THE BAHÁ'Í HOUSE OF WORSHIP: LOCALISATION AND UNIVERSAL FORM

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Introduction

To many observers the Bahá'í religion is best known for its universal outlook, its Houses of Worship, and the persecution of its adherents in Iran. This chapter is focussed on one of these dimensions, and to a small extent considers the other two. It focuses on the concept of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Bahá'í thought and practice, and explores the interplay between the universal specifications for this particular architectural form and its enculturation in regional settings; European, African, Oceanic, Asian, and American. In doing so, it explores the extent to which their emergence models the "six facets of production" that Peterson and Anand suggest underlie effective "production of culture" (Peterson and Anand 2004). The first section of the chapter reviews the conception, design, and construction of Houses of Worship; whilst a second section focuses on matters of use and receptivity.

The Bahá'í religion had its origin in nineteenth century Persia but in the past century has spread to all continents and now has a global membership (Warburg 2006). Central tenets of Bahá'í belief are that all religions refer to the one Creator, that this Creator has in various epochs communicated to humanity through divinely inspired messengers, all of whom have taught an essentially similar message concerning the spiritual nature of the human being, just as they taught social norms and laws that differ in accordance with exigencies of the time. Such a theology embraces the legitimacy of the world's prophetic religions (which it distinguishes from subsequent schisms and divergent interpretations of the founders' scriptural utterances), whilst also recognizing the unique station of the Prophet-founder of the Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh (1817–1892), as the most recent of these messengers.

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Bahá'í spiritual and social practice is based on assisting in the establishment of world peace, which in this era of globalization is viewed as a necessity rather than merely an idealistic aspiration or millennial vision. There are many other dimensions to Bahá'í belief, which cannot be explored in detail here. It is important to highlight, however, the emphasis on unity, or the "oneness of humanity" as a central idea around which all Bahá'í values and practice revolve: establishing conditions of unity will unlock the potential required to solve the pressing issues facing the planet in current times. Abdu'l-Bahá referred to the individual who initiated the Ashqabad Temple as "first builder of a House to unify man" (Abdu'l-Bahá 1971: 128), and the early champions of the Chicago Temple regarded their project as one that mediated Islamic and Christian traditions and expressed the "unity of east and west."

The institution of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, instigated by Bahá'u'lláh in his book of laws, the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (Most Holy Book), creates a sacred space in which humanity can express praise to its Creator and gain inspiration for this task of social renewal and regeneration.

> Blessed is he who, at the hour of dawn, centring his thoughts on God, occupied with His remembrance, and supplicating His forgiveness, directeth his steps to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and, entering therein, seateth himself in silence to listen to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Mighty, the All-Praised. Say: Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is each and every building which hath been erected in cities and villages for the celebration of My praise. Such is the name by which it hath been designated before the throne of glory, were ye of those who understand.
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> ...O people of the world! Build ye houses of worship throughout the lands in the name of Him Who is the Lord of all religions. Make them as perfect as is possible in the world of being, and adorn them with that which befitteth them, not with images and effigies. Then, with radiance and joy, celebrate therein the praise of your Lord, the Most Compassionate. Verily, by His remembrance the eye is cheered and the heart is filled with light (Bahá'u'lláh 1993: 61).

This passage has been elaborated on by successive leaders of the Bahá'í Faith. Following the passing of Bahá'u'lláh in 1892, authority transferred to his eldest son Abdu'l-Bahá for the period 1892–1921, subsequently to Abdu'l-Bahá's grandson Shoghi Effendi Rabbani for the period 1921–1957. Following the death of Shoghi Effendi in 1957 responsibility lay for six years (1957–1963) with a group of pre-eminent individuals known as "Hands of the Cause," which oversaw the first election of the Universal House of Justice, a governing body seated in Haifa, Israel, which continues

to be elected at regular intervals by delegates from the worldwide Bahá'í community (Hassall 2009: 168).

Conception and Design

The term "Mashriqu'l-Adhkár" is Arabic for "Dawning-place of the remembrances of God" (Arabic: مشرق الاذكار). In English, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is often referred to as a 'Temple' or 'House of Worship', and these terms will be used interchangeably in this chapter. Eight Houses of Worship were built in the twentieth century (Ashqabad, Wilmette, Kampala, Sydney, Frankfurt, Panama City, Apia, and Delhi), and more than one hundred additional sites have been acquired globally for future construction. Seven of the eight Houses of Worship constructed to date remain in use (the Ashqabad House of Worship was appropriated by Soviet authorities in the 1930s and later demolished). In many English-speaking Bahá'í communities the terms 'Temple' or 'House of Worship' are currently accepted as referring to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, in the manner that other religious traditions refer to churches, synagogues, mosques, and the like.[2] Although referring principally to a physical structure, whether pre-existing or purpose built, Mashriqu'l-Adhkár also refers to processes of spiritual renewal and expression of devotion.

Bahá'í Houses of Worship have nine sides, and are surrounded by nine gardens with walkways. They are reserved for prayer and meditation carried only by the human voice. Humanitarian, educational and charitable institutions are to be established in their vicinity. As these institutions are in their formative stages, no House of Worship thus far is associated with the full range of agencies they are eventually to inspire. Identification of the human voice as the sole instrument for praise, and religious scriptures as legitimate text, has generated forms of worship in which voice

[2] The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is not be confused with another Bahá'í institution, the Hazirat'ul-Quds, or with yet other buildings of historic significance, notably the Shrine of the Báb, located on Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel, as has occurred (see Wangerin 1993; Richard 1995). Some have mis-labelled the Teheran Haziratu'l-Quds as a temple (Rajaee 2007); others have mislabelled the Shrine of the Báb as a temple (Turner 1992). Internet site, http://isragirl.wordpress.com/2008/03/02/the-gorgeous-bahai-temple-in-haifa/. Accessed 21/02/2011. Pachter's reference to a Bahá'í temple in Berlin most probably refers to Frankfurt (Pachter 1982).

and architectural design interplay. Each building's interior silent space is accompanied by iconic exterior form reflective of cultural context.

The art historian Julia Badiee has perhaps contributed most to the exploration of the symbolism embodied in Mashriqu'l-Adhkár (Badiee 1992). In addition to continuities between past and present approaches to the design of sacred spaces, Badiee notes the use of gardens to depict "paradise"; water imagery to signify purity; the elevation of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár on mountains or else by encircling stairs; and incorporation of the circle and other aspects of 'sacred geometry'.[3]

The first Bahá'í communities, located in Iran (formerly Persia) in the nineteenth century, used existing buildings as Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and, due to their persecuted state under successive Islamic regimes, worshipped as unobtrusively as possible. The Houses of Worship constructed in the twentieth-century (Ashqabad, Wilmette, Kampala, Sydney, Frankfurt, Panama City, Apia, Delhi, and—currently under construction—Santiago) are designated as 'Mother Temples', a term signifying that they are merely the first of many to be built on the continents of the Americas, Asia, Australasia, Africa, and Europe.

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is first and foremost a structure established for devotional purposes. However, a more comprehensive explanation of the term signifies not merely a building for worship but the instigation of an integrated set of institutions serving social and humanitarian interests. Momen thus refers to Mashriqu'l-Adhkár as having three meanings: the act of gathering to worship, usually at dawn; the physical building; and the "complex of edifices" serving social and humanitarian ends (Momen 2010). Abdu'l-Bahá referred to such future dependencies as hospitals, drug dispensaries for the poor, travellers' hospices, schools for orphans, homes for the infirm and disabled, educational institutions for advanced studies, and "other philanthropic buildings" open to people of all races, ethnic backgrounds, and religions (Abdu'l-Bahá 1971: 20). These five additional

[3] This pattern becomes obvious from aerial views such as are found on Google Earth. Internet site, http://www.javierduhart.cl/templos/. Accessed 21/02/2011. It must also be noted that the mythic and spiritual symbolism in architecture is also known to indigenous cultures around the world. The Maori of New Zealand, for example, in building communal buildings known as *Marae*, regarded the central lintel as representative of *Tahu* = backbone—skyfather, the floor as "earth mother," and the Centre poles as representative of children of the god "Tane" (indicating the separation between children and parents), and the side columns—*Heke*—as representative of the tribe's various descent lines. The *Marae* is in sacred site as well as functional communal space: a structure need not be massive to be imbued with meaning. See Linzey (2004: 13–20).

functions are to be part of each Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, since "[t]he Temple is not only a place for worship; rather, in every respect is it complete and whole" (Abdu'l-Bahá 1978: 99–100). Since few of these dependencies have been as yet developed, this chapter focuses on the construction of Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs in the twentieth century, and on their subsequent evolution as newly created sacred spaces.

Ishqabad and Chicago

Construction of Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs in Ashqabad (at the time part of Russian Turkestan) and Chicago during the ministry of Abdu'l-Bahá provided opportunity for him to articulate their architectural form and religious and social functions in both eastern and western contexts. In Abdu'l-Bahá's conception, a new architecture is required to announce the coming of a new religion. Each House of Worship was to be made "as perfect as possible" using a common architectural formula: a circular, symmetrical, nine-sided building with a dome above the central room (Herrmann 1994). Bahá'í Temples were to be "places of meeting where various peoples, different races and souls of every capacity may come together in order that love and agreement should be manifest between them..." (Abdul-Bahá and MacNutt 2007: 48). They are open to the diversity of humanity and not restricted to use by adherents. In keeping with the Bahai principle that only adherents can contribute to Bahá'í funds, Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs are not encumbered with admission charges or appeals for donations. Each Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is to have nine sides and entrances (that is, they are nonagonal) and an upper level.

