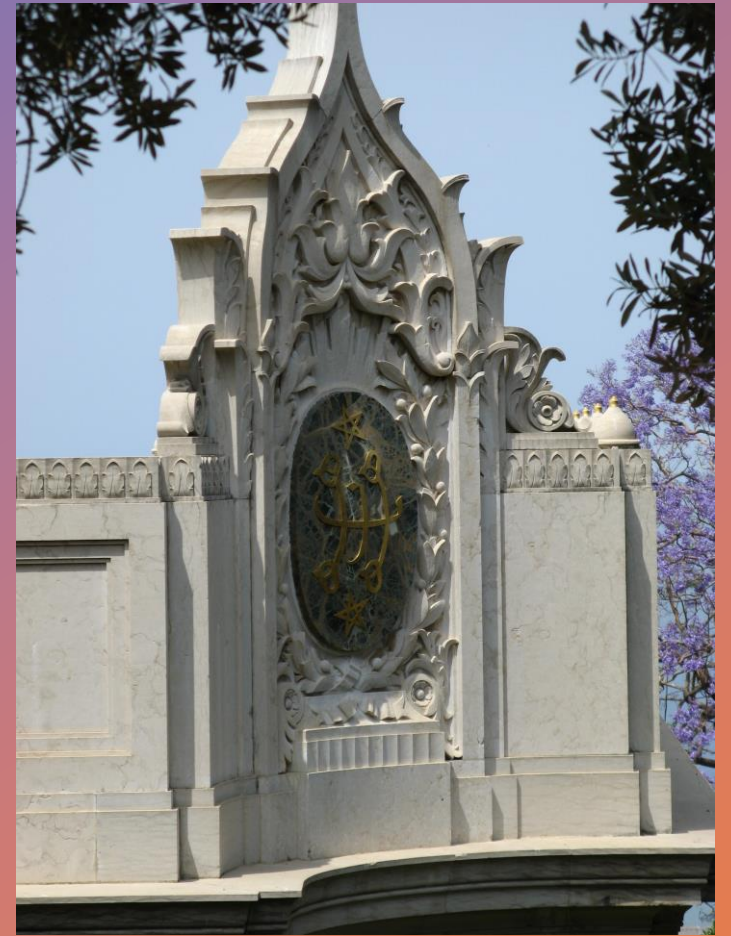


Sacred Architecture



Bahá'í Temples and Shrines



About our Meetup Group

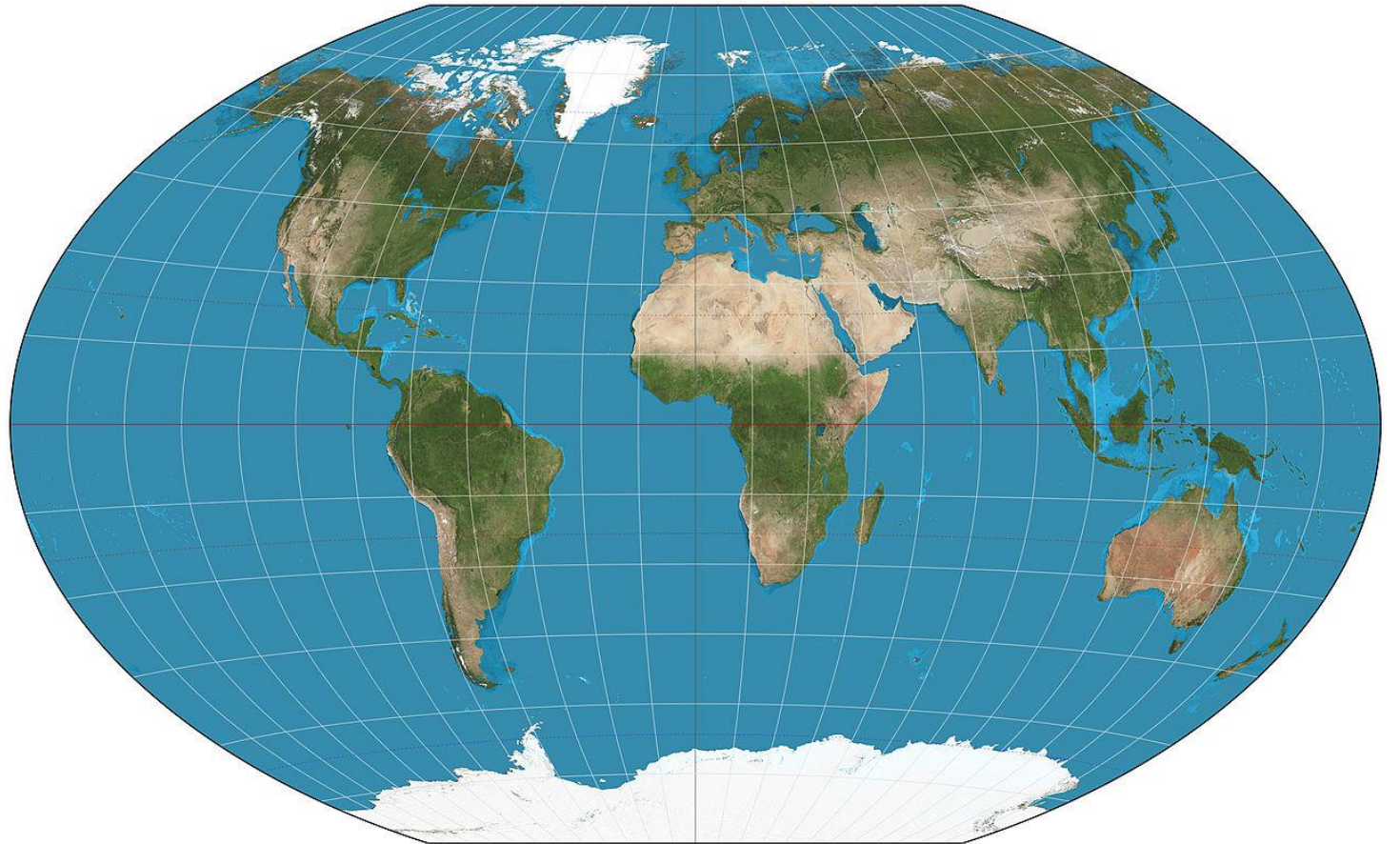
- This is the “Bahá’í Faith and Spiritual Teachings Meetup Group”
- First of all, welcome to all new Meetup group members
- This Meetup group has been live late Oct, 2021
- Co-organizers: Brian Wittman and Cher Gupta
- Meetings are open – so some attendees may not be group members
- Looking for new topics – so please send a message with your suggestions

