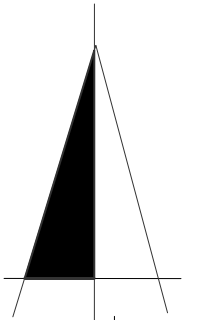




A QUEST OF THE SPIRIT

I hereby humbly dedicate the beginnings of my understanding of the faith from an architectural perspective... Amen.



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"In the name of God, Most Merciful, Most Gracious

All praise is due to God, Lord of the Worlds

The Most Merciful, The Most Gracious

Master of the Day of Judgment

Thee alone do we worship

And Thee alone do we seek assistance from

Guide us on 'the straight path'

The path on whom Thou bestow Thy Grace

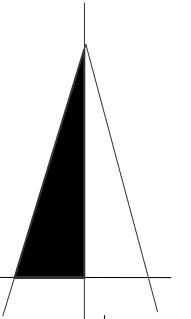
Not on the path of those whom Thou wrath is upon

Nor on the path of those who have been led astray."

(Qur'an, 1:1-6)

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‘(SAW)’ is an abbreviated form of the Arabic word, ‘sallallahu-alayhi-wasallam,’ and is exclusively used for the Holy Prophet of Islam.

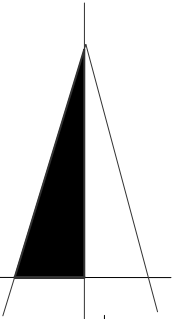
### Terms and terminology:

(AS) – a title attached to all the prophets. It is an abbreviated form of the Arabic words ‘alay-his-salaam’, which conveys salutations of peace upon the person being represented. For example Adam would be addressed as Adam (AS), and likewise for all the other messengers of Allah.

(RA) – a title attached to all the companions of the prophets. It is an abbreviated form of the Arabic words ‘radiyallahu-anhu’, which also conveys salutations of peace upon the person being represented.

(SAW) – whenever the name ‘Muhammad’ is used, and is in reference to the Prophet of Islam, it is attached with the abbreviation ‘(SAW),’ as a mark of respect.

- Like every language, Arabic also has its rules of grammar. In this regard, when kings or people of status used to speak, they would address themselves in the plural form, as ‘We’ or ‘Us’ instead of ‘I’. This denoted their authority and their esteemed value or lofty status. Consequently, the Qur’an, being originally an Arabic one, has adopted Arabic grammar, and thus God addresses Himself as ‘We’ or ‘Us’. Many have been prone to error in misjudging this, and taking it that Islam is contradictory to itself, since it consistently proclaims of “The One God,” yet addresses God as ‘We’ or ‘Us,’ which indicates partners, or others associated with God. It is purely a matter of grammar, which is not fully understood by non-Arabic speaking people.
- All other Arabic terms to occur in the document, will be immediately accompanied by a translation after its first use, and thereafter will occur in its Arabic form alone, in italics. A glossary for the Arabic terms used in the text, can be referred to at the end of the document.



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## INTRODUCTORY INDEX

The book has been broadly divided into nine sections in order to facilitate an easy reading and cross-referencing. Each section has its own index, whilst the introductory index stipulates the sections as follows:

- SECTION A:** The process towards an establishment of a brief, terminating in determining the general guideline parameters
- SECTION B:** Contextual Study
- SECTION C:** The brief proper; guideline parameters
- SECTION D:** Precedent Study
- SECTION E:** Overall framework rationale
- SECTION F:** The design rationale informed by religious narratives and ideals; conceptual sketches
- SECTION G:** Overall design rationale; design development; technical aspects
- SECTION H:** Feasibility study
- SECTION I:** Acknowledgements and Appendices

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## Index to Section A

### Background towards the establishment of the brief

#### Component one:

This component is further broken down into two categories:

**Category-A:** essentially deals with the client's rationale into investing and allocating the proposed site to serve the needs of the South African Muslim community at large:

1. Introduction
2. The Client
3. The Criteria
4. The final check
5. Needs and primary users
6. Tourism and local users
7. To which type of Muslims does the village cater for?
8. Target market
9. Allocating a site
10. Logic versus divine law

**Category-B:** essentially deals with the client's functional expectations in terms of the basic zoning criteria and the possible structures aimed to be developed. For clarity purposes, the functional requirements of the client are subdivided into a framework of three distinct zones:

1. Zone A
2. Zone B
3. Zone C

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**Component two:** (Please refer to Appendix A at the back of the book for this section, since it is a background to the establishment of the brief).

This component is further broken down into two categories:

**Category A:** This component involves a highly complex matrix, which takes one through the features of a local Mosque. Within this walk-through one begins to understand the classical elements of Islam, their origins and historical significance, as well as their religious and symbolic importance. Interwoven into this matrix, are the suggested guidelines applicable to the proposed development, which are methodically placed after the discussion of each classical element.

**1. The minaret:**

The historic, symbolic and religious origins of the minaret

The evolution of the minaret over time

The restriction against music in Islam

**Guideline parameters:**

- Height restrictions
- Music restrictions

**2. The ablution area**

The origins of the ablution ritual and its spiritual implications

The evolution of the ablution area over time

The use of courtyards, gardens, water -within an Islamic context

Recreation in Islam

**Guideline parameters for the proposed development:**

- Water ethics to be implemented
- Garden maintenance strategies

**3. The interior of the Mosque:**

The origins of 'sacred' space in Islam

Space and gender in Islam

Creative arts and the role of geometry in Islam

**Guideline parameters:**

- Geometry and geometric forms
- Space and gender

**4. The *mehrab*, (or niche found in the *qibla* wall):**

The essence of the *mehrab*: an introduction to the *qibla*

The *qibla* wall: an introduction to 'wall architecture' and colonnades

**Guideline parameters:**

- The *qibla*; walls and arches

**5. The *minbar*, (or raised platform from which the imam addresses the congregation):**

The essence of the *minbar*

**Guideline parameters:**

- Height restrictions

**Category B:** This component views the impact of global historic traditions as well as the religious emphasis placed upon architecture

**1. A glimpse of the history of global Islamic architecture trends and their origins.**

**2. Traditional guidelines to place-making in architecture**

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## Section A: Background towards a brief establishment

### Component one:

#### Category-A:

##### 1. Introduction

According to a recent survey, the Muslim population of South Africa numbers approximately two million people, (Jamiat: 2004). Many of these people are conservative or strictly adhere to the *Shari' at*, or Islamic laws. It is difficult for these people to adhere to an Islamic way of life in a democratic society.

People generally look forward to some form of entertainment to relieve their minds from the day-to-day pressures of life. Since leisure, relaxation and entertainment are basic human needs, Muslims are placed in a dilemma. Majority of the places delegated towards entertainment and leisure, have activities that are not permissible by the *Shari' at*, and also have environments that do not facilitate Islamic needs.

Simple examples of impermissible acts would be the intermingling of sexes, gambling, movies, music, the partaking of specific types of foods, which are not declared *Halaal*,<sup>1</sup> etc. Simple Islamic needs would be the catering for *Salaat*, or prayers; for *Azaan*, the call to prayers; for *Wudhu*, the washing before prayers; for the appropriate dress codes; for the separation of sexes; for an appropriate and adequate Islamic environment in every essence, which would cater for more religiously orientated activities.

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<sup>1</sup> All animals not slaughtered in the name of *Allah* (God); all animals of prey, pork; all substances that are harmful to the body, as well as all forms of intoxicants are *Haraam*, or not permissible. All other foods are *Halaal*, or permissible.

The need for enjoyment and entertainment is there, but finding a suitable place that also facilitates for Islamic needs, is rare. Thus, many Muslims feel uncomfortable at the local resorts available. The need to cater for a resort, which facilitates for Islamic needs, is becoming a necessity at a regional and national level. (Please refer to Addendum A).

##### 2. The client

The client wishes to establish a cultural resort based upon Islamic principals.

The object of the development is not only commercial, but also to facilitate an Islamic need. By carrying out this deed, the client will be rewarded by *Allah*, or God, and will see the blessings of his actions in this world, and in the Hereafter, according to his belief.

The client wishes to remain anonymous. The reason for this is because good actions are governed by the laws of *Ikhlās*, meaning sincerity. One of the key elements in a state of *Ikhlās* would be to conceal the good action being performed.

The client currently resides on the north-eastern corner of the proposed site. (Refer to Section-F, pg.2).



### 3. The criteria for checking the Islamic issues against:

- All decisions are to be checked against the Holy *Qur'an*,<sup>2</sup> an inspiration revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*)<sup>3</sup>, before it can be verified as correct or permissible.
- All decisions are thereafter to be checked against the *Hadith*, which are the traditions, actions, or words of the Holy Prophet (*SAW*), before it can be verified as correct or permissible. If there is a clash between the sayings of the Holy Prophet (*SAW*), and the Holy *Qur'an*, then the Holy *Qur'an* will take precedence over the matter.
- If a matter is not clear, and cannot be found in the *Qur'an* or the *Hadith*, then the local *Ulema*, or knowledgeable elders of the community, will be consulted about the matter, and a *fatwa*<sup>4</sup> will have to be passed.

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<sup>2</sup>The Holy *Qur'an* is believed by Muslims to be the last, authentic revelation of God's. It has been preserved in its pristine Arabic, and is a reference for all Islamic jurisprudence and way of life.

<sup>3</sup>*SAW* – *Sallallahu-alayhi-wa-sallum* – means peace be upon him. It is a basic belief and practice that upon hearing or using the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*)'s name, to respect it by sending peace and salutations to him, who was sent as “a mercy to mankind”.

<sup>4</sup>A ruling by a Muslim judge that will permit an act, or declare it not permissible. His decision will be final and cannot be disputed.

### 4. The final check:

- The *Jamiat-ul-Ulema* is an Islamic body that has been in existence for many years in South Africa. It comprises of some of Islam's best experts on religion and Islamic law, some of which have world-class recognition. It is this very body that regulates and decides many Islamic matters facing the *Muslim* community, and that makes this information available to the masses. ***The Jamiat's<sup>5</sup> approval would mean approval from all sides, and must be considered as a standard to comply with, for this project to be a success.***
- Once the project is approved by the *Jamiat*, its marketing will become easy. The *Jamiat* themselves will make it possible to use *Masaajid*, or Mosques, literature and media, to make the Muslim community aware of the development.

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<sup>5</sup>'Jamiat' is a short form of saying 'Jamiat-ul-Ulema', which is an Islamic body, comprising of the most learned jurists in Islamic affairs.





