indeed, the everyday tenets of immigrants and the religious, such as Iranian Bahá'í refugees, promise to unfold a more vibrant and persuasive cosmopolitanism. Perhaps religion, especially when informed by its transnational adherents, offers the marriage of cosmopolitan ideals to emotional—or better, *spiritual*—convictions that Nussbaum has found lacking in the realm of political philosophy.

In Closing: A Cosmopolitan Vista

Let us travel from Williamsport, the city with which I began this article, six thousand miles east to Haifa. If ever you get the chance to visit Haifa, I would suggest taking a walk down Mount Carmel toward the Mediterranean so you can pass through several of the city's varied neighborhoods. This is a walk I took seven years ago, along with other Bahá'ís who had newly arrived to begin a period of volunteer service at the Faith's World Centre. We started from the garden-bedecked property of the Bahá'í World Centre. We walked downhill to Hadar, a district that has

been a magnet for Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union, where Cyrillic joins Hebrew on the signs of countless little shops. We walked further downhill to Wadi Nisnas, the oldest part of Haifa, with curving lanes and timeworn stone buildings, home to Arab Christians; storefronts here feature Arabic signage. The city also houses smaller Arab Muslim and Druze populations, as well as the community of several hundred Bahá'í temporary residents to which I belonged for two years.

The diversity of Haifa and its relative dearth of ethnic conflict have made it a symbol of urban cosmopolitanism, an "island of sanity" amidst the Israel-Palestine conflict (Welsh), symbolized by its annual "Festival of Festivals" in which Hanukkah, Eid al-Adha, and Christmas are simultaneously celebrated. Resident Moad Ode, a Muslim, observes, "Haifa is not a special city . . . Haifa represents how normal human beings should live" (Welsh). Though the city is not a total utopia of coexistence, as its Jewish and Arab communities are fairly segregated (Black), it seemed to me a world apart from the interreligious hostilities plaguing its larger counterpart, Jerusalem.

While the Israel-Palestine conflict exemplifies the risks of ethnoreligious disunity, Haifa evokes the possibilities of cosmopolitanism. As Israel's third-largest city, Haifa is located in a country that epitomizes religious violence. Yet, this mountain city's relative serenity indicates the potential for religions to coexist—and maybe even to abet intergroup harmony someday.

The fate of the world—not just of Israel and Palestine—may well rest on whether cosmopolitanism can gain a foothold against nationalism, as urgent threats such as climate change can only be addressed with international cooperation. The transformation of international governance likewise hinges on the diffusion of a cosmopolitan disposition from the grassroots into the upper echelons of power: instead of judges teaching immigrants how to love their adopted country (as in the naturalization ceremony described at the beginning of this article), immigrants should teach judges how to love the world as a whole. The cosmopolitan dispositions of Iranian Bahá'í refugees whom I interviewed for this project offer glimmers of hope for such a transformation, as they endeavor to enact and promote Bahá'u'lláh's teaching that the "earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens" (117:1). Cosmopolitanism matters greatly, and it needs to gather persuasive power from diverse resources beyond its traditional lineage—resources including the principles offered by the Bahá'í Faith.

Appendix

Interview Questions for Iranian Religious Groups (Zoroastrians & Bahá'ís) | May 2018

On Immigration

Personal Background

- What is your profession?
- How involved are you with your religious community? Do you have any administrative or leadership roles in it?

Personal Experiences with Immigration

- Have you had direct experience with immigration?
- Did you emigrate from another country to the United States, or has someone in your family done so?
  - If "yes" to the above question:
    - Did religious persecution play a role in your decision to immigrate to the United States?
    - Did your religious community help you to resettle in any way? For example, did members of your religion help you make social connections in your new place of residence?

Views of Immigration

- U.S. immigration—both legal and illegal—is a controversial issue. What are your views on this issue?
  - How do you view immigrants to the United States? What role do they play in U.S. society, in your opinion?
  - What is your opinion of U.S. policies on immigration?
- Does your religion affect the way you view immigration? If so, how?

Community Perspectives on Immigration

- Do you think your views on immigration reflect the views of others in your (religious) community here?
- What kinds of interactions do you or your community have with any immigrants, whether from Iran or from other countries?

On Intercultural Awareness

Current Perceptions

- What do you think a typical Euro-American knows about your community?
- Do you think your community's connection with recent immigration from Iran affects the way other Americans perceive it? If so, how?

Vision for Outreach

- How do you envision your community's outreach efforts—for example, events that are open to the public—influencing public discourse?
- What do you want a typical Euro-American to know about your community?

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