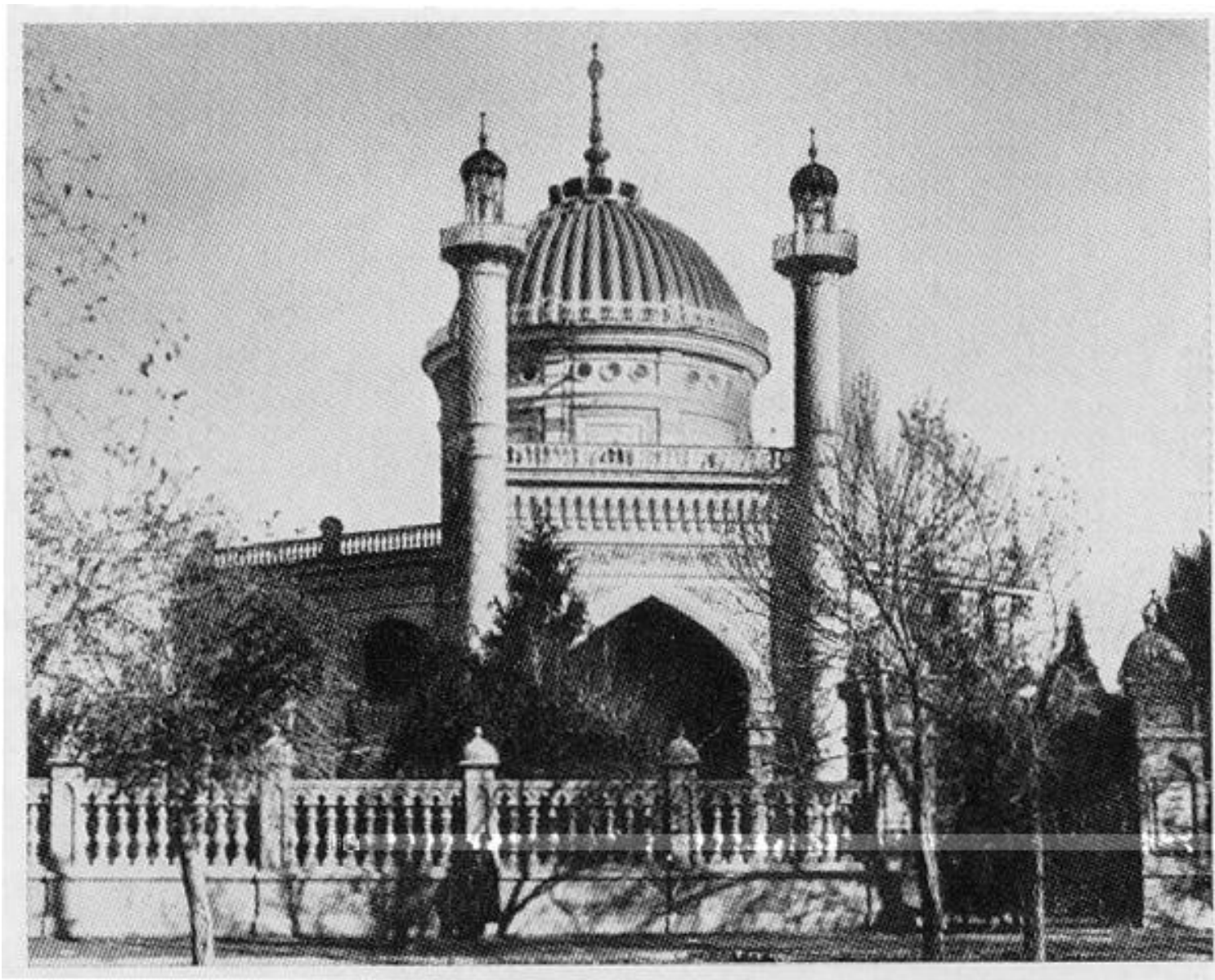
Bahá'í Temple =
Bahá'í House of Worship =
Mashriqu'l-Adhkár (مشرق الاذكار)
(Arabic phrase meaning
“Dawning-place of the remembrance of God”)

- All Bahá'í Temples have 9 sides, symbolizing unity
- Reserved exclusively for worship (no sermons, only scripture read or chanted/sung)
- Open to all
- In the future will be surrounded by dependencies for social, humanitarian, educational, and scientific pursuits (hospital, hostel, university, etc.)
- 12 Temples have been completed around the world (8 continental, 3 local, 1 destroyed)

Location of very first Bahá'í Temple?