## 5. Why is there a need for an Islamic Resort?

### Who will be the primary users?

- South Africa's affluent Muslims of Indian origin have all been through a similar past, that being apartheid and its consequences. The fact that all sorts of entertainment that were previously banned were suddenly, in 1994, open to all, holidays for the average Indian Muslim family has changed. Instead of spending a holiday with friends and families at each other's homes, holidays are being spent at the beautiful resorts available. This led to the realization that these resorts do not offer a suitable environment for Muslims. Since the environments are unsuitable, building an Islamic resort would create a suitable environment for their entertainment. The need for an Islamic resort is thus very high, and needs to be adequately addressed. This need exists at a regional and national level. (Please refer to Addendum A).
- There has also been an Islamic re-awakening amongst the youth in South Africa and more so, in the world at large, (Jamiat: 2004). It is the youth themselves that are reforming, and want to be involved in such types of entertainment that are permissible by the Shari'at. (Please refer to Addendum A).
- Many foreign Muslims find South Africa to be an ideal tourist destination, since *Halaal* food and Mosques are easily located, and the availability of shopping and entertainment is plentiful. For these people, this resort would be an ideal place for a holiday, since their spiritual needs and obligations will also be fulfilled. (Please refer to Addendum A).

## 6. Tourism and local users:

- To the Muslim users, whether locals or tourists, it will be a pleasure to be at a resort where the *Shari'at* is practiced and abided by.
- Since the resort is to be governed by an Islamic culture, the resort has the potential of becoming a popular destination, attracting many non-Muslim locals and tourists to observe an Islamic setting. All non-Muslims will be specially made welcome, since this will provide an opportunity for *da'wa*, or propagation, or an invitation, to observe Islam.

## 7. To which type of Muslims does this cultural village cater for?

- Many Muslims have modernized their lifestyle and no longer abide by all the laws of the *Shari'at*. This resort is intended to encourage Muslims to become mindful of their lives, and become more religiously inclined. It would also educate non-Muslims about the true spirit of Islam. By holidaying at this resort, it will make many realize their actual duty towards Islam.
- Many Muslims are conservative and do abide by the laws of the *Shari'at*. For these Muslims, it would be ideal to have a place such as this resort at their disposal.
- In conclusion, this resort is ***not catering for any type or group of Muslims. This resort will be*** designed according to the laws of *Shari'at*, thereby ***creating an Islamic environment***, to cater for ***any individual that sorts for entertainment within the boundaries of the Shari'at***
- ***The intention of this resort is to address an Islamic need of the Muslim community, and to propagate Islam via an Islamic setting.***

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## 8. Target market:

At the onset, the client was faced with the possibility of numerous venues for hosting the proposed development. The current site was chosen, based upon priority given to the Gauteng Muslims, due to the following reasons:

- The Gauteng community is a very affluent society, and their financial support would be able to make this project a reality. It is the Gauteng community that has the buying and spending power, more so than the Muslims in other provinces. This can be clearly observed from the records of the *Jamiat*, which portray that most of the Islamic financial backing for South African developments stems from this region. (A simple example would be the Mia family, who is responsible for the construction of many Mosques, both locally and abroad, and have spent large sums of money to distribute Islamic literature at an international scale).
- Most Islamic projects in other provinces receive a large sum of their funding from Gauteng sources. (*Jamiat*: 2004).
- There is a large sector of the Gauteng community that is conservative, or wants to preserve their culture. This is eminent from the following facts:
  - The large number of Islamic schools in this region, more so than the other provinces. (*Jamiat*: 2004).
  - The origin of the *Jamiat-ul-Ulema* foundation was in the Gauteng region, and most of its founding or leading members still reside in this province. (*Jamiat*: 2004).
- The large Muslim communities in the Natal and Cape regions, at least have the vast ocean at their disposal. Since the Gauteng province is inland and has no ocean, most Muslim communities in this region have to resort to either making a long-distance trip to the ocean, or to compromise and holiday at the local resorts available.

## 9. Allocating a site:

The proposed site was chosen by the client due to the following reasons:

- The site was within a reasonable distance from the Johannesburg-Pretoria-Vereeniging regions, a necessary requirement in order to cater for the proposed target market.
- The route to the site from the perspective of tourists and travelers is along a scenic route, through the Hennops and Magalies Mountains, terminating at the Hartebeespoort Dam, a popular tourist destination. From here, the intention would be to bring the people through the dense farming lands of the Brits district, terminating at the proposed site, which is located approximately ten kilometers away from the dam. By extending the existing Hartebeespoort-Dam tourist route towards the town, it would create financial opportunities for the locals, and would allow travelers to experience a country-town setting.
- The site is in close proximity to a Muslim community. The intention is to create job opportunities for disadvantaged Muslim families, and to enable them to enjoy the facilities of a cultural village within their midst.
- The site is easily accessible, since it has an entrance along the main route to the town, and would therefore be easily found by holidaymakers, travelers and tourists alike.
- The site has the advantage of the Crocodile River passing through it, and is characterized by dense greenery, with the Magaliesburg Mountains framing its backdrop.
- The site has an urban link within a kilometer from its main entrance, which enhances public interaction from the urban environment, and it also has a rural link, since it is surrounded by farming land, wild bush and dense greenery along most of its boundaries.
- The site, having an area of approximately twelve hectares, was adequate to suite the needs of the intended cultural village.



**10. Logic cut short by divine law:**

One needs to be cleansed in a particular manner before a prayer. This cleansing is completed when one washes the hands, face, forehead and the feet. This cleansing by law then falls away if for example, one passes wind. The cleansing will then have to be re-performed before commencing with the prayer. This does not make sense to the human mind, because the passing of wind has no relation to the hands, face, forehead or feet. In fact, it relates to a completely different part of the body; yet when one passes wind, Muslims will wash other limbs not related to the cause of the breaking of the cleansing. Logic is thus cut short by law. Islamic philosophy is based upon making logic out of the law, instead of using logic against the law. It is by accepting the given laws as divine, pure and true, that a new and deeper understanding will be created. It is believed that this understanding will give the world the solutions it is searching for, and will shed new light on many matters. It is in the above light that the possibility of this cultural village should take place.

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**Component one**

**Category-B:**

**Functional requirements:**

This category pragmatically divides the resort into a framework of three functional zones, namely:

- **Zone A:** Public interface
- **Zone B:** Entertainment / Relaxation belt
- **Zone C:** Spiritual belt

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## Framework for Zone A: Public interface

### 1. Conference Center:

- Should be in close proximity to the client's house (Refer to Section-F, pg.2).
- Should cater seating for 600 people
- Should provide an eating hall for 600 people within the same structure, or a structure adjacent to it.
- The preparation and services area of the dining hall should be allocated within the boundaries of the client's personal dwelling area, since the client wishes to personally manage this component of the proposed development
- Should have independent services areas for both itself and the dining hall areas respectively

### 2. Amphi-theatre:

- Should cater seating for 400 people
- Should have a scenic backdrop, so as to relate the audience symbolically to the notion of the 'paradise garden' often related to in Islamic art
- Should accommodate its own services areas
- Should relate to the conference center

### 3. Cultural Exhibition Centre: (To be fully rationalized and developed for the purposes of the thesis)

- Should be located in close proximity to the *Jamaat-khana*, (almost similar to the function of a Mosque), since most Muslims would likely want to pray after experiencing such an emotional event.
- Should be centrally located along an axial route, thereby making it easily identifiable and accessible
- Should lead out to a garden area, so as to cater for a 'breathing space'
- Should accommodate its own services area

### 4. Jamaat-khana: (see explanation below)

- Should be centrally located to all three zones
- Should cater for 600 people
- Should accommodate its own services area

#### The distinction between a Mosque and a *Jamaat Khana*

A *Jamaat Khana* essentially has the same functions as a Mosque. The difference is usually attributed to the level of responsibility each one adopts:

A Mosque essentially carries a lot of responsibility. Once a structure or piece of land is declared a Mosque, than that structure or land can never have another purpose. It is bound by Islamic law that the Mosque is the property of *Allah*, and will be the responsibility of the community to ensure that it remains a Mosque. However, a *Jamaat Khana*, can be owned by private individuals and can also be converted to have another purpose, be it residential or commercial.

A Mosque demands that five times daily prayers have to be performed. If the prayers are not performed, than the community will be held responsible for this, in view of the *Shari'at*. A *Jamaat Khana* is however not bound to this, and prayers can be performed whenever possible by the community. However, it would be preferable to have the five daily prayers performed in a *Jamaat Khana* as well.

A Mosque is also bound to have people to sit in *I'tikaaf*. This takes place in the month of *Ramadan*, a holy month in the Islamic calendar, when it is necessary for at least one person of the community to stay in the Mosque for a period of a minimum of ten days. A *Jamaat Khana* is not bound to this, but it would be preferable for someone to perform the *I'tikaaf*.

It is thus clear from the above that it would be safer to have a *Jamaat Khana* instead of a Mosque, because it is not yet certain whether the rights of a Mosque will be fulfilled by the proposed village. Once it is certain that the rights of a Mosque can be fulfilled, then it would be possible to declare the *Jamaat Khana* a Mosque.



**Framework for Zone B: Entertainment belt** (not developed for thesis purposes).

**1. Hotel:**

- Should accommodate for 200 overnight guests
- Should have a recreation center within the hotel structure

**2. Recreation facilities**

- Should cater for recreational activities as encouraged by the *Shariat*, according to the discretion of the designer.

**Framework for Zone C: Spiritual camp** (not developed for thesis purposes)

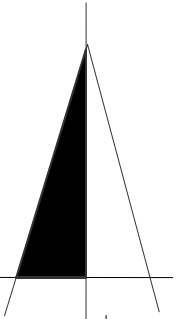
**1. Accommodation sector**

- Should cater meditation units for 200 overnight guests
- Should cater for staff accommodation, which should be centrally located to all guests.

**2. Gathering area**

- Should be closely linked to the staff accommodation sector and the Mosque
- Should accommodate a space / courtyard to gather 200 people
- Should have its own services area

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**Appendix A:**

**Component two:**

**Category A:**

This component comprises of the following matrix which will guide one through the basic elements of the Mosque, and thereby simultaneously introduce many complex themes in order to facilitate an understanding of the guideline parameters to follow:

**The Matrix**  
**'A philosophical breakdown of the elements...'**



Fig.1. Mosque survey: Friday Mosque, Zakariya Park, Lenasia. Illustrating minaret.

**Minaret**



Fig. 2. Mosque survey: Brits Friday Mosque. Illustrating ablution area

**Ablution Area**



Fig. 3. Mosque survey: Friday Mosque, Laudium. Illustrating internal prayer space.

