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The Implications of a New Mosque Curriculum on the Design of Mosques As a Community Development Centre

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Abstract: The design of mosques as a tool to develop the Muslim community in the present time depends on the eternal idea of the mosque, a clear curriculum for the small community and the needs of the modern pattern of life. The paper presents the argument that the eternal idea of the mosque contained in the Qur'an and the Hadith approaches that of developing the community rather than a place for mere ritualistic concerns. The needs of the modern pattern of life specifically related to the Malaysian cultural context is discussed in relation to providing the proper solution for the development of Muslims within the framework of the working and living lifestyles of the community. The paper then outlines the important objective of the mosque to develop the small Muslim community intellectually, physically and in strong brotherhood. These three objectives are translated into a curriculum and activities that culminate in a community programme. Finally the paper presents the architectural guideline for the design of the mosque.

Introduction

The mosque is the most important building in Islam. It can be considered as the heart that drives the Muslim community. The malady that affects the mosque in the present time is that although it is beautifully expressed architecturally, but in truth, it is not. The essence of the mosque is not in its physical structure but is in its eternal idea. This paper puts forward the argument that the eternal idea of the mosque as a *House of God* (بيت الله) is also as a Community Development Center. Having expounded the eternal idea of the mosque we will put forward a brief suggestion of its 'curriculum' and the implications on the design of contemporary mosques. This paper is based on two of our works. [1,2] There are four sections in the paper. The first section presents an explanation on how the eternal idea has been lost through layers upon layers of perception as a *House of God* brought about by the treatment of the mosque in historical writings of architectural academics, on the uses and roles of the mosque in the past and on the failure of the religious scholars to explain the holistic implications of mosque design intentions. The second section presents a reinterpretation of the religious sources of Islam and an explanation of the meaning of concepts and rituals in relation to the idea of the mosque as a community development center. The third section presents a brief description of the proposed curriculum that would help develop the Muslim community intellectually and in fostering a strong Islamic brotherhood. The final section presents some design implications on the curriculum of the mosque.

The Eternal Idea of the Mosque

The present conception of the mosque covers its eternal idea. It is made up of many layers of architectural interpretations, historical uses and religious pronouncements. Throughout its fourteen hundred-year life span, these layers of meanings have totally changed what the idea of the mosque truly was and should be. Peeling these layers of mist is a necessary act towards establishing the mosque on its original footing based on the *Sunna* of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) and the ideals of Islam.

Architectural Historiography

Much of the conception of mosque that we have come to understand is presented to us by the works of architectural historians. In the early writings of architectural history on Islamic architecture, the historians were mostly non-Muslims but in the present century a few Muslim architectural historians have made their debut. Whether these historians were Muslims or non-Muslims there are several problems in their interpretation of the idea of the mosque in Islam. The historians' ideas about the mosque are subjected to their interpretation of what was considered as 'Architecture' as opposed to mere buildings, the universal idea of religion as a way of life with specific rituals performed to please a deity and the personal and much too liberal approach at interpreting and also choosing the religious sources.

The idea that there is a great distinction between the term 'Architecture' and the phrase 'mere building' have dominated early writings of the previous century up to and until the middle of the 20th century. Architecture seems to be defined as a great piece of art meant to move the spirit whilst 'mere building' were those designed in a most utilitarian approach. The choice of mosque for documentation has always been the great monumental ones patronized by the elite monarchy, aristocracy and religious scholars. Many small, obscure but active mosques are not documented since they do not posses the element of designing to move the emotions. The choice of the elite patronage is also a problem since they do not represent the main crust of the society and their works are mostly stained with personal egoistic agendas. There are a few writers who have even wrongly dismissed the Prophet's Mosque as a mosque in its early setting as can be seen from Creswell. [3]

The idea of the mosque with exotic *muqarnas* (مقرنصات), splendid domes, ornate decorations and multiple minarets stems from the disregard of the simple messages of Islam via the Prophet's teachings. Thus, in the present day, the clients and architects of mosques vie one another to revive monumental historical precedence at the cost of simple common Islamic sense.

The works of architectural historians are also tainted with their stereotyped idea of 'religion' and the 'religious acts'. Many see the mosque as mainly a place for the performance of ritual prayers, meditation, recitals and nothing else. The fact that many mosques conduct teaching activities was seen merely as subsidiary functions and as an after thought. Many historians could not accept the idea of Islam as a religion *'deen'* (الدين) and a way of life and the fact that the mosques served many 'secular' functions.

Many historians use Creswell's assumption to start elaborating about the architecture of the mosque after the demise of the Prophet and the Four Pious Khalifah. The beginning of Islamic Architecture has always been seen when Muslims began building monumental edifices in Syria under the influence of such Khalifah's as Al-Walid.

It is sad to see historians such as John D. Hoag dismissing the whole body of knowledge about Islam contained in the hadith compilations from this simplistic interpretation. In

another instance there are historians who actually use the religious sources but interpreted at their own whims and fancies while disregarding totally the rules of exegesis like James Dickie, who is a convert and goes by the name of Yakub Zaki. [4]

Abul A'la Maududi expounds the mentioned Qur'anic Verses in great detail. He argues that since there exist clear hadiths considered highly authentic by the Sunni Muslims, which prohibit the construction of tombs and mausoleums, one cannot use the above interpretation of the Verses without considering the implications of the hadiths. [5, p. 11-15]

Historical Precedence

When clients decide to commission mosques and when architects begin to design one, historical precedence is usually sought out for the best-styled and most exotic mosques. The use of revivalism and eclecticism has made a come back with the wave of Post Modern architecture. Inherent in the assumption of historical revivalism and eclecticism is the hope that a building, which was considered to have functioned splendidly in the past, may bring back the aura of religiosity associated within its edifice. This is truly a romantic assumption and if it were true the problem of Muslim religiosity can simply be solved by correctly reconstructing 'pious' mosques. At another level, the use of historical revivalism and in some cases eclecticism, have been accepted as an important architectural approach for the sake of religious continuity to past traditions. However, there are several concerns that must be considered in the choice of building precedence. Among these are the intention and historical context of the past structures. Most of the times the monumental mosques of the past were tainted with political agendas, personal symbolic gestures, questionable religious practices and the effect of colonization on the masses.

In the past the mosque had functioned as the main medium for communication. Leaders know that in order to influence the masses, one must control the media. Thus the bigger the mosque the greater the congregates and also the support for whoever controls the mosque. Huge mosques such as the one in Sammara, were built to house the whole Muslim army so that they would not mix freely with the general populace of the conquered towns and cities. Thus we can see the awkward problem of revivalism without prior understanding of the historical context of the structures.

The choice of building precedence should also depend on the particular religious school or 'sect' in Islam. In the traditional mosques of the Malay World one could discern the development of the mosque's *serambi* or verandah area. In the early stages the mosques were a single space affair which implies that there was no separation between religious affairs and the socio-political aspects of the people's life. But when the serambi came about, one could see more and more that the *serambi* (verandah) was considered as a secular space for socializing and that the interior space was considered a place of high religious sanctity. In the serambi one can indulge in any kind of talk but one should only recite the Qur'an in the mosque interior.

From the previous discussions we can see that one cannot derive the eternal idea of the mosque through historical precedence since they are tainted with political agendas, personal whims, questionable religious practices and the mark of secularization.

Interpretation from of Scholarly Thought

Ulama (العلمـــــاء) are Guardians of the religion because the Prophet had said that the *ulama* were the inheritors of religious knowledge. The term *ulama* stands for a person who knows

much knowledge of the religion, which has evolved since the time of the Prophet. The *Sunna imams* (أئمة السنة) of the various schools of thoughts should master both the 'religious' and 'secular' knowledge such as science and economics for instance.