In Ashqabad, just north of the border with Iran, where a flourishing Bahá'í community was established during the 1880s by Iranian emigrants, the idea of building a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was kindled by the greater religious freedom enjoyed in Turkmenistan at the time. Rafati reports that the Temple was designed by Ustád 'Ali-Akbar Banná during a visit with Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akka, Palestine, in 1893, commenced in 1902 and officially inaugurated in 1919 (Rafati 1985: 461). The building of brick and stucco, five stories high and capped with an hemispherical dome, completed about 1921 after twenty years of effort, was "the most imposing building in the city, larger than any of the churches or mosques" (Momen 1991: 278–305). A pilgrim house was also built, as well as schools for both girls and boys.

However, the fortunes of religious communities waned following the Russian revolution of 1917, those of the Bahá'ís included. In 1928 a law

expropriating religious edifices was applied to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár although the community was permitted to use it as a House of Worship until 1938, when it was fully expropriated and converted into an art gallery (Shoghi Effendi 1987: 361).[4] In 1948 the temple was severely damaged by an earthquake and in 1963 was demolished following further deterioration caused by heavy rain.

The existence of the Ashqabad House of Worship inspired the American Bahá'í community to build a Temple of their own. Abdu'l-Bahá's 1903 approval of a petition by a small group of Chicago Bahá'ís seeking permission to erect a House of Worship commenced a project fifty years in duration. A committee established in 1907 to search for a Temple site purchased one on the shore of Lake Michigan by April 1908, and the North American Bahá'ís held a convention annually from 1909 to discuss the Temple project as well as other community business. The "Bahá'í Temple Unity" was incorporated as a religious corporation in the State of Illinois to hold title to the property and to supervise construction. Financial contributions began to flow from Bahá'í communities in different parts of the world and the project was given a significant boost by the visit of Abdu'l-Bahá to the project site in May 1912 in the course of his nine-month tour of the United States and Canada.

Competition for the Temple design was won by Louis Bourgeois, a French-Canadian member of the North American Bahá'í community who was firmly convinced that the project was his life's calling and who poured all his knowledge of the world's religious architecture into the design (Armstrong-Ingram 1997). The completed edifice, described in detail below, drew on Egyptian, Romanesque, Arab, Renaissance, and Byzantine styles, and incorporated religious symbols from the ancient swastika to the six-pointed Star of David, the five-pointed star, the Greek cross, the Roman cross, and the star and crescent of Islam (Whitmore 1984). Chiat notes in her work on spiritual tourism in Chicago that when the Temple's

[4] Confiscation of the building was accompanied by persecution of the Bahá'í community. "In 1938 the situation in both Turkistan and the Caucasus rapidly deteriorated, leading to the imprisonment of over five hundred believers—many of whom died—as well as a number of women, and the confiscation of their property, followed by the exile of several prominent members of these communities to Siberia, the polar forests and other places in the vicinity of the Arctic Ocean, the subsequent deportation of most of the remnants of these communities to Persia, on account of their Persian nationality, and lastly, the complete expropriation of the Temple itself and its conversion into an art gallery" (Shoghi Effendi 1987: 361).

plan was unveiled in 1920 the *New York Times* referred to it as "the architect's conception of a religious league of nations" (Chiat 2004: 185).

With the passing of Abdu'l-Bahá in 1921, leadership of the Bahá'í community fell to his grandson, Shoghi Effendi, who encouraged the North American Bahá'ís in the final decades of their Chicago Temple project. This included providing clarification of many ideas the American Bahá'ís had generated from the statements of Abdu'l-Bahá, whilst always remaining faithful to instructions that were indisputably clear. "The beloved Master has not given very many details concerning the House of Worship," wrote Shoghi Effendi's secretary in a letter of 1955. "He has written in tablets, however, that the building must be round, and be 9-sided. The Guardian feels that at this time all Bahá'í temples should have a dome" (Shoghi Effendi 1985: 247).

Shoghi Effendi explained that the "dependencies" referred to by Abdu'l-Bahá were "institutions of social service" that relieve suffering, sustain the poor, and provide shelter, solace, and education; and that the phrase "openness to all faiths," did not imply that the interior would consist of "a conglomeration of religious services conducted along lines associated with the traditional procedure obtaining in churches, mosques, synagogues, and other temples of worship" as such would be merely "a spectacle of incoherent and confused sectarian observances and rites, a condition wholly incompatible with the provisions of the Aqdas and irreconcilable with the spirit it inculcates" (Shoghi Effendi 1945: 192). At other times he distinguished between the purposes of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and its accessory buildings: "[t]he central edifice of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, which is exclusively devoted to purpose of worship, represents the spiritual element, and therefore fulfils a primary function in every Bahá'í Community, whereas all other Temple accessories, whether of a strictly administrative, cultural or humanitarian character, are secondary, and come next in importance to the House of Worship itself" (Hornby 1983: 606). All such elucidations, made originally in the context of the Ashqabad and Chicago Temples under the guidance of Abdu'l-Bahá and then Shoghi Effendi, helped distinguish the archetypal features of this new architectural form from those that might vary in specific cultural and geographic contexts.

In the case of Chicago, attention was paid to both the symbolism and intricacy of the design, as well as to exploration of materials capable of realising the architect's vision. Bourgeois was also much influenced in his organic design and ornamentation by the work of Frank Lloyd Wright's one-time mentor, Louis Sullivan. He noted in *Art and Archaeology* in June 1920:

> [t]he first floor in its simplicity of line suggests the Greek and Egyptian temples, while the treatment of the doors and windows is Romanesque in form, and the intricacy of the ornamentation suggests both the Gothic and the Arabic. The second story, beautiful in its windowed elegance, while Renaissance in line, is purely Gothic in the interlaced arches of its openings. The third story is Renaissance, and quiet and restful in feeling. Above it rises a Byzantine dome, intricate with symbolism, while, crowning all, the beams of the dome arise like hands clasped in prayer, thus imparting that feeling of ascension and aspiration heretofore found only in Gothic towers... The whole structure is a mass of symbolism, beautifully harmonized and blended. In the tracery everywhere may be made out, besides the Bahai symbol of the nine pointed star, such designs as the swastika cross "(Gammadion, i.e. solar whorl)," which is the earliest religious symbol; the Greek cross; the Roman or Christian cross, the circle, the triangle, the double triangle, or Solomon's seal; the five pointed star, indicating the Savior; the square of the microcosm and the octagon of the macrocosm. It will be seen that universality is the keynote of the temple dreamed by Mr Bourgeois (Bourgeois 1920).

The Temple's superstructure was completed in 1931, but its exterior ornamentation was not completed until 1943 and the interior ornamentation not completed until 1953 (Whitmore 1984). The ornamentation covering the dome was made of crushed quartz from South Carolina and Virginia, and cemented with white Portland cement, using new technologies tested and perfected for the project by leading concrete engineer John Early (Kramer 2006; Miller 1962). The resulting "temple of light" was referred to by *Time* magazine in 1943 as "one of the most fantastic pieces of architecture in the U.S." and as "... a mélange of ancient styles sparkling with tons of white quartz crystals" (Anon 1943).

Shoghi Effendi hailed completion of the exterior ornamentation as a "prodigious accomplishment" (Shoghi Effendi 1947: 59), and his history of the origins of the Bahá'í Faith, *God Passes By*, recounts several contemporary expert appraisals:

> "Americans," wrote Sherwin Cody, in the magazine section of the New York Times, of the model of the Temple, when exhibited in the Kevorkian Gallery in New York, "will have to pause long enough to find that an artist has wrought into this building the conception of a Religious League of Nations." And lastly, this tribute paid to the features of, and the ideals embodied in, this Temple—the most sacred House of Worship in the Bahá'í world, whether of the present or of the future—by Dr. Rexford Newcomb, Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Illinois: "This 'Temple of Light' opens upon the terrain of human experience nine great doorways which beckon men and women of every race and clime, of every faith and conviction, of every condition of freedom or servitude to enter here into a recognition of that kinship and brotherhood without which the modern world will be able to make little further progress... The dome, pointed in form, aiming as assuredly as did the aspiring lines of the medieval cathedrals toward higher and better things, achieves not only through its symbolism but also through its structural propriety and sheer loveliness of form, a beauty not matched by any domical structure since the construction of Michelangelo's dome on the Basilica of St Peter in Rome" (Shoghi Effendi 1987: 352).

With the Chicago Temple complete, after a half-century of effort, Shoghi Effendi conceived plans for multiplication of the first continental Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs. Land for eleven future Temples was to be purchased by 1963: three in the Americas (Toronto; Panama, Santiago); three in Africa (Cairo, Johannesburg, Kampala); two in Asia (Baghdad, New Delhi); two in Europe (Rome, Stockholm); and one in Australia (Sydney).