**Inner sanctuary of the Mosque**

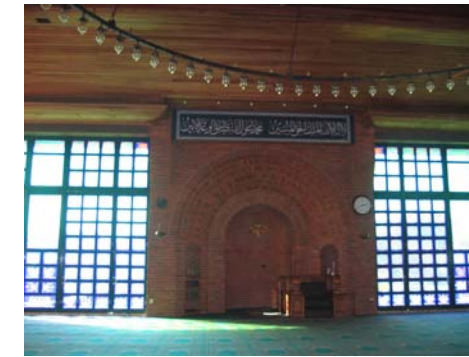


Fig. 4. Mosque survey: PMS Mosque, Laudium, Illustrating mehrab and minbar area

**Mehrab**

**Minbar**

1. The minaret:

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o **The historic, symbolic and religious origins**

Hearing the call to prayer, Muslims are reminded that it is time for them to perform their duty towards their Lord. As one approaches a Mosque from a distance, it is *the height of a minaret* which catches the eye. The minaret, which *symbolically points towards* something beyond the material world, towards *the Divine and Absolute Unity of God*, simultaneously makes an *audio-visual statement*. The symbolic interpretation takes us back to its origins: that being the narrative of Bilal (RA), a former African slave, being the first caller in Islam. (Tayob: 1999, pg.1).

In the early days of Islam when believers were severely persecuted, Bilal (RA) was placed at midday on the hot sands of Arabia, with a rock on his chest, being forced to recant his faith. The people of Mecca, unable to accept the unity of God, had been unable to suppress his faith despite their harsh and cruel methods of torture. After the migration to Medina, he was given the honor of calling the believers to prayer. At a time when Arab prejudices were high, Bilal (RA), a slave, was ironically announcing the same message for which he was formally persecuted for in Mecca. (Tayob: 1999, p.2).

Many reports narrate how *Bilal (RA) climbed onto a high place and delivered the call to prayer* so that as many people as possible could hear him. Bilal (RA)'s taking of a high place for the call to prayer *symbolized all subsequent minarets*, as they too rose to facilitate the call to prayer. This action of Bilal (RA) rising *initiated an architectural style* which became an inextricable aspect of Mosques in most parts of the Islamic world. As a functional instrument for the amplification of the human voice, the height of a minaret was a natural and obvious symbol of the Islamic call to prayer. (Tayob: 1999, p.3).

The words to the calling for prayers are:

*“Allah is great (twice)*

*I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah (twice)*

*I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God (twice)*

*Come to Prayer (twice)*

*Come to Success (twice)*

*Allah is great (twice)*

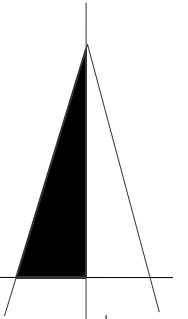
*There in none worthy of worship except Allah”...*

(Hoosain: 2002, p.127)

The call to prayer was an important part of the early religious sense of Islam. It was the call to prayer which literally manifested itself into the formation of the first Muslim community and state, thereby becoming a symbol for the formation of all subsequent Muslim communities. “Many Muslims feel that an Islamic community only really comes into being when the call to prayer can be heard in their homes. The Mosque may be a physical symbol of Islam, but the call to prayer is a ritual act which sets that symbol into motion by calling people together.” (Tayob: 1999, p.3).

Unfortunately, closer examination reveals that the symbolism of height and the grandeur of exquisite monuments to one God have often been used for less than spiritual reasons. Historical study indicates that height was first used by Muslim rulers to symbolize power and authority. The rulers’ audience halls were the first buildings to exploit space and height as symbols of authority. Later, this was extended to the use of the tower and the minaret. Historical evidence has attested that the using of tall slender minarets to call the faithful to prayer was a later development in the architecture of Islam. It was first used by Muslim authorities to make a statement of power, to assert their own authority through the apparent authority of God. The first such dynasty was the Ummayyads who used height in this manner. Since the Ummayyad dynasty was built on the ashes of a civil war, they were eager to search for symbols of legitimacy among Muslims, and built tall minarets over the Mosque in Medina. Minarets were thus





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used by the rich and powerful to make their statement in society, carrying their message from the Mosques of capital cities and ordinary villages. (Tayob: 1999, p.12).

The Abbasid regime used minarets to establish a hierarchy of religious structures. They shortened the minarets in Medina, and made the ones in Mecca taller and slender to indicate the latter's higher value over the former. Minarets were thus first built by the Abbasids as symbols of the most important places in Islam. The minaret was not part of the standard features of all Mosques at that time, but was the 'first significant step towards the exteriorization of a previously interiorized type...' (Tayob: 1999, p.13).

In early Islamic history, the tall tower of the minaret as a feature for Mosques was introduced much later in some areas outside Arabia. A careful look at the religious literature indicates that tall and ostentatious buildings were incompatible with the Prophetic ideal of simplicity and moderation. The height and majesty of a tower seemed to completely nullify the acts of submission and self-negation that constituted the worship inside the Mosque. It was therefore not surprising, that political rulers and not religious groups were the first to exploit the architecture of height in a mosque. Religious acceptance of the tall tower was slow, ambivalent, and contested. (Tayob: 1999, p.14).

o **The evolution of minarets over time:**

Since Islamic architecture is characterized by many regions and states, as well as over a long period of time, varied forms of minarets appeared. Illustrated are some key minarets which had developed through history:



Fig.5. The Great Mosque of al-Mutawakkil at Samarra. (from Hattstein: 2001, p.105).



Fig. 6. Gunbad-I Kabus in Jurjan. , 1006 (from Hattstein: 2001, p.117).



Fig. 7. Ribat of Souse, early 9th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p. 138).

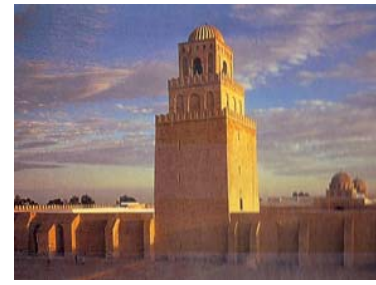


Fig. 8. The Great Mosque of Kairouan, late 9th century. (from Hattstein: 2001, p.132).



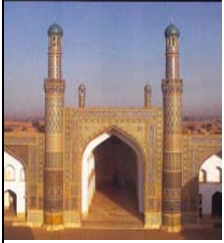






Fig. 9. Tomb of Sitt Zubaida in Baghdad, 1225. (from Hattstein: 2001, p.117).



Fig. 10. Kutubiya Mosque of Marrakech, 1958. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.262).

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| Fig. 11. The Great Mosque of al-Mutawakkil at Samara (from Hattstein: 2001, p.339).      | Fig. 12. The Great Mosque of al-Mutawakkil at Samara (from Hattstein: 2001, p.339). | Fig. 13. The minarets of the Taj Mahal, Agra, 1643. (From Hattstein: 2001, p. 481). | Fig. 14. The Great Mosque of Tunis, late 10th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.134). | Fig. 15. Uc Serefeli in Edirne, 1438. (From Hattstein: 2001, p. 546). Fig. 16. King Faisal Mosque, Islamabad, 1986. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.592).                      | Fig. 17. Picture of Dar-as-Salam Mosque, Laudium, South Africa, 2002. This recent interpretation highlights the use classical element of the dome and the slender minaret. |
| Figures 5 – 16. depict minarets through the ages. (Illustrations - from Hattstein: 2001) |   |   |   |   |  |

Even though the minarets were used as a symbol of power and authority, these facts are hardly ever remembered, since minarets are practical in many ways, have a great symbolic value, recall the sacrifices of the early Muslims, and identify the presence of Islam and a Muslim community. Minarets are thus an integral element of the Mosque, and they should never be lost. Modern-day minarets have further testified their importance as a Mosque feature, and portray this element in varied creative frenzies, which are aptly suited to their task and their message

#### Guideline parameters for the proposed cultural village

- Minarets should be implemented into the scheme, so as to portray an Islamic eminence.
- The form of the minaret would depend upon the architecture being used, and a suitable form should be adopted. The form of the minaret should thus depict a new spirit, and should not be a mere replication of past minarets.
- The height of the minaret should be derived from the overall form of the structure.
- Height should only be used for the purposes of portraying an Islamic identity

#### The restriction against music in Islam

The Islamic call to prayer brings up the issue of the place of music and the human voice in Islam. The early Muslim communities rejected musical instruments in favor of the human voice. Since then, the call to prayer has been a powerful symbol of the faith. Islam in general, celebrates the role of the human voice. (Tayob: 1999, pg.'s 14-15).

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Since the earliest period of Islamic history, most scholars have apposed the use of musical instruments in society in general, and for religious purposes in particular. They have justified the basis of this position on the base of numerous Prophetic statements which condemn the use of musical instruments. (Tayob: 1999, pg.'s 20-21).

The mystical groups of Islam however, argue that the Prophetic condemnation taken as a whole implied that music was prohibited because it was usually accompanied by singing slave girls, drinking bouts and frivolity. The mystics of Islam used this approach to justify an entirely different perspective of music: for them, music was a source of spiritual perfection and ecstasy; they found a deep spiritual resonance in music and musical sounds. From this approach, gave rise to the development of inspirational music which became extremely popular. Some aspects of this tradition, like the *Qawwali*, or devotional songs of South Asia, have become world famous for practicing a music closely associated with the development of the soul. (Tayob: 1999, p. 24).

Nevertheless, it has been unanimously agreed that music should not be used in fundamental religious obligations: thus no music ever accompanies congregational worship or the call to prayer. (Tayob: 1999, p.21).

**Guideline parameters for the proposed cultural village:**

- o Music will be totally prohibited, and any entertainment associated with it, will not be permissible.

**2. The ablution area:**

- o **The origins of the ablution ritual and its spiritual implications**

As one steps into the Mosque, one has to remove one's shoes, and perform a spiritual and physical cleansing ritual of ablution, known as *wudhu*. This can be directly related to a command in the Qur'an, whereupon mankind is instructed:

*"Believers, when you get ready for prayer, then wash your faces and arms to your elbows, wipe your heads, and wash your feet up to your ankles. If you are impure from sexual defilement, then purify yourselves. And if you are ill or on a journey, and have gone to the privy or touched women, but cannot find water, then turn to pure sand and wipe your faces and arms therewith. God does not want to place a burden on you; but God wants to purify you and complete his favor upon you so that you may be graceful."* (Qur'an, 5:6).

The theme of purification and cleanliness are further emphasized in the verses:

*"God loves those who repent, and those who are pure."* (Qur'an, 2:222).

*"And your garments purify them."* (Qur'an, 74:4).

