



Re-Imagining Mosques

The intersection of
inclusive architecture
and urban design

Ryan Wazir

Byera Hadley
Travelling Scholarships
Journal Series
2023



NSW
Architects
Registration
Board
A

Re-Imagining Mosques: the intersection of inclusive architecture and urban design



Acknowledgment of Country

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land which I live and work, the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, and pay my respect to Elders past and present. I extend this acknowledgment to all First Nations people where this research took place. I also acknowledge, the First Nations people who have embraced Islam as a religion. The 2021 census registers 1140 First Nations people who identify as Muslim across the continent.

The Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series is a select library of research compiled by more than 160 architects, students and graduates since 1951, and made possible by the generous gift of Sydney Architect and educator, Byera Hadley.

Byera Hadley, born in 1872, was a distinguished architect responsible for the design and execution of a number of fine buildings in New South Wales.

He was dedicated to architectural education, both as a part-time teacher in architectural drawing at the Sydney Technical College, and culminating in his appointment in 1914 as Lecturer-in-Charge at the College's Department of Architecture. Under his guidance, the College became acknowledged as one of the finest schools of architecture in the British Empire.

Byera Hadley made provision in his will for a bequest to enable graduates of architecture from a university in NSW to travel in order to broaden their experience in architecture, with a view to advancing architecture upon their return to Australia.

Today, the Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarship fund is managed by Perpetual as Trustee, in conjunction with the NSW Architects Registration Board.

For more information on Byera Hadley, and the Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships go to www.architects.nsw.gov.au or get in contact with the NSW Architects Registration Board at: Level 2, 156 Gloucester Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

You can also follow us on Twitter at:
[www.twitter.com/ArchInsights](https://twitter.com/ArchInsights)

The Board acknowledges that all text, images and diagrams contained in this publication are those of the author unless otherwise noted.

© NSW Architects Registration Board 2023

Ryan Wazir was awarded the Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarship in 2017 and undertook travel in 2018-2019

Cover image: Shahporan Mosque, Hackney Rd, London.

All Photographs and words by
© Ryan Wazir.

About the Author	i
Acknowledgments	ii
Introduction	2
Key Findings	8
Methodology	12
Mapping the Context	16
Themes:	
Identity, Community, Consultation	26
More than a Mosque: A Space for Community	34
Urban and Suburban Mosque	54
Built for Purpose	78
Re-Purposed Buildings, New Mosques	110
Unbuilt, On Hold	146
Inventory of Mosques Visited	158
References	172

About the author

Ryan Wazir

i

As a member of the diaspora community, being the child of Muslim migrants from Tripoli, Lebanon, and growing up in Lakemba, south-west Sydney, I grew to appreciate urban spaces, with a curiosity for how the built environment could help (or hinder) fostering community connectedness.

This personal experience and curiosity, has been a focus in my approach to architectural practice, where I am guided by a belief in the value of creating engaging and inclusive spaces for all.

As a registered Architect, with over 15 years experience, I am currently in private practice, leading inclusive, community-focused projects internationally. Prior to this, I have been in both private practice and at the NSW Government Architect's Office, across new, adaptive re-use and conservation projects.

All views expressed within this report are my own.

Acknowledgments

ii

I would like to thank the NSW Architects Registration Board, and The Trustee for The Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarship, for generously awarding me this scholarship to undertake my research. This scholarship offered me the opportunity to engage with diverse communities and viewpoints, and gain valuable insights firsthand.

This project reflects research and time spent across several countries and cities, and would not have been achievable without the generosity of those who gave their time to speak with me.

I would like to thank Sheridan Burke, Jocelyn Jackson and Helen Lochhead, for their support at the project's inception. I would also like thank those who welcomed me into their mosques and communities, shared their experiences, and provided rich insights into the design, and context of the mosques visited. In particular, I'd like to thank the architects of these places, who generously gave their time to be speak with me, listed here.

- Harkan Elevli, Director, Elevli Plus Newport Mosque
- Glenn Murcutt Newport Mosque
- Koray Duman, Founder, Buro Koray Duman Islamic Cultural Centre
- Mustafa Abadan, Partner, SOM Islamic Cultural Centre of New York
- Michel Abboud, Founder, SOMA Park51
- C. Po Ma, Prinipal, Moriyama & Teshima Architects: Ismaili Centre Toronto
- Julia Barfield, Director, Marks Barfield Cambridge Central Mosque
- Shahed Saleem, Director, Makespace Architects Shahporan Mosque and Alhikma Mosque
- Alen Jasarevic, Director, Jasarevic Architekten Penzburg Mosque
- Anna Naumann, Lead, Kuehn Malvezzi Architects House of One

On a personal level, I would like to thank Joanna and Art, for their continued support throughout this project, with special mention to Rushdy, a Turkish Van cat who remained by my side.

This research explores how the intersection of architecture and urban design offers an opportunity to not only re-imagine contemporary design approaches to mosques, but also contribute to the continuing conversation on how these disciplines can foster inclusivity.

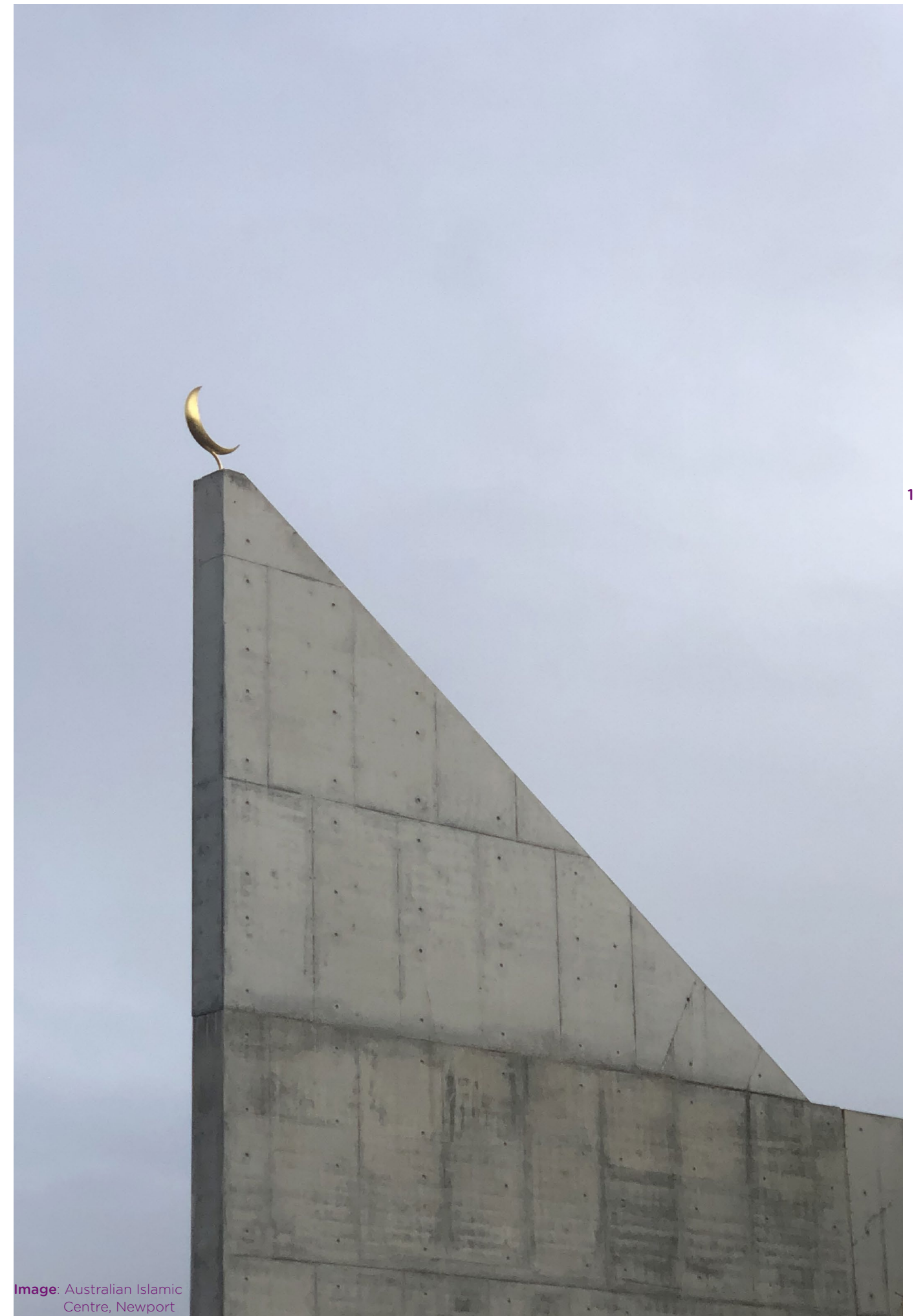


Image: Australian Islamic Centre, Newport

1

Introduction



‘We do not want an ugly big white pastry in our neighbourhood, as you sometimes see when they build a new mosque. Our mosque will be completely in the style of the ‘Amsterdam School’’, such that it fits perfectly in the neighbourhood and becomes a real Dutch mosque.’