Much of this plan was adhered to, with the exception of projects thwarted by the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í community. Shoghi Effendi's original intent was to build the third and fourth Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs in Tihran, Iran, and Haifa, Israel (Shoghi Effendi 1984: 14). The Iranian Bahá'ís had already acquired a 3.58 square kilometre plot of land, named Hadiqa, in the foothills of the Alborz Mountains in northeast Tehran, and had constructed buildings for summer schools and other social and administrative activities (Rafati 1985: 457). However, as explained at the time by Shoghi Effendi's secretary "in view of the strong recrudescence of persecution and hatred of the Faith in Persia, he feels that to erect Temples in Africa and Australasia —where it is possible to do so—would be a great comfort to the Persian believers and a befitting response to their enemies who may well make it unfeasible to build the Tehran Temple during this Plan" (Shoghi Effendi 1997). This in effect meant that the Bahá'ís of Africa and Australia were called to take responsibility for building Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs much sooner than they had anticipated.[5]

Kampala, Sydney and Frankfurt

In Africa, the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was constructed in Kampala, in recognition of the swift emergence of a Bahá'í Community in Uganda and neighbouring countries in East Africa. Shoghi Effendi had travelled extensively in Africa, and was instrumental in guiding the Temple design so as to reflect African architectural form at the same time that it contributed something entirely new to the continent's religious architecture. Set in

[5] See also Shoghi Effendi (1999: 90). On the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í community at this time see Ghanea-Hercock (2002).

extensive gardens on fifty acres on Kikaya Hill seven kilometres from the capital, the 127-foot high building, designed by American Bahá'í architect Charles Mason Remey and constructed between 1958 and 1961, features walls of Ugandan-quarried stone, and a dome forty-four feet in diameter covered in fixed Italian mosaic, lower roof tiles from Belgium, and empanelled coloured glass from Germany. The nine doors and the interior benches for six hundred worshippers use Ugandan timber. The dome is supported by nine columns, each two feet in diameter, and the two roofs are supported by two sets of twenty seven slightly smaller columns. The inside of the dome is painted a pale blue and the rotunda, into which are set nine large and fifty-four smaller windows, all filled with green, amber and pale blue glass, are painted a brilliant white, while the columns and the lower walls are a very pale green. "All this lends itself to an effect," is the description of one commentator;

> ...of lightness and airiness which is intensified by the large green and amber glass-filled grilles which stand on either side of the huge mvule doors... The interior woodwork and colored glass windows create a vibrant hall of ambers, blues, greens and whites that dictate the temple's extraordinary being. When the nine large entrance doors are opened, the interior appears to merge with the sun-drenched fields, and the blue and white sky dropping in from the outside- a reminder of the oneness of God's creation that is central to the Bahá'í faith (Rulekere 2006).

The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in Sydney, Australia, designated the 'Mother Temple of the Antipodes,' was designed by Sydney architect John Brogan, from an initial concept by Charles Mason Remey, and built at approximately the same time as the Kampalan Temple, between 1957 and 1961, at a cost of approximately £175,000. The auditorium seats six hundred, with additional space in a gallery that runs around all nine sides of the building's interior. The concrete dome (with height of thirty eight metres and diameter of twenty metres) was one of the first of its kind constructed in Australia, and the first-time use of a helicopter to place a lantern on the dome attracted unprecedented media attention. The building was dedicated on 17 September 1961 by Ruhiyyih Rabbani, the widow of Shoghi Effendi, and quickly became a recognized landmark at Mona Vale on Sydney's North Shore. Its placement in 380,000 square metres (38 hectares) of natural bushland,[6] on a hill-top and close to the ocean, was met

[6] The bushland is officially a native reserve and contains such native Australian plants as waratahs, several grevillea, including the unique caleyi, Australian wattle (acacia) and woody pear, and three species of eucalypts. Its curators have won recognition for their care of the natural environment.

sympathetically by an Australian society, and perhaps Sydney residents in particular, who added a "visit to the Bahá'í Temple" to their sight-seeing list: "Sydney's latest landmark," commenced one magazine article soon after the dedication, "... the Bahá'í House of Worship, lends a touch of the Orient to the Australian Bushland at Ingleside, near Mona Vale. Soaring above gum trees, gullies and ridges, a glittering white dome rises 130 feet" (Frizell 1961).

The third Mashriqu'l-Adhkár constructed in the 1960s is in Germany. 'Abdu'l-Bahá had visited Germany briefly in 1913 and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Germany was formed in 1923. From 1937–1945 Bahá'í activities were banned by the Nazi regime. A design competition was won by Frankfurt structural engineer Teuto Rocholl, and in 1957 a site was selected 25 km west of Frankfurt, at the foot of the Taunus Mountains in the village of Langenhain, a section of the town of Hofheim. Negotiations over the style of the first European Temple provide insight into Shoghi Effendi's views on classical and modern architectural forms, for in the process of refining its design he stressed to the German National Assembly that whilst the architect was "not restricted in any way in choosing his style of design" (Shoghi Effendi 1954), the Temple had to "represent throughout Europe the dignity and spirit of the Faith" (Shoghi Effendi 1985: 245). "There must be," he wrote at one stage, "none of this hideous, exaggerated, bizarre style, which one sees in many modern buildings. It is not befitting for our House of Worship (Shoghi Effendi 1985: 215). He regarded much modern architecture as "transient in style, for the most part ugly, and altogether too utilitarian in aspect for a House of Worship" (Shoghi Effendi 1955). He also expressed the view that "the vast majority of human beings are neither very modern nor very extreme in their tastes, and that what the advanced school may think is marvellous is often very distasteful indeed to just plain, simple people" (Shoghi Effendi 1956). Clearly, Shoghi Effendi's preference for classical architecture was an important influence, and his disdain for modern forms influenced the style chosen for the Houses of Worship designed during his lifetime.

Learning from the experience with the Chicago Temple (which took five decades to construct), Shoghi Effendi emphasised to the German Bahá'ís that the size of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was less important than its quality: "[s]ize and pretentiousness are not important. The important thing is that the building should be speedily erected, and be a financial possibility, not placing, as the American Temple, a terrible strain on the friends for years to come" (Shoghi Effendi 1985: 236). After some administrative delays, Rocholl constructed the distinctly modern Temple between

1960 and 1964. The prefabricated, reinforced concrete steel block superstructure produced in the Netherlands rises twenty-eight metres (ninety-two feet) from the ground floor. The interior base is forty-eight metres (157.5 feet) in diameter. The dome is supported by twenty-seven pillars that curve upwards to a circle which supports a lantern. Five hundred and forty diamond-shaped (rhombic) glass panel windows between the ribs stream sunlight into the interior making this, too, a 'temple of light.' It is not surrounded by bushland in the manner of the Australian Temple, nor cultivated gardens as in Kampala; rather, it is approached by traversing the calm of a green field. There were now Temples in North America, Australia, Africa and Europe, each having a distinct character and geographic and cultural setting, and yet each instantly recognizable as representative of the Bahá'í Faith.

Panama, New Delhi, Apia and Santiago

The Universal House of Justice, from its establishment in 1963, continued the project of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár building that had commenced during the ministry of Abdu'l-Bahá and had continued through that of Shoghi Effendi. In Panama City, New Delhi, and Apia, Temple-sites were acquired during the lifetime of Shoghi Effendi, but the Universal House of Justice emphasised the freedom that architects had to design these Temples "in relation to the climate, environment and culture of the area where it is to be built" (Universal House of Justice 1996: 271). It pointed out, additionally, that Shoghi Effendi's "own predilections in such matters" were not be regarded as the only point of inspiration: "[a]s clearly indicated by his rejection of the design submitted to him for the Temple in Kampala... he did not feel that the general modern trend of architecture current at his time was suitable for a Bahá'í House of Worship, but this in no sense implies that he instituted a pattern of his own" (Universal House of Justice 2000). Shoghi Effendi's preference for a classical style for the structures on Mount Carmel[7] was made on the basis that this was the style most suitable to that context, but architects were told that they need not feel constrained in their sources of inspiration when considering designs for the Houses of Worship in India and Samoa.

[7] That is, the International Archives Building and the Shrine of the Báb. Additional buildings have been established on Mount Carmel in the classical style in the years since Shoghi Effendi's passing in 1957.

An invitation for submissions for the Panama Temple was issued by the Universal House of Justice in 1965 and in 1969 a design by British Architect Peter Tillotson was selected from among forty-three entries. Situated approximately ten kilometres northeast of Panama City on *la montaña del Dulce Canto* ('the mountain of Beautiful Singing'), in Las Cumbres, San Miguelito, the 550-seat Temple completed in 1972 is constructed of local stone laid in a pattern reminiscent of Native American fabric designs. The white dome is two hundred feet in diameter and ninety-two feet high, and covered with thousands of small oval tiles, and is visible from many parts of the city below.