Any guesses?





First Bahá'í House of Worship

Ishqabad (formerly Russia, now Turkmenistan)

Subsidiary humanitarian institutions:

- School
- Hostel for travelers
- Hospital

Timeline:

1902 - Construction started

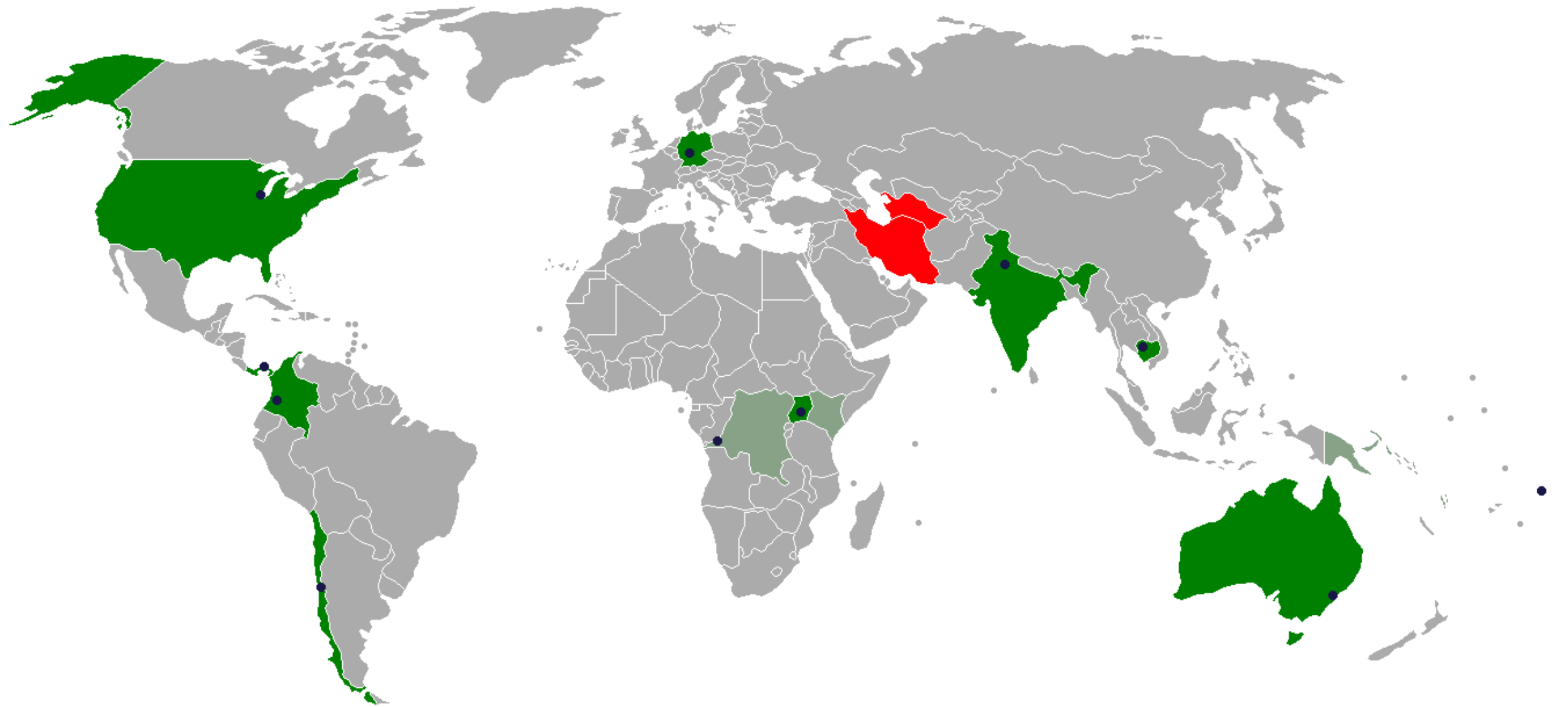
1908 – Construction completed

1928 – Expropriated by Soviet authorities and leased back to Bahá'ís

1938 – Secularized and turned into art gallery

1948 – Severely damaged by earthquake

1963 – demolished, turned into public park



Locations of Bahá'í Temples around the World



Bahá'í House of Worship (or Temple) in Wilmette,
IL, north of Chicago
Dedicated 1953
Architect: Louis Bourgeois (died 1930)



Aerial view of the Temple with Lake
Michigan in background



'Abdu'l-Baha and Bahá'ís laying the "Cornerstone" on land purchased for the Temple. May 1, 1912. After the stone was laid, He said: "The Temple is already built."