In the realm of architectural interpretation concerning the idea of the mosque there are basically two camps of *ulama*. The first group upholds the presently accepted idea that the mosque is a House of God. On the other hand there exist another group of *ulama* that boldly states that the mosque is more than just a place of ritual prayer but it approaches more of a community center. This group of *ulama* is forever reminding us of the spirit of the mosque of the Prophet in its early days of conception.

The fact that some of the *ulama* does not use a multidisciplinary approach in considering any problem. What they quote is usually straight from sources. There are different opinions which state the fact that we cannot revert totally to the way the Prophet had administered his mosque in the past because of the different life patterns that all Muslims are living at the moment. There are also different settlement models and transportation implications directly involved in the determination of such things as the size of a *qari'a*.

Reinterpreting the Eternal Idea of the Mosque

Much of the sources of the Qur'an and Hadiths have been used to present the mosque as a House of God. We will present the argument that this is not entirely so. We will also explain that the meaning of *ibadat* (عبادات), *solat* (صلات), *tilawah* (تلاوة), *i'etikaf* (اعتكاف) and death has a different implication on the idea of the mosque that is usually understood. Finally we will argue that the Muslim social obligations must be taken into account in developing the idea of the mosque in Islam.

The Mosque in the Qur'an

The word *masjid* is used in the Qur'an in a variety of contexts. The word *masjid* is also used in the following Verses to either denote a specific building or a collective reference to many other houses of worship unknown to the Arabs at that time:

"*Permission (to fight) is given to those against whom war is wrongfully being waged - and, verily, God has indeed the power to succor them: Those who have been driven from their homelands against all rights for no other reason than their saying," Our Sustainer is God!" For if God had not enabled people to defend themselves against one another, (all) monasteries and churches and synagogues and mosques - in (all of) which God's name is abundantly extolled - would surely have been destroyed. And God will most certainly succor him who succors His cause: for, verily, God is most powerful, almighty.* [Sura 22, Verses 39-40]

One conclusion that can be drawn from the quoted Verses is that the word *masjid* is used to refer to a variety of structures that has something to do with ritual worship and symbolic gesture. There is insufficient evidence to derive the eternal idea of the mosque in the context of the community mosque used presently by Muslims. The Verses also indicate that a philological approach to the study of the word *masjid* is not useful since its meaning is too universal.

The Mosque in the Hadith

The hadiths contain many references to the use and functions of the mosque during the Prophet's time. The Prophet had also mentioned a few admonishments concerning the building of mosques. Concerning the functions of mosques, the hadiths contain many accounts of the uses of *Masjid al-Haram* (المسجد الحرام) in Makkah and the Prophet's own mosque in Al-Madinah.

There are many references about the social conditions of the area surrounding the Ka'ba. The mosque was used as a gathering place for all the nobles of the Arab society. The traditions record political pronouncements and diplomatic exchanges taking place at close proximity to the Ka'ba.[6] The Prophet had engaged in many debates, discussions and preaching at the Holy Mosque. All of these seem to indicate that the idea of sanctity in religious structures is not one in which only a particular ritual is intended. Of course, some historians might argue that the Arabs were not civilized enough to know the difference between a town hall and a religious building. The historian might even go as far as suggesting the Arabs were too poor to have separate edifices for the secular and religious functions. This manner of argument has the flaw of stereotyping every society into neat little packages of entities that must follow a universal religious and political law. In the latter part of this paper we will show that Islam is an all encompassing religion and such practices as combining various social, political, recreational and ritualistic actions are commonplace in this religion.

The Prophet's Mosque in Al-Madinah was also used in the same manner as a social, political and religious center. There are hadiths, which includes the functions of a shelter, an educational institution, a health care facility and a prison. Celebrations and recreational activities were also held near the mosque.[7] The mosque was also a stage to pass judicial decisions.[13] Again, it is all very well for the Western historians to dismiss all these functions in the mosque by saying that the building was more of a tribal *madjlis* or that it was done for lack of other facilities. This statements assumes that Islam fits into a stereotyped idea of a religion, which must contain a building that houses a specific set of ritual worship. But if we were not to accept that idea, we might infer that the Prophet purposely let these activities take place in the mosque because the idea of the mosque is more of a kind of Muslim gathering place as well as a House of Rituals. We will explain in a later section that the highest form of ritual in Islam, the *solat* or prayer, requires no building for its performance and thus the building known as the 'mosque' must have a different role as well as a house of worship.

Finally, the Prophet had also admonished the Muslims in being wasteful about constructing monumental mosques and buildings as in the following hadiths:

Narrated Abu Huraira: *One day while the Prophet was sitting in the company of some people, a strange man "the angel Gabriel" came and asked many things. When will the Hour be established (Doomsday)? The Prophet answered, "The Answerer has no better knowledge than the Questioner..... "*[8]

Thus, from the hadith we can understand that the idea of the mosque does not approach that of a monumental building meant for a single ritual worship act. The mosque it seems was a place where the Muslims gather to interact and discharge many responsibilities for the benefit of Islam. We will show that all their activities, most of it considered secular by the historians, fall into the category of 'worship' or *ibadat* (عبادات). Thus, the mosque as a house of worship has a different connotation in Islam than in other religions.

The Worship and the Eternal Idea of the Mosque

The idea of worship in the normal usage of the English language usually connotes an act specifically set in the religious and ritualistic context. In Islam the word worship is the only closest word, which is used to translate the concept of *ibadat*. Abul A'la Maududi and Abu Urwah explains that since the word *ibadat* is a derivative of the term abd or 'slave' the true Muslim is a compliant slave to Allah The Most High. [9] The true Muslim would do Allah's every bidding and in doing so pleases Him. But what are the acts that Allah The Most High wants the Muslim to do? The following Verses describe these actions explicitly:

"It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East or the West, but it is righteousness to believe in God and the Last Day and the Angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity, to fulfill the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain or suffering and adversity and throughout all periods of panic; such are the people of truth, the God-fearing. "[Sura 2, Verse 177]

"And be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity and whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, ye shall find it with God; for God sees well all that ye do." [7, Sura 2, Verse 110]

Aside from prayers, the Muslim has many social obligations to fulfill. Fulfilling these social responsibilities will help create a conducive religious environment to be at peace with oneself and in the constant remembrance of God. Many Muslims and non-Muslims would argue that it is only prayer or *solat* that is the most important act that must be singled out. If any one has such a notion than he or she ought to contemplate the following hadiths:

Narrated Abu Huraira: *A man came to Allah's Apostle and said, "Instruct me as to such a deed as equals Jihad (in reward)." He replied. "I do not find such a deed. "Then he added, "Can you while the Muslim Fighters is in the battlefield, enter your mosque to perform prayers without cease and fast and never break your fast?" The man said, "But who can do that?"* Abu Huraira *added, The Mujahid (Muslim fighter) is rewarded even for the footsteps of his horse while it wanders about (for grazing) tied in a long rope."* [10]

The life of the Muslim must be seen as a total servitude to God and since Allah has commanded them to pray, perform charity, fulfill their social obligations and defend their faith, we can see that the true life of the Muslim is a full and an active one. The true Muslim is not one that secludes oneself from the society as in the following hadith:

Narrated Abu, Sa'id Al-Khudri: *Somebody asked, "O Allah's Apostle! Who is the best among the people?" Allah's Apostle replied, "A believer who strives his utmost in Allah's Cause with his life and property." They asked, "Who is next?" He replied, "A believer who stays in one of the mountain paths worshipping Allah and leaving the people secure from his mischief."* [10, V 4, no 45, p. 37]

Thus, if we understand this definition of worship, can we not see a different picture of the Prophet's mosque's role and functions during his lifetime? Can we justifiably assume that the activities were there for lack of another building? We must agree that the idea of the mosque approach not as a building for a mere single set of ritual worship but more of a kind of social center.

