EXPRESSING AN ISLAMIC IDENTITY
MOSQUES BUILT IN WESTERN SOCIETIES
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The modern encounter of Muslims and the West started over a century ago but only began to take form after many of the countries with majority Muslim populations achieved independence in the late 1940s and the 1950s – the phase of nationalism. A second phase of the encounter – internationalism – took place in the 1970s with ideas of progress and economic and cultural independence taking on a new guise. A recent third phase – Islamisation – may be discerned since the late 1980s where Islam has increasingly become a defining force in evolving political agendas, not only in the Middle East but from North and West Africa to the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, from India to Western China and in South-East Asia. This phase varies from the Islamic experience of the 1970s and early 1980s (Iran in 1979, Lebanon after 1982 or Egypt in the late 1970s, etc) in that, in general, change is being advocated from within existing political systems and is more prevalent amongst the mainstream Sunni who account for at least eighty-five percent of the world’s one billion Muslims. This assertion of identity within what one can call an Islamist tradition, tests not only the expressions of Islamic nation-states but also that of individual and collective aspirations.

The expression of identity can be perceived in many ways – perhaps one that is clearest and most apparent is its manifestation in architecture. Identity is tested when contexts and boundaries of definition change; for instance, when one becomes a ‘foreigner’. The notion of building boundaries as a means of self-definition is common in anthropology and sociology, and in terms of identifying oneself in relationship to the ‘other’. What a foreigner builds in his or her adopted land is an externalising of identity, which is what I shall explore here through the public aspect of the religious and social life of Muslims in non-Muslim societies – the mosques.

From the onset of mercantile development after 1815, the cities to which immigrants came were less and less places of settled native populations. Urban migration and its attendant economics was one of the forces that fostered nationalism; an image of some place fixed for those who were experiencing displacement. This movement of people set against an enduring land, of economic re-deployment and migration of labour which began in the mid-nineteenth century, is likely to continue in our ever-globalising world. The motives for cultural idealisation may be even stronger for us than it was for people who lived through the first great age of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century. The era of the ‘universal citizen’ celebrated by Kant was an era which could not conceive of mass migration and cultural instability of the extent we see in the twentieth century.

In today’s world in which material culture and intellectual paradigms are shifting away from manifestations of the nation state and industrialisation, perhaps a different lens is needed with which to view the international settlements of people and what they represent, both from an individual and community perspective. The ‘foreigner’, foreign to the other inhabitant of the shared space, is in a curious position: he or she cannot become a universal citizen, cannot throw off the mantle of nationalism and can only cope with the heavy baggage of culture – but subjects it to certain kinds of displacement to lighten its burdensome weight. The need to be a participant in the ‘project of modernity’ and yet remember one’s own traditions lies at the root of expressing an Islamic identity through buildings. It is an act of displacement which often produces curious results when Asians and Africans live in Western societies. This effort to displace the imagery of tradition and culture is similar to the work of twentieth-century artists whose energies have been marshalled not so much to represent objects but to displace them.

The notion of the altered context, both operational and physical, also plays an important role in this expression of change. Boundaries are being dissolved both intellectually and in reality, but are being replaced with others, making a ‘difference’ in the expressions of identity and self here to stay in the foreseeable future.

One can look at the phenomenon of displacement, of transformation and of change expressed through building from that of a regionalist’s perspective. By regional, I am referring here to building types that have existed in a society over a period of time, long enough to have established a tradition in terms of image, style, function, technology and construction. However, due to mass communications and the international transmission of ideas, it now appears impossible not to be influenced by international developments and to base buildings strictly
on a local or regional tradition. Hence, the notion of an 'authentic' expression of culture in today's world is hard to define; and this becomes even more difficult when different cultures come into contact with each other. In fact, can we understand what is authentic in another culture from the viewpoint of our own? Do we really understand what is authentic about our buildings? I am reminded of a description by William Carlos Williams in America and Alfred Stieglitz, where he writes: 'They saw birds with rusty breasts and called them robins. Thus from the start, an America of which they could have no inking drove the first settlers upon their past. They retreated for warmth and reassurance to something previously familiar but at a cost. For what they saw were not robins.' The example is slight but interesting enough to illustrate how outsider viewpoints can alter meanings. It has its parallel in architecture: do we know how to read the architecture of a place that is not our own?