The "Cornerstone" (really a dedication marker) is now preserved in "Foundation Hall". Here it is exactly 100 years later.





Welcome Center with Temple in background

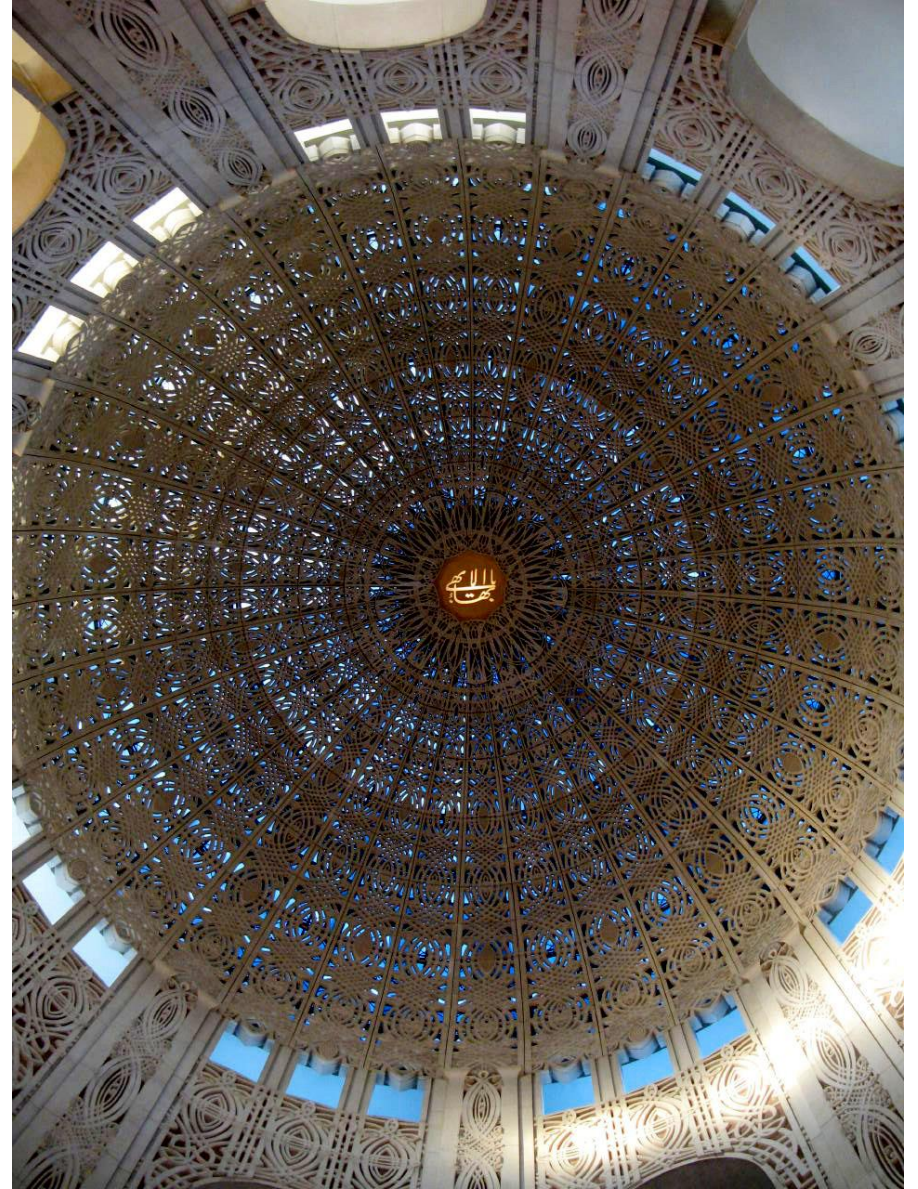


Welcome Center viewed from Temple steps

A new Welcome Center was opened in 2015. It was built after a survey revealed that many visitors to the House of Worship never got out of their cars, some not realizing that the Temple was open to the public. Before 2015, there was a welcome center in the Temple's basement, but most non-Bahá'í visitors either did not realize this or didn't want to enter. Many visitors had no idea about the Temple's history, context, or significance.