Dutch-Turkish Muslim community leaders who commissioned the West Mosque in Amsterdam, The Netherlands
(Adwell 2015)

‘If you are Muslim and you want a mosque, go back to the Middle East. This is Australia.’
Anti-mosque protester, Bendigo
(O’Brien 2014)

The above quotes speak to some of the many architectural, social and political tensions that the spectre of a mosque and minarets rising above urban landscapes, provoke in both Muslims and some non-Muslims alike. As the quote by the Dutch-Turkish Muslim community leaders reveals, a desire exists by some Muslims to re-imagine how a mosque is designed and integrated into the existing built and urban fabric. In contrast, the comment by the Bendigo protestor, speaks to a concern about a mosque existing in the first place.

The aim of this research is to draw together these seemingly disparate concerns and explore how the intersection of architecture and urban design offers an opportunity to not only re-imagine contemporary design approaches to mosques, but also contribute to the continuing conversation on how these disciplines can foster inclusivity, interfaith and inter-cultural dialogue. Having said the above, it is important to note the complexities around statements of ‘openness’ in relation to mosques can imply, that for a community to be accepted, they must adapt and ‘fit in’, that not doing so renders them closed off or ‘mysterious’, which can be an exclusionary notion.

The mosques visited as part of this research, have been adapted, built or proposed in cities with

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

the largest population of the Muslim diaspora - that is, people who have been displaced from their countries of origin - call home. The Muslim diaspora is not a homogeneous group, but rather a diverse group originating from several countries from Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA), sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, Turkey and Southeast Asia, speaking several languages.

The mosques visited are located in Australia, the United States of America (U.S.A.), Canada, and Europe including the United Kingdom (U.K.), Germany, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Italy. This research has revealed that it is these same places where a series of protests and petitions usually follow an announcement that a mosque may be built and/or expanded.

In Australia alone, one of the better-known cases of protest is that of the Bendigo Mosque, with similar examples in places like Camden, Gosford and Padstow. Globally, opposition to mosques increased in the years following the Gulf War, the World Trade Centre bombings of 1993 and September 11, 2001, with the built form of the mosque being the most obvious signifier of Islam in the urban landscape, and therefore an obvious target for those opposed to the presence of the religion (Barnard 2021).

In 2012, the Pew Research Centre, detailed 53 mosques across the U.S. that were subject to opposition and protest, while more recently, Charles Sturt University conducted a study in 2021, outlining mosques that have been subject to attack within Australia.

As opposition to new mosques increases, leading to many being denied development approval or having a delayed or curtailed development, this study seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of how architectural and urban design principles can be used to engage in this conversation and are influenced by these broader events.

Examples of contemporary mosques exist in areas of the diaspora population, several visited date from the 1970s-1990s, however the majority visited have been built in the 21st century, with some still under construction at the time of writing.

Locally, Glenn Murcutt, along with Melbourne Architect, Hakan Elevli, designed a contemporary mosque, an Islamic Centre that is open to all. The mosque is designed to allow the non-Muslim community to connect and be included within the Muslim community of Newport, and in turn allow the Muslim community to connect to the wider community. The mosque is devoid of traditional

minarets and domes and seeks to represent a site specific and contextual mosque, using contemporary materials and forms.

For the purposes of this research, a contemporary mosque is a mosque that seeks to eschew traditional Islamic architectural elements such as the minaret and the dome, or seeks to reinterpret them. This reinterpretation of the form and traditional signifiers of an Islamic building has created a site-specific mosque that seeks to establish a dialogue within its context. It is also a mosque that is limited in location to being within cities of diaspora populations.

Regarding urban design and the place of mosques in urban landscapes, traditional mosques have historically functioned as private spaces for people of the Muslim faith to worship, contemplate and connect with community. Contemporary mosques, however, seek to disrupt the private/public divide through the integration of more public spaces. For example, the mosques visited include designated areas such as community centres, that is partly or wholly open to the public. It is such spaces that have transformed traditional notions of a mosque, from a seemingly ‘closed’ building to an ‘open’ building that sits within the fabric of a city and connects with the communities that inhabit it, fostering an inclusive dialogue through the built environment.

A key to fostering a sense of openness is community consultation, the lack of which has contributed to broader community opposition to mosques. Community consultation with members of the Muslim community, but also with the non-Muslim community. For example, locally, in a conversation with Glenn Murcutt in relation to this research, the majority of the Muslim community members for the mosque in Newport, were in favour and advocated for a contemporary mosque. In contrast, some members of the same community, took time, and were eventually welcoming of this new interpretation of what a mosque can be.

In Sydney, the Punchbowl Mosque by Candalepas Architects, was described by the community as “a contemporary design by an award-winning Architect for the future of Muslims in Punchbowl and Sydney,” speaking to the desire of the community for a contemporary approach to the new mosque.

This research seeks to compliment the existing research into mosque design, and to provide an understanding of shifts in approach. This research has investigated how architects have been re-imagining the design principles of mosques, and re-evaluating the relationship between the context and traditional signifiers of an Islamic building. This is to foster a sense of inclusivity and openness,

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

but also to provide mosques that are contextual and site specific. Architecture and urban design have an intersecting role, in both contributing to re-imagining mosques and the possibilities for community and inclusion. This report looks at the mosques visited through setting the context and themes identified:

- Key Findings: A summary of findings
- Mapping the Context: Providing an overview of the context in which these mosques exist
- Identity, community, consultation: an overview of identity and the consultation process
- More than a Mosque: A Space for Community: Outlining the way in which mosques are expanding beyond a place for worship and include community focused facilities
- Urban and Suburban mosques: Understanding the context in which the mosques are situated
- Built-for-Purpose: Built-for-purpose mosques and the context
- Re-purposed buildings, New Mosques: Focuses on mosques in existing buildings
- Unbuilt, On-hold: Mosques yet to be built
- Inventory of mosques visited: List and graphs

Each chapter includes images of mosques most relevant to that chapter, taken at the time of travel. Of course, each mosque may have elements that are relevant across many themes.



Image: Punchbowl Mosque

2

Key Findings



Mosques speak to the fabric of a place through the built form, revealing the evolving needs of a community. Often, mosques are located within areas of a city or town, where a portion of the diaspora community has settled, the number of mosques growing as the community grows. Where there is a lack of mosques compared to community numbers, this can reveal the challenges that communities face in building new mosques.

The aim of this research has been to explore how the intersection of architecture and urban design offers an opportunity to not only re-imagine contemporary design approaches to mosques, but to also better understand how these disciplines can foster inclusivity,

Through visiting mosques across countries of the diaspora, and interviewing architects, the changing architectural language of the mosque has been examined, along with the urban context that shape the mosque and surroundings.

This study revealed how architects have been re-imagining design principles when designing mosques, to create engaging and inclusive spaces that better represent community needs. This re-imagining has been led from within the Muslim community.

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

In many instances, traditional signifiers of a mosque, such as the dome and the minaret, have been replaced with contemporary interpretations. In others, these elements have been kept as a way to maintain a link to the historical past - but also, to maintain familiarity.

A common thread amongst mosques purpose-built this century, is one of 'transparency'. This notion of transparency has been implemented through the physical - that is the architecture, for example - or through immaterial ways, such as the facilitation of open days to the wider public. This notion of transparency is usually linked to a desire to welcome the non-Muslim community into a mosque, particularly where the lack of which has contributed to opposition to the mosque.

Prior and during the design stage, a key element to fostering a sense of openness is community consultation. Community consultation with those of the Muslim community, but also community consultation with the non-Muslim community.

Importantly, the mosques visited have been built on colonised lands in many of the cities visited. As part of the community consultation process, consultation with First Nations communities should be prioritised.

Women have been leading the movement to re-imagine women's spaces within mosques. This movement is growing, and is not limited to a particular city or country. This highlights the importance of 'for us, by us', in creating change, the voices of those affected need to be elevated, heard and change implemented.

An analysis of the data collected in this study, is included within this report. The data is focused on the mosques visited and categorises them based on various factors .