There were two Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs constructed in the 1980s; in small Pacific Island state of Samoa, and in the massive continent of India. Situating the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in the Pacific Islands in Apia honoured Samoan Head of State Malietoa Tanumafili II (1913–2007), the first reigning monarch to declare his personal acceptance of the Bahá'í Faith (in 1967). The project was announced in 1974 and in 1975 a site was selected in Tiapapata, inland from Apia on the island of Upolu. The design by Husayn Amanat, selected in 1978, was inspired by the Samoan *fale* (traditional dwelling), with a white mosaic tiled dome of white reinforced concrete resting on nine pairs of buttresses clad in soft red granite. Mirrored glass draws in sunlight by day and creates an iridescent effect when lit at night. The open plan main hall seats five hundred and a cantilevered mezzanine level provides an additional two hundred seats. Construction commenced in 1981 and was completed in 1984. As with the other Houses of Worship set in tropical locations—Uganda and Panama—the Samoan Temple features a dome beneath which an auditorium is aired by warm breezes, in a setting of lush tropical vegetation that creates a silence conducive to prayer and meditation.

The eighth Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, situated in Bahapur, New Delhi, the first on the Indian sub-continent, is the largest constructed worldwide to date. Architect Fariborz Sahba was inspired by the Lotus, a symbol of purity in Hindu tradition (Sebestyén 1998; Sahba 2011; Badiee 2000). Situated on twenty-six acres of land, the Temple consisting of twenty-seven free-standing marble clad 'petals' arranged in clusters of three to form nine sides, with a diameter of seventy metres and a height of forty-one metres, was completed in 1986 (Nooreyezdan 1986). The construction of the dome from interlacing curved concrete shells overcame formidable technical challenges, and drew on new engineering solutions which had not been available to Jørn Utzon, who designed the Sydney Opera House (Fisher 1987).

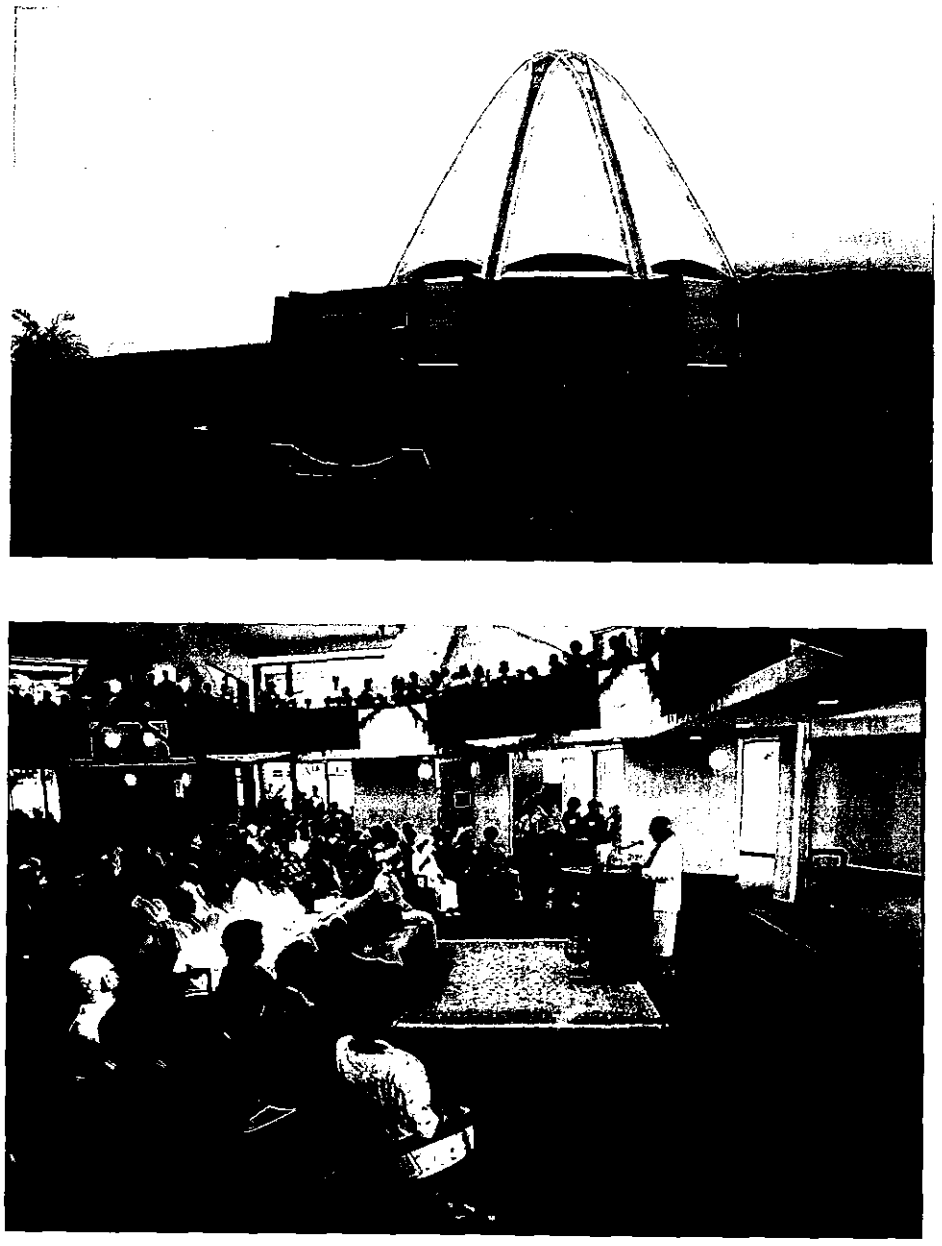


Fig. 1. Exterior and interior views of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Tiapapata (Apia, Samoa), with Head of State Malietoa Tanumafili II seen reading at the 1984 dedication service.

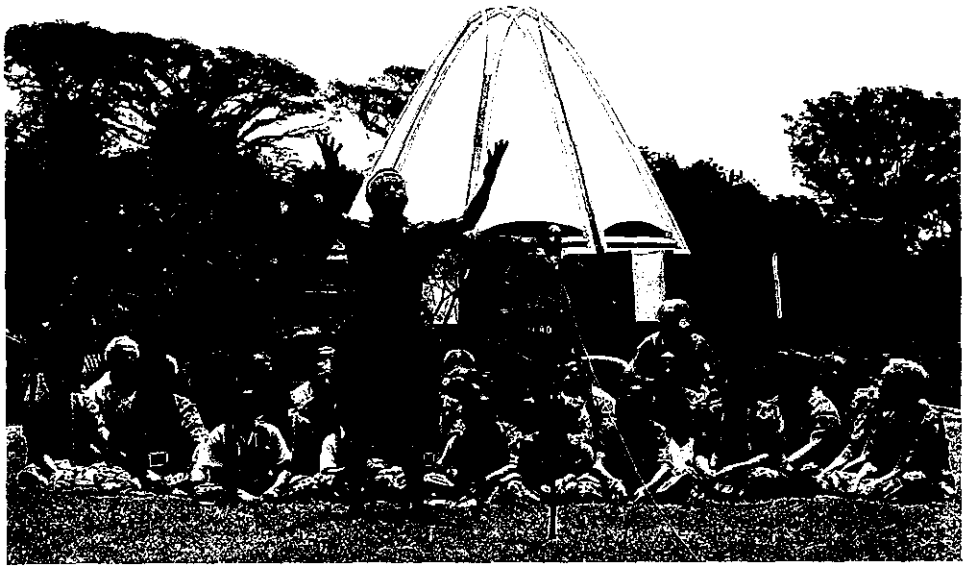


Fig. 2. Exterior view of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Tiapapata (Apia, Samoa).