Architecture is interpretation and mediates realities. Buildings, by their very state of being, communicate directly to people. Creating an environment that 'feels right' raises the question of simulation. The questions of how we judge are these: how do we judge a satisfying mendacity? How do we, in an increasingly global culture in which regions are not easily definable, project the authenticity of locality? What relationship does the architectural expression in a new situation have with the object 'back home', born within a definable architectural tradition? To speak of inheriting and extending a tradition, sometimes into different realms, does not mean copying what has gone before but of absorbing the principles behind earlier solutions and transforming them into new vocabularies suitable to changed attitudes. It gives rise to ideas of transfer and transformation that begin to address issues of understanding and operation in cultures other than our own. For regional architecture, or indeed new architecture, to express cultural roots, what may be called the 'deep structures' have not only to be transferred, but also transformed, if they are to take root in new situations.

Manifestations of a self-conscious identity and the role as self-conscious guardians of Islam relates individual experience to community. Muslims entering a community in the West express their collective identity most clearly through the mosques that they commission. In general, these 'symbolic' mosques are found in cities and are built by Muslims of different origins and backgrounds, serving as indicators of how a particular religious group sees itself within a new or different cultural setting. These may be distinguished from mosques built by communities for their own everyday use, such as the African-American storefront mosques in Philadelphia or New York, or local buildings such as the Islamic Centre in Plainfield, Indiana, or Sherefrudin's White Mosque in Visoko, Bosnia. It can be argued that the older immigrant populations, such as those in Britain (like the Black Muslims of the United States) are now an integral part of English settlements and that their expressions of identity cannot be seen as expressions of 'the other' within their adopted homeland. However, I believe that the process of assimilation is nowhere near complete and that the different Muslim populations, such as the Pakistanis living in England, still, by and large, view themselves as apart and distinct from 'the British.' Hence, the characterisation of the expression of 'difference' and a separate reality still holds even in such long-standing situations.

Projects for mosques expressing Muslim presence in non-Islamic countries started to take shape in the 1950s, although there are earlier examples. However, the colonial connections between countries like Britain and India, France and Algeria, or Italy and Libya remained. Early mosques, like England's first purpose-built mosque in Woking, Surrey, founded in 1889 by Shah Jehan Begum, the wife of the then Nawab of Bhopal, was a version of the Indian Mughal mosques of Lahore and Delhi. Similarly, the Paris Mosque built in the late 1920s was modelled on North African architecture. By the 1960s the burgeoning immigrant Muslim communities in Europe and North America began to express their identity and existence through building new mosques. Projects that had been initiated in the 1950s, like the Islamic Centre in Hamburg, built between 1960 and 1973, and funded jointly by the Iranian community in Germany and religious institutions in Iran, were finally seeing the light of day.

Like their counterparts in Islamic countries – the state and local authority sponsored mosques – mosques built in foreign cultural settings are characterised by four tendencies. Firstly, they accommodate multiple social and cultural activities as well as religious activities, and house facilities such as libraries and nurseries. Secondly, their design is tempered by the local context, modified by local laws and regulations, and sometimes by local community pressures. Thirdly, the design refers back to historical or regional Islamic traditions and the physical form is usually influenced by one dominant style from a country or region, depending on who is financing, designing or leading the project. Lastly, the interiors of the prayer halls tend to be exuberant and often eclectic collections of styles and ornament that proclaim the space as being particularly Islamic. The following examples are presented as outline case studies, emblematic of the periods and images that Muslims wish to project to society at large.

In the United States, the 1957 Islamic Center in Washington DC was established by a group of Muslim ambassadors stationed in the capital some fourteen years after its inception. The project is particularly remarkable for the perseverance of the initiators and for its breadth of vision. In addition to religious and prayer-related facilities, the scope of the initial project included a wide range of services such as a museum; an institute of higher learning for history, art, sharia, Arabic and religious studies for
children; an academic magazine and various publications dealing with Islamic issues, lectures and library facilities. Many of the clients' objectives were never fulfilled due to lack of funds, personnel, space and some divisions within the Muslim community itself. It is probably the first such centre in the United States (although the first mosque designed as such in North America seems to have been in Ontario, Canada at the turn of the century). It is interesting to note that the inception of the idea was contemporaneous with that of the London Central Mosque, and that the two undertakings influenced each other in community action, though not in design.

The site of the Washington mosque is in the prominent heart of the embassy quarter of Massachusetts Avenue. During the long years it took to realise the building, many Muslim countries, persuaded by their diplomats, substantially funded the works which were also supported by donations by individuals and communities both in North America and abroad. The Egyptian ambassador persuaded the Egyptian Ministry of Waqf to design the centre. In Cairo, the Ministry assigned an Italian architect, Mario Rossi, residing and employed by the Ministry of Works, to design the Centre. Rossi was an influential architect who had designed several mosques in Egypt. His design shows an adherence to tradition using the Ottoman centralised dome type, stylistically reflecting Cairene models.