The data showed that, of the 50 mosques visited, 73% were located in urban areas, with 25% of total mosques visited including a landscape component in the design.

A total of 63% were located in Europe, with the majority being in the U.K., with London making up 12%, this was closely followed by Paris with 8%. In terms of total mosques visited in a city, the majority were situated in New York City, making up 25% of mosques visited. The mosques in New York City make up a large proportion of 28% of 're-purposed' mosques visited, with the city only having one purpose built mosque.

The majority of mosques visited were built in the 2010s, making up 36%, followed by the 1970s with 12%, demonstrating that contemporary mosques are not limited to the 21st Century. Architects designed 65% of the mosques visited, with 22% of those Architects having Muslim heritage.

In terms of materiality, over 20% were of brick, the dominant material, followed by stone and concrete, with 20% including artwork in the form of calligraphy.

The majority of mosques, at 47% did not include a dome or minaret, whether traditional or re-imagined, however 18% included a re-imagined dome or minaret.

The cross section of mosques visited across several cities, represent a point in time for these communities, and these spaces. There is much to be said about the resilience of communities who have experienced opposition to their presence in a place they call home.

3

Methodology



The research has been carried out through visiting mosques, interviewing architects and community members, and undertaking desk-based research, to explore the changing architectural language of the mosque.

Qualitative data was collected through interviews with architects and Muslim community members, both in-person and online. The project relied on connecting with architects to understand the process taken in the design approach. This data was analysed for themes and used to inform this report.

Questions explored included:

- What does it mean to lose traditional Islamic language?
- Is it in fact a loss or is it a change that is necessary for a community to establish a connection to a particular place?
- How do contemporary mosques foster an 'openness', a dialogue with the wider community?

A survey was undertaken relating to the key characteristics of the mosques studied, which included data such as building type, traditional elements, community facilities, public space and community consultation, among others.

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

Quantitative survey data is set out in graphs in this report, and was used to compare key characteristics of mosques, such as the percentage of mosques that included a community focused space. This approach acknowledges that within architecture, data is increasingly important in influencing architectural and urban design outcomes.

The mosques and Islamic centres visited were selected as they demonstrate a contemporary design approach as defined by this project. While some may include minarets or domes, and others do not, they have each sought to create a contextual mosque, whether it be through form or material choice. They each have a distinctive approach to siting and context. Several mosques in this study are located within re-purposed buildings, which architecturally do not reflect a traditional mosque, rather reflecting the needs of the community to have a space for prayer.

A small number of the mosques and Islamic centres visited were in the construction phase at the time of visitation, with some having been completed, while others remain under construction. They have all been included in this study as construction site visits provide insight into the siting of the buildings, context and urban design elements.

Visits to each mosque included a thorough walk through of the mosque and the neighbourhood in which the mosques are situated. This assisted in understanding the context, which is expressed through photographs within this report, of the mosques, streetscape and contextual elements.

The use photography was a key component in this study, to capture the mosques at a point in time and provide a visual analysis of the architecture and context.

4

Mapping the Context



Mosques have historically been a feature of Islam, with the most well-known being the Masjid al Haram, enclosing the Kaaba in Mecca.

As Architect Shahed Saleem articulates, the Kaaba is ‘the physical and spiritual centre of the Muslim world’. Each year, millions of Muslim pilgrims visit this sacred site as part of the Hajj pilgrimage, a fundamental pillar of Islam (Saleem 2018). The Kaaba takes the form of a stone cube, entirely covered with a black cloth, with gold Arabic script, that is renewed each year.

What is a mosque?

A mosque is a place of worship, originating from the Arabic word ‘Masjid’, which means ‘a place of prostration.’ Although descriptive words relating to mosques and prayer are in Arabic, it should be noted, not everyone who is Muslim speaks Arabic, and not all those who speak Arabic are Muslim.

The first mosque built by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Masjid an-Nabawi, was built in Medina c622 CE, and has since undergone several adaptations. Originally, the mosque was an open air, mud-brick courtyard building, that incorporated community and administrative functions, much like the community focused contemporary mosques today (Madain Project 2023).

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

Beyond the built form, a place for prayer transcends the need for physical structures. A place for prayer does not need walls, a roof, or even water for ablutions, in cases where water is unavailable. What is needed, is a person’s intention to pray and for that prayer to be orientated towards the Kaaba in Mecca. This allows for flexibility, where no matter the circumstances, praying is not an obstacle, but rather is weaved into daily life and can be performed anywhere.

Building on this premise, mosques offer more than a space for prayer; providing a sense of community and belonging. They serve as gathering places for social interaction, spiritual enrichment, and communal activities. Whether located in majority Muslim countries or not, mosques fulfill these roles, fostering connections and belonging, and reinforcing the sense of community.

Within Islam, there are several denominations, Sunni and Shia being the predominant two, each with variations on the practice of the religion, and sometimes with dedicated mosques. This study does not differentiate between denominations, unless necessary in discussing a particular mosque.

Elements

There are certain elements and architectural styles that form a mosque, in a traditional and cultural sense. Traditionally, mosques feature predominant architectural elements including:

- A minaret: A tower used for the Adhan, the call for prayer
- The qibla: incorporates the requirement to face the Kaaba in Mecca during prayer, a mosque includes a qibla wall that faces Mecca
- A mihrab: the qibla wall includes a niche within it, in the direction of Mecca
- A minbar: a pulpit for the Imam, located to the right of the mihrab
- A dome: usually in the centre of the main prayer hall, providing light from above

These elements may or may not exist in a mosque, particularly contemporary mosques. The minaret originated to allow the adhan (call to prayer) to be heard by the congregation, in their homes and places of work. The minaret acts as an important element in the streetscape, as a landmark to identify where a mosque is located. Given prayer occurs five times a day, being close to or identifying the location of a mosque has been important within communities.

The detailing and style of the minaret, varies from place to place, however, traditionally a minaret is a tower with access for a person at the top to recite the adhan. It can be argued that minarets in their traditional form are not used for the adhan in the same way, because of technology, such as speakers amplifying sound. Even so, their reference to the past is important to consider in contemporary mosque design, with possibilities for re-interpretation, such as the Islamic Centre in Newport interpreting the minaret within a concrete wall.

The dome, incorporated within many mosque designs, was used in buildings in the SWANA region well before Islam, yet over time, they have become symbols representing a mosque. In his book *The British Mosque*, Architect Shahed Saleem outlines that the:

‘dome emerged as one of the key symbols of the mosque, and for Muslim immigrants to Britain it served as such a primary signifier that in numerous examples of British mosques domes have been incorporated into buildings even where they serve no purpose internally.’

The same can be said elsewhere as the dome has become an integral part of mosque design in communities of the diaspora. Some of the mosques

designed and canvassed in this research, have moved away from the dome or incorporated it in other ways in the design, such as the Cologne Central mosque interpreting the dome within the envelope of the building. Importantly, whether to remove it or incorporate it, is a Muslim community led decision.

The Contemporary

Contemporary mosques are not a new notion. In majority Muslim countries, non-traditional mosques have been emerging for decades. However, mosques in the diaspora have often maintained traditional architectural styles for much longer, reflecting a desire to stay culturally connected through built form.

This research has shown there is a growing desire from within diaspora communities to move towards a contemporary approach to mosque design. There are a number of reasons for this, including a desire for purpose-built mosques that incorporate more functions, to be of the place and context, and for buildings to be more inclusive to both the non-Muslim community and future generations of Muslims within the diaspora. Equally, there are communities that prefer a more traditional approach to mosque design, and both approaches are valid and important.

Mosques are also contemporary through the choice of materials and construction techniques. A number of mosques visited, make use of modern materials such as pre-cast concrete, glazing and brickwork.

The Places

The mosques visited span several continents and cities with a large population of the Muslim diaspora. The research began in Australia, home to 813,000 Muslims making up 3.16% of the population, followed by:

- The USA 3.4million (1%)
 - Canada 1.7million (4.8%)
 - The U.K. 3.8million (5.8%)
 - Germany 4.6million (5.5%)
 - France 6.7million (10%)
 - Italy 2.9million (4.8%)
 - The Netherlands 387,000 (2.2%)
 - Denmark 313,000 (5.4%)
- (World Population Review 2021)

A number of compelling observations can be made, that are unique to each country, when compared to their geographical neighbours. For instance, Germany is leading the way with new contemporary mosques in Europe and makes up a large portion of contemporary mosques visited in this study. Meanwhile in France, new mosques have struggled

to obtain development approval and established mosques have been protested (Bernard 2021).