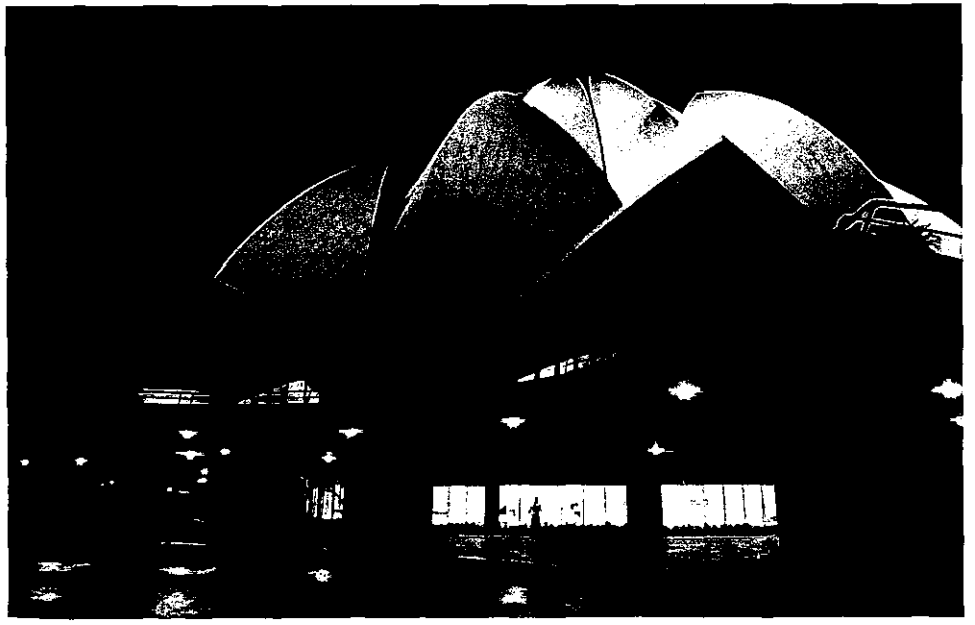
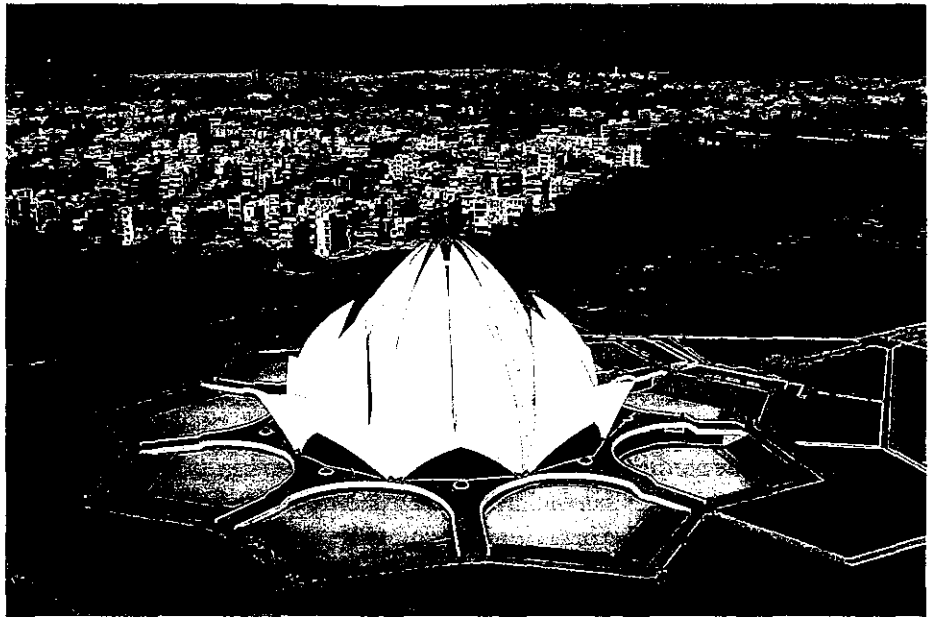


Fig. 3. Exterior view of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Bahapur (New Delhi, India).



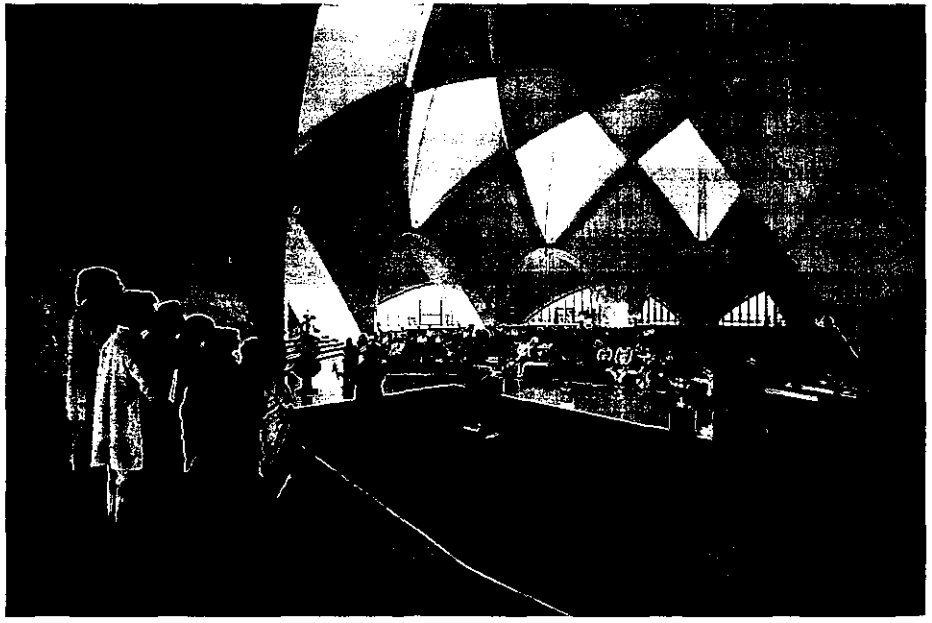


Fig. 4. Exterior and interior views of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Bahapur (New Delhi, India).

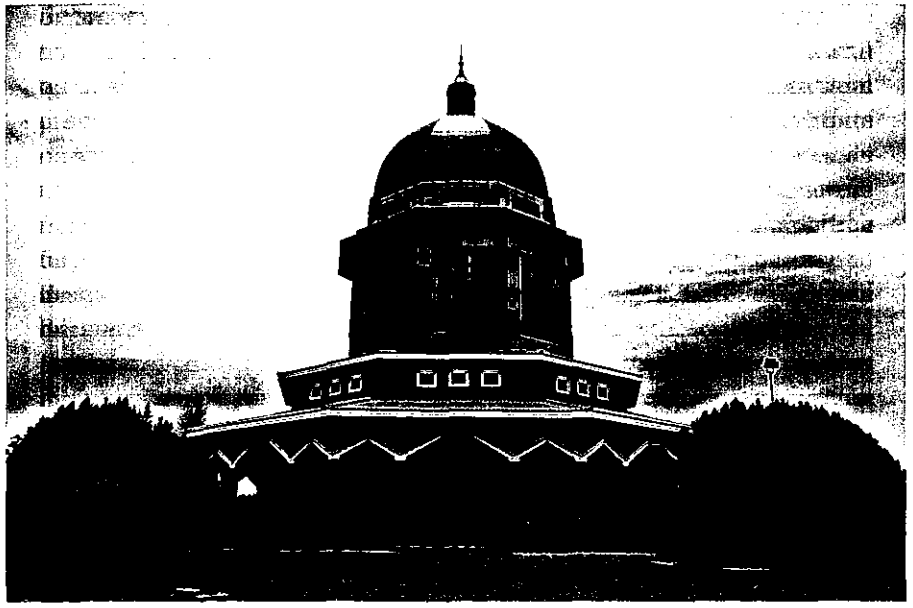
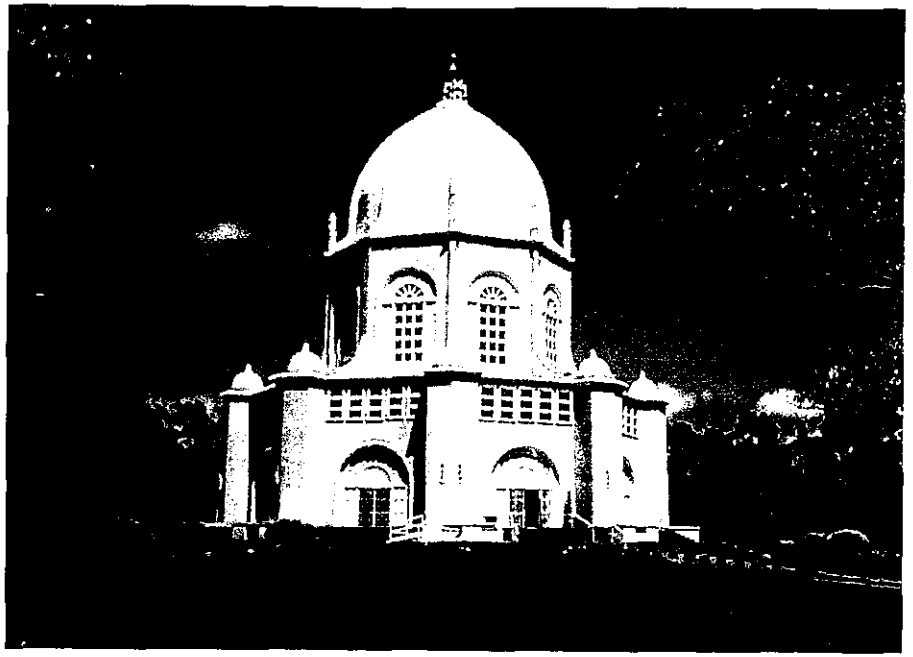


Fig. 5. Exterior and interior views of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Kikaya (Kampala, Uganda).



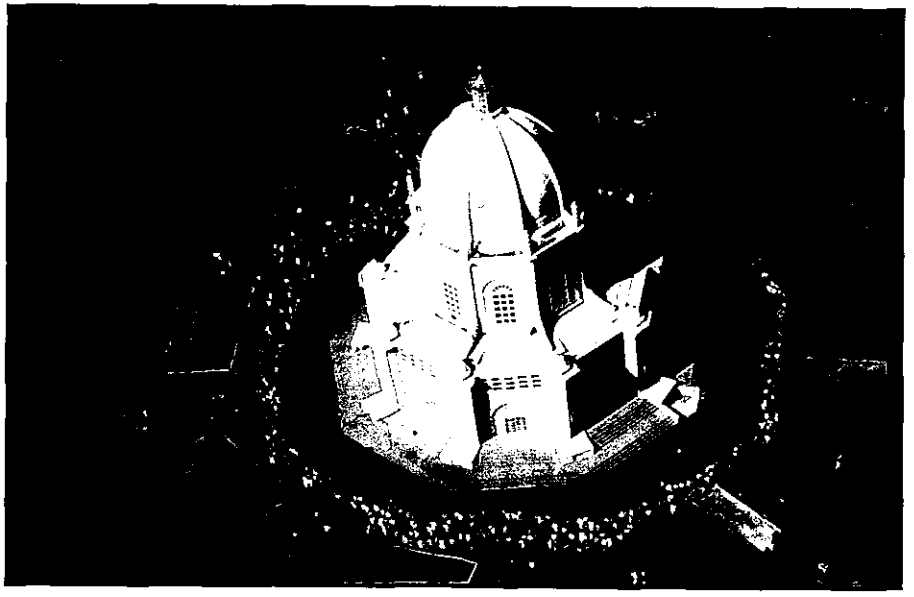


Fig. 6. Exterior views of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Mona Vale (Sydney, Australia). The aerial view showing a Peace Exposition held in the UN year of Peace, 1986.