Closeup of ornamentation on exterior pillar



Inside the Temple looking up



Kampala, Uganda



Langenhain, Germany



Panama City, Panama



Sydney, Australia



Interior of Sydney Temple



Apia, Samoa



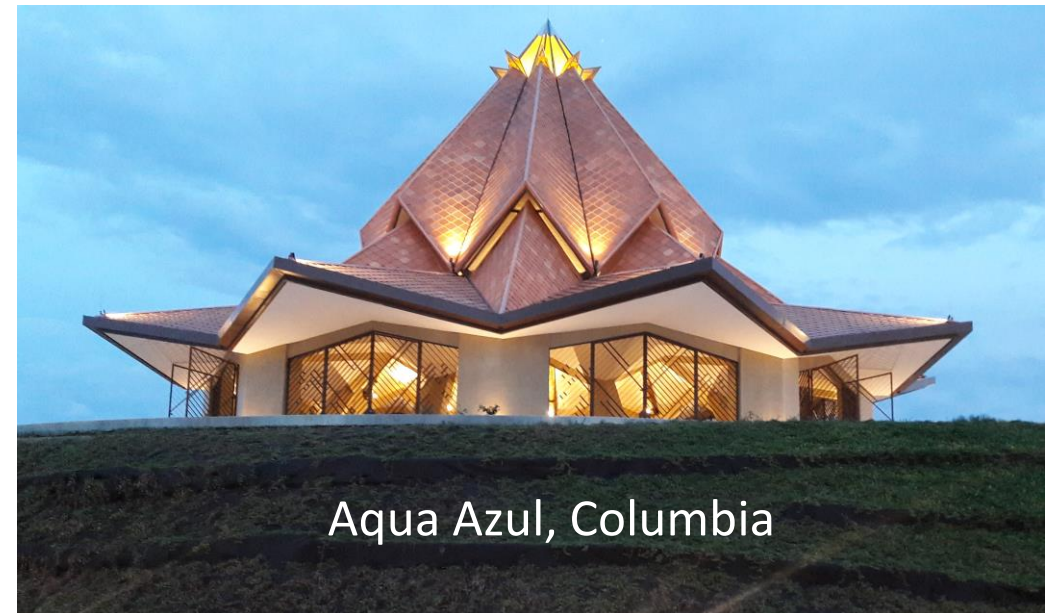
New Delhi, India



Santiago, Chile



Battambang, Cambodia



Aqua Azul, Columbia



At the dedication, a local choir sings “Make my prayer, O my Lord, a fountain of living waters.”

World’s Most Recent Bahá’í House of Worship, Matunda Soy,
Kenya, opened May, 2021

Scriptural Motivation

The term *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár* is used in the writings of [Bahá'u'lláh](#), ['Abdu'l-Bahá](#), and [Shoghi Effendi](#) to refer to a gathering of Bahá'ís worshiping and praising God through use of sacred scripture, especially at dawn; to a building dedicated to such worship; to the complex of buildings surrounding a central House of Worship that Bahá'u'lláh ordained to be at the heart of every Bahá'í community and that is to include educational and humanitarian service institutions open to people of all religions; and to the central House of Worship, or Temple, itself. Only Bahá'ís may contribute funds to the building and operation of a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. As is generally the case with Bahá'í institutions, the development of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár as an institution is both gradual and evolutionary.

In His book of laws, the [Kitáb-i-Aqdas](#) (Most Holy Book), Bahá'u'lláh describes the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár as a building erected in a city or village for the worship of God.¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whose ministry spanned the period 1892–1921, encouraged the Bahá'ís to establish Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs in every "hamlet and city"

Source: The Bahá'í Encyclopedia Project at https://www.bahai-encyclopedia-project.org/index.php?view=article&catid=36%3Aadministrationinstitutions&id=70%3Amashriqul-adhkar&option=com_content&Itemid=74#santiago

Future Temple Locations?

- Tehran, Iran – A site was selected and purchased before 1944. A design was approved by Shoghi Effendi, but construction has been delayed indefinitely, due to the persecution of the Faith in Iran.
- Haifa, Israel – A site was selected and purchased on Mt. Carmel near the spot where Baha'u'llah chanted the “Tablet of Carmel.” A design was approved Shoghi Effendi, but construction has been delayed. In 1971, the Universal House of Justice erected an obelisk on the site.
- Eliot, Maine, U.S. – During his visit to Green Acre in Eliot, Maine in 1912, ‘Abdu’l-Baha stated that the 2nd Bahá’í House of Worship in the U.S. would be located there.
- A list of many other future sites is given at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%CA%BC%C3%AD_House_of_Worship#Other_selected_sites



Government officials and Muslim clerics destroying the Tehran Bahá’í Center, 1955



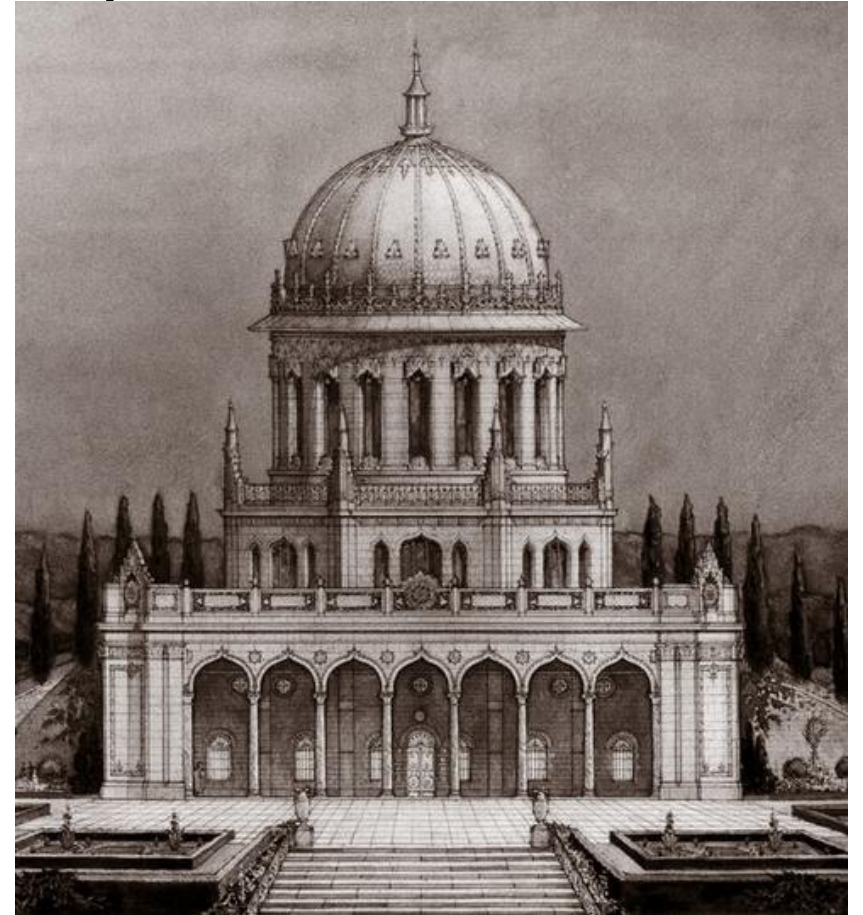
Obelisk marking position of future Bahá’í House of Worship, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Israel