In contrast, Italy has fewer than eight purpose-built mosques across the country, despite a significant Muslim population, as the religion is not officially recognised in the country (Momigliano 2017). Whether new mosques are being approved and built appears to reflect the socio-political landscape.

What is Inclusive?

‘Inclusivity’ can be defined as ‘the fact of including all types of people, things or ideas and treating them all fairly and equally’ (Cambridge University Press 2023). This extends to the built environment, like places of worship.

Conversations around mosques have extended this notion to include the wider non-Muslim community within the walls of a mosque. This is noted in the descriptions of the mosque in Newport, Victoria, which was ‘designed to be physically and psychologically inclusive rather than exclusive, transparent rather than closed, contemporary rather than conventional, and to speak eloquently of both its current Australian context and ancient Islamic culture’ (Croaker 2016), as was requested by the Muslim community of this mosque.

Contemporary mosques – but for whom?

Questions of inclusivity are at the heart of re-imagining mosque design, as well as who accesses these re-imagined spaces. Contemporary mosques studied in this research, allow for a certain openness in the built form, and through the facilitation of open days and community focused days. This research explores how some contemporary mosques can be re-imagined to be spaces of inclusion, particularly for women.

An inquiry into inclusivity also involves examining who is designing mosques, and what are the lived experiences of architects informing these designs and which community members are consulted. This exploration reveals the extent to which diverse perspectives are incorporated into the architectural development of these spaces.

22



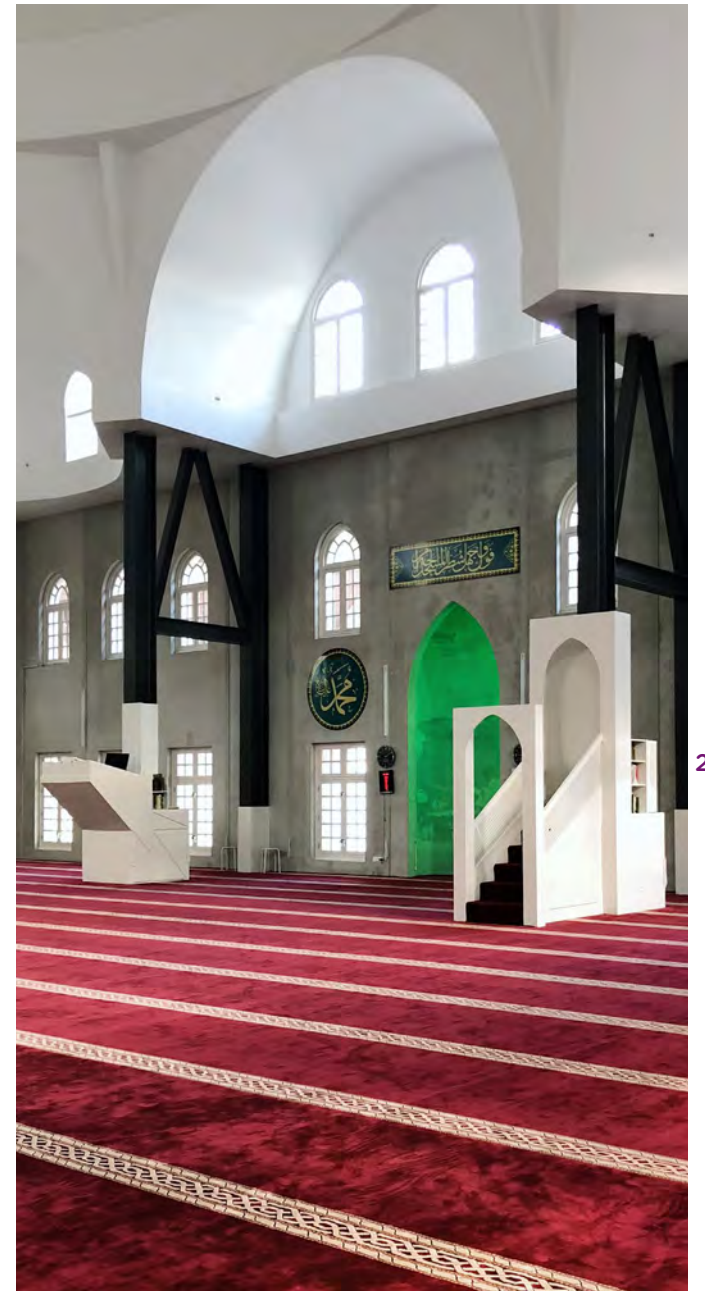
‘Minaret’

Images from “Westermoskee” Amsterdam showing the common elements of a mosque.



‘Dome’

23



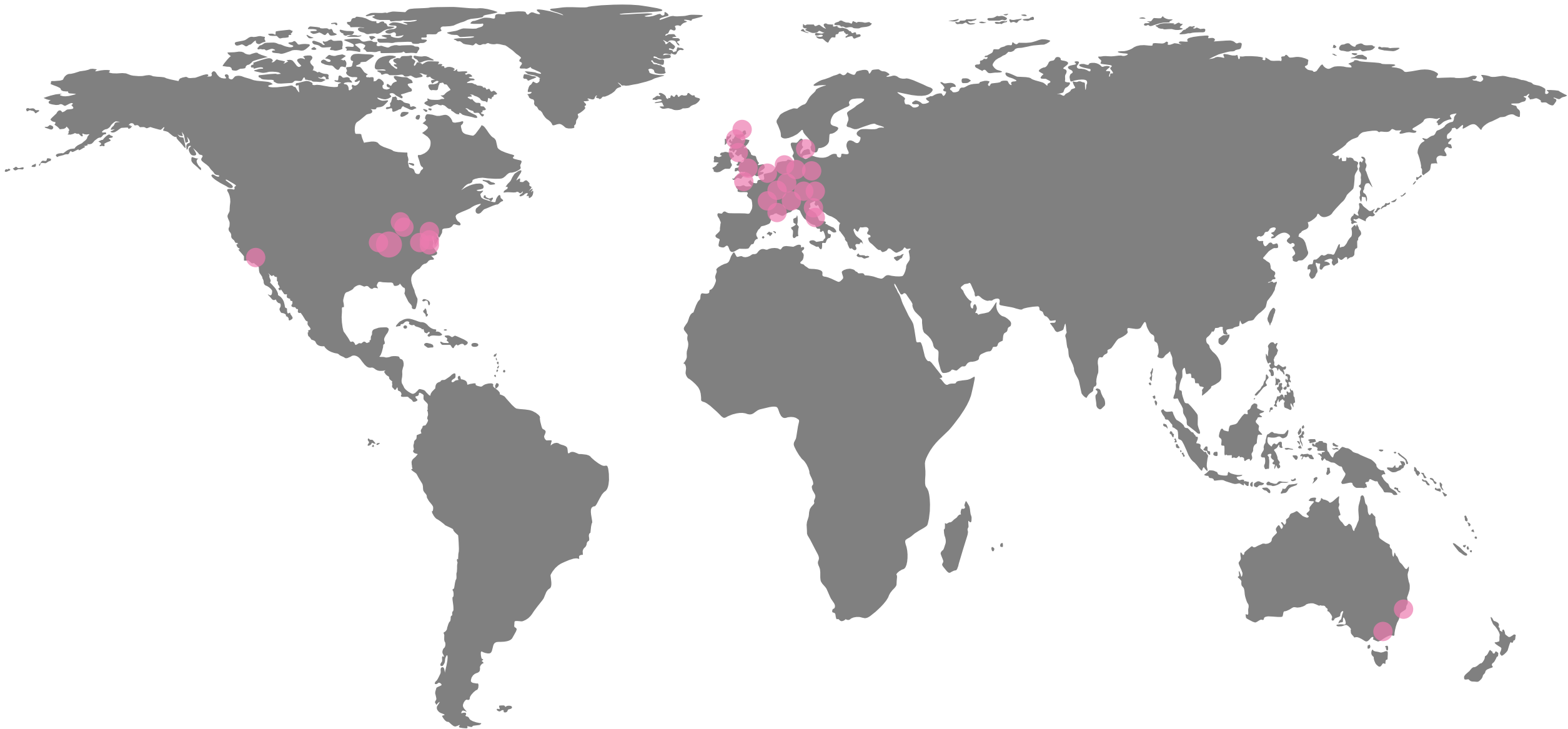
‘Mihrab’ (Qibla Wall) with ‘Minbar’ (Pulpit)

Cities Visited

24

25

- Sydney
- Melbourne
- Los Angles
- New York
- Indianapolis
- Toronto
- London
- Glasgow
- Edinburgh
- Aberdeen
- Rome
- Venice
- Paris
- Strasbourg
- Berlin
- Munich
- Cologne
- Hamburg
- Amsterdam
- Copenhagen



5

Identity, Community, Consultation



Mosques are a visible and physical symbol of the religion, as well as being on the receiving end of political tension and racism.