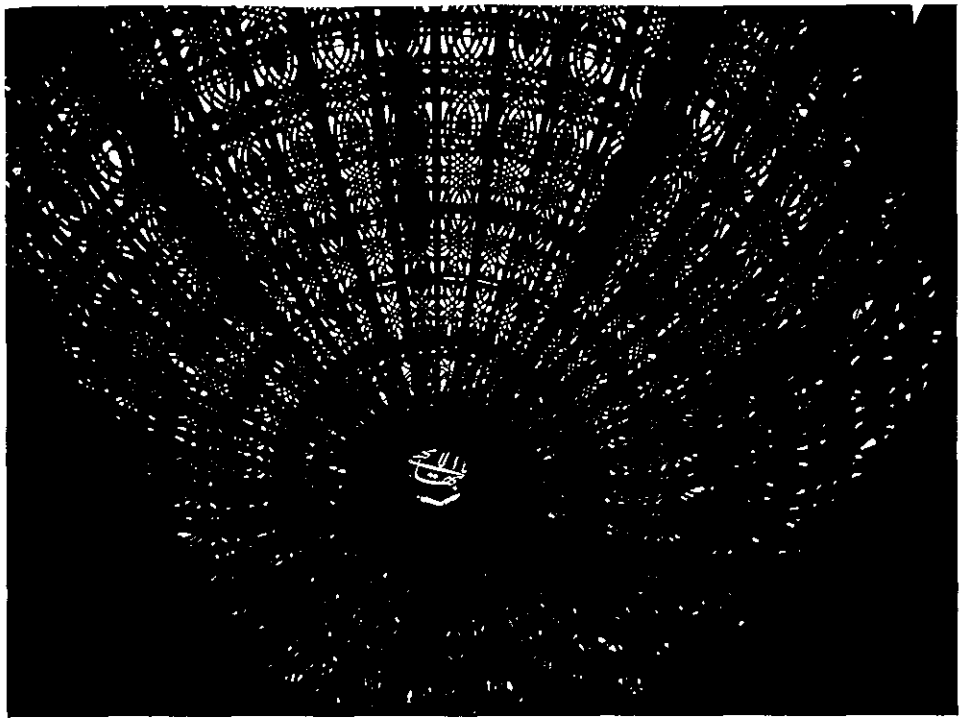


Fig. 7. Interior view of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at Wilmette (Chicago, USA).

At the current time there is just one Mashriqu'l-Adhkár under construction, at Peñalolen in metropolitan Santiago, Chile. The striking design by Hariri Pontarini Architects generated by digital parametric design tools to sculpt an "irregularly shaped exterior" (Cichy 2006: 3), features sails of luminescent white alabaster and glass. Like the New Delhi Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, this building commenced receiving honours prior to its completion, such as a *Canadian Architect* Award of Excellence (2004) for which one judge described it as "a rare convergence of forces that seem destined to produce a monument so unique as to become a global landmark" (Anon 2004: 43). In August 2010 a global panel named the Chile House of Worship joint winner in the World Architecture News 'Civic Building—Unbuilt' award category:

> [t]he Temple is designed as a crystallising of light-as-expression, an evanescent structure of white alabaster and glass; a place of pure luminescence. During the day, the soft undulating alabaster and glass skin of the Temple forms its outer expression. At night, the image reverses; the entire volume

becomes a warm totalised glow, with the inner form of the building visible through the glass.

The inner form of the Temple, suspended within its radiant exterior envelope, is a volume defined by finely articulated tracery of wood, offering a delicately ornamental inner surface, rich in texture, warm by nature, acoustically practical and responsive to the cultural givens of the area. The Temple's nine enfolding wings, identical in form, are organically shaped and twisted slightly to produce a nest-like structure, readable as a soft undulating dome positioned around a raised base. The Temple is to be sited amidst a radiating garden comprising of nine reflecting lily pools and nine prayer-gardens. The primary approach to the Temple reveals a sinuous, ethereal, light-washed structure.

The Temple touches lightly on the ground, its base having become virtually transparent, with each of the nine wings practically floating in the horizon. While firmly grounded, in terms of its engineering, the form of the Temple speaks nevertheless of ascendance. It is hoped that the Temple's design will be seen as a restrained interplay of seeming contradictions; movement against stillness, the building's profound rootedness made to seem buoyant, the building reading as a symmetrical structure that seems possessed of a performative spirit (Anon 2004).

Other aspects of the Santiago Temple's design are engineering features to fortify the structure against the region's earthquakes, and its placement within a landscape of nine prayer gardens and a lily pool in a manner that plays with both sunlight and moonlight to evoke "... a gentle and welcoming beacon to the whole of South America" (Anon 2004a).

Warburg has also noted the use of local symbols, particularly in some of the newer temples:

> [t]he lotus-flower design of the temple in New Delhi is one example. The outer pillars of the Panama temple are made of reddish-brown brickwork laid in a pattern reminiscent of the decorations on Mayan temple walls. In the Apia temple, the pillars supporting the dome are narrow and the spaces in between the pillars are entirely in glass. From a distance, this architectural detail makes the temple look like the traditional Samoan house, the *fale*. The *fale* has no walls, only an elevated floor and wooden pillars supporting the raised thatch roof (Warburg 2006: 489).

However, such adoption of local cultural motifs is integrated with elements of a global template, such as use of nine sides to signify 'unity' as the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár's fundamental message: "[n]ine is the highest digit, hence symbolises comprehensiveness, culmination" (Hornby 1983: 312).

Use and Reception

The production of unique architectural forms, however few in numbers and scattered on a global scale, as described in section one above, generated both global and localized iconic effects, which are set out in brief in this second section of the chapter. Upon completion of building, the Bahá'í institutions were faced with the challenge of creating policies for its use on the basis of the guidelines established in the Bahá'í Writings. The human voice is the sole instrument to be used, thus ruling out accompaniment by musical instruments; revealed scriptures only were to be used, thus ruling out all other text, including sermons or lectures. Armstrong-Ingram has observed the gradual development of devotional activities in the context of the Chicago Temple (Armstrong-Ingram 1987).

In Houses of Worship located amidst predominantly Christian societies, services were established on Sundays as a matter of convenience (there is a Bahá'í Calendar comprising nineteen months of nineteen days each, but to date this calendar has not been systematically incorporated into House of Worship programs). In a number of locations choirs have been established on the strength of local talent available, and a repertoire of music based on Bahá'í scripture gradually established. Danish sociologist Margit Warburg, one of the few commentators to have visited the majority of the Bahá'í temples for academic observation, has noted:

> [s]ince the 1960s, the American Baha'is have had an ongoing discussion about the use of the temple in Wilmette, in particular whether the devotional sessions should be for the public in general and thereby support the mission, or primarily serve the religious needs of the Baha'i communities of the Chicago area. My field trips to the temples in Frankfurt, Kampala, Panama and Apia indicated that the far majority of those who attended the Sunday services were local Baha'is and that very few non-Baha'is came to the services. The public in general, however, seems to visit the temples at other times. For example, the temple in Panama was visited by 25,000 people in 2000, an increase from 20,000 the previous year. The number of visitors, around 500 per week, is much higher than would be expected based on the number of people (40) attending the Sunday service when I visited the temple. Considering that it was during the season in Panama with the most pleasant climate and therefore the peak tourist season, the numbers only make sense assuming that the Baha'i temple mainly serves as a place for individual visits, for Baha'is and non-Baha'is alike, rather than as a place of collective worship (Warburg 2006: 493).

In this analysis distinction is made between use of Bahá'í Temples for formal devotional sessions of interest to Bahá'ís as compared to other faiths, use for informal meditation, and use as a tourist attraction. Warburg notes that numbers of tourists greatly outweigh numbers attending regular services and implies Baha'i communities could do more to develop the use of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár (Warburg 2006: 494).

Important as these observations are, they do not take into account the extensive formal and informal relationships that Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs weave both within and beyond Bahá'í communities. Bahá'í Temples are for people of all faiths, not just for Bahá'ís, and so the only requirements for entry are having modest dress and maintaining quiet. Although no ceremonies take place within Bahá'í Temples, Temple gardens have become a popular site for the exchange of wedding vows (Hill 2010).