Holy Shrines

- Shrine of the Báb (the “Gate” – the Forerunner)
- Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh (the “Glory of God” – Prophet-Founder)
- Shrine of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá (the “Servant of Glory” – Center of the Covenant)

Shrine of the Báb – a little history

- The Báb martyred by firing squad – Tabriz, Iran, July 9, 1850
 - His body thrown in a ditch to be devoured by wild animals
 - His body rescued and hidden by followers
- The Báb's remains hidden for the next 59 years
 - Always in danger of discovery by enemies of the Faith
 - Sometimes hidden in the Shrine of an Imam
 - Secretly transported to Palestine
 - At one point hidden in the room of Bahá'u'lláh's daughter
- The Báb's remains buried by 'Abdu'l-Bahá on March 21, 1909
 - Mausoleum he had built on Mt. Carmel (now Haifa, Israel)
 - Spot designated by Bahá'u'lláh Himself
- Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá who is buried in the Shrine, Nov. 1921
- Shoghi Effendi works on Shrine and beautification of World Center 1921-1957
- Design by William Sutherland Maxwell for Shrine superstructure approved, May 1944
- Shrine of the Báb dedicated, May 1953
- Passing of Shoghi Effendi, Nov. 1957





'Abdu'l-Bahá in 1912

'Abdu'l-Bahá was accused by his enemies of building a fort, amassing arms, and raising an army to overthrow the government. An Ottoman commission was sent to investigate.

“Every stone of that building, every stone of the road leading to it, I have with infinite tears and a tremendous cost, raised and placed in position.”