To further implicate the virtue of *wudhu*, the Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said:

*"When a servant performs ablution and gargles his mouth, sins fall out from his mouth; when he sprinkles water into his nose, sins fall from his nose; when he washes his face, sins fall from his face until they fall from under his eyelashes; when he washes his arms, sins fall from his arms including right under his nails; when he wipes his head, sins fall from his head until they come out from his ears; when he washes his feet, sins fall from his feet until the inside of his toenails. Then his walking to the Mosque and his prayer is extra."*

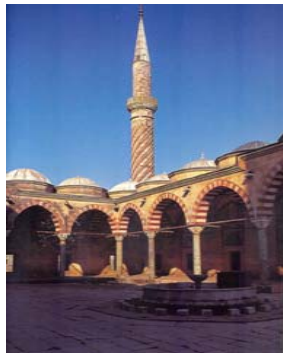
(Malik: 1980; Vol.1, p.37).

"In conformity with the Qur'anic injunction and the Prophetic promise of ritual purification, Mosques throughout the ages had incorporated some form of water system in their architecture". (Tayob: 1999, p.31).



o **The evolution of the ablution area:**

The first public ablution facility was first introduced as late as the Ottoman Empire, prior to which, people were expected to perform their ablutions elsewhere, and then proceed to the Mosque. Illustrated below are the earliest examples, in the form of seating arranged in a radial fashion around a fountain:



Left: Fig. 18. Ottoman Empire Uc Serefeli in Edirne, 1438 (From Hattstein: 2001, p.546).



Right: Fig. 19. Ottoman Empire Shehzade Mosque, Istanbul, 1544 (From Hattstein: 2001, p.551).

This type of courtyard-fountain speedily developed across many regions as its popularity and wide-scale practicality and functionality appealed to the masses. (Hattstein: 2001, p.551). Later on, this was improvised into a distinct ablution area, with the typical seating-and-channel system, as depicted below.



(Left: Fig. 20. Brits, Friday Mosque, 1995, indicating the seating and channel system in the ablution area).

(Right: Fig. 21. Friday Mosque, Laudium, 1965, indicating a link from the ablution area to the courtyard space).

(Far right: Fig. 22. Brits, Friday Mosque, 1998, indicating link from ablution area to courtyard space, which has a water-feature at its center).

The passing of time and the emergence of new ideas and techniques had thus transformed a traditional component, and given rise to the birth and adoption of a new space and style.

More recently, within a local context, the ablution facilities had taken yet another leap: a row of cellular units, each characterized by an individual water tray, replaced the usual communal water channel:



(Left: Fig. 23. Dar-as-Salaam Mosque, Laudium, South Africa, 2002, indicating the individual cellular trays in the ablution area).

Ablution areas were initially characterized within a courtyard, as can be observed from the above illustrations of the Ottoman Mosques.

From a more local and recent perspective, the ablution areas, being independent spaces, were found to link themselves towards the internal sanctuary of the

Mosque, as well as to a courtyard, as depicted below:

Below: Fig. 24. Illustration of courtyard, Friday Mosque, Laudium

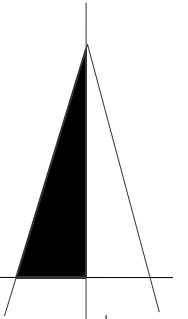


Below: Fig. 25. Illustration of courtyard, Friday Mosque, Brits



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(Left: Fig. 26. Laudium, PMS Mosque, indicating courtyard link from ablution area).

From the illustrations depicted, we notice how courtyards within a local context, differ in their internal treatments of the courtyard space. Whilst the two Laudium Mosques have open courtyard spaces, the Brits example shows a semi-enclosed space, with the roof treated with light-weight materials. We also notice that

courtyards can be further enriched by greenery and water features, as was typically done throughout history.



(Left and right: Fig.'s 27-28. Brits, Friday Mosque, indicating semi-enclosed courtyard space with light-weight roof materials over).



o **The use of courtyards, gardens and water within an Islamic context:**

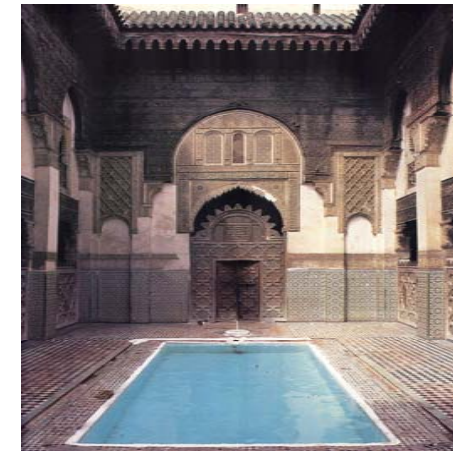
From a local Mosque perspective, the courtyard serves many functions. Since the talking of worldly affairs is condemned in the inner sanctuary of the Mosque as well as in the ablution area, the courtyard serves as an intermediary space between the strictly religious confines of the Mosque, and the outer world at large. It is in the courtyard where people get together and

socialize after prayers. The courtyard, being strategically placed, also serves as a point of entry for those who have already performed ablutions elsewhere, and can thus enter the inner sanctuary via the courtyard, thereby bypassing the ablution area. More importantly, the courtyard caters for the large crowds on a Friday, and for the feeding or hosting of more informal community gatherings. The courtyard thus has the vital role of defining the character of a particular space within a Mosque. It is within the essence of the courtyard aesthetic, with its informal spatial quality, which distinguishes it from the more formal and enclosed spaces of the Mosque at large.

It was typical of the Arabs to build courtyards within their own domestic spheres, since they had long ago learnt the advantages of its vital implementation, which served as a sanctuary against the harsh desert climate. From a socio-functional perspective, the courtyards created an internal environment which was outside, yet inside the parameters of privacy. Courtyards were constantly characterized by greenery, and in later years, by huge masses of water bodies, which further assisted in cooling the internal environment. (Hattstein: 2001, p.284).



Left: Fig. 29. Almo had Dynasty, Spain Court of the Martyles, 1500 (From Hattstein: 2001, p.284). Right: Fig. 30. Maghreb Dynasty, Morocco Al-Sahrij Madrassa, Fez, 1321 (From Hattstein: 2001, p.315).



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Water and greenery are universal elements to sooth the mind and soul. Within the Islamic sphere however, these elements take on a symbolic and spiritual significance as well: water is seen as a purifying element in a spiritual sense, and gardens are intended to depict the eternal garden of paradise, with its pristine rivers of water, and luscious greenery.

The hostile environment and the harsh climate characteristic of the Muslim world further encouraged the laying out of gardens. Gardens in general, provided opportunities for physical recreation and entertainment. Traditionally within the Islamic sphere, gardens were places where fairs were held. (Lari: 1990, p.57).

Gardens were formally planned, with paths laid out geometrically. Watercourses representing the rivers of life, would divide gardens into quadrants. The segmented quadrants were at times filled with trees, and at other times, with precisely planted shrubbery beds, all irrigated by water channels. Watercourses and water channels were typically aligned by a row of trees. Special trees and flowers of all kinds were imported and planted in the gardens. (Lari: 1990, pg's. 57-64).



A striking characteristic of the paradise garden was the way in which geometric symmetry was juxtaposed with the freedom of plant growth. The prototype of the paradise garden was a flat, two-dimensional plane, but waterfalls soon became fashionable when the garden stood on the side of a hill. As supplies of water improved, the patterns of watercourses became increasingly intricate. (Hattstien: 2001, p.490).

Narrow channels developed into wider canals and even into great tanks, as the cooling effect generated by large bodies of water was discovered. (Hattstien: 2001, p.293).

Left: Watercourse in the Nilkanth Pavillion, Mandu, late 16th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.490).



Top left: Fig. 31. Patio de la Sultana, Generalife, Spain, 14th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.296).

Top right: Fig. 32 Alhambra, Palacio del Partal, Spain, 14th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.293).

Middle right: Fig. 33. Palace garden in Fez, 17th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.492).

Middle right: Fig. 34. Portal Palace, Taj Mahal, 1643. (from Hattstein: 2001, p.492).

Bottom left: Fig. 35. "Crucero" garden, Seville, 12th century. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.491). Bottom right: Fig. 36. Patio de la Sultana, Generalife, early 1500's. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.297).



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#### Guideline parameters for the proposed cultural village

##### Water ethics to be implemented:

- Water should be strategically implemented bearing in mind its spiritual and symbolic importance
- Water should be used to further enhance the surroundings.
- Water bodies to be constantly in motion, by the usage of fountains and jets, in order to prevent stagnation, and to create a pleasant environment.

##### Garden maintenance strategies to be implemented:

- A processional route through the main garden should be clearly demarcated and implemented.
- A precisely geometrical layout of the garden area should be implemented in keeping with the importance of geometry within Islamic philosophy.
- A hierarchy of garden spaces should be created, based upon the above-mentioned geometry.
- Garden areas should be defined by containing them via the usage of stone, vegetation, water and other natural elements.

##### o Recreation in Islam:

Following the theme of gardens and water, one is reminded about their social function within an Islamic environment. Traditionally, Muslims sort for recreation and amusement within the confines of gardens. Gardens were popular hosts of fares, amusements and relaxation activities. (Lari: 1990, p.57).

However, when we look back into the history of Islam, it suggests a different connotation to recreation. Recreation was taken in the literal sense, meaning to 'recreate', to refresh or rejuvenate oneself mentally and physically. Traditionally it has meant a journey into self-knowledge, removing one-self for spiritual transformation by retiring into a saints' sanctuary. Recreation also meant leaving the crowded and often unsanitary environment to avail oneself. (Lari: 1990, p.57).

The difference in meaning and attitude between recreation as self-indulgence and recreation as spiritual rejuvenation is not only a problem of old versus new interpretation; it is also the difference between the Third World and the technologically advanced world. (Lari: 1990. p.58). In the proposed development, the nature of both these recreational sides should be adopted, in keeping with the true Islamic spirit.

In some instances some recreational activities are not allowed by *Shari'at*. A few common examples that will *not be permissible* would be the following:

- Any form of entertainment that involves pictures of animate objects, for example, television, playing cards, chess, video games, etc.
- Any form of entertainment that involves musical instruments

In essence, all activities will have to be tested to conform to the *Shari'at*, and simultaneously be acceptable in the eyes of the local Ulema, before being implemented into the design scheme.

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### Guideline parameters for the proposed cultural village

#### Recreational governance strategies and implementation:

- Separate male and female facilities should be catered for, or one area allotted different times.
- According to the discretion of the designer and the available statistics, the potential area for these activities could be indoors, or outdoors, or both, or could facilitate many sporting activities.
- The scale of the above activities should be allocated according to the designer's discretion.