As only Bahá'ís can make financial contributions, there are no collection boxes; as the Faith has no clergy, there are no pulpits. There is also no segregation within the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár on the basis of gender. The ambience of Bahá'í temple architecture has probably had an impact on composition. Identification of the human voice as the sole instrument for praise and religious scriptures as the only text to be read has generated forms of worship in which voice and architectural design interplay. Shoghi Effendi had counselled against "all forms of rigidity and uniformity in matter of worship." As there were no specific provisions in the Bahá'í Writings concerning the method of prayer, chanting of prayers "should neither be required nor prohibited" (Shoghi Effendi 1985: 608–607). When this matter was raised upon completion of the Ugandan Temple, Shoghi Effendi's advice had been to encourage "the desire of the Africans to sing," with again the warning that "rigidity in the Baha'i service be scrupulously avoided" (Shoghi Effendi 1931: 1). Choirs have been established at most temples—there are at present choirs in Uganda, Wilmette, Sydney and Frankfurt—which require members of sufficient ability who also live within a reasonable distance, as well as a director able to compose or else make use of existing compositions. The freedom of musical form alluded to above has allowed for experimentation with multiple styles, usually under the influence of the director, who is generally a non-paid volunteer.

At the Sydney House of Worship, music teacher Merle Heggie initiated a choir in the 1960s, which was later developed by Tom Price, who subsequently moved to the United States and whose choral compositions as recorded on the CD *Songs of the Ancient Beauty* and as sung by a collective choir at the second Bahá'í World Congress in New York in 1992, became

the basis of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár choir repertoires worldwide. The Sydney Temple Choir continues under choirmaster Linda Safajou. Armstrong-Ingram has documented the slow emergence of a Bahá'í Choir at the Wilmette House of Worship. In time, a choir did emerge, eventually reaching standards of excellence. In 2006, a composition by Choirmaster Van Gilmer won "Best Gospel Song" in the Independent Music Awards, and in the same year a "Choral Music Festival" was established, which now draws hundreds of participants annually (Bahá'í Choir 2011). Although the Indian Temple does not currently have a permanent choir, renowned Indian musician Ravi Shankar composed several works for the 1986 Dedication of the House of Worship in New Delhi that show the possibilities for integration of classical Indian music of a culture into Bahá'í worship (Price 2009). In the Ugandan House of Workshop, two choir masters lead an *a capella* choir songs in Luganda (the language of Uganda), plus English, French, Arabic, and Kiswahili at services held on Sundays, Bahá'í holy days and at such other occasions as memorial services for believers who have passed away, and for observance of International Woman's Day and the International Day of Peace.[8]

It is certainly the case that the Temples attract significant numbers of tourists. Shoghi Effendi had appreciated the fact that the quality of the first Houses of Worship would attract publicity and anticipated that this would in turn lead to an increase in the number of Bahá'ís and Bahá'í communities. Although such an outcome has not been systematically documented, it is quite plausible, given the rapid increase in visitor numbers to the New Delhi House of Worship, in particular. The Wilmette Temple attracted publicity both in the United States and around the globe as early as the 1930s, well before its completion in the 1950s (Anon 1935). In 1978 it was listed in the United States Government's National Register of Historic Places (Whitmore 1984: 240). By the end of the century, it was attracting no less than a quarter of a million visitors annually (Stausberg 2011: 96). The European Bahá'í House of Worship is visited by about 25,000 people annually (Anon 2010d).

The New Delhi Temple is now commonly listed as one of the major sights in that city, together with Humayun's Tomb and the Qutb Minar (Vaughan 2009).[9] It is not merely a tourist destination (Yadav 2010), but,

[8] Aqsan Mehari Woldu, pers. comm., 12/02/2011.

[9] The temple is routinely listed in sight-seeing lists, an example being India Luxury Hotels, http://india-luxury-hotels.com/touristplaces.html. Accessed 21/02/2011.

"one of the world's major attractions, drawing more than two and a half million visitors a year. On Hindu holy days, it has drawn as many as 100,000." With more than 4.6 million visitors annually by 2007, the temple is now described as "one of the most popular spots on earth, in a league with St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and not far behind the Eiffel Tower in Paris" (Anon 2008). The New Delhi Temple is now routinely listed among the most significant architectural achievements of the late twentieth century (Anon 2010a).

The Sydney House of Worship been described by University of Sydney architectural historian Jennifer Taylor as one of four major religious edifices constructed in Sydney during the twentieth century. (Anon 2010b) Similar recognition, whether official or unofficial, has been given to other Bahá'í temples. In 1987 the Frankfurt Mashriqu'l-Adhkár was listed as a cultural monument by the German state of Hesse, and in 2009 was included in events celebrating the seven hundred year anniversary of the village of Hofheim. The mayor and more than three hundred townspeople gathered at the temple to hear a choir from Langenhain[10] as well as the Bahá'í choir alternate in singing Christian psalms and Bahá'í scriptures, with both choirs combining to sing words of Bahá'u'lláh set to music by Mozart.

Both before and after construction, the 'Lotus Temple' attracted architectural recognition.[11] In 2000, for example, the GlobArt Academy of Vienna bestowed its "GlobArt Academy 2000 award" in recognition of "the magnitude of the service of [this] Taj Mahal of the 20th century in promoting the unity and harmony of people of all nations, religions and social strata, to an extent unsurpassed by any other architectural monument worldwide" (Rasiwala, n.d.), whilst the Architectural Society of China named the Lotus Temple one of one hundred canonical works of the twentieth century (Frampton et al 2000).

[10] The New Langenhain Choir plus a local traditional choir founded in 1844.

[11] These awards included: the Institution of Structural Engineers (1987) for excellence in religious art and architecture ("so emulating the beauty of a flower and so striking in its visual impact"); the International Federation for Religious Art and Architecture (1987) for "excellence in religious art and architecture"; the United Kingdom's Institute of Structural Engineers Award (1988) "For producing a building so emulating the beauty of a flower and so striking in its visual impact"; the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America's Paul Waterbury Outdoor Lighting Design (1988) for the excellence of its outdoor illumination; the Maharashtra-India Chapter of the American Concrete Institute (1989) for "excellence in a concrete structure"; the American Concrete Institute (1990) as one of the most finely-built concrete structures.

At times Mashriqu'l-Adhkár services have been incorporated into landmark events, such as the 1967 centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's writing of the *Suriy-i-Mulúk* (*Tablet to the Kings*), as well as major conferences and gatherings. They have also been incorporated into interfaith and inter-organizational programs. The Frankfurt Temple is the site of an annual *Somerfest*, literally a 'summer festival' in which Bahá'í communities and the general public party in the Temple grounds accompanied by music, displays, food, and children's activities (Sommerfest 2006).

In the case of Sydney, active relationships have been established with the United Nations Association, with services conducted to mark International Women's Day (5 March), United Nations Day (24 October), Universal Children's Day (20 November), International Women's Year (1975), Year of Youth (1985), and Year of Peace (1986). Activities during the International Year of Peace included a week-long 'Bahá'í Peace Exposition' in the Temple grounds, featuring prayer and meditation services, a conference, an open air stage, a performance at the Sydney Opera House by Bahá'í duo Seals and Crofts, peace displays and exhibits, an Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Marquee, a children's participation marquee, and a Raja Yoga peace pavilion. The event was co-sponsored by the International Year of Peace Secretariat of the Federal Government's Department of Foreign Affairs, the Australia Council, Warringah Shire Council, UNICEF, and St John Ambulance Brigade, and earned the Australian Bahá'í community one of three "Peace Messenger Awards" awarded to activities within Australia to mark the International Year of Peace.[12] The Temple's fiftieth anniversary in September 2011 was marked by a week-long program, renewed media attention (it was used as the backdrop, for instance, of a television weather report), and new collaboration when it was bathed in blue light for seven evenings in support of prostate cancer awareness.

Houses of Worship are also used for Memorial Services held in memory of community members who have passed away. These are held sometimes at the request of a Bahá'í institution and sometimes at the request of an individual family. Yet other special events have included services "to extol the memory of the Bahá'ís in Iran who have been executed for their Faith and to pray for those remaining who are faced with grave dangers," and for the victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami (held in Sydney on 16 January 2005). However, levels of formal activity have not been uniform across Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, and to a certain extent their silent presence has

[12] Programmes for each of these events are in the author's personal collection.

imbued the observer with spiritual significance. In the Ugandan context, the Chief Justice of Uganda, Benjamin J. Odoki, observed at the fiftieth anniversary of the Kampala Temple, held 18 January 2011, that it had had a "discernable impact on the lives of those who have been associated with it and those who have visited it" (Anon 2010c).