'Abdu'l-Bahá on the Shrine of the Báb



Barracks square in Tabriz, Iran, site of the martyrdom of the Báb, July 9, 1850

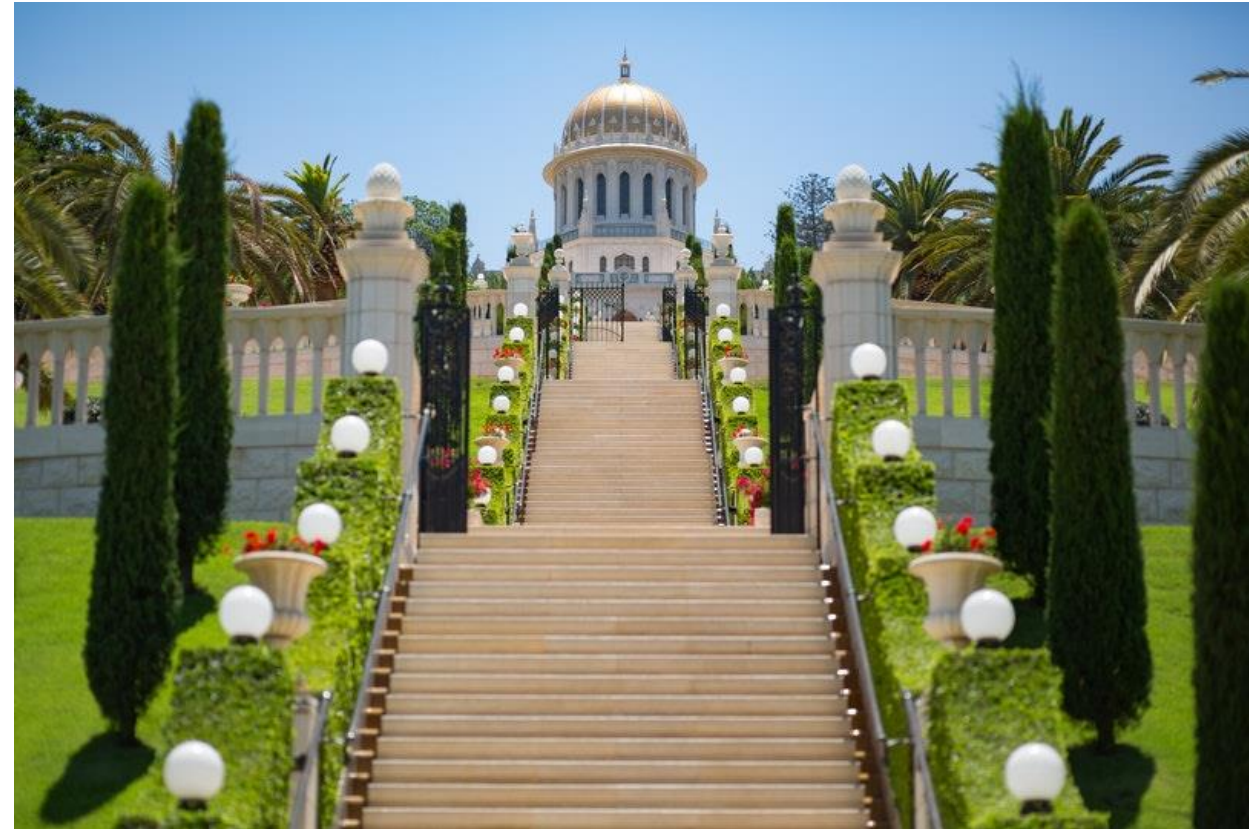


The Shrine of the Báb as constructed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá



The Vision of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

“Soon this mountain will be developed; fine buildings will be built on it. The Shrine of the Bab will be built in a most glorious way. Gardens will be made with flowers of different hues. Terraces will be built. From the bottom of the mountain to the Shrine there will be nine terraces and nine more terraces will be built from the Shrine to the top of the mountain. From the sea to the Shrine there will be one road; everything will be beautified with gardens and flowers. The pilgrims, who come by ship, will see the dome of the Shrine.”

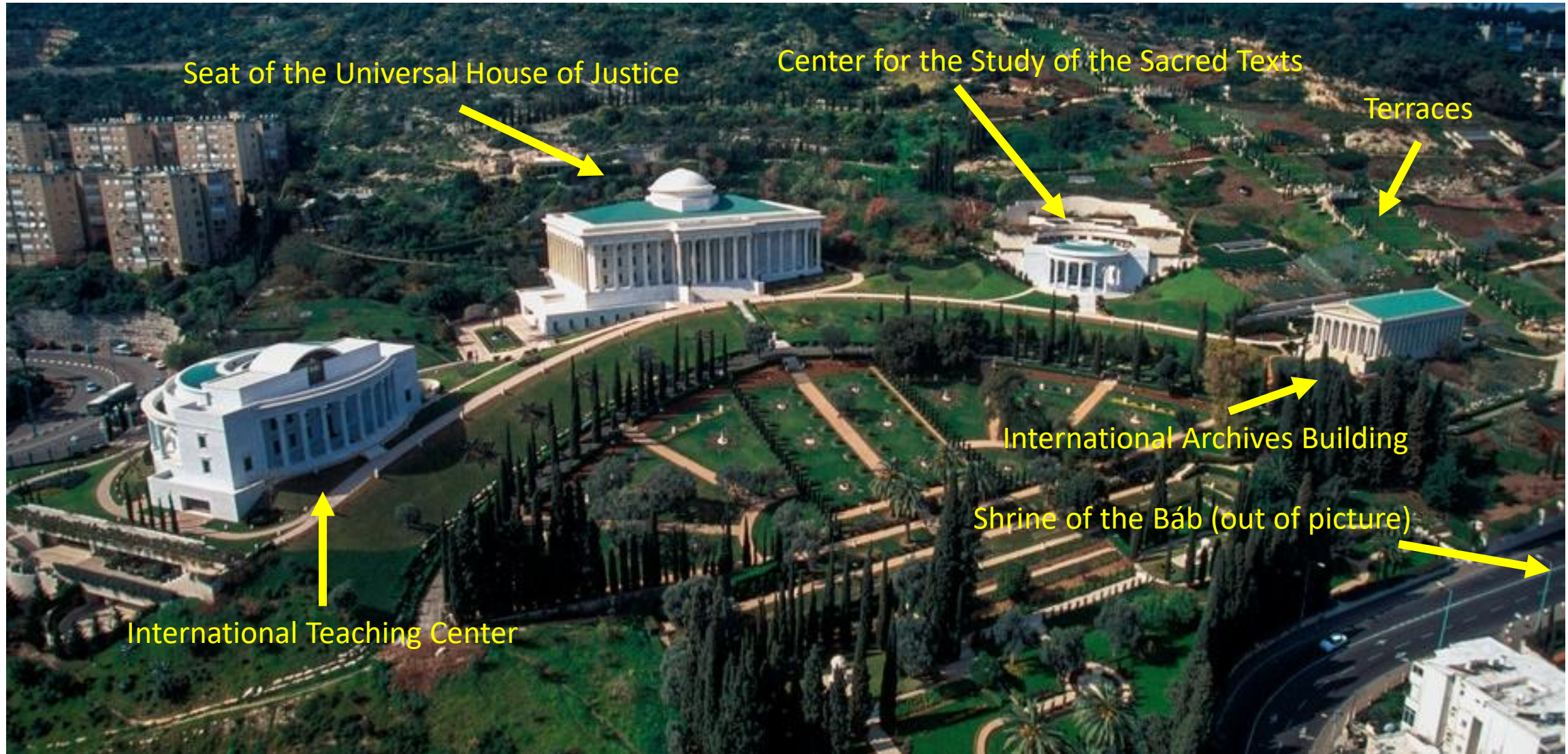


Shrine of the Bab and terraces today, Shrine finished by Shoghi Effendi. Surrounding terraces and gardens created by the Universal House of Justice