#### The following cultural activities / facilities should be catered for:

- Islamic conferences / lectures - to deal with current issues.
- Islamic debates
- Islamic literature (via the provision of a small library)
- A *Jamaat Khana*, or prayer room, with the following mass group activities:
  1. *Salaah*, or the five daily prayers compulsory upon all believers
  2. *Quraan reading*
  3. Daily *Fikr* - having / creating a worry and concern for mankind to be guided
  4. *Taalim*- learning, reading or teaching basic Islamic values
  5. *Zikr* or particular remembrance of Allah via specific meditation
  6. Reviving old *Sunnah*, or practices or actions of the Prophet (*SAW*)
  7. *Da'wa*, or propagation of the faith

### 3. The interior of the Mosque:

- The origins of 'sacred' space in Islam

One step further into the mosque, and we come into the central space for prayer and meditation. The notion of space in Islam plays an important role in the life of Muslims. One speaks with difficulty about sacred space, in the sense of the sacred of the divine descending and occupying a place on earth. Such a notion would go against basic Islamic principals. However, if religious space is regarded more loosely as the product of rituals and narratives, and less as the presence of absence of beings, then Islamic space becomes more meaningful and amenable to analysis and appreciation. Space is constantly being created and shaped through acts; some spaces are accorded more importance than others, and some are regarded as being in closer proximity to important events. (Tayob: 1999, p.59).

The highest prestige in the Islamic spatial framework is accorded to the Sacred Mosque in Mecca, to which all Muslims turn in worship. In cosmological terms, the *Ka'ba* stands directly under the throne of God. Just as the angels circumambulate the latter, human beings perform similar rituals on the earth. By further turning to Mecca in prayer, Muslims all over the world confer a 'sacred' character upon it. (Tayob: 1999, p.61).

Similarly, the eminence of Medina follows Mecca, because the Prophet Muhammad (*SAW*) established his community there, and because it became the centre of religious devotion and study. (Tayob: 1999, p.62).

The Mosque in Jerusalem is also special because it was the home of previous prophets, as well as being the first direction of worship for the early Muslim community. (Tayob: 1999, p.62).

Stories and narratives in other Muslim contexts have further recreated the importance of these places, thereby investing sacral connections in them and inspiring numerous travels and pilgrimages. (Tayob: 1999, p.62).

It is reported that the Prophet (*SAW*) said that the 'earth was made pure and a place of prostrations for me; wherever a person finds himself at the time of prayer, let him pray.' (Tayob: 1999). The Prophet (*SAW*) mentioned this in the context of a distinguishing feature of his prophecy, and thus a distinguishing feature of the religion of Islam. Of course this has not





prevented the production of great monuments of Mosque architecture. However, the fundamental principal within Islam lay in the adoption of the earth as a place of prostration. (Tayob: 1999, p.60). Seyyed Nasr regards the earth and nature as the 'primordial mosque' is emulated by the numerous Mosques in cities and towns. (Nasr: 1990, p.10). It is thus not unusual to see Muslims simply rolling out a carpet anywhere they find themselves and proceeding to fulfill their obligation to God. More recently, this observance of the earth as a Mosque can be seen on the part of modern travelers in some of the world's busiest airports. (Tayob: 1999, p.60).

"And to God belong the mosques," became the corner stones for ensuring that mosque endowments were completely unencumbered." (Tayob: 1999, p.60). This was a juridical and legal way in which to preserve the natural state of the Mosque. In this pure, non-owned status, the Mosque could only belong to God in a way that everything else on earth does and should do. (Tayob: 1999, p.60).

In general terms, a Mosque could be viewed as a religious site which expresses, through rituals and rules, the aspirations and desires of a community. Islamic jurists have defined the Mosque space in terms of what one may or may not do inside it. Sleeping, passing through, raising one's voice, buying and selling, and even decoration of the Mosque walls, are frowned upon. Mosques are often associated with exquisitely beautiful calligraphy and arabesque decoration, yet, there is some agreement among jurists that this is better left out. The general principals guiding these regulations, including the absence of decorations, is an attempt to create a space for unhindered devotion. Not even the name of God on a Mosque wall should come between the worshipper and his or here concentration upon God. This absolute devotional aspect of the Mosque is a means by which space is set aside. Assigning rules of behavior then was a means by which the Mosque became a religious space, as space set apart from other spaces. This is the closest that one gets to the notion of a sacred space in Islam. (Tayob: 1999, p.63).

- **Space and Gender in Islam:**

"The particular place of women in modern Islamic societies is open to change, and it is difficult to say how relations may change. What is true, however, is the fact that women's practices in Islam may and do hold much significance for understanding Islam in context. And, as I believe, they offer much to men who care to listen and take note." (Tayob: 1999, p. 79).

"The debate on Islamic space signifies the difficulty of reconciling the religious and social place of women in Islam. There is a general agreement that women have the same religious and spiritual responsibilities and privileges as men with the religious tradition. On the other hand, society is deeply divided along public / private and male / female axes. Accordingly, women's primary responsibility and preserve is the home, while men move freely in public places". (Tayob: 1999. p.76).

"The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: 'The best of rows for men are in the front and the worst at the back; and the best of rows for women are in the back and the worst in the front'." (Siddiqi: 1976, Vol. 1: p.279). Thus, one can visualize men and women occupying their respective places in the mosque from two very different, but very honorable places. To a certain extent, this statement by itself inscribes a spatial symmetry, in that there are two different, but meritorious places, for both men and women.

The gendered construction of Muslim space is not fixed, and the position of women is continuously changing, but some of the complexities lie deep in religious texts, interpretations and social expectations. In the twentieth century, the doors of the mosque are being reopened for women. In some, women are reoccupying the rear of the Mosque, whilst in others, provision is made in special places completely cut off from the men. A few Mosques are beginning to reconsider spatial dynamics of the building and are dividing the mosque lengthways, one side for men and the other for women. (Tayob: 1999, p.73).



- **Creative arts and the role of geometry in Islam:**

Most Mosques have been humble buildings providing a demarcated space for worship. This is often overlooked when we think of the grand Mosques that grace so many cities and towns where Muslims live. Muslims with financial means, usually rulers and wealthy merchants, have spent generously to decorate the 'sacred' space of the Mosque with some of the most exquisite calligraphy an arabesque, even though this does go against the principal set out by the jurists regarding sacred Islamic space. However, this does give us some leeway to discuss the role of Islamic art practiced in Mosques, and its practice in general. (Tayob: 1999, p.79).

Islamic art includes a great variety of forms, of which Mosque architecture represents only one dimension. The recitation of the Qur'an and the calligraphic shaping of letters into exquisite forms, are also key forms of art. Arabesque, the use of stylized plants and geometric designs, sometimes by themselves, but often together with imbedded calligraphy, is another form of Islamic decoration. The prayer carpet might appear to be an abstract element of art, but is regarded by some as "the medium that brings together the principal features of Islamic art in a concentrated form." (Tayob: 1999, p.79).

There is great debate amongst scholars as to the significance and meaning of the artistic tradition in the world of Islam. There is some agreement that the art produced by the Islamic world exhibits a unity that transcends local variations. By implication, therefore, there should be some underlying foundational philosophy that produces this art; however, there is some disagreement as to where this foundation stems from. (Tayob: 1999, p.80).

Seyyed Nasr, a leading Islamic philosopher states that the "variety of Islamic art, reflecting the diversity of geographical and cultural groups, should not be confused with its essence, or with the appreciation of beauty in Islam." (Nasr: 1990). Nasr further states that the thread that runs through Islam's art, whether in calligraphy on a mosque wall, recitation of the Qur'an, or an exquisite carpet, unmistakably points to its unity. He states that this inherent unity that binds Islamic art across cultures is the underlying source of Islamic art. (Nasr: 1990, p.7). He goes on to indicate that the use of the different media of art

"produces a striking visual image of the primary belief in the Oneness of God in Islam." (Nasr: 1990, p.7). From this perspective, Islamic art could thus be described as "the result of the manifestation of Unity upon the plane of multiplicity." (Nasr: 1990, p.7). Nasr finally postulates his viewpoint by adding that art could only be called Islamic if it was directly connected with the primary sources of inspiration in Islam. (Nasr: 1990, p.7).

From the above perspective, Islamic art is thus strongly associated with a contemplation of basic Islamic values, principals and influences. This phenomenon can be affirmed in numerous manners as the following examples illustrate:

- The art of calligraphy "was produced by the saints who regarded themselves as the pen in the hand of God." (Nasr: 1990, p.24).
- The art of practical items such as cutlery, candlesticks, stem from the Qur'anic descriptions of Prophet Solomon (AS) who ordered the legendary jinn's to create a molten brass fountain, cooking vessels, etc. (Hattstein: 2001, p.35).
- The contents of decorative arts were greatly influenced by the Qur'anic descriptions of the paradise gardens, with its rivers and beautiful settings.
- The art of abstract forms such as geometric and arabesque art were consorted to, due to the prohibition of figurative arts. (Tayob: 1999, p.82).

Islam thus gave rise to an-iconic art through the mediums of geometry and rhythm, through arabesque and calligraphy which fundamentally reflected the Islamic spirit. In general, all forms of Islamic art were thus set out to deliberately 'disguise' and transfigure nature. Mass, volume, depth, perspective, space, enclosure, gravity, cohesion and tension are all elements that have been aesthetically negated by the Islamic artists. Thus stylization, non-individualization and repetition in the varied forms of art removed any semblance of nature within art. The philosophy behind this form of art can be understood from the perspective that the human being, in principal, is unable to reproduce the creation of God. Artists depicted this principled inability by "stylizing plants, denying individuality to human figures and robbing nature of depth and character." (Tayob: 1999). "Rather like the Qur'an, art had to flow continuously." (Nasr: 1990, pg.'s 8-24). This continuous flow was achieved by



the use of arabesque, patterns produced by the combination of geometric figures, calligraphy and stylized elements. "The arabesque provides the artist with an ideal medium in which to combine forms and produce a combination of patterns, endless in principle and effect." (Tayob: 1999, p.82).

Critchlow, in his book on Islamic patterns and numbers describes Islamic art as "essentially a way of ennobling matter by means of geometric and floral patterns united by calligraphic forms which embody the word of God as revealed in the sacred book, the Holy Qur'an." (Critchlow: 1976, p.6). He also states that "Islamic art is a means of relating multiplicity to Unity." (Critchlow: 1976, p.6).