In recent times this has become evident in the candid blogs of travellers and tourists, now so freely shared on the internet. "I was able to spend more than an hour in the cool of the Sydney Bahá'í Temple today," runs a blog by "Leila," "its delicate pale green and strong and simple lines put me in mind of the Mediterranean. And, in Sydney, there are *always* spiders" (Leila 2008). In the internet age, the Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs can be appreciated online. Most have a dedicated website, and there also several websites that provide 'panoramic' views.[13] They appear on sites devoted to religious architecture, heritage lists, lists of the "most amazing buildings" in the world, (Anon n.d. a) and even "spiritual tourism" (Chiat 2004: 185). Graphic material is also proliferating on such sites as Flickr, Yelp, Youtube, and Facebook, with Google Earth granting the potential visitor significant visual access prior to their arrival.[14] John Hartmann writes of his encounter in New Delhi in 2008:

> [a]t the Bahá'í Lotus-Temple in Delhi, out of respect, all visitors are expected to take off their shoes and tread barefoot on the woven mats that lead up to the Temple's entrance. I remember first seeing the Temple, somewhat masked by the haze generated in Delhi's own greenhouse-like atmosphere. It sits on a parched grass lawn, and is shaped like the traditional flower of Hindu and Buddhist iconography, twenty-seven interlocked petals emerging from a pool. I accompanied several Buddhist monks to the doorway, and stood back for a few moments watching them enter the base of the marble lotus. Looking out over the walkway, Asian tourists, Hindu holy-men, all backgrounds of Indians, and the occasional Westerner slowly pushed their way through the humidity to the Temple entrance. Unaware that I was blocking the door, I was urged by a French backpacker, currently a Bahá'í door-holder, to enter the Temple.
>
> I expected there to be some sort of ceremony or activity inside; however, there was nothing, nothing but the stone silence of several hundred people breathing. Never before had I encountered a congregation of people simply sitting, listening to silence, simply thinking. I sat on one of the few hundred wooden benches and stared three stories upward at the ceiling. The Temple itself is surprisingly light for having so few windows. It seems to collect the sighs and soft murmurs of its occupants, bottling them into a collective and primal drone (Hartmann 2008).

A travel guide to Panama City asks:

> [w]hat is that dome-ish thing up there on the hill!? There are only 7 Bahá'í Temples in the world, one of which is located right here in Panama City, Panama. After I had that cleared up, I started to wonder, just what is the Bahá'í faith? I knew that "The Office" actor Rainn Wilson is Bahá'í and that he traveled to Panama for that very reason, but this was the extent of my knowledge.... After researching a bit about Bahá'í in Panama, what strikes me most is their outreach with the Ngabe-Bugle people. The Bahá'í' community runs 10 schools in the region where they otherwise would not exist. These schools are only accessible by horseback or on foot (Anon n.d. b).

A Lonely Planet Guide advises:

> [o]ne of 38 religious, spiritual sights in central America: On the outskirts of Panama City, 11km from the city center on the Transisthmian Hwy, the white-domed Baha'i House of Worship looms like a giant egg atop the crest of a hill. The inside is surprisingly beautiful, with a fresh breeze always present. The Baha'i House of Worship serves all of Latin America. Information about the faith is available at the temple in English and Spanish; readings from the Baha'i writings (also in English and Spanish) are held Sunday mornings at 10:00. Any bus to Colón can let you off on the highway, but it's a long walk up the hill. A taxi from Panama City costs around US$10.[15]

Whereas Warburg's reflections (noted earlier in this chapter), present critical reflections on the physical form as well as community use of Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs, the passages above represent the unmediated responses from the contemporary culture of travel and tourism. Here the traveller is surprised at their discovery, and the tour industry admitted the Temple to its list of sites worth seeing.

[13] See internet sites, http://bahaikipedia.org/House_of_Worship; Chile http://templo.cl.bahai.org/ and http://www.chilean-temple.org/; Germany http://www.bahai.de/haus-der-andacht/wegbeschreibung/; India http://www.bahaihouseofworship.in/; Panama http://www.panamabahai.net/; Samoa http://www.bahaitemplesamoa.ws/; Australia http://www.bahai.org.au/Participate/Temple.aspx; United States of America http://www.bahai.us/bahai-temple. Accessed 21/02/2011. For panoramic views, see http://www.p4panorama.com/panos/lotustemple/index.html. Accessed 21/02/2011.

[14] Javier Duhart has collated the coordinates of the Temples for viewing on Google Earth. See Bahá'í Temples on Google Earth, at http://www.javierduhart.cl/templos/. Accessed 21/02/2011.

[15] Lonely Planet, "Baha'i House of Worship." At http://www.lonelyplanet.com/panama/panama-city/sights/religious-spiritual/baha-house-worship. Accessed 23/12/2010.

The 'Bahá'í Temple' has thus found its way into popular culture: in the manner that Christina Wright "visited a Bahá'í temple, tasted matzah ball soup in our cafeteria, studied Wicca, learned about Rosh Hashanah and Ramadan, discovered why Muslim women wear a headscarf and what a yarmulke is, participated in interfaith dialogues, listened to Sikh music, and so much else" in the course of "discovering that other religions had components which were just as powerful and moving to others as Christianity was to (her)" (Wright 2005); and that Christgau informs a singer about unique Chicago sites they had omitted from a song: "Soul Vegetarian vegan soul food restaurant run by the African Hebrew Israelites, the Bahá'í temple in Willamette which gets a lot of god in the architecture and has seven gardens" (Christgau 2006). Of course, the Wilmette Temple is included in 'photography walks' together with other sites in Wilmette Illinois (Mosser 1997), and one website lists the Temple under "Arts and Culture" (Anon n.d. c).

Conclusion

Peterson and Anand have argued that "symbolic elements of culture are shaped by the systems within which they are created, distributed, evaluated, taught, and preserved" (Peterson and Anand, 2004: 311). They suggest, furthermore, that cultural products are generated through the interplay of technology, law and regulation, industry structure, organization structure, occupational careers, and the market. To what extent does the gradual articulation of Bahá'í Mashriqu'l-Adhkár fit this theoretical frame?

In terms of technology, each House of Worship has pushed the boundaries of technological possibility in order to create new architectural forms: at Wilmette the lace-work on the Temple's outer shell required the development of new concrete; at Sydney the dome was completed with first use, in Australia, of a helicopter to install the crowning lantern; at New Delhi the "sails" employed materials and methods of construction beyond those available to the builders of Utzon's Sydney Opera House; while the structure currently rising in Santiago has required the creation of new materials capable of realising the architect's design. In terms of law and regulation, the form and use of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár originate in Bahá'í Writings and they are regulated by institutions of the Bahá'í Faith. This regulation ensures continuity of purpose and suitability of use.

Industry structure has the least relevance of Peterson and Anand's six facets, unless one is willing to make analogies between religions and their

sacred buildings on the one hand, and other forms of production on the other (which this essay is not inclined to do). Organization structure and occupational careers, however, may provide useful insight into the practices of worship that Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs have generated. As Bahá'í is a religion without clergy, its Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs are sacred spaces without pulpits, rituals, sermons, or ceremonies; and as the religion's finances are drawn from adherents only (and under conditions of anonymity), such services as are held in Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs omit fund-boxes, collections, or other events involving tithing. Armstrong-Ingram's reference (1987) in the context of Wilmette to the slow generation of original musical forms may reflect this lack of a professional cadre drawing its living from the musical forms, the lessons, and the ritual ceremonies, associated with services of worship.

Finally, the market provides an interesting lens through which to consider receptivity to the concept and practice of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Shoghi Effendi referred to the first Houses of Worship as "the forerunner of a divine, a slowly maturing civilization" (Shoghi Effendi 1987: xvi), and the Bahá'í vision is for the construction of Houses of Worship "in every town and village" (Bahá'u'lláh 1992: 190). There is, thus, an expectation that demand for Mashriqu'l-Adhkár will grow, and that this demand will be met through additional construction and design innovation. In 2001 the Universal House of Justice announced that national Houses of Worship would be built in the next phase of the expansion of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, and there are currently more than 148 sites for such future development (Buck 2010). Around each will emerge a number of ancillary agencies and social institutions. These will not replicate the scale of the 'Mother Temples' that have been established for each continent and may shift emphasis more swiftly to communal worship and contemplation of social action.

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CONSTRUCTING THE CORNUCOPIA THAT IS CAODAISM: THEMES OF CULTURAL PRODUCTION IN AN INCREASINGLY ACEPHALOUS MILIEU

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Introduction

In this chapter I will trace a trajectory of particular cultural production that is approximately eighty years long. It is the story of a Vietnamese new religious movement that seeks to present itself as architecturally distinct from the general aesthetic milieu of Vietnamese sacred architecture, and yet also to proclaim that it is the consummation of several millennia-long traditions of that nation's (and the world's) religious quest for an ultimate unity of purpose nestled within the sacred. The cultural production of Caodaist architecture goes through a number of stages in this period, but perhaps the most fascinating is the continued development and spread of an architectural model that arises despite the decapitation of the formal bureaucracy of this faith by the Communist government after 1975. Since this period, Caodaist architectural cultural production has taken on a number of added roles amongst the Vietnamese diaspora, which include the amelioration of homesickness and the need to absorb anxieties about a lack of official institutional direction. This chapter focuses on the Sydney Caodaist community, not only because it is one solid, working example of a Caodaist community in exile, but also because it was one of the first outside Vietnam to complete a purpose-built temple to Đức Cao Đài [God]. Thus I will demonstrate the strong links between community development, the topography within which a community can find itself as a new religion, and the nature of the motivation and changes in style to religious cultural production. Caodaism is of note in this process, because of its recent acephalous status.

Cornucopia As Theme and Methodology

Caodaism is a religion that self-identifies as a syncretic system, bringing together the religious traditions of the world for the next stage of religious development (known by Caodaists as the 'Third Amnesty between God