The Shrine of the Báb Today



Bahá'í World Center Buildings – Mt. Carmel



Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh – Mansion of Bahji



Bahá'u'lláh was a prisoner and exile of the Ottoman Empire for the last 40 years of His life. He and His family and close followers were exiled successively from Tehran, to Baghdad, to Constantinople to Adrianople, and finally to the prison-city of Akka, on the coast of Palestine (now Israel). Bahá'u'lláh remained a prisoner under house arrest until His passing in 1892, but 'Abdu'l-Bahá was able to gradually improve His Father's living conditions, renting and finally buying the mansion of Bahji for Bahá'u'lláh towards the end of His life. The mansion and its surroundings were greatly beautified by Shoghi Effendi. Bahá'u'lláh was buried in a small house adjacent to the mansion.

Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh



This is the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh. It is open to Bahá'í pilgrims and visitors, and to the public. It is the “point of adoration” to which Bahá'ís around the world turn to when praying. The Mansion of Bahji is to the left, just out of the picture.

Recent Developments and the Future



Aerial view of Mansion of Bahji and Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh

A Visitor Center/Pilgrim House was built in 2001. In the future, it is anticipated that the tomb of Bahá'u'lláh will be embellished with a monumental superstructure.

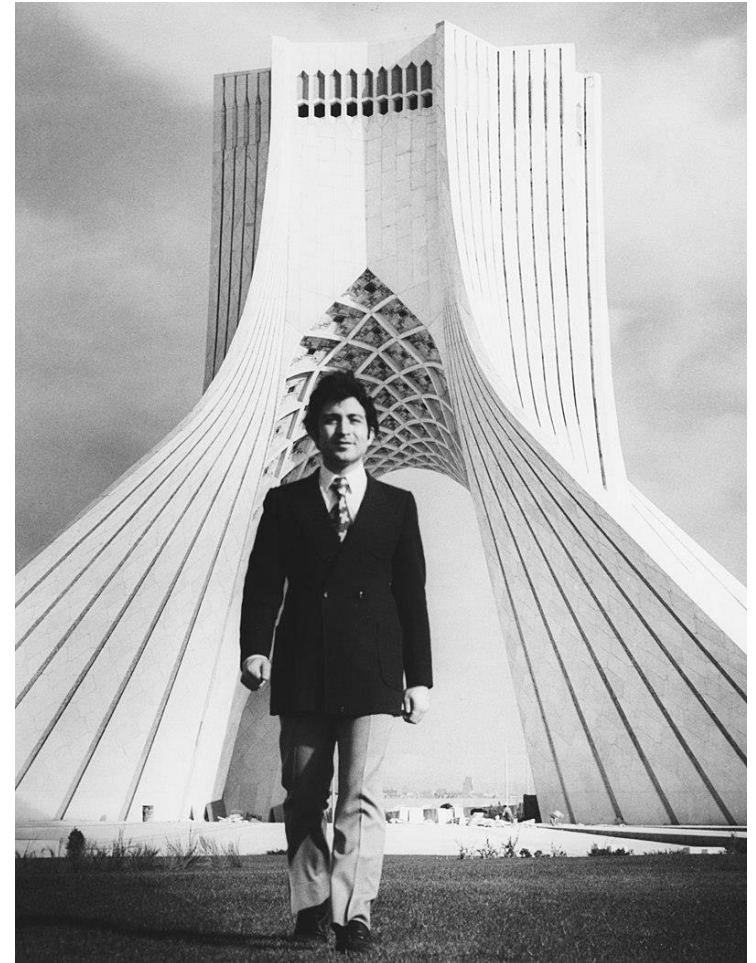


Bahji Visitor Center and Pilgrim House

Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá was buried in the Shrine of the Báb, but a new Shrine is being built for Him
- The design concept for the Shrine was released in Sept. 2019
- Architect – Hossein Amanat who designed:
 - Azadi Tower (formerly Shahyad Tower) in Tehran
 - Seat of the Universal House of Justice – Bahá'í World Center, Mt. Carmel
 - Center for the Study of the Text – Bahá'í World Center, Mt. Carmel
 - International Teaching Center – Bahá'í World Center, Mt. Carmel
 - Bahá'í House of Worship in Samoa

“This should be unlike any other building. It seeks to manifest 'Abdu'l-Baha's selflessness, wisdom, openness, acceptance, and kindness towards all people, to embody His love for gardens and nature, and to reflect His progressive and forward-looking approach.” Hossein Amanat



Hossein Amanat in front of the Shahyad Tower he designed, Tehran, Iran. Amanat fled Iran during the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Design Concept, Sept. 2019 - 1:52

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYDk_jl4Voc&t=5s

Shrine of 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Construction Progress, Sept. 2021 - 2:52

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vSRvXsvgPQ&t=3s>