Research conducted by Charles Sturt University between 2014 and 2019 (published 2021), following the Christchurch attacks, examined the magnitude of violence towards mosques and worshipers. The research outlined that the ‘threat of an attack increased in cases where there had been public attention. For example, mosques that were reported in the media (100%) or experienced online opposition to the development of the mosque (83%) experienced higher rates of victimisation’ (Lewins 2021). This included attacks on the mosques themselves, but also Islamophobic violence towards individuals.

In London, a study carried out in 2022 by Muslim Engagement and Development and Muslim Census, found that 42% of mosques or Islamic institutions had experienced attacks within the preceding three years (MEND 2022).

A decade earlier, in 2012, the Pew Research Centre, a nonpartisan fact tank based in the U.S.A., detailed 53 mosques across the country that were subject to opposition and protest. The opposition cited the usual planning issues relating to traffic, parking and

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

noise, with a number relating to ‘fears around Islam, sharia law and terrorism’ (Pew 2012).

The abovementioned studies, highlight some of the challenges faced with the development of new mosques, as well as experiences of racism and anti-immigration sentiment towards communities.

These challenges encompass the perceived need to re-imagine symbolic notions of a mosque. In some instances, established mosques have established regular open days to invite the non-Muslim community, such as those observed in Cologne, Germany. While this allows dialogue between communities, there is a risk that the onus is placed on the Muslim community to address a perceived and unjustified threat.

Community Consultation

Increasingly, community consultation has become important in planning our cities and good community consultation extends beyond the mandatory planning process.

Community consultation for mosques has been led by the Muslim community, as well as architects,. From the mosques surveyed, this often benefits from additional non-Muslim community consultation.

The Copenhagen Mosque, originally designed by Henning Larsen, underwent extensive community consultation with the Muslim community who will be using the mosque. Community members generously invited me to sit in on one of the consultation sessions, where I listened first hand to the issues raised. The consultation session led to the redesign of the mosque to better reflect the aspirations of the community, who sought a mosque that maintained more traditional forms.

In contrast, the contemporary design of Newport Mosque, was driven from within the community and facilitated by the Architects, Glenn Murcutt and Hakan Elevli. In conversation with Elevli, it was highlighted that the community sought a place that caters to the younger generation of Muslims, those new to the religion, and those outside the religion, to foster a community focused place and reflect the community of Newport.

In discussion with Architect Buro Koray, who is based in New York City (N.Y.C.), Koray suggests that proposing a standalone, purpose-built religious building of any kind, is very difficult in cities like New York. This is because of the density and the cost of properties, as well planning legislation. Having designed an un-built Islamic Centre for N.Y.C., Koray suggests the key to consultation, is to develop a

relationship with the community, followed by a creative exploration into what it means to build a purpose-built mosque. This reflection assists the design process, and helps in understanding the reasons behind the approach, and maintain focus in the design.

The architect of the Toronto Ismaili Centre, C. Po Ma of Moriyama & Teshima Architects, shared the following approaches to the consultation process:

- Start the engagement process early and maintain open, transparent communication. This helps address concerns and build trust.
- Involve a diverse range of community members. Engage with local politicians, professionals, and the broader public to seek a range of perspectives.
- Listen to community feedback and incorporate it into the design process. Demonstrate how community input has shaped the project.
- Ensure the final design is welcoming and accessible to all. Create flexible, multipurpose spaces that can be used by everyone.
- Emphasise the project’s role in fostering understanding and dialogue between different communities. Highlight how the project can bring people together.



30

Australian Islamic Centre

Location: Newport, Victoria, Australia
Architect: Glenn Murcutt and Elevli Plus
Year: 2019

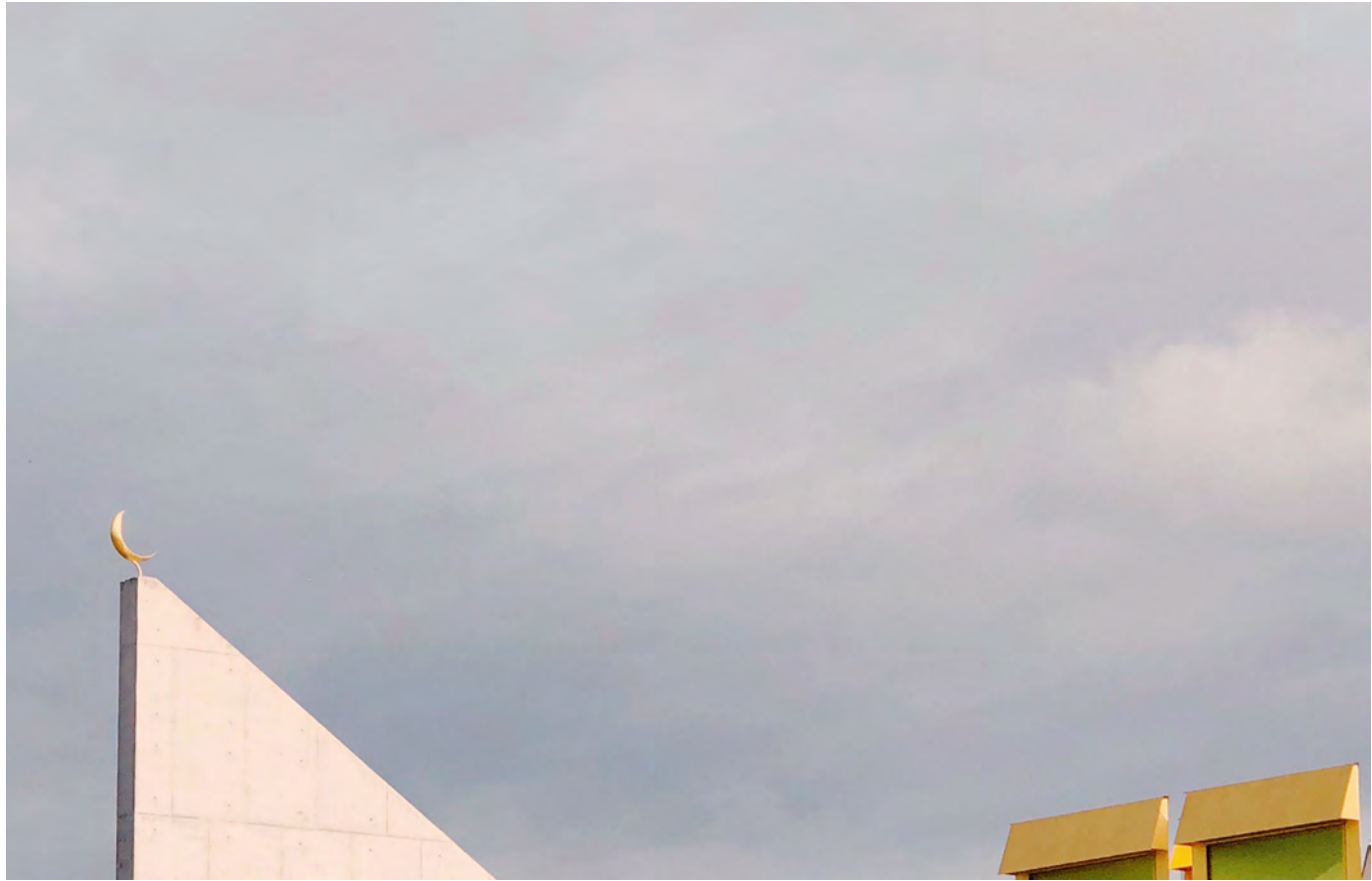


31





32



33

6

More than
a Mosque,
a space for
community

Image: Cologne Central Mosque



Places of faith have a long history of incorporating community spaces and functions that reach beyond a space for worship. Grundvicks Church in Copenhagen, was built with an entire community of housing surrounding it, while the first mosque, built by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), included community and administrative facilities. Mosques increasingly include community facilities when newly developed or expanded.

When we think of mosques, there is a collective image of a dome and minaret, with a space for prayer. A self-contained place, however, mosques have evolved to offer more to a community and to include more of the community. While they are spaces for contemplation and spiritual connection, they are also places of gathering and social connection.

Australia's largest mosque, constructed in the early 1970s, is located in Sydney's south-west suburb of Lakemba. The south-west region of Sydney includes a large portion of the Muslim population, making up 8.3% (ABS 2016).