Solat and the Eternal Idea of Mosque

Prayer or *solat* is universally accepted as the reason for the existence of mosques. With this existence, *solat* is seen to be the most important function that a mosque should cater for.

Many mosques have been designed with the intention of providing the best 'meditative' atmosphere for the performance of prayer. In this section we will show that all of these assumptions have been based on a perception of Islam not found within its original spirit and thus, the idea of the mosque approach not as a meditative place of ritual worship.

Concerning the necessary existence of mosques for the performance of prayer, we must remind here that in Islam there is no such requirement as clearly shown in the following hadith:

Narrated Jabir bin Abdullah: *Allah's Apostle said," The earth has been made for me (and my followers) a place for praying and a thing to perform Tayamum. Therefore my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due."* [10, V 1, no 429, p. 256]

The Muslim does not need any kind of icon or intermediary in the performance of *solat*. *Solat* is an act that occurs constantly at least five times a day regardless of whatever the Muslims daily rituals are. Exceptions are given to those who are unconscious or traveling in which case the number of times are reduced and the prayer shortened. Otherwise the Muslim is reminded to interrupt his daily activities with a few minutes of intense remembrance of Allah the Most High. There is no requirement for a building for prayers. Even the congregational or Friday prayers can be performed outdoors and at any clean place with the strict exception of the cemetery. At best we can justify the existence of the mosque to facilitate the performance of congregational prayer.

Concerning the perception that *solat* seems to be singled out as the most important *ibadat* to be performed, we have already argued that *solat* is but one of many actions that a Muslim must perform. Thus, we repeat that if there were a mosque built, it is a strange idea to specifically reserve it only for the performance of prayer.

With regards to the idea that mosques should be designed in order to produce a high state of meditation, we must ask Muslims to consider the implications of the congregational and individual prayers to the design of mosques. It has always been assumed that the mosque is meant for the performance of all types of prayers. We will present here an argument that says the mosque is the place for congregational prayers and that the house is the place meant more for the performance of individual *sunna* prayers.

First of all we must ask what is the different purposes of congregational prayers and individual prayers. All obligatory forms of *solat* are best performed in congregation as in the following hadith:

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (PBUH) as saying: *Prayer said in a congregation is equivalent to twenty five (prayers) as compared with prayer performed by a single person.* [10, V 1, no 1363, p. 315]

Note that the rewards for the congregational prayer are totally independent of a building. This means that no extra rewards are given if one prays alone in a community mosque (with the exception of the Three Holy Mosques in Islam, Masjid Al-Haram, the Prophet's Mosque in Al-Madinah and the Masjid Al-Aqsa). [10, V 2, no 3128, p. 699 & no 3209, p. 697] We must also understand that congregational prayers must be performed in the briefest possible time as indicated in the following hadith:

Abu Mas'ud Al-Ansari reported: *A person came to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and said, "I keep away from the morning prayer on account of such and such a man because he keeps us so long. I never saw Allah's Messenger (PBUH) more angry when giving an exhortation than he was that day. He said: O people, some of you are scaring people away, so whoever of you leads the people in prayer he must be brief, for behind him are the weak, the aged and people who have urgent business to attend."* [10, V 4, no 45, p. 37]

Uthman bin Abu'l-'As al-Thaqafi reported: *The Apostle of Allah (PBUH) said: "Act as an Imam for your people. He who acts as Imam of the people he must be brief for among them are the aged, among them are the sick, among them are the weak and among them who are people who have business to attend. But when any of you prays alone, he may pray as long as he likes."* [10, V 1, no 946, p. 250]

We can, therefore, assume that the role of the congregational mosque is to foster a spirit of community by making the rich and the poor stand side by side and all equal under the eyes of Allah with the exemption of those with the better deeds.

As opposed to the obligatory congregational prayers, all individual prayers are supererogatory ones. Now before anyone belittle the purpose of supererogatory prayers, they ought to take note of the following Qur'anic Verse and hadith about the importance of Tahajud Prayer as follows:

"O thou folded in garments! Stand to prayer by night, but not all night. Half of it or a little less. Or a little more and recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones. Soon shall We send down to ht a weighty Message. Truly the rising by night is most potent for governing the soul and most suitable for framing The Word (of Prayer and Praise)." [Sura 73, Verses 1-6]

"Establish regular prayers at the sun's decline till the darkness of the night, and the morning prayer, and reading: for the prayer and reading in the morning carry their testimony. And pray in the small watches of the morning (late night). It would be an additional prayer (of spiritual profit) for thee: soon thy Lord will raise ht to a Station of Praise and Glory." [Sura 73, Verses 1-6]

Narrated Al-Mughira: *The Prophet (PBUH) used to stand (in the prayer or pray till both feet swelled. He was asked why (he offered such an unbearable prayer though Allah forgives his past and future sins) and he said (PBUH):"Should I not be a thankful slave?"* [10, V2, no 230, p. 128-9]

We can see that in many instances the Prophet strives to perform the individual prayers, which are non-obligatory. Even the *Terawiyh prayer* (صلاة التراويح) started out as an individual prayer before Umar Ibn Khatab recommended the congregational Terawiyh prayers after the demise of the Prophet. The prophet had prayed the Terawiyh prayer alone as in the following hadiths: Zaid b. Thabit reported: *The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) made an apartment with the help of the leaves of the date trees or of mats. He went out to pray in it. People followed him and came to pray with him. Then they came again one night and waited for him but the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) delayed in coming out to them. And when he did not come out, they cried aloud and ... He came out in anger and said to them: "By what you have been constantly doing I was inclined to think that it (Night prayer) might not become obligatory for you. So you must observe the optional prayers in your houses, for the prayer observed by a man in the house is better except an obligatory prayer."* [10, V 1, no 1708, p. 377]

If the Qur'an and the hadith argues forcibly about the importance of the individual prayers, we must speculate on why this is so. One idea is that during individual prayers, one can pray as long as one likes and in the privacy of ones own home. Individual prayers have more merit if performed without any one seeing the worshipper. It is for these reasons, therefore, the Prophet had recommended the individual prayers be performed at home rather than the mosque as seen in the following hadiths:

Ka'b b. Ujrah said: *The Prophet (PBUH) came to the mosque of Ibn, Abd al-Ashhal. He prayed the Maghrib prayer there. When they finished the prayer, he saw them praying the*

supererogatory (Sunat Rawatib) prayer after it. He said: This is the prayer to be offered in the houses. [10, V 1, no 1295, p. 342]

Zaid B. Thabit narrated that the Prophet said*: Prayers are better performed at your own houses than at my mosque except the Fard prayers.* [11]

Jabir reported Allah's Messenger (PBUH) as saying: *When anyone of you observes prayer in the mosque he should reserve a part of his prayer for his house, for Allah would make the prayer as a means of betterment in his house.* [10, V 1, no 1705, p. 376]

Ibn Umar reported Allah's Apostle (May PBUH) as saying: *Observe some of your prayers in your houses and do not make them graves.* [10, V 1, no 1703, p. 376]

Thus, we can observe that designing the mosque with a meditative expression finds no place in Islam. Some rooms of the house can be designed as such which would suit the manner of individual prayers. For the mosque, it is an active and bustling center of activities where the Muslim converges to discharge their social obligations. It is a natural act for all activities to cease when the congregational prayer time arrives. The mosque, is the place for community interaction whilst one of the functions of the house is for private mediation in the form of individual prayers. Designers must understand that the community mosque ought not to be designed as an individual place of meditative worship but a 'social workhouse for Muslims.' We close this section with the words of Abdul Hamid Siddiqi, the translator of *Sahih Muslim:*