Fronting onto the avenue, the building is reached by a flight of steps that lead to a main colonnaded portico entrance, decorated with a tall band of calligraphy. The building is two storeys high with pointed arch windows on the second floor, covered by a sloping green-tiled roof reminiscent of Andalusian architecture. The whole structure is crowned by crenellations and by a fifty metre (160 foot) high Mamluk-inspired minaret. As a result of the zoning requirements in Washington, the building had to be modified, especially in its alignment with the street — causing the entrance facade and the prayer hall's Mecca orientation to create an angled courtyard transitioned space. The actual prayer hall for eight hundred worshippers is almost square in plan and covered by a dome. The lower part of the external walls are ornately decorated with a band of Turkish tiles based on Iznik designs (donated by the Turkish government), as is the mihrab which is treated as an arched niche. Next to it, the minbar (donated by the Egyptian government) consists of thousands of pieces of hand-carved wood, inlaid with bone and ivory. The eighteen metre (sixty foot) high dome is supported on an octagonal drum with arched windows, on a square base which in turn is on stone columns. Egyptian craftsmen executed the plaster work and the calligraphy which features Qur'anic verses and the names of Allah, the Prophet and the four Caliphs in Kufic script. At the time of the Center's construction, the question of whether to admit women to prayer remained unresolved, but today a small curtained space is provided for them.
Another mosque that also bases itself on traditional historical models is the 1977 London Central Mosque, perhaps better known as the Regent’s Park Mosque, built to provide a focus and inspiration to the over half-million Muslims in the United Kingdom, which already has about five hundred mosques, of which about forty have been specifically constructed to serve as mosques.

In 1940 the Egyptian Ambassador to the Court of St James approached the Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, to purchase a site for a mosque as a reciprocal gesture to the Egyptian Government which had donated land in Cairo for the building of an Anglican cathedral some years earlier. The site at Hanover Gate in the park was formally obtained in 1944 by the Mosque Committee, which at that time was made up of twelve ambassadors from Muslim countries. The project was designed by an Egyptian architect, Ramzy Omar, but abandoned because of objections from the London County Council and the Fine Arts Commission. Finally, through an international design competition, a design by the British architect Sir Frederick Gibberd was selected. After modifications to the design, construction began in early 1974 at an estimated cost of £4.5 million donated by the Mosque Trust (Waqf) made up of a number of Muslim governments.

The triangular site in Regent’s Park is almost entirely taken up by the mosque and cultural centre. The qibla wall, the most important element of the mosque, is pushed up to the edge of the site facing Mecca so that all other functions occur behind it. With the exception of the dome, which rises to a height of twenty-five metres (eighty feet), and the minaret, forty-three metres (140 feet) high, both of which function as important signs of the mosque’s presence, the structure is built relatively low, nine-and-a-half metres (thirty feet), so as not to dominate the surrounding parkland and Nash’s terrace just across the road. The layout of the facilities is linear in terms of the transition of spaces, from the courtyard to the entrance hall and from these to the prayer hall. The prayer hall has a thousand people is rectangular, with the women’s gallery (which represents about twenty percent of the hall’s floor area) recessed into the west wall. The hall is covered with a steel-framed dome, based on the form of the Iranian four-centred arch which is a repeated formal element in the building.

The London Central Mosque was designed to be an expression of an Islam that uses modern technologies and pan-Islamic design elements. The treatment of the arches, for instance, was that of their reinterpretation within modern technological language and concerned with the formal expression of contemporary building materials as developed by Rifat Chadirji and Mohamed Makiya in the early sixties. However, the new technology, as expressed by the arches and modern materials, is somewhat inconsistent with the traditional forms of the minaret and dome.

In contrast to the preceding examples, the Mosque of Rome and the New York Islamic Cultural Center Mosque propose an architectural expression in a contemporary vein, and although they refer back to historical models, they both reinterpret traditional styles and principles in a modern idiom. The Mosque of Rome was substantially completed in 1992 and officially inaugurated in 1993. It offers a constructive solution to the problem of establishing a link with the past by evoking the historical model of the Great Mosque of Cordoba in terms of horizontality and the organic image of a forest of columns which the architects believe capture the atmosphere of spirituality in older mosques. In addition to the Moorish influence, Turkish and Persian styles are combined with Italian and specifically Roman imagery to reflect both the eclectic client and the genus loci of Rome.