Typical of many Islamic artworks, such as the intrinsic lattice of all patterns, is an underlying complex geometrical grid. These grids derive their inspiration from pure geometric forms, of which the circle is the archetypal governing basis. From the purity of the circle, and the rational arrangement of circles at polarized intervals, the shapes of the triangle, square and hexagon are derived. All patterns thereafter are a sub-division of proportional ratios and interrelatedness of the primary shapes, which serve as underlay for all Islamic patterns. (Critchlow: 1976, p.7).

In more theological terms, the circle is seen as a pure form, which describes the Unity of God, from which the multiplicities of other pure shapes originate. In cosmological terms, the circle represents the heavens and heavenly bodies. (Critchlow: 1976, p.7).

From the derivative of such a pure nature, the equilateral triangle is derived, the most common lattice in nature. The triangle is seen as the geometric expression of two entities and their reconciling relationship. In more cosmological terms, the triangle represents the existence of the sun, the moon and the earth, and their subordinate relationship to each other. In a more theological sense the triangle represents the minimal conditions for existence, one, the other and the conjunctive or put another way, the viewer, viewing and the viewed, or the triangle of human consciousness. It has been suggested that the essential spiritual triangle in Islam is Allah, The Most Merciful, The Most Gracious, as they occur at the beginning of each chapter of the Qur'an. (Critchlow: 1976, p.7).

The triangle gives rise to the square and the hexagon, which co-exist and are complementary to one another. The square is self-reflecting, as squares emerge from the centre of a square matrix. The square is often associated with the symbol of four-ness, in terms of the four-ness of the year; or the four-ness of the external conditions of heat, dryness, cold and moistness which embody the principles of expansion, fixation, contraction and solution. (Critchlow: 1976, p.7).

The hexagon represents the six-ness of creation, and ultimately represents the heavens, equating itself as a derivative of both circle and triangle independently. It attaches itself primarily to the period of creation, which is described in the Qur'an as being that of six stages. (Critchlow: 1976, p.8).

From the above we conclude that Islamic geometric patterns are rooted practically, symbolically, philosophically and aesthetically, whilst also exhibiting a hierarchy of order within the complexity of its unfolding geometry. (Critchlow: 1976, p.8).

In an attempt to philosophically describe Islamic art, Critchlow states that "Islamic art is predominantly a balance between pure geometric form and what can be called fundamental biomorphic form: a polarization that has associative values with the four philosophical and experiential qualities of cold and dry – representing the crystallization in geometric form – and hot and moist – representing the formative forces behind vegetative and vascular form." (Critchlow: 1976, p.8). He further defines Islamic art more specifically as a "unique integration between controlling laws and the beautiful variety of patterns and colors." (Critchlow: 1976).

#### Guidelines for the proposed development:

##### Geometry and geometric forms:

- Geometry and geometric patterns should influence the overall design rationale
- The pure geometric forms of the circle, triangle and square should be used as the underlying grid to determine overall proportion, symbolism, meaning and scale.
- Geometric forms should flow and relate to each other in a harmonious manner

##### Space and gender:

- The changing role of women's space should be carefully analyzed and suitably accommodated for.

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#### 4. The *mehrab*, (or niche found in the *qibla* wall):

- The essence of the *mehrab*: an introduction to the *qibla*

The interior paradigm of the Mosque is empty of any cultic materials, its space created by the performance of rituals like the *salaah*, the obligatory prayer, and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. In almost all mosques, one usually finds a niche or *mehrab* in the front wall, a slight recess which indicates the direction of the Inviolable House in Mecca. It is this particular direction, called the *qibla*, which all Muslims must face when turning to the ritual prayer. Some of the great mosques in Islam also feature *mehrab's* along the outer walls of the mosque. These recesses provide opportunities for personal devotion like the recitation of the holy Qur'an and *dhikr* (remembrance of God via meditation). Sometimes they are large enough for a small group to gather in one for similar religious purposes. An intriguing feature of the *mehrab* and its direction, the *qibla*, is the fact that it represents a self-effacing central point in a mosque.

We approached the mosque by heeding the call to prayer, then performing ablution, thereupon entering the inner sanctuary of the Mosque, and finally engaging in worship. The immediate goal of these activities is standing and facing Mecca, a direction indicated by the *mehrab*. From this perspective, the *mehrab* represents the spatial end-point of a movement towards a particular direction. When we arrive at the *mehrab* however, we find that it points away from the mosque, indicating that the spiritual journey is not over, but to points to something extending beyond. Thus the mosque is not an end-point, but a fundamental starting point for the spiritual journey to come. The semi-circular form of the *mehrab* indicates that the journey to God is not a long, continuous one, but consists of unfolding stages.

In conjunction with the above, Hassen Fathy suggests that "space in the mosque has to be two-directional; the one vertical tending upwards linking it with the sky, and the other horizontal linking it with Mecca. The horizontal direction is due to the fact that Islam is ecumenical; the idea is expressed by having one sanctuary for all Muslims, the Ka'ba in Mecca. This direction is indicated by the *mehrab*, or niche; this alone is not sufficient; it has to be expressed by the building orienting itself architecturally towards Mecca." (Longeteig: 1985, p.151).

- The *qibla* wall: an introduction to 'wall'- architecture and the arched colonnades of Islam

Bearing Fathy's suggestion in mind, one is prone to think of the importance of the *qibla*, which gave rise to the basic orientation of the Mosque, which thereby stresses the importance of the *qibla* wall.

The *qibla* wall, as often described, is the perpendicular wall offset from the direction of the *mehrab* or the *qibla*. It is this wall which then inspires the direction and orientation of the other walls of the Mosque, typically being either perpendicular or parallel to it.

Mosque architecture or Islamic architecture in general, is typically described as 'wall' architecture. This stems from the very origin of Islamic tradition, which characteristically celebrates the internal world, and thereby excludes the outside world. When the outside world is brought in, it is typically enclosed by courtyard walls, once again celebrating the new 'internal' world which it promulgates. In some cases, the popular breeze walls allow for inside-outside interaction, but these once again limit total visual contact within the disguise of apparent decorative arabesque techniques. In essence the primary objective of Islamic architecture is viewed to create definite notions of exclusions to the outside wall, an ever-fixed affirmation of boundary definition and privacy.

Many western critiques criticize this 'wall' architecture, arguing that the structure of the building is not aptly celebrated, and is hidden by masques of decorative arabesque. Historically, the 'wall'- architecture developed from a practical, local and climatic perspective. The local building techniques required heavy structural walls in order to support its structure. These heavy walls had the climatic advantage of insulating the internal spaces, allowing them to resist the heat of the day, and release the absorbed heat at night. This practice was continued, until the column and beam method, via the medium of reinforced concrete, was introduced to the Islamic world. A dilemma faced the Islamic world, since tradition carried forth a 'wall'- architecture, whereas the modern world set the pace towards a more 'framework' architecture, characterized by celebrating



structure via the means of columns and beams, with intermediary walls suspended as curtain walls. This is an entirely different kind of expression from that in which structure within itself is the source of expression. Where structure is the source of expression one is free to open up the walls to view out and let the light in, but that structural style is entirely foreign to the traditions of Islamic architecture. In Islamic architecture, surface, mass and volume are emphasized.

The theme of walls brings us yet to another important component of Islamic architecture, that being of arches within the walls. In a primitive world, where the discovery of the concrete lintel had not yet been discovered, arches were seen as structurally stable, and a suitable means to facilitate an opening in a wall. The aesthetic nature of the arch, combined with its structural suitability, gave rise to its adoption in early Islamic Mosques. Ever since, arches have played an important role in Mosque architecture, appearing with varied styles over different regions within the sphere of Islamic world.

With the use of modern materials, some Mosques have moved away from this element, since its function has become one which is purely aesthetic. Whilst some adopt the arch as an essential Islamic feature, others tend to pick up its essence of reciprocating repetition and rhythm, synonymous to the rhythm of the recitation and calligraphy of the Qur'an, which echoes and flows throughout the internal dimensions of the Mosque.

#### Guideline parameters for the proposed development:

##### The qibla; walls and arches

- The general orientation of the entire framework should aspire to adapt itself along the qibla.
- Walls should be bland or decorated in an abstract manner, and yet allow room for important structural elements to be celebrated.
- Walls in general should be used to define spaces and critical axes in a manner to celebrate the qibla, or the making of 'special' places.
- The use of arches should not be emphasized, but rather its repetitive spirit inducing rhythm into the design framework.

#### 5. The *minbar*, (or raised platform from which the imam addresses the congregation):

- The essence of the *minbar*:

The minbar is essentially a raised platform from which the imam addresses the congregation. The minbar was in existence from the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW), who used to stand on a slightly raised platform to address the early Muslim congregation. At this time though, the minbar was merely a step or two, and established the Prophet (SAW)'s authority as a leader of his people.

Shortly after the demise of the Prophet (SAW), the governor of Egypt wanted to build a raised platform to address the congregation in the Mosque. He was given the following reply from the caliph: "Is it not sufficient that you are standing while the people are sitting?" (Tayob: 1999, p.113). Thus the authority that was imbued within this powerful symbol of early Islam was for the meantime curbed to a certain degree.

The minbar, from simply being a raised platform, underwent a total transformation when the Umayyad dynasty introduced beautiful *maqsurah*'s into mosques. The preacher, the symbol of leadership, would enter the *maqsurah* and ascend its flight of stairs. Once he was inside the *maqsurah*, the door would be closed and guarded by soldiers. The *maqsurah* beautiful as it may appear is in complete contrast to a leader standing in front of his congregation with his back to them. As time passed by, the rulers declined from leading the people, and passed this duty over to the learned scholars. Consequently, the *maqsurah*'s disappeared, and stairs leading up towards a raised platform became the characteristic minbar in modern times. (Tayob: 1999, p.113).

When the imam leads the congregation in worship, he stands on the same level as his followers, facing as they do in the direction of Mecca; however, when he addresses the congregation in a sermon, he stands on a raised platform with his back against a wall, facing the people. From a functional point of view, the raised platform simply became a means for carrying the voice of the speaker beyond the initial rows of the congregation. From a symbolic point of view, the physiology of the two places in the Mosque implies radically different leadership roles. The *minbar* in Islam potentially threatens the *mehrab*, and



vice versa. It is this underlying juxtaposition of leadership and believers, height and ground levels, which occurs repeatedly in Islam. (Tayob: 1999, p.113).