The aim of religion, as was said before, is to develop a spirit of piety and God consciousness in man. Islam heightens this aim by saying that this God-consciousness must be externalized in a social order permeated by religious sanctity and goodness. It is for this reason that prayer in Islam is divided into two parts, one individual devotion to Allah in which a single person as a single entity is trained to develop love for God; it is a *nafl* prayer (صلاة النافلة). The second part is collective prayer, which trains a person how religious piety is to be transfused into society. The five obligatory prayers are all congregational prayers in which every Muslim, who has no valid reason to remain aloof, has been enjoined to participate. It is in fact social training in God-consciousness, which Islam exhorts its followers to develop, and which distinguishes this faith from other religions. Moreover, meeting together five times a day in the mosque and showing submission to the Lord binds the Muslims together in tender chords of spiritual affinity. [10, V 1, p. 314]

I'etikaf and the Eternal Idea of the Mosque

I'etikaf (اعتكاف) is a supererogatory ritual that does not approach the act of monasticism. On the other hand we will argue that *i'etikaf* is a mere displacement of one's physical self into a new environment of community contribution to recharge one's waning spirit in Islam.

Abdul-Hamid Siddiqi defines *i'etikaf* as follows:

"I'etikaf is derived from akifa *'alaihi*, meaning "he kept" or "he cleave to it constantly or perseveringly", and i'etikaf means literally "to stay at one place". Technically, it is staying in a mosque for a certain number of days, especially the last ten days of the month of Ramadhan." [10, V 2, p. 575]

Syed Sabiq, in his *Fikih Sunna*, mentions that *i'etikaf* is not an act that the Prophet had encouraged verbally.[10] It is only stated in the hadith that the Prophet had practiced it during Ramadhan. The question that we must ask here is firstly, is *i'etikaf* a form of monastic seclusion? The next question concerns the conditions of the person in *i'etikaf.*

With regards to the first question the Qur'an contains some Verses that does not encourage monasticism (الرهبانيـــة):

"Then, in their wake, We followed them up with (others of) Our apostles: We sent after them Jesus the son of Mary, and bestowed on him the Gospel; and We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and Mercy. But the Monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them: (We commanded) only the seeking for the Good Pleasure of God; but that they did not foster as they should have done. Yet We bestowed, on those among them who believed, their due reward, but many of them are rebellious transgressors." [Sura 57, Verses 26-27]

The Prophet had once admonished his followers about extreme acts of worship as follows:

Narrated Anas bin Malik: *A group of three men came to the houses of the wives of the Prophet asking how the Prophet worshipped (Allah), and when they were informed about that, they considered their worship insufficient and said, "Where are we from the Prophet as his past and future sins have been forgiven." Then one of them said, "I will offer the prayer throughout the night forever." The other said, "I will fast throughout the year and will not break my fast." The third said, " I will keep away from women and will not marry forever," Allah's Apostle came to them and said, "Are you the same people who said so-and-so? By Allah, I am more submissive to Allah and more afraid of Him than you; yet I fast and break my fast. I do sleep and I also marry women. So he who does not follow my traditions in religion is not from me (not one of my followers)."* [10, V 7, no 1, p. 1]

From the above quotations, *i'etikaf* is not monasticism in the sense of leaving the community specifically to meditate about God. The life of a Muslim is a full life. The Prophet's life is the best example of the busy life of the Muslim. He had not left the community in search of solace. His act of monastic seclusion was before he received the Message from God.

Thus, if *i'etikaf* is not a form of monastic seclusion, what are the conditions of staying in the mosque? The 'fuqaha' differs on this matter. Some pronounce that a person in *i'etikaf* is excused from social obligations of attending marriages, following funerals and others. Other 'fuqaha' disagrees and takes the precedence of the Prophet who still takes care of his household affairs even during *i'etikaf* as in the following account:

Narrated Al-Hussain: *Safiya, the wife of the Prophet (PBUH), told me that she went to Allah's Apostle to visit him in the mosque while he was in i'etikaf in the last ten days of the month of Ramadhan. She had a talk with him for a while, then she got up in order to return home. The Prophet accompanied her to the gate of the mosque.* [10, V 3, no 251, p. 139]

Dr. Sidi Gazalba, in expounding his theory on the meaning of the mosque, explains his concept of *i'etikaf.* [12] He maintains that Islam is a way of life that takes the path of the 'middle way' and has no extremes such as the monasticism of Buddhism or Christianity or the total secularism of the present culture. Islam possesses both aspects of community and individual development even in matters of faith. On the one hand, *i'etikaf* is an individual act of "regenerating' or 'recharging' one's faith amidst the surrounding cares of the world by retreating to the mosque to concentrate on the meditation and contemplation of God and the way of Islam. However, Dr. Sidi Gazalba mentions that this retreat from life is not a total retreat because the individual still has obligations to the family and community to perform. In this respect *i'etikaf functions* both as an individual act that benefits not only the individual but also the society at large.

To this concept of *i'etikaf* we would offer a similar but slightly different interpretation. We believe that the concept of *i'etikaf* has an even lesser individualistic meaning than even that

proposed by Sidi Gazalba. Since acts of individual worship such as the *Sunna* prayer or charity are more merited when performed far from the eyes of the public. *I'etikaf* can be seen by others as a solely private worship in the mosque. The person in *i'etikaf* uproots his daily and mundane rituals of home and work and from his house and work places and situates himself in the unfamiliar and unpredictable life in the mosque. This physical segregation induces the mind and heart to a partial separation of the daily affairs he is used to and the mind and soul has more time to practice and reflect on the meaning of life. It may involve silent and long meditation but this act should take place only when no one is looking such as during the time of the *Tahajud* Prayers (صلاة التهجد) when the mosque is empty of its congregation. If there were other Muslim performing *i'etikaf* individual meditations should be done without the knowledge of one another's actions.

In the second instance, *i'etikaf* benefits the Muslim's soul by the sacrifice of individual concern and bending one's energy to the direct development of the community. The person in *i'etikaf* performs the janitorial tasks of keeping the mosque clean and may even help in cooking meals for the Muslim working in the mosque or see to the needs of the poor and homeless frequenting or living in the mosque. The Muslim in *i'etikaf* is presented with a greater chance of participating in the community projects than if he was at home. These community concerns are important not only for the development of the Islamic social and built environment but it merits the disciplining of the soul for love of others through the spirit of sacrifice.

It can, therefore, be suggested that *i'etikaf* is an individual act of devotion that develops faith through the idea of sacrificing an individual's time and attention to the development of the Muslim community as well as the disciplining of the individual's self in the performance of *sunna* rituals.

The whole notion of the mosque being a place of meditative seclusion should be reconsidered. The mosque is the center for the Muslim community and it is the place where activities pertaining to the strengthening of the Islamic brotherhood and intellectual development occur. *I'etikaf* is not seclusion from the community but the voluntary act of living in the mosque for a prescribed period of time to learn the value of the greater 'self' of the Muslim society. Seen within this perspective, the initial concept and eternal idea of the mosque approaches more toward an active center for communal gatherings rather than a place of secluded meditation.