Lakemba Mosque is a mosque I frequented with my family growing up, where every year, twice a year, the main street would close for Eid and the community gathered, extending the prayer space

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

into the street and carpark. This still occurs today, with approximately 60,000 worshipers attending each year (LMA). The mosque has expanded to include several community facilities, including gym facilities. Open days are held inviting the wider community as an opportunity for the non-Muslim community to directly engage with the space and people. Several of the contemporary mosques visited also incorporate open days,

Punchbowl Mosque

In the neighbouring suburb of Punchbowl, a contemporary mosque has been built, with modern materials and form, while incorporating a dome.

Prior to construction, the community advertised within local shops and sought donations, outlining that it will be 'a contemporary design by an award-winning Architect for the future of Muslims in Punchbowl and Sydney. It includes a mosque, primary school and two-level basement carpark.'

This is a direct quote from donation points placed at various shops within Punchbowl and neighbouring suburbs. This reflects the aspirations of the community seeking a contemporary building, that serves the needs of the community into the future, incorporating community facilities.

The architectural brief provided to the architect by the community, outlined that 'the mosque is a modern interpretation of traditional elements that reflected the local Australian environment' (Candalepas 2019).

Ismaili Centre, Toronto

In Toronto, the Ismaili Centre sits across from the Aga Khan Museum. Two buildings in dialogue. The mosque is only open to those of the Ismaili faith, a denomination of Shia Islam. However, regular guided tours are held for members of the public, which I joined. The guided tours are informative in relation to the building elements, as well as providing insight into the faith.

The centre receives an increased number of visitors, given its proximity to the Aga Khan Museum, generating interest in the religion. The proximity to the Aga Khan Museum is significant, as the museum is focused on Islamic art and as highlighted on the website is 'dedicated to fostering intercultural dialogue and understanding.'

The building designed by Moriyama & Teshima Architects in association with Charles Correa Associates, is a solid building with a glazed prism over the prayer hall.

Internally, artwork is used throughout based on calligraphy/typography, created by local Islamic artists. The building includes office space and a boardroom, which open up onto a terrace overlooking the prism to the prayer hall. The building is also made up of a series of community spaces, which can be rented out to the public.

Penzburg Mosque, Germany

In Germany, the Penzburg Mosque located at the outskirts of Munich, interprets the cube form of the Kaaba in Mecca, while maintaining a minaret that incorporates the adhan as calligraphy. Speaking to the Architect, Alen Jasarevic, the mosque has been designed as 'not just a mosque, but a community centre', where the mosque portion makes up 30% of the use.

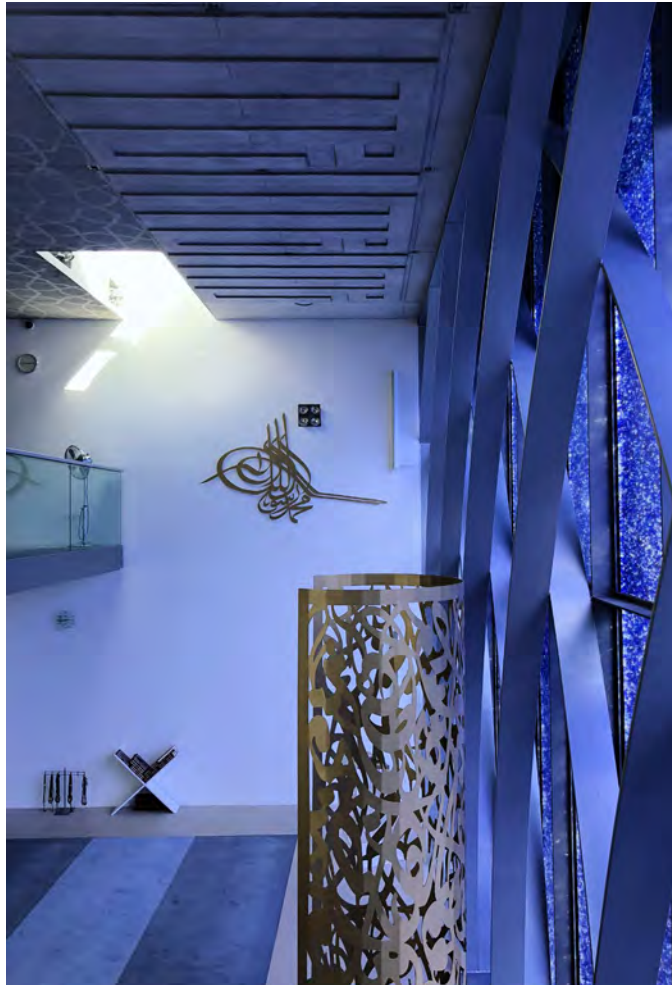
The mosque incorporates community facilities, an administration wing and library, designed to allow a visitor to feel 'invited'. Design decisions have been made to facilitate this, such as deciding not to include fences or barriers, and create a sense of transparency to the façade.