When we turn from the local Mosque to the Meccan sanctuary, the height of the Ka'ba raised above ground level also became a point of contention. The Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: "Your people, (the *Quraysh*), diminished 'the house' (*Ka'ba*) in the direction towards the *Hijr*, and but for the fact that till recently they were unbelievers I would myself demolish the *Ka'ba* and restore the reduced dimensions. I would also make two doors for it down on ground level, one towards the east for people to enter, and to the west for people to exit. And do you know why your people raised the door? And Aisha (RA) said she did not. Muhammad (SAW): 'to make sure that no one but whom they wished would enter it. If they disliked a certain person entering it, they would allow him to climb up, and then, when he was about to enter, they would push him and he would fall to the ground...'" (Quoted from Tayob: 1999, p.122).

Thus it can clearly be observed that powerful symbolic battles of height and ground levels had been characteristic within early Islam. In contrast to this, the Qur'an preaches humbleness and humility. Architecturally translated, humbleness would impose low-rise structures as opposed to high-rise structures, to indicate simplicity and humility.

**Guideline parameters for the proposed development:**

**Height restrictions:**

- Other than the concession given to minarets, Islam promotes humility and humbleness. Taking the theme of humility and humbleness into an architectural perspective, structures should also be humble and hence be low in height.
- A three-story height restriction should thus be adopted as the maximum allowable height. This phenomenon will promote an environment that takes the human scale into account, and doesn't promote an architecture that tends to become overbearing. It will also avoid the usage of lifts which will save in the energy efficiency of the development as a whole.

a quest of the spirit



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**Conclusion to Category A:**

My exploration of the symbols, values and images of Islam have been guided by the local, physical and conceptual features of the Mosque. Colonialism, modernity and globalization have presented Islam with a great number of challenges. Whether in matters of beliefs, world views or practices, these global historical forces have forced Muslims to adapt and grapple with their traditions. In the twenty-first century, religion claims its place in the public sphere as both spiritual quest and group identity. Islamic political activities particularly, have been insisting that the social and political nature of Islam should be the source and foundation of state, judicial and educational systems. In essence, Islam determines everything in Muslim societies and should therefore be used as a base in search for new solutions in all spheres of life. (Tayob: 1999)

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**Component two:**

**Category B:**

**1. A glimpse of the history of global Islamic architectural trends, their origins and their application in the 21st century:**

Since the Arabs were mainly a nomadic people, their architecture comprised of the simple elements of the desert. For the more permanent dwellers of the desert, mud bricks and camel skin sufficed for most. With the Prophet (SAW)'s example of modest living, his Companions were eager to follow suite. In this regard, coupled with the fact of traditional lifestyle, the Arabs of the desert had little to offer architecturally. It was these very same Arabs that entered foreign lands and spread Islam. The first Mosque to be built by the Companions of the Prophet (SAW) on foreign land was a field defined by reeds. (Hattstein: 2001, p. ). As time passed by, and more territory was gained, the local architecture of the foreign land became the architecture to be used by the Muslim conquerors. New Mosques took on the shape of the local architecture. The Islamic culture now adopted by these societies had an influence on their design, but the Islamic architecture to come from the Companions, was that of temporary dwellings of mud bricks and camel skin. (Hacker: 1979). It can thus be clearly noted that the Islam preached by the Prophet (SAW) and his Companions to follow, had nothing to do with the classical Islamic architectural elements. It is the classical elements which began to become associated to Islam; or rather the communities in which Islam became manifest, together with the local traditional methods of material assembly, which then developed into what is termed as classical Islamic architecture. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 34-44).

In order to cater for the needs of a growing Muslim society in the areas of Syria and Iran, the Umayyads realized that huge areas of prayer were required. This led to the building of the hugest Mosques of the time, which also had an important role to play in the political world, as well as to establish authority. The usual type of Mosque in the Umayyad dynasty was based on the model of the Prophet (SAW)'s house in Medina. Typically, these Mosques consisted of a large courtyard, surrounded by brick walls. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 64-80).

The Umayyads continued the legacy of having exterior walls which were relatively plain, and it was the interior world which was emphasized, as characteristically known of Islamic architecture and the custom of the Arabs. This theme of plain exterior walls, and a celebrated internal environment also carried itself over into the Umayyad palaces.

(Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 64-80).

From the earliest of times, the dome was taken to theologically and cosmologically symbolize perfection and harmony of the heavens and the Creator. The Umayyads used domes to emphasize authority and religious importance, which can be observed in both Mosque as well as palace architecture, where domes were either placed over the area where the caliph would pray, or would roof the throne rooms. Domes were thus 'an attribute of the sovereigns'. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 64-80).

It was also an attribute to the Umayyad dynasty to have introduced the prayer niche in the qibla wall, commonly known as 'mehrab', which set an example for later Mosques. Complementary to this, niches soon appeared in the throne room of the king, who simultaneously faced the qibla and the people he was addressing. The importance given to the qibla wall was re-emphasized during the Umayyad reign, as was initially emphasized by the Prophet (SAW) in Medina. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 64-80).

The use of mosaics in Mosque and palace architecture was also introduced by the Umayyad dynasty. Many of these mosaics were often in gold, but varied in material, from glass, to tile, to exquisite marble finishes, depending upon the political stability, the region and the availability of resources. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 64-80).





Characteristic of the Umayyad palaces were the fortress-like, high walls, guard-towers and the square plan, which was used as a basic layout mechanism for new structures.

As time went by, the Umayyads developed bathhouses. These bathhouses were entirely ornamented with wall paintings, and the floors with mosaics. We also notice the implementation of a passive air conditioning system, achieved via strategically placed narrow air channels. By this time the Islamic law regarding the portraying of images was forgotten by the Umayyad princes, who ravished in the arts of figurative, sculptural and relief decoration. The arts of fresco painting and stucco works founded their roots within this period. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 64-80).

The opposing Abbasid reign soon took over from where the Umayyads had left, and introduced a few more changes in the realm of Islamic architecture. Mosques changed function, and instead of having social, political and religious functions, Mosques exclusively became used as a religious institutes alone. The Abbasids introduced a standard type of Mosque architecture over many regions, which continued from the Umayyad legacy in some aspects, such as the hypostyle halls, mehrab's and domes, but introduced the minbar and minarets as the new standards. They also emphasized on plastered mud-brick structures instead of stone, as well as geometric patterns which were molded into the walls and into the overall design. (Hattstein: 2001).

The strong enforcement and tendency towards geometry of the Abbasid reign can be observed from their new planning of the city of Baghdad, which became renowned as the 'Round city'. (Hattstein: 2001, p.96).

The Abbasids paved the way for palaces, Mosques and city architecture, into what is called the 'imperial style'. This type of architecture was characterized by barrel vaults, huge piers which supported the roof, towers at the corners of a square plan, and arched colonnades which introduced the theme of repetition and rhythm. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 96-118).

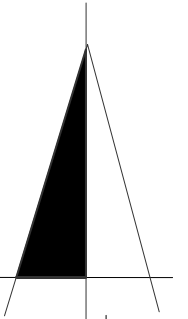
Towards the end of the Abbasid reign, the caliph moved the capital to the newly built city of Samara. It was here that architecture was celebrated in the form of numerous huge palaces, with the Mosque placed directly at the center of the city. The palace façades were merely blank walls, and the minarets placed emphasis on the Mosque. The intention was to **shift emphasis from the palaces to the Mosque** as the focal point. Even the customary role of the caliph to lead the Friday prayers was taken over by the ulema in charge of the Mosque. The Mosque, drawing the focal attention, was **externally decorated by careful brick laying techniques and the arranging of mosaic glass and stucco work**. The famous tower at *Malwiya* was built, to further perpetuate the attention towards the Mosque and its external aesthetic appeal. This tower uniquely emerges to set off the trend for the many minarets to come in later times. The internal facades were intensely clad with the usual marble, wood and mosaic finishes. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 96-118).

Another trend that developed during the Abbasid reign was the erection of tombs and shrines. Tombs were generally characterized by domes for purposes of emphasis. This was to set the trend of holy shrines to come in later times, usually characterized by domes as well. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 96-118).

The Abbasid reign is also marked with its influence in the field of decorative arts, which took to many forms and patterns, with a definite geometric progress within the various mediums of textile art, ceramics and metal work. A new age of geometry, writing and arabesque had dawned upon the Islamic world: a vibrant and influential move away from the figurative arts, to establish an art based on vegetal elements such as tendrils and leaf shapes, which were subject not to the laws of nature, but to geometry. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 96-118).

The Aghlabids came into power after the Abbasids, and improved on the Islamic architecture, inspired by both Byzantine and Abbasid architectures'. The Aghlabids later built what is known as 'ribat' architecture, which were essentially built as fort-like dwellings, wherein a siege could be well resisted, since water and storage of food, as well as weapons were catered for. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 96-118).

ribat



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The Fatimads came into power, and replaced the Aghlabids. They had a major influence in the Italian regions. (Hattstein: 2001, p.140). They were followed by the Ayyubids and the Mamluks, to be finally crushed by the Crusaders between the east-to-west Mediterranean regions. (Hattstein: 2001, p.164). In the Moroccan to Tunisian regions, the Maghreb dynasty reigned. (Hattstein: 2001, p.298). In the regions of Asia Minor and Central Asia more specifically, the great Seljuk's and Shah's reigned, whilst the mighty Mongol and Khan regimes came into power later on. (Hattstein: 2001, p.346). In Iran, the Safavids and Qajars reigned. (Hattstein: 2001, p.494). By 1453, the Islamic world took over a new turn, as the great Ottoman Empire, which was characterized by its multinational embodiment, came into power. It was the most effective, stable and long-lasting Islamic reign. (Hattstein: 2001, p.534). Simultaneously, within the time-frame between 1800 and 1914, the European world had undergone a rapid change, which resulted in mass colonialism. By the 19th century the Ottoman Empire was thus consequently weakened: Greece, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Spain, Egypt, Sudan and many of the Gulf States were overpowered by strong European colonialists such as the French, British and the Dutch. The Ottoman Empire lost all its Arab states and eventually became contained to modern-day Turkey. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 536-544).

By the 20th century, after the great World Wars, we notice that the Islamic world had gained independence, but had based much of their policies and ideals on European principals. Due to the advent of wars and socio-political changes, we observe the gradual rupture of older traditions, from a political, social and economic perspective. The traditional architecture and arts of Islam also lost its footing. The adoption of a European building style was viewed in many Islamic countries as an opportunity to progress in a more 'modern' direction. An example of this was the intention of the Egyptian King Ismail to Europeanize Cairo, "following the precedent of the city plan of Paris". (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 582-585).