Bida'a (بدعة) of Tomb Building

In some Muslim countries, the building of tombs is either isolated inside cemeteries or adjacent to mosques. The researcher shows here that the prophet had never encouraged tomb buildings and admonishes mosques to be build on graves of persons. The following hadiths makes clear reference to the Prophet's stand and attitude concerning tomb buildings and worshipping at tomb-mosques:

Narrated Aisha and Abdullah bin Abbas: When the last moment of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) came he started putting his Khamisa on his face and when he felt hot and short of breath he took it off his face and said, "May Allah curse the Jews and Christians for they built the places of worship at the graves of their prophets." [10, V 1, no 427, p. 225]

Urwa narrated that Aisha said," The Prophet (PBUH) in his fatal illness said, 'Allah cursed the Jews and the Christians because they took the graves of their prophets as places of praying.' "Aisha added," Had it not been for that the grave of the Prophet (PBUH) would

have been made prominent but I am afraid it might be taken as a place for praying." [10, V 2, no 414, p. 232]

Jundub reported: I heard from the Apostle of Allah (PBUH) five days before his death and he said," I stand acquitted before Allah that I took any one of you as friend, for Allah has taken me as his friend, as He took Ibrahim as His friend. Had I taken any one of my Ummah as friend, I would have taken Abu Bakr as a friend. Beware of those who preceded you and used to take the graves of their Prophets and righteous men as places of worship, but you must not take graves as mosques, I forbid you to do that." [10, V 1, no 1083, p. 269]

Perhaps many Muslims were deluded by the fact that the Prophet was buried in his mosque. We must clarify the historical context of this situation. Firstly, we must understand that from the hadith above there should be no argument whatsoever about making the Prophet's tomb a kind of place for prayer or supplication. Secondly, we must understand that the place where the Prophet was buried used to be his house (specifically Aisha, Mother of the faithful). Thirdly, the reason why the Prophet was buried where he died was from the following hadiths:

Yahya related to me from Malik that he had heard that the messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, died on Monday and was buried on Tuesday and people prayed over him individually with no one leading them. Some people said that he would be buried in al-Baqi (a cemetery near Al-Madinah). *Abu Bakr al-Siddiq came and said," I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, say, 'No Prophet was ever buried except in the place where he died. '" So a grave was dug for him there (in Aisya's, the Prophet's wife, house).* [13]

It was obvious that the Companions had interpreted literally the Prophet's saying and buried him on his deathbed and not at the Baqi where the Muslims were buried.

Thus from the above considerations, Islam considers the building of tombs in the form of a superstructure above the grave as Bida'a (بدعـــة) (invention in Islam). In the case of cemeteries, it is preferable that cemeteries be located in a serene environment given for contemplation since it is a place to remind us of the hereafter.

Tilawah and the Idea of the Mosque

Tilawah (التـــلاوة) or reciting the Qur'an is considered a good act in Islam. It seems that Muslims have the impression that there are more merits at reciting the Qur'an in the mosque than at any place else. We will show that individual recitation should best be done when one is alone and that only when teaching recitation would it be done in the company of others.

Reciting the Qur'an for oneself is an individual act. We have argued that the *Sunna* prayers should be performed in the privacy of one's home. The Qur'an contains Verses about slowly reciting the Qur'an in the small hours of the morning which indicate seclusion from peering eyes since most people are asleep at that time:

"O thou enwrapped one! Keep awake (in prayer) at night, all but a small part of one half thereof- or make it a little less than that or add to it (at will); and (during that time) recite the Qur'an calmly and distinctly, with thy mind attuned to its meaning." [Sura 73, Verses 1-4]

If one has further doubts about reciting the Qur'an individually in private one should contemplate upon this story as told by Imam Ghazali in his monumental work *Ihya Ulumuddin*:

One night Sa'id ibn Al-Musayyab heard Umar ibn Abdul Aziz reciting aloud the Qur'an in the Mosque of the Prophet. Sa'id ordered his son to go to the person who was praying and tell him to lower his voice in recitation. His son replied that the mosque is a public place and that they had not a single right to it and furthermore, the man who was reciting was the Governor of Al-Madinah. Sa'id then called onto the reciter and said," O you who is praying. If you desire that Allah The most High to accept your prayer, then lower your voice. If you desire that people accept you, the people are only in need of Allah." When Umar, the Governor of Al-Madinah heard, this advice, he shortened his supererogatory prayer and lowered his voice in recitation. [14]

The Social Obligations and the Idea of the Mosque

Muslims have many communal responsibilities to perform which relates to the mosque. Charity must be collected to be distributed to the poor. The young and the old must be educated in all knowledge to ensure their survival in this world in the spirit of Islam. Non-Muslims must be taught the principles of Islam in the spirit of mutual exchange of knowledge. Non-Muslims must never get the idea that the Muslim possesses a religious zeal such as those of the Christian missionaries to convert people to Islam. The responsibility of the Muslim in this aspect has always been to explain Islam in the best possible manner and that one should never measure the success of *da'wah* (الدعـــوة) (missionary activity) by the number of converts since it is only Allah that inspires the *hidayah* (الهدايـــة) in all those who lean towards Islam. The Muslim must ensure the accommodation of guests to their settlements and also see to the poor who reside at mosques. The Muslim must also prepare his community for the defense of the religion and requires all to learn the art of warfare. The Muslim must establish an organizing center to implement all the social, educational and political programs if he or she were to ensure the progressive development of the *Muslim umma* (الأمـــة الإســـلامية). The Muslim must know intimately the conditions of his neighbors and members of the community in a manner that he must help his brother before he even asks him for it. That is the level of *'ukhwah'* or brotherhood required by Islam as shown by the following hadiths:

Mundhir bin Jarir reported on the authority of his father: While we were in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) in the early hours of the morning, some people came there who were barefooted, naked wearing stripped woolen clothes, or cloaks, with their swords hung around their necks. Most of them, nay, all of them belonged to the tribe of Mudar. The color of the face of the Prophet underwent a change when he saw them in poverty. He then entered his house and came out and commanded Bilal to pronounce adhan. The Prophet then performed prayers with the Companions and then addressed them, reciting verses of the Qur'an: "O people fear your Lord...." until the end of the verse "...Allah is ever a Watcher over you" and then he recited Sura Hashr:" Fear Allah, and let every soul consider that which it sends forth for the morrow and fear Allah." Then the audience began to vie one another in giving charity. Some donated a dinar, others a dirham, still others clothes, some donated some wheat, some dates till the Prophet said," Bring even if it is half a date. Then a person from among the Ansar came there with a moneybag, which his hands could hardly lift. Then the people followed continuously, till I saw two heaps of eatables and clothes, and I saw the face of the Messenger of Allah glistening like gold on account of joy. The Messenger of Allah said," He who sets a good precedent in Islam, there is a reward for him for this act of goodness and reward also of that who acted according to it subsequently, without any deductions from their rewards; and he who sets in Islam an evil precedent,

there is upon him the burden of that and the burden of him also who acted upon it subsequently, without any deduction from their burden. [10, V 2, no 2219, p. 487]

Islam does not have such institution as 'the Vatican' to implement these social obligations. It is left up to each community to organize themselves and to discharge this responsibility. The mosque seems best suited for instituting the programs of developing the Muslim society from all aspects. It is sad to find that mosques nowadays implement charity works at a seasonal basis such as during Ramadan and as such.

New Mosque Curriculum

From the previous deliberations we have attempted to clarify the issues about the true eternal idea of the mosque in Islam. At the earlier part of the paper, we have shown how the idea of the mosque has been intentionally or unintentionally distorted by the methods of architectural historiography. We have also shown the problems of using historical precedence without understanding the true historical contexts of each building in the past. Finally we have shown that religious scholars have difficulty providing a satisfactory answers on the idea of the mosque for lack of multi-disciplinary training.

In the next section we have endeavored to answer the question of the eternal idea of the mosque through a reinterpretation of the religious sources. From the Qur'an we have concluded that the word mosque have been used in the universal sense and pose little help in our understanding of the eternal idea. From the hadith, we have ventured a suggestion that since the mosque was host to a multitude of different functions then it should be construed as an important phenomenon rather than dismiss the whole idea on the grounds that Muslims were too ignorant, uncivilized or too poor to build other buildings. We have also suggested that the Prophet is displeased with the construction of useless monuments. Thus we begin to form a picture of the mosque as an active center in which its size ought to be commensurate with a small community. The mosque seems more as a social center rather than a 'House of God'.