Penzburg Mosque

Location: Penzburg (Munich), Germany
Architect: Jasarevic Architekten
Year: 2005

40



41





43

Turkish Cultural Centre

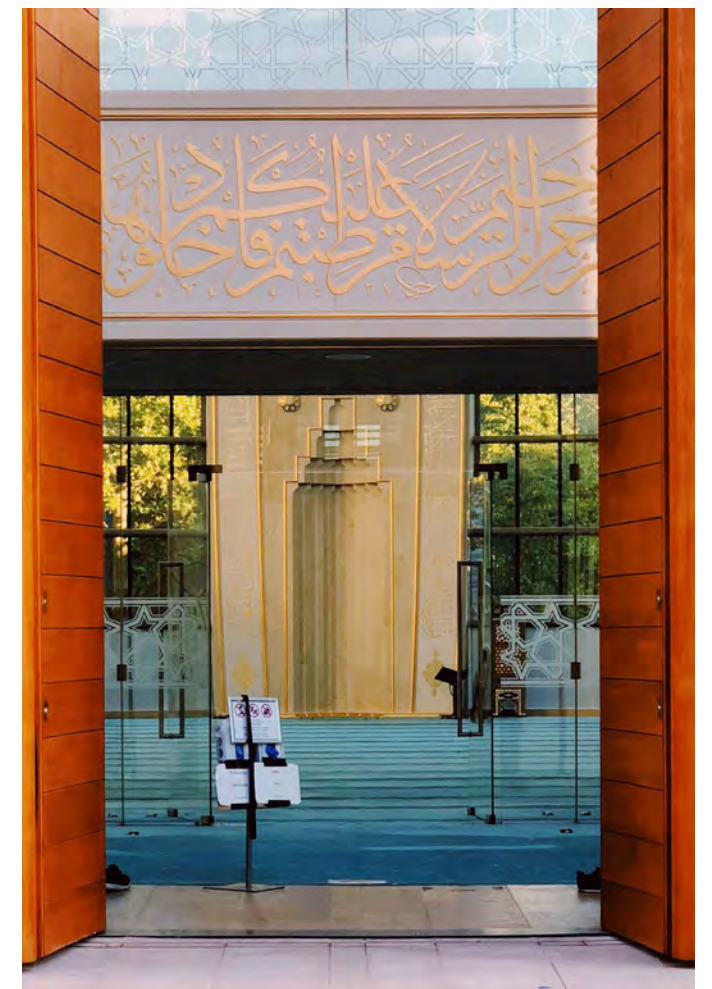
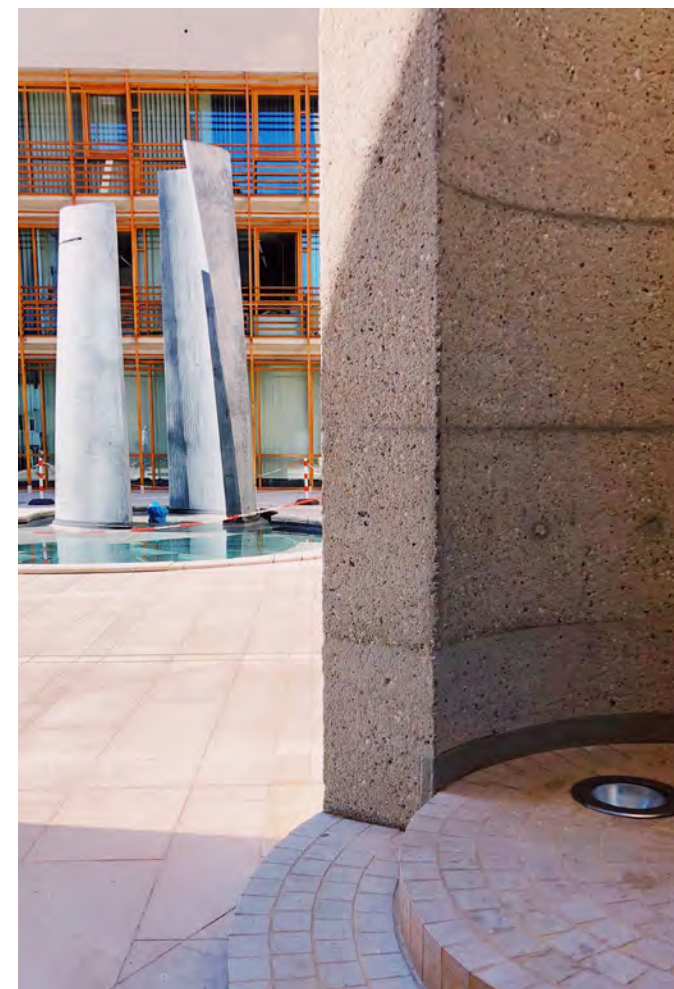
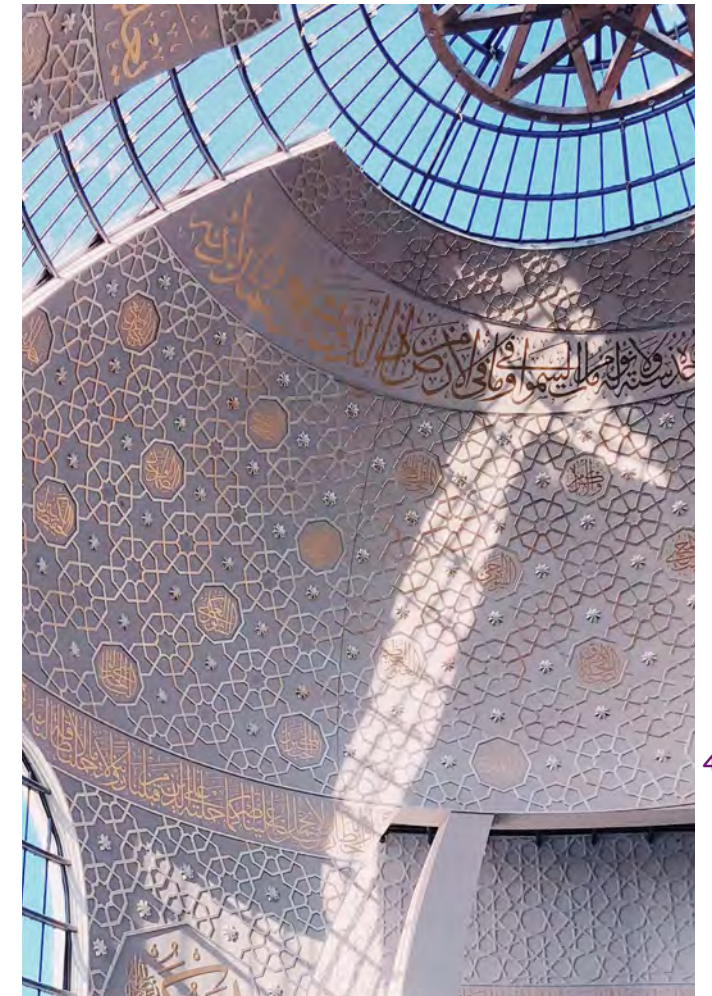
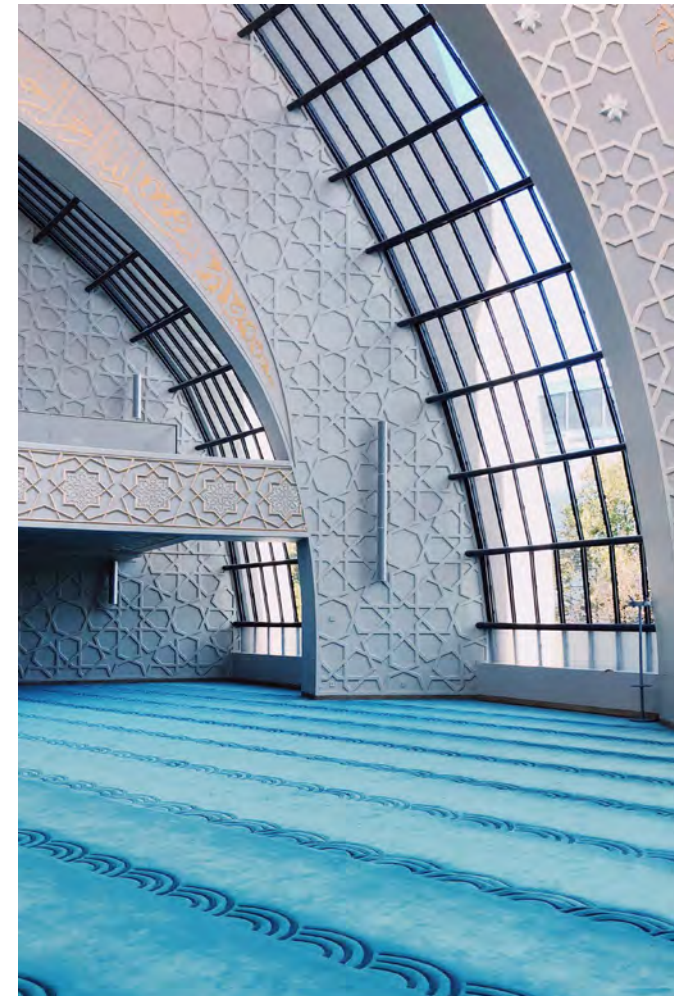
Location: Doetinchem (Amsterdam)
Netherlands
Architect: Atelier PUUUR
Year: 2013





Cologne Central Mosque

Location: Cologne, Germany
Architect: Gottfried Böhm and Paul Böhm
Year: 2017



48



Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series



49



Institute of Islamic Culture

Location: Paris, France
Architect: Ateliers Lion
Year: 2013





Ismaili Centre

Location: Toronto, Canada
Architect: Charles Correa Associates in association with Moriyama & Teshima Architects.
Year: 2014



52



53



Ismaili Centre

Location: London, U.K.
Architect: Casson Conder Partnership
Year: 1985

Urban & Suburban Mosque



56 *‘Islamic architecture should be expressive and understandable to all. It should employ a form of language that invokes in immigrant Muslims a sense of belonging in their present and hope in their future. To the indigenous Muslims it should represent a linkage with Muslims from other parts of the world and should underscore the universality and unity of Islam. To the new Muslim this architecture should invoke confidence in their new belief. For non-Muslims it should take the form of clearly identifiable buildings which are inviting and open, or at least not secretive, closed, or forbidding.’*
- Gulzar Haidar

The architectural language and urban design treatment of mosques varies across cities, and is dependent on location, the community it is serving, the community’s aspirations for the place, budget and funding. It is also influenced by historical, social and political shifts.

The mosques visited in this study include a mix of urban and suburban – or regional – mosques, with the majority being urban, reflective of the concentration of Muslim community populations. The concept of ‘suburbia’ differs between the cities visited, and regional is more appropriate in some instances. This was most prominent in Germany and France, while the most distinctive regional mosque visited was the Plainfield Mosque in Indiana, U.S.A.

Islamic Cultural Centre of New York, N.Y.C.

N.Y.C provides an important representation of the urban mosque in a Western context. The city is distinctly characterised by a lack of development of purpose-built mosques, with the majority housed in re-purposed buildings. The Islamic Cultural Centre of New York, designed by SOM, is the exception.

Built in 1991, the mosque was designed within the confines of a city block, at the border of Harlem and the Upper East Side of Manhattan. In conversation with the Architect, Mustafa Abadan of SOM outlines

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

the mosque was orientated to the Qibla, while an administration building was designed to align with the N.Y.C. grid to differentiate it, however this portion was never built.

The mosque is set on a sloping site, back from the street, with a fence to the perimeter, which encloses the building and the associated landscape. Despite the inclusion of a fence, the building is inviting with the use of contemporary materials such as granite and glazing. It is also contemporary in form, while incorporating a dome over the prayer hall.

Attendees of the mosque include Muslims from the wider N.Y.C. area and further afield. Located on a busy intersection, the building was designed with an internal focus, to avoid distraction from the busy city streets.

Islamic Society of North America, Plainfield

In stark contrast, the Islamic Society of North America’s Plainfield Mosque is a suburban mosque situated on a large site surrounded by rolling hills, a long winding driveway and is a solid brick building.