Before the construction of the mosque, the international Muslim community had used rented premises for religious and cultural gatherings. In 1963 the Vatican Council agreed that it would allow the building of a mosque in Rome on condition that it was not in sight of St Peter’s Basilica and that its minaret was no taller than the dome of St Peter’s. This cleared the way for the formation of the Centre in 1966. However, it was a visit to Italy in the early 1970s by the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia that seems to have been the trigger for action to build the mosque. The design was the outcome of a 1975 competition where two projects, one by the Iraqi architect Sami Moussawi and the other by the Italian team of Paolo Portoghesi and Vittorio Gigliotti, were ultimately selected by a jury composed of professors from Islamic universities, Italian historians and a number of ambassadors to Italy from Muslim countries. The architects were asked to collaborate in a joint effort to produce a final design. A committee of thirteen ambassadors sponsored the project, twenty-four Muslim countries financed it, and the two-and-a-half hectare (six acre) site was donated by the Rome City Council in 1974. The design was approved, and work began in 1979, but unfortunately had to be interrupted due to insufficient funding. In 1984 the work recommenced with an infusion of funds from Saudi Arabia.

The complex is divided into two distinct parts: the prayer area and the library and cultural centre, separated by a colonnaded court. On the sloping site, the prayer hall is set against the mass of the Monte Antenne, while the rest of the construction is kept lower in order to maintain a harmonious relationship between the architecture and the natural environment. The landscape brings to mind Persian gardens, and the geometric layout with its horizontality of colonnades with their dynamic curves relate well to the site. The H-shaped complex creates continuously moving perspectives reminiscent of Michelangelo’s Campidoglio in Rome and the inflected surfaces of Borromini’s architecture.

The most successful element of the complex is the large prayer hall itself that accommodates over two thousand
people and which combines the modular and circular systems of the classical Arab hypostyle hall and the central domed Ottoman model with its palm tree-like structure inspired by the mosque of Cordoba. The central dome and sixteen minor domes are supported by an intricate system of interwoven arches and columns reminiscent of the elegant mosque of Tlemcen. The seven-stepped central dome which measures almost twenty-four metres in diameter (seventy-eight feet), supported on eight columns, has mixed historical references in the cosmological image symbolising the Seven Heavens in the Prophet Mohammed’s Miraj Numa, or Ascent to Heaven. The hall is lit naturally by glazed apertures in the domes, an effect that is replicated by the artificial lighting. The circular geometry of this project is a recurring theme in Portoghese and Giglitti’s work, as can be seen in their projects for Amman and Khartoum, amongst others.

A woman’s section, raised as a gallery covering some ten per cent of the prayer area, runs along the sides of the prayer hall, screened by carved lattice-work. The interior is decorated richly in zellige, mosaic work from Morocco. The tiles and the screens are executed with great delicacy and their rich traditional patterning and colours contrast strikingly with the monochrome interior and structure, as do the carpets. Using modern technology and materials, the architect’s aim was to create an atmosphere of sacredness and solemnity, using, according to Portoghese, ‘the effects of lightness, dematerialisation and static paradox found in classical Islamic architecture’ that would evoke the atmosphere of ancient mosques. In this the architects have been successful in the prayer hall. Rather than make overt references to precise regional traditions or styles, the Mosque of Rome is a neutral expression of pan-Islamism in the sense that it attempts an architectural expression for all Muslims, regardless of their origins.

Similarly, the Islamic Cultural Center for New York uses easily recognisable elements associated with mosques to produce a modern building. The Centre, sponsored by the Islamic nations of the United Nations (UN), is located at 96th Street on New York’s Upper East Side. Greater New York, which in the 1970s had no more than a dozen mosques, now has some 250 and by the mid 1980s there were over 600 mosques operating in the United States serving some three million Muslims. The Muslims of New York form a wide ethnic and cultural mix – Lebanese, Pakistani, Yemeni and Turkish being predominant – and are the most highly educated in the Muslim umma. It appears that an ‘American Islam’ may be emerging in the country – one which is distinguished by a general wish by Muslims living there to be seen as ‘modern’, be they liberal or conservative, and which holds true for the Muslim states represented at the UN.