In the previous sections we have suggested that the mosque is the place better meant for congregational prayer rather than individual ones. The practice of *i'etikaf* is also related to the act of communal responsibility. Other individual acts such as *tilawah* is better performed at home whilst at the mosque the agenda must always be a communal one. Finally we have shown how the meaning of *ibadah* (عبـــادة) encompasses all aspects of social obligations and responsibilities that require the Muslim community to organize and implement programs towards the betterment of their society. The whole argument thus centers around the eternal idea of the mosque as a community development center.

Much discussion surrounding mosque designs have centered mainly on the problem of building stylization. We propose that the solution to mosque designs in the present situation be looked at from the perspective of the eternal idea of the mosque and the needs of contemporary Muslims. It is only through examining the needs and problems faced by Muslims in the present can we hope to identify the criteria and strategy of mosque design. We believe the answers lies in determining what the 'curriculum' of the modern mosque should be before proposing the architectural guidelines for it. The 'curriculum' of the mosque will answer the needs of the Muslim community with the mosque as the one of the main mechanism to bring about positive social changes. Thus, we propose that the curriculum of the mosque have as its objectives to develop the Muslim community intellectually and developing a strong brotherhood. The mosque thus serves as a Community Development Center to bring about positive changes the Muslim society.

The Development Programs

The main purpose of the Intellectual Development Program is to create a Muslim individual who has a critical mind, who has awareness of his Islamic and ethnic heritage and be able to source information necessary for survival.

Muslims are faced with many serious challenges today. Ethnic violence has erupted because ethnic groups do not understand each other's socio-cultural needs and thus do not respect one another. There are even serious disagreements among Muslims of different sects and *madhab* that have created shameful unrest. Honest leaders find difficulty developing Muslims who do not understand the political realities of their nations and heritage. At one time Muslims have been 'ripped off' economically by con artists who were hustling false share schemes. It showed that Muslims were not even aware of simple economic laws on investment. We have also found out to our great shock that many older generation Muslims refuse to come to terms with many sound scientific findings and prefers to believe their religious 'teachers' who brand this field as some sort of Great Satanic Deception of the West. Finally we can also see that many religious teachers are still teaching Muslims through the old traditional pedagogy and shy away from using technology and experimentation of new teaching methods.

The program for intellectual development calls for a total revamp of the present curriculum. Muslims must not only be taught about rituals of prayers and *tafsir* (تفسير) of hadith and Qur'an but they must also be taught history and to celebrate the sacrifices of past and present 'heroes' in Islam who had saved or developed their peoples. The teaching of the *Sirah* (السيرة) and the deeds and morals of these important individuals must be 'alive' in the spirit of every Muslim young and old. Aside from lessons in Islam, Muslims must also be exposed to knowledge about the various ethnic groups and their cultures around the world who are also Muslims so that they understand the greatness of Islam in the world and that these people will not seem mere statistics to them in times of giving aids. There must also be lessons on the religions of the different cultures who lives amongst Muslims; for instance the Muslim Malays in Malaysia live amongst Chinese and Indians who are mainly followers of Buddhism and Hinduism. Interfaith discussion is necessary for us to tolerate one another's peaceful existence. The burning of mosques and temples in the past is a regrettable events and should not be condoned by anyone especially Muslims. There must also be lessons on the ideas of science and the use of technology in our daily lives. It is fearful that, in Malaysia, we have seen 'false prophets' predicting the *Qiamat* (القيامة) and Muslims were fooled because they could not understand basic sciences.

Much of the implications of these programs relate directly to the methods of instruction. These may include lectures, discussions, viewing videos, reading or even performing cultural shows. Exhibitions can also be held, as it is an important educational mechanism. The design of the mosque must cater for these needs in the sense of providing the audio-visual equipment and their proper placements, spaces for libraries or electronic viewing or stages for performances. Special storage facilities for exhibition materials must be included in mosque designs so as the ease of changing and exhibiting them can be achieved. Classrooms and story telling corners would be a most welcome addition to children and youngsters. The teenagers and adult population would appreciate libraries, resource and hobby centers.

The Programs and the Strengthening of the Brotherhood

Islam encourages the development of a strong brotherhood so much so that the Prophet had said that a Muslim should not go to Paradise if one had no love for one's brethren in Islam. The state of the Muslim society is in deterioration in relation to this aspect of Islam. With the proper programs the mosque can make critical changes in strengthening the brotherhood of Islam in each community.

Much of the disintegration in the Muslim society and of other societies as well, is caused by the assimilation of working and living patterns brought about by the West. Western imported technologies and city-planning principles, which destroyed the traditional settlements, did much to encourage social disintegration. The separation between working pattern and living environment has given rise to a neither here nor there situation in which people spend half the day working and commuting to work. What little that is left of the day is spent at home where most families are independent in terms of acquiring food, recreational and medicinal needs. Individuals could not influence their societies for there are neither long enough in the cities nor are they present at length in the housing estates. There is little time for social interaction among the families in a housing estate. Furthermore the disappearance of the extended families due to poor house designs, economic considerations and an active government welfare program help to worsen this situation. Adults and teenagers find themselves without any role in the society since 'everything' is taken care of. The main task of adults seem to be making money whilst teenagers need only perform the act of studying. Thus with much spare time on their hands, teenagers fall into the world of drugs, electronic entertainment and other disruptive past time.

Programs must be implemented to make each Muslim feel a sense of Islamic identity and to foster communal feelings of brotherhood. The mosque administration must then identify its congregates to lead the teenagers in all the activities practiced in the mosque. In this way there will be many Muslims who will pride themselves in contributing to the society and learn to become leaders in the small organizations.

The architectural implications of the above program include the design of spaces as library space and perhaps workshops. Mosques must also be equipped with an exterior space that can be used for outdoor activities.

Architectural Design Implications

There are many aspects of design that are affected by the implications of the curriculum previously mentioned. We present here a few of those aspects related to size, siting spatial planning and the architectural language of the mosque.

There is no specific guideline that is agreed upon by the religious scholars as to the ideal size of the mosque. In architecture, there are two fundamental factors controlling the determination of size. The first factor is related to occupancy while the second concerns the aesthetic or symbolic intention of the building. If the question of size is related to the aesthetic intention of symbolizing an object, it is relative to the economic constraint and the visual impact of the building in its surrounding context. The world is filled with such grandiose schemes by monarchs, caliphs and governments in this respect. With the advancement of long span structures, today's mosque can fill tens of thousands of Muslim. This is basically a result of several factors. Firstly, there is no set of conditions for the ideal size of the mosque. Secondly, since the mosque is more regarded as a house of God and the place of prayer, the clients and designers feel justified in creating the grandiose scale of the

building because to them it is almost literally a house of God. Thirdly, the impact of sheer size is crucial in creating a visual symbol.

In the context of smaller communities, religious scholars have been wrestling with the definition of the *qari'a*. The *qari'a* constitutes a single neighborhood area. There is no definitive criterion for this concept and the religious scholars have suggested a few conditions without strong support from the hadiths and the Qur'an. There is a suggestion of the radius of the human voice in calling the people to prayer. There is also the suggestion of a limit of 40 houses by those of the Shafie'i school of thought. In the present Malaysian system the number of 1000 worshippers is quoted from the considerations of the size of the modern housing estates. In the villages, the criterion is rather obscure and usually is left up to the discretion of religious scholars in the government department of religious affairs.