The mosque is slightly visible from the street in the distance, with a large sign indicating its presence. Built in 1981, the brick mass sits amongst well-maintained greenery and is located 30 kilometres

southwest of Indianapolis, the capital city of Indiana.

The mosque was designed by Architect Gulzar Haidar, a member of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), which commissioned the building. The building is contemporary in form, using geometric volumes to define the space, and use brickwork to create a monumental architecture.

The Plainfield Mosque is yet another example of an earlier mosque that departs from the traditional. The building’s geometry was derived from a cube, referencing the Kaaba, as appears to be a common thread in mosque design. Haidar outlines the need for architecture to invoke a sense of belonging as the quote above suggests.

This sentiment by Haidar, is relevant to the conversations around the design of mosques today, and their potential for positive impact on the communities they serve.



Islamic Cultural Centre of New York

Location: Upper East Side, N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Skidmore, Owings and Merrill
Year: 1987



60

61

Islamic Society of North America

Location: Plainfield, Indiana
Architect: Gulzar Haidar
Year: 1981

62



63



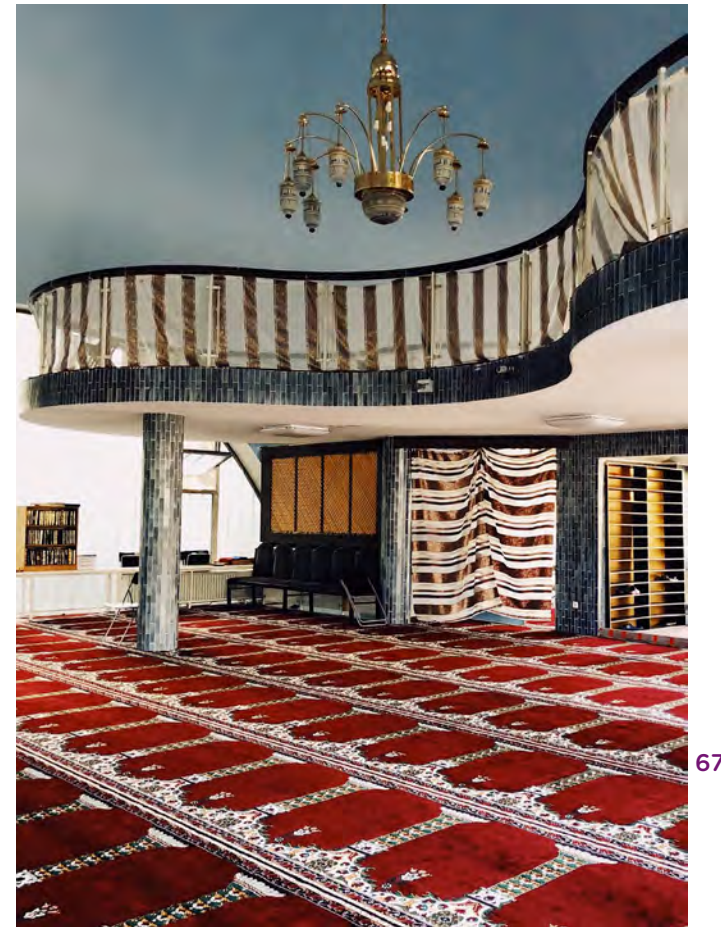
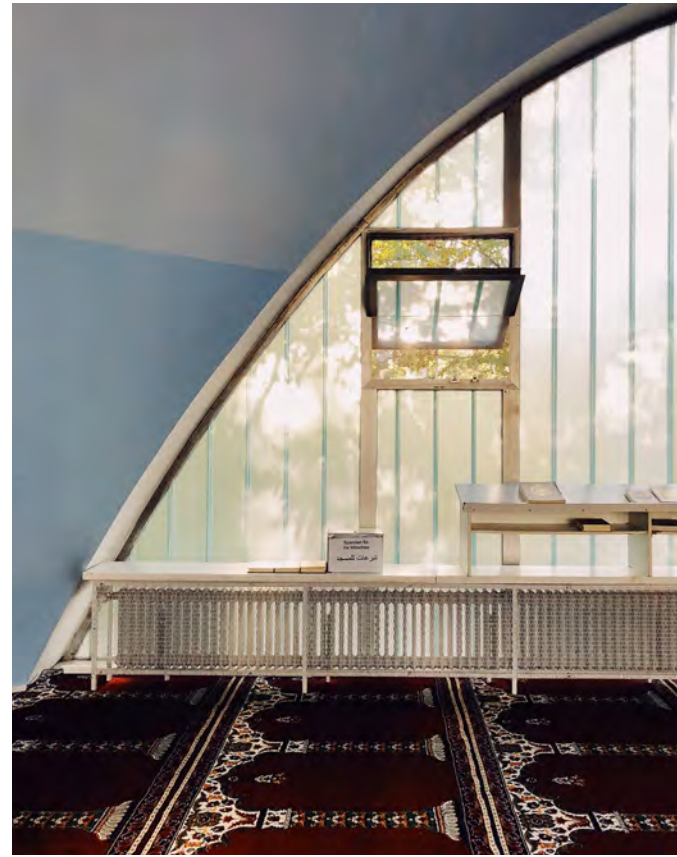


Islamic Centre of Munich

Location: Frieimann, Munich, Germany
Architect: Osman Edip Gürel
Year: 1973



66



67



Social Complex & Mosque

Location: Gelsenkirchen, Cologne, Germany
Architect: Agirbas & Wienstroer Architects
Year: 2013

70



71





73

Duisburg Cathedral Mosque

Location: Duisburg, Cologne, Germany
Architect: Cavit Sahin
Year: 2008



Bondy Mosque

Location: Seine-Saint-Denis, Paris, France
Architect: Abderrahmane Bousmaha
Year: 2001



Alhashimi Mosque

Location: Saint-Ouen, Paris, France
Architect: Unknown
Year: 2017

8

Built for
Purpose

Image: Plainfield Mosque

Built for purpose mosques are few in comparison to mosques housed in re-purposed buildings, for those visited as part of this research. There are usually financial and spatial constraints that limit the introduction of purpose-built buildings, as well as planning and approval constraints.

Australian cities are becoming increasingly sprawling, with a portion of diaspora communities settled in the suburbs, which inherently allow space for purpose-built mosques, often at a lower purchase price.

Similarly in places like France and Germany, purpose-built mosques are largely located at the outskirts of city centres, as was observed with the mosques visited. Cities such as London and New York are examples of densely populated places with few purpose-built mosques.

The purpose built mosques visited in this study, are predominately constructed with modern materials, such as granite, concrete, brickwork and a significant proportion of glazing. This contemporary approach to material choice, is an important observation as it aligns the contemporary mosques with current shifts in construction techniques.

Grand Mosque of Paris & Institute of Islamic Culture

France is home to several mosques across the country. The Grand Mosque of Paris, which was built in the 1920s in a traditional Spanish-Moorish style, features a restaurant, hammam and shops that are open to all (Mosqpedia 2023). Although traditional in form, it is a place of gathering for both the Muslim and non-Muslim community, with inclusion of the prominent cafe and opportunities for all to visit.

North of the city, the Institute of Islamic Culture, is a contemporary art centre dedicated to the cultures of Islam, and has incorporated a prayer room for 300 people, managed by the Grand Mosque (Institut des Cultures d'Islam). Designed by Ateliers Lion, the building sits within a typical Parisian street. The building is clad in a metal screen over a stone base.

Great Mosque of Rome

In Italy, Islam is not recognised as an official religion, and while the country is home to 2.9 million Muslims, there are only eight mosques. The lack of recognition means there are blockages in relation to planning permissions and access to public funding. Instead, there are several hundred prayer spaces, including several within the outer suburbs of Venice, which were visited in this study.

The Great Mosque of Rome is run by the Islamic Culture Centre of Italy, designed by the Architect Paolo Portoghesi and built in 1994. Despite the circumstances, the mosque has been given the title as 'the largest mosque outside the Islamic world, Russia and India' (Divisare 2023).

The building's repeating columns are visible from the street, appearing as a Roman structure, and walking amongst the columns evokes a feeling of walking through a traditional Roman building. The mosque is of the place and is contextual, and exists, despite the challenges that come with the religion not being legally recognised across the country.

Cambridge Central Mosque

Meanwhile in Cambridge, an environmentally sustainable mosque has been designed by Marks Barfield Architects. At the time of visiting, the mosque was under construction, however, has since opened to the public. Speaking with the