Through this type of admiration for European culture, the Islamic traditions came to a standstill. Even students had to undergo training in European states to become recognized in their own countries as masters in the new profession of architecture. It was now possible to see the development of a limited combination of Eastern and Western styles, whereas more predominant was the overtaking Western style, appearing as the new and lucrative 'image' that had to be portrayed. In

place of regional, ethnically orientated artistic styles, the Islamic states now emerged into the unifying style oriented towards the modern world. "The individual Islamic regions temporarily disappeared almost completely." (Hattstein: 2001, p.583).

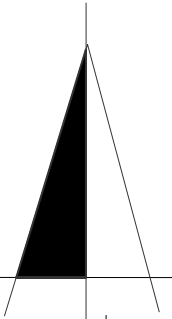
Throughout the ages, even at a time when modernism appeared to pave the way forward, it is the Mosque architecture that managed to survive this onslaught, and classical elements almost always had some link to the new Mosques being proposed. Mosque architecture could almost always be viewed to conform to its local physical, ecological and landscape environment. Many Mosques became modernized by combining both modern and traditional-classical elements, such as the origination of needle-like minarets created from more modern techniques. This type of transformation became strikingly pronounced in non-Muslim states as well, where the external form conformed to its surrounding modernized architecture, but yet retained some elements of the dome and the minaret, as well as a traditional internal environment. This interplay between modern form and Islamic tradition is commonly found in many countries, and further establishes a common and deliberate connection to the ideology of the older, established states in modern terms. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 583-585).

**It is this exceptional quality of Mosque architecture, which managed to relate to its cultural surroundings, and yet possess abstract Islamic elements, that some critics label this evolution attributed to Mosque architecture, as the true Islamic spirit of architecture.** (Hattstein: 2001, pg.'s 592-593). The illustrations below are some examples of this sort: (Fig. 37. The state Mosque of Indonesia, Jakarta, 1984. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.593).



The mosque in Jakarta, harks back to old architectural styles such as the minaret, but transforms them into an abstract symbol, and then refers to forms from modern office buildings and large-scale mid-20th-century complexes. The Mosque enabled itself to identify with the modern state promoting itself with Islam as its state religion.

a quest of the spirit



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A certain tension exists between the modern building forms and the materials used, and the traditional architectural forms that can be observed in mosque designs in the eastern Mediterranean area and the Near East. The adoption of individual elements of classical Islamic architecture and their transfer into a modern form with modern materials is an approach that can also be

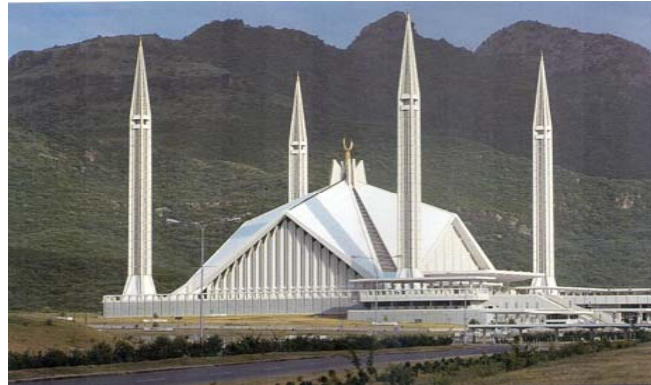
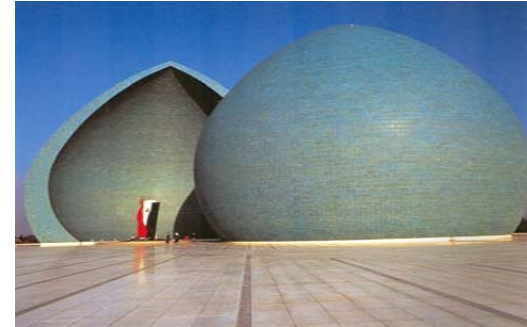


Fig. 38. King Faizal Mosque, Islamabad, Pakistan, 1986. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.592). forms, feature prominently in Islamic states such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia, amongst others. **Irrespective of the generalized criticism of being unable to identify the bearing and loading structure, due to the decorative nature of the traditional style wall, as it hides this by a layer of ornamentation that spreads over the whole structure, the practice is seldom abandoned. Islam is proud of its walled-architectural facades, which are well-suited for its harsh climatic environment, and which portray the essence of Islam in a traditional, spiritual and practical manner.** (Hattstein: 2001, p.593).

recognized in the King Saud Mosque in Jeddah, as shown below: (Hattstein: 2001, p593).

It is in this Mosque, that even the niche in the qibla wall is indicated via the use of a laser beam. **This stands to prove the widespread, unbroken relationship with tradition, as the evolution of the combination of old traditions, religious ideas and modern approaches gel together into a harmonious whole.** These key characteristics, where there is a play with classical forms, which are then rendered by modern techniques and in modern building

figurative forms, Iraqi artisans in the 20th century, in contrast to this, produced a striking monument within the huge voids produced by two huge 'onion domes'. (Hattstein: 2001).



This monument preserves some cultural identity, and dedicates itself as a 'Monument for the Martyrs'. Tiled in blue-turquoise, with the huge masses of the two 'onion domes', arranged on an isolated tiled island, this monument is impressive, simple, yet frightening...which I feel is apt for its purpose.

Fig. 39. The Martyrs Monument, Baghdad, Iraq, 1983. (From Hattstein: 2001, p.596).

It seems as if Islamic architecture is once again finding its roots from traditions, spiritual links, modern techniques, and cultural ethnicity within the frameworks of a quest for a new global Islamic identity.

The quest for a new Islamic identity has not only swept the architectural sphere, but the arts and crafts as well. Even though there was a tendency to sway towards European trends, and little remained of the traditional elements, as sculpture took

a quest of the spirit



### 1. Traditional guidelines to place-making in architecture

The Qur'an is believed to be the supreme source of guidance in all spheres of life, and would thus be the logical plane to begin with, in order to ascertain the basic principals of Islamic tendencies. Suggested below are some examples from the Holy Qur'an, from which one is able to extract fundamental values of the Islamic culture in relation to architecture:

- **"Squander not thy wealth;** the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils." (Qur'an, Chapter Al-Esra, 27).  
**"Build ye on every high place a monument for vain delight? And seek ye out strongholds that haply ye may last forever?"** (Qur'an, Chapter Ashura, 128-129).  
From the above verses we gage that Islam practices the principal that buildings should not be luxurious. "All luxurious phenomena which govern most old Islamic edifices and many modern buildings conflict with this principle." (Lari: 1990, p.41).
- "Thus we have appointed you a **middle nation**, that ye may be witnesses against mankind and that the messenger may be a witness against you." (Qur'an, Chapter Al-Baqarah, 143).
- "And those who, when they spend, are **neither prodigal nor grudging**, and there is ever a **firm station between the two.**" (Qur'an, Chapter Al-Furqan, 67).  
From these verses, the principals of modern living and moderate expenditure can be derived. (Lari: 1990, p.41).
- "O ye who believe! **Enter not houses other than your own without first announcing your presence** and invoking peace upon the folk thereof. That is better for you, that ye may be heedful." (Qur'an, Chapter Al-Furqan, 67).

From this verse we can observe the importance of privacy and the rights of private spaces. (Lari: 1990, p.42).

- He it is who hath placed you as viceroys of the earth and **hath exalted some** of you in rank above others, that **He may try you** by that which He hath given you. Lo! Thy Lord is swift in persecution, and Lo! He is forgiving, merciful."  
(Qur'an, Chapter Al-An'aam, 165).  
This verse signifies both the values of equity in dealing, and the different standards of living. (Lari: 1990, p.42).
- Is he who **founded his building upon duty to Allah** and His good pleasure better, or he who has **founded his building on the brink of a crumbling, overhanging precipice** so that it toppled with him into the fire of Hell? Allah guideth not wrong-doing folk." (Qur'an, Chapter Al-Tawbah, 109).  
From this verse the principal extracted is that religious ideals and obligations should be given proper consideration when designing public buildings.  
(Lari: 1990, p.42).

It could be said that the above examples, are generalized examples, but in essence, the **Qur'an preaches simplicity, a moderate social life, equity in public life, privacy, respecting religious ideals and obligations, and proper maintenance.** (Lari: 1990, p.42).

It has also been noted that amongst certain traditions, the Holy Prophet (SAW) did not encourage building in general. This has been argued from the viewpoint that **necessary building is permissible**, and beyond that will be wasteful, and thereby will be answerable for, in the eyes of Islamic jurisprudence. This logic stems from the fact that the Holy Prophet (SAW) himself assisted in the building of the first mosque of Islam, and also permitted the building of his quarters. When one observes his quarters however, we find it simply built out of mud brick, with a maximum of four square meters per room, which was allocated to each of his wives. Other than this, he had no other living spaces. His quarters opened directly into the



courtyard of the Mosque, and a piece of camel skin was the only barrier of privacy which separated him from the community. The Mosque has been described by numerous traditions to have been made out of mud bricks, with the roof made out of palm leaves supported by the trunks of palm trees. The floor is proven to be sand, based upon the reports of praying in mud when it rained. (Hattstein: 2001, pg.s 60-64). All these factors further enhance the theme of humbleness of structure, simplicity, and consorting to only that which is entirely necessary. With retrospect to the current development, it will be justified to thus build that which is necessary to further basic comfort needs and requirements. To further substantiate this viewpoint, the entire development is being dedicated towards the faith, with the intention of perpetuating and catering for Islamic needs, as its priority objective. Thus, all the structures being proposed can be categorized as necessary structure to enhance the faith.

As far as comfort levels are concerned, the *Ulema* indicate that a standard equal to the living standards of the community, or the Friday Mosque in the locality, should influence the extent of comfort to be experienced in the proposed development. From a religious judicial perspective, it would thus be permissible to build such structures which have similar finishes to its surrounding community, which I would say, are moderate, and to some extent, avoid luxury. The logic behind this theory is that the inhabitants of the community are used to a certain standard of living, and it is this standard that should be maintained in the proposed development, in order to make people feel comfortable in their surroundings. Furthermore, the living standard of the local Islamic community at large should also be taken into account, in order to accommodate general ideals of comfort. In order to avoid lengthy discussions in this regard, I merely postulate that in essence, ***simple structures, with moderate finishes and levels of comfort should be aspired towards, in keeping with local Islamic injunctions.***

In essence the architecture, in the words of Lari, should express:

- "Unity as its existence: one God, one Truth;
- The Qur'an as its message;
- The Prophetic traditions and Islamic law as its path." (Lari: 1990, p.42).

The Qur'an advises to invite others with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and to argue in ways that are best and most gracious. (Lari: 1990, p.123). The architecture should thus be like a greeting of peace and an invitation to discourse and dialogue about Islam.

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