The work suggests that the present criterion of mosque size has been based entirely on the notion of the house of God and that its main concern was that of prayer. Since the work suggests that the eternal idea of the mosque is to provide the opportunity for the Muslims to organize and develop their community, it follows that the consideration of size must take into account the ideal and manageable size toward this aim. One of the main functions of the mosque is that of education and also to unite the Muslim in a strong brotherhood tie. In this respect the question that must be raised is what should the ideal size be for a leader and the administrative committee to manage the activities toward these ends. It is important to question whether the building of huge mosques for tens of thousands worshippers is appropriate. The question of the density of a modern housing complex with the ease of modern transportation must also be considered under these objectives.

The work cannot answer this question of the *qari'a* because of the complex social factors involved. However, the work suggests that it is better to build smaller Islamic Centers in the Muslim settlements such that the community can be easier to educate, organized and encourage in intimate social interactions.

At the present time there seem to be a variety of criteria for the choice of sites to build mosques. Most of the mosques, which were built for a symbolic purpose, are usually sited on island sites, on a hill and isolated from the urban fabric. The choice seems to be based solely on the full visual impact of the building. Mosques have also been known to be built on special sites such as in the middle of a lake with a bridge connecting it to the village it serves. Other less noted mosques in the cities have been built on the least expensive parcels of land usually at the city's edge. Only in the village or the housing estates, the mosque is located in the centre of the community. However, the weakness inherent in this scheme is that the mosque is generally located near a playing field and secluded from the commercial part of the place.

The work proposes that the mosque should be sited where people are most found. It should not necessarily be on the ground but can be sited on several floors of a multi-functional block. It can also be placed where the busiest commercial and mixed-use complex is built. *Isolate*d urban sites should not necessarily be chosen and where possible the mosque should be integrated into the urban fabric of the cities. Islamic Centres should also be located where there is an institutional complex where a great number of people live and work at the same place or within the same area. Where possible the Islamic Centres of villages and settlements should be sited such that schools, villages, the commercial activities and the main road of the places meet to ensure easy access to people in all their activities and to the travelers visiting the particular location.

The Types of Spaces in the Mosque

There are basically four types of spaces required in the mosque to fulfil the requirements of the programs mentioned previously. The spaces described are mainly for the Islamic Centre unless otherwise stated. The four types of spaces can be classified as the prohibited, the multi-purpose, the specific and the outside space. The following sub-section describes the general function of these types of spaces.

The Prohibited Space

The prohibited space can be defined as that area of a building which has been 'intended' by the builders and patrons to be constituted as the actual 'mosque'. This space was described previously as that sanctified area where the prohibition of the presence of menstruating women and Muslims in a state of major defilement are disallowed to visit or stay for a long time. It is also the place signified to be where the performance of the *Tahiyyah al-Masdjid* (تحيـــة المســـجد) and the *i'etikaf* ritual can take place. As stated in the previous chapters, these prohibitions and special requirements are controversial issues even among the Sunni religious scholars. Thus the prohibited space is necessary only for those who hold strongly this view while it is unnecessary for those who do not consider it a major affair.

There is nothing particularly sacred about the *minbar* or the *mihrab* in Islam despite some of the suggestions offered by scholars in architecture keen on reinforcing the concept of these two elements. Since the projected *mihrab* was never the invention of the Prophet and was admitted to be a later addition by most scholars, the only acceptable function it is useful for is as a directional indicator to the Qibla. Since the hadiths merely points to its use to elevate the Prophet in his teaching so as those in the back of the audience can hear. It is a highly questionable act for certain religious scholar to emphasize the *minbar* solely to be used as the place where the Friday sermon can be delivered. If the *minbar* is merely an acoustical device, its presence is rivaled by the audio system of the modern age. Its presence is necessary only as a continuity of tradition because the Prophet had used it and because part of the Friday Sermon requires the speaker to sit for a few seconds in between the sermon as the Prophet had done fourteen centuries ago.

The size of the prohibited space cannot be determined from any religious source. The prohibited space can be used for any activity aside from prayer with the exception of those activities involving the presence of Muslims in a state of major defilement. If the space is too large, it will impede many community activities but if it is too small, it would impose difficulty on the supererogatory act of Tahiyyah al-Masjid Prayer and the person in *i'etikaf*. It should not be a major problem since the two rituals are merely supererogatory with little merits compared to many other activities in the whole building.

The *minbar* and the *mihrab* space should also be designed with the capacity for incorporating the use of modern audio-visual technology. There are religious scholars who oppose the use of visual aid equipment in sermons simply because it was never practiced by the Prophet. These same people somehow neglect to criticise the common use of the audio facilities. Their view is that the *minbar* is a place for delivering the sermon and thus one must literally adhere to the Prophet's *Sunna*. It was explained that the *minbar* is not merely a place to deliver the sermon but a facility for use in communicating with an audience. Speeches, lectures and sermons fall into this category of communication, which can be made more effective with the modern audio-visual aid.

The Multi-functional Space

The prohibited space should be integrated with the multi-functional space in the mosque complex. The multi-functional space is the most important space because most of the mosque activities are centred in it. The space must be designed so that many activities can be performed and many events can be held. The space should not be designed with any fixed furniture but should be close to storage facilities where furniture used in the activities can be easily stored or moved when the congregational prayer is performed.

The Single-function Spaces

There are many essential spaces that have specific functions and requires fixed types of furniture and fittings. One of the most important single function spaces is an enclosed one for women. It is important to be fully aware of the conditions of women in the mosque in justifying this claim. There are five conditions with regards to women, prayer and the mosque. Firstly, women are not as strongly recommended in Islam as men are in the responsibility of performing the congregational prayers at the mosque. It is not obligatory for them to perform the Friday Prayers or to attend the daily congregational ones. Secondly, when they are present in the mosque for prayers, they must be grouped with their own kind and not to mix with the male worshippers. Thirdly, during prayers, they must be positioned so that the men in prayers have no visual access to them until they leave when the prayer is over. Fourthly, the women in congregational prayers must be able to see either the imam or the male congregation so that they may synchronize the rites of prayers with the rest of the congregation. Finally, in performing the rites of ablution before prayers, the women must remove their veil and put them on again during prayers. From the consideration of the first four conditions of women in prayers, there is no concrete justification for a special enclosed space to be allocated in the mosque. What is usually done in most mosques is the construction of a curtain in the back part of the prayer space. It is only in the consideration of the fifth condition, which necessitate the existence of a specially enclosed space for women with their own ablution rooms totally separate from any male circulation passages. The private space for women would also accommodate them by their being able to remove their veils and head covers to socialize amongst themselves.

Since one of the main functions of the mosque is education, it is preferable to establish complete resource center. The room should be a small library with the modern conveniences of extracting information such as the use of computers, slide projectors, audio-video facilities, books, newspapers and periodicals. It should not be a space filled only with the Qur'an or any other religious works. It should emphasize the appeal and needs of the popular audience rather than the academic researcher. It should also be quipped with printing facilities for the purposes of producing printed literature for newsletters, flyers and brochures to cater for the communal needs and as information source to the non-Muslim.

The ablution place is usually grouped together with the toilet facility. It may also contain adequate space and facility for bathing the dead. The ablution facilities that are usually used are the tap and pool facility. Designers should ensure a method of conserving the use of water in the ablution ritual and also a beneficial system of utilizing the wastewater from the ablution such as in the form of watering the mosque gardens and orchards. Whenever the pool method is used care must be taken against possible accidents with children.

The kitchen may be considered as an important space in the mosque for it is here that most of the food preparation for the many social functions and celebrations are prepared. It is also a public facility for the needy in the preparation for their daily sustenance. The kitchen

should also be equipped with a generous storage space to keep the tents, furniture, pots and crockery that is rented out for feasts or used by the mosque in its activities.