It is therefore not surprising that the mosque, seen as a pan-Islamic symbol, is conceived both as a place of prayer and social exchange – a model that reflects diversity. The problem faced by the mosque committee of UN ambassadors was the same as the one in London, Washington DC and in Rome: namely, what should the building look like?

Like earlier mosques, the source of funding and decision-making was diverse, even though the Kuwaiti ambassador was a prime mover of the project, and the wish to be seen as being ‘progressive’ vis-a-vis the city and its non-Muslim inhabitants was imperatively in the mind of the building’s sponsors. The building was first designed as a ‘skyscraper mosque’ in the 1970s; this proved to be too ambitious and the whole project was scaled down and put on hold. The project was re-launched in the 1980s and was given to the New York office of the firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) under the leadership of the project architect Michael McCarthy who was known to the client for his work in Kuwait. The architects were advised by two special committees of experts selected by the client to assist project definition. Unfortunately, the two committees had conflicting viewpoints: one urged the architect to follow literal historic motifs and the other encouraged total freedom of expression, with a respect for Muslim beliefs and architectural tradition. The architects chose to follow the latter although the client insisted that the Centre have a dome and a minaret.

The building, angled to the street grid because of orientation requirements, is based on a square grid and is itself essentially a vertically extended cube covered by a central dome. The design was modelled on the single-domed Ottoman mosque, proposed by the project architects, which included Mustafa Abadan, himself a Turk. The original idea remained, but it was revised and substantially reworked over time. The central space, which can house some one thousand worshippers, has a twenty-seven metre (ninety foot) clear span made up of four trusses supporting the steel and copper-clad concrete dome above, and suspending the women’s mezzanine below. The mezzanine to the rear of the prayer hall covers an area about twenty per cent of that given to men. The whole space is carefully articulated and designed where the simplicity of monochromatic materials contrast with panels of blue tiles and greenish opaque glass in the upper areas of the hall, and with the striking blue muqarnas mihrab which is bordered by a frieze consisting of Qur’anic verses in Kufic. The main entrance portal also uses the same device of the glass muqarnas. Artificial lighting is provided by a circle of steel-wire supported lamps, a device dating to the suspended circles of oil lamps found at Ibn Tulun, Cairo, and elsewhere in Turkey. The corners and the top of the main structure are chambered to emphasise the dome with its gilded crescent finial outside. The minaret, some forty metres (130 feet) tall, placed as a free-standing element, is a square shaft with an internal staircase with a balcony for the muezzins call to prayer – however, with most new mosques, this is done by a recording transmitted through loudspeakers.
Also included within the structure are a conference hall and ablutions facilities. The first stage of the centre was completed and opened in 1991 and, although a second stage, including a library, classrooms and offices facilities was envisaged, no further work has yet been executed.

The illustrations are emblematic of trends in how Muslims present themselves to the outside world. As mentioned earlier, these expressions reflect a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic viewpoint, conceived through official state representation, as symbols of Islam in non-Muslim societies, and differ both in scale and programme from those mosques/centres built by local communities. In the case of the former, image is a primary concern and the presence of an international Muslim community is stressed. It is also generally apparent that in spite of the break with their home societies, the ambivalent attitude towards women in mosques remains – usually twenty per cent of the space is granted to them, despite them representing a larger percentage of the population.

Mosque design in the West seems to have changed over the years: the earlier twentieth-century buildings were, in the main, more literal in their historicist expressions, whilst the later buildings from the 1980s onwards reveal a concern for projecting the 'modern Muslim'. However, tradition and modernity are seen as two sides of the same coin and the buildings reflect experiments in expressing the identity of populations acquiring new roots in the West. Interestingly, by contrast, buildings commissioned by national governments (as State mosques) and local authorities in Islamic countries appear to be increasingly more conservative and tradition-bound architecturally, referring to past models that are seen as manifestations of political and religious authority and legitimacy.

There is a clear need to be able to deal simultaneously with an overlay of aspirations and material conditions. The simultaneous reality of global and local cultures is upon us. It is with reference to these that the multiplicities of actualities are now merely parts of the same web in which we all find ourselves, and with which we must deal. Nineteenth-century nationalism established what we might call the modern ground rule for having an identity – you have the strongest identity when you are least aware of yourself. Twentieth-century realities of pan-national multiculturalism and multi-national economic forces with global communications are also bringing with them the expression of a lowest common denominator, understood by individuals and nation states.