A private meeting space may also needed such that private meetings of administrative staff and judicial proceedings of sensitive cases can take place. The meeting room is usually grouped together with the office space for clerical functions and the office of the imam and his aids. The imam office can also act as his personal changing room or preparation space before a formal meeting or before leading the congregational prayer.

A separate room for the teaching of children and as a nursery is recommended. The room can double as a tutorial place to help the older children in their school examinations. The assorted facilities related to the school must also be considered such as the teacher's room and the storage space for the school equipment.

The inclusion of shops and cafeterias adjacent to the mosque are strongly recommended not only because they provide fixed incomes for the mosque but also as places to generate the public's frequent visits. The shops and cafeterias must certainly be instructed to sell only those items that are not forbidden by the Islamic moral code. The imam of the Malaysian National mosque has suggested that the mosque be equipped with postal and banking services. He has also suggested the presence of bus and train ticket booths to cater for the basic travel needs of the Muslims and others. The whole philosophy of having the commercial activity is not only as an income generator but also as a service provider and an effective method of populating the mosque 24 hours in a day.

It is also recommended that the Islamic Center be provided with some kind of workshop facility to not only aid in the training of working skills to the teenagers but also as a place where they can expand their energy in a fruitful hobby. It is recognized everywhere that most of the social problems of drug and alcohol abuse are mainly due to the teenagers' sheer boredom in there after school activities. The presence of the workshop may attract the teenagers to the mosque and they can then be encouraged to learn about their Islamic responsibilities and participate in the communal activities organized by the mosque committees.

A specific place for the shelter of the traveler and the homeless is needed although the multi-functional space can also function for this purpose. It is better to separate both of the functions since the multi-functional space houses many activities and functions. The shelter should be designed to ensure some kind of basic privacy for the users.

The Outside Spaces

The present design of mosque compound is usually that of a serene garden and parking facilities. There is little attempt to utilize the spaces for other functions and to attract the public to the mosque.

Paved courts for light sports can be constructed which can function also as an outdoor space for celebration. This outside court can be used for physical exercises or the training in self-defense. It should be mentioned that the training of self-defense, before becoming a recreational interest was part of the education of the young in many traditional societies. In the Malay traditional society the art of *silat* is taught to teenagers as part of their adult education. The training of these martial arts incorporates many aspect of the Islamic religion as part of character building and discipline. It is highly recommended that their training be performed at the Islamic Centres as this will increase the sense of the primary purpose of fighting which is toward preserving and protecting an accepted way of life for the sake of Allah The Most High. Finally the games court can also be used as a praying space.

Children play spaces are strongly recommended since they would attract parents to take their children to the mosque and thus encourage social interaction. It is also important that the children be made to grow around the spirit of the mosque so that the communal responsibilities can be exposed to them and also they would be able to learn indirectly from the various rituals and events at the mosque.

The outside space can also contain outdoor furniture and equipment to create a garden environment for encouraging the Muslim to past their leisure time near the mosque. Certain parts of the outside area of the mosque can be used as a public fruit and vegetable orchard. With the limited land on individual house lots, it is possible to encourage community activities by allocating lands as public space near the mosque. Muslims who are interested in such endeavor can both benefit from the products and also receive the blessings, while people and animals eat the fruits and vegetables. Lastly, an area must be allocated in relation more to the kitchen and the events of the *aqiqa* (العقيقة) and the *qurban.* (الأضحية) This is the place where the animals are slaughtered and thus a small pen is all that is required nearby the kitchen.

The Architectural Expression of the Mosque

Psychologists have suggested that architecture and its elements are charged with meanings and that the whole ensemble of architectural vocabulary can convey a wide range of messages. The mosque has also been expressed as a place of seclusion from the worldly life while guarding its inner sanctuary. These attempts have been entirely based on the idea of the mosque as a House of God and as the place of prayer and seclusion.

There are three basic purposes of architectural language concerning the mosque that are suggested in this work. Firstly, the designer must use whatever vocabulary in the culture, which he is designing to make the mosque, clearly identified as one. It is deemed unimportant to debate about the origins of the architectural elements used whether they be pointed arches, horse shoe entrances or minarets. The designer should restrain the embellishment of the mosque to a point where it is recognizable as such. If a minaret suffices to indicate its presence, two or more minarets are not recommended or else the mosque runs the risk of conveying the message of extravagance in Islam. However, if the presence of more than one minaret are required due to several important functions such as its role as a wind tower or as an acoustical device, they can be built without much controversy.

The second purpose of the architectural expression in the mosque is to portray and design it in such a manner that it projects the idea of a public facility inviting to Muslims and offering the chance for non-Muslims to satisfy their curiosity about what the Islamic way of life is all about. The designer is free to utilize any psychological stimulus suggested by behaviorist in achieving this end. The mosque interior should be designed to fit religious requirements as well as a place for education and social-interaction. The quality of light should be as bright as an office space for general task work and not romantic with shafts of light in the midst of a dark interior. The whole atmosphere is of a bustling place of communal activity and not of silent meditation.

Finally, if the designer wishes to use a particular architectural style, the designer must ensure that the choice of style is acceptable to all the ethnic cultures that have embraced Islam. If the mosque is situated in a country where the majority of Muslims come from a particular ethnic group and where mosques have been built according to the architectural language of this culture, the choice of using its vocabulary may be justified. However, if the

mosque is located in a place where there is about an equal distribution of ethnic groups, the designer should either choose a 'neutral' language or an eclectic composition that reflects the architectural vocabulary of a great majority of the ethnic groups so as to avoid an overemphasis of a particular architectural language that might make another group feel as if there is ethnic elitism in Islam.

Conclusion

The notion of the mosque in Islam must be seen in the larger context of social engineering rather than mere exercises in aesthetics or romantic revivalism. The mosque has the great potential of changing the Muslim society if it is considered closer as an educational institution in addition to its main function as a House of God. The researcher believes that over sanctification of mosque brought about by scholars of architecture and religion have deteriorated the idea of the mosque as a center for community development in Islam. Rather than deal with the question of which ornament to use and how big a dome should crown the prayer space Muslims ought to pay particular attention to the programs and functions of the mosque that would benefit the people more than it would the egoistic few.

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متضمنات برنامج إنشاء مسجد جديد على تصميم المساجد كمراكز لتنمية الأحياء

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ملخص البحث: إنّ تصميم المساجد كأداة لتطوير المجتمع الإسلامي في الوقت الحاضر يعتمد على فكرة وجود المسجد الخالدة، والبرنامج الواضح للمجتمع الصغير واحتياجات نموذج الحياة الحديث. وتعمل هذه الورقة على تقديم المفهوم الجدلي الذيّ يقول أن الغاية الخالدة من وجود المسجد المفهومة من القرآن الكريم والحديث النبوي هي: تطوير المجتمع أكثر من أنّه مكان محدود لممارسة الشعائر. وإن احتياجات نموذج الحياة الحديث المرتبطة بالمحتوى الثقافي الماليزي يجري مناقشتها على ضوء الحلّ الصحيح للتطوير الروحي للمسلمين ضمن الإطار العملي والمعيشي للمجتمع. وعند هذا الحدّ تقترح هذه الورقة ملخصّاً للهدف المهم للمسجد من أجل تطوير مجتمع إسلامي صغير من النواحي الذهنيّة والفيزيائيّة وتقوية الروابط الأخوية. وقد ترجمت هذه الأهداف الثلاثة إلى برنامج ونشاطات لتأجيج برنامج اجتماعيّ. وفي النهاية، تقوم الورقة بتقديم النهج المعماري لتصميم هذا المسجد.