These building expressions of Muslim communities in transition raise wider issues about cultural assimilation. The architecture of the mosques provides one set of clues to understanding the needs of recent Muslim migrants – foreigners in a foreign land – in societies of cultural diversity and ever-increasing immigration. If public buildings and spaces are to reflect the multi- and inter-cultural realities of today's societies, the many fragmented
boundaries that are created by a diversity of populations need to find a voice and a place. The ‘other’ needs not only to be recognised as such, but should also be considered an important participant in the formation of a new world order. How Muslims view and express themselves within such contexts becomes important for cross-cultural understanding and development. The current message that seems to be transmitted by the mosque in the West is: we have our own identity and yet we wish to be part of the society into which we have entered, but we are not yet part of this world we inhabit because we are still unsure of ourselves and of our place within it.

NOTES
1 For a recent account and analysis see Robin Wright, ‘Islam, Democracy and the West’, Foreign Affairs, Vol 71, No 5, Summer 1992, p145. The term ‘Islamist’ is used here to describe interpretative and sometimes forward-looking and innovative attempts to reconstruct the social order within the religious traditions of Islam. As Wright has pointed out, the various Islamic movements are often called ‘fundamentalist’ in the West, but most are in fact not so in their agendas. Fundamentalism generally urges adherence to literal reading of the religious texts and does not advocate change in the social order, instead focuses on reforming the lives of the individual and family. Most of today’s Islamic movements resemble Catholic Liberation theologians who urge active use of original religious doctrine to better the temporal and political lives in a modern world.
2 Gregory Bateson (1970) argues that people focus on perceived differences as a way to make sense of the world and this, in fact, gives shape and form to the societies and permits cultural labelling and classification.
3 I am indebted to Richard Sennett who has written about these ideas in his seminal works and in an unpublished paper entitled The Foreigner, presented at the Urban Forum conference on ‘Ethnicity, Migration and the City’, in New York, October 1980. He and I differ on interpretation, but I agree with his broad-brush characterisation of changes in people brought about by displacement from their societal roots.
4 Note my emphasis on shifting intellectual paradigms. The realities are somewhat different where I believe, we are witnessing the dramatic and bloody death throes of both nationalistic and ethnic assertions of identity, as in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.
5 This issue of ‘boundaries’ has been discussed in unpublished presentations: Dissolving/Resolving Boundaries: Difference and Differentiation in Disciplines, Cultures and Practices by Setha M Low and mine, Displacing/Replacing Boundaries: Expressions of the Other in Architecture, at the Built Form and Culture Research Conference held in Cincinnati, October 1993. In her paper Low calls for the dissolving/resolving of boundaries within a post-modern construct. However, I do not believe that this will be possible in the foreseeable future – but the idea is a nice one.
8 Information on the mosques is taken from a forthcoming book, Contemporary Mosques by Renata Holod and myself – a study undertaken over six years of some eighty case studies based on original research, and other examples brought to our attention, notably by the Aga Khan Award for Architecture.
10 Makiya and Chadirji, two prominent architects working throughout the Middle East, were very influential through their use of materials – such as concrete and steel – in simplified arch forms in their projects which were seen as new reinterpretations of Islamic architecture. They have been copied and extensively repeated for almost two decades.
11 According to an essay in the Middle East Economic Digest, 25-31 July 1989, p22. However, the architect believes that the only real obstacle to the height of the minaret was the restriction imposed by the Municipal building code.
12 Paolo Portoghese, ‘Elogio Della Contumazione’, XX Secolo, 1992, pp4-11, gives a good explanation of the architect’s view.
14 For a study of Islam in the United States, see Yvonne Haddad and Adair Lumis’s, Islamic Values in the United States, Oxford University Press, New York, 1987. The information herein is taken from this published study of 1983, which still remains essentially correct, ten years after it was undertaken.
15 The issue of legitimacy and authenticity in the architecture of the Islamic world is one that is currently of great debate and concern by scholars concerned with Islam, modernity and its cultural expressions. The historian Mohamed Arkoun has argued repeatedly that contemporary Muslim governments resort to the use of historically-accepted styles of architecture to reinforce an image of longevity, permanence and legitimacy. Such architecture is viewed as having the weight of authenticity. For a discussion on authenticity, see Hasan-Uddin Khan, ‘Meaning in Tradition Today: An Approach to Architectural Criticism’ and ‘Counterpoint’ by Michael Sorkin, both in Criticism in Architecture, Aga Khan Award for Architecture, Geneva, 1989, pp53-69. For a more detailed discussion of issues of legitimacy and Islam facing Modernity see Arkoun, Overtures sur l’Islam (2nd ed), Paris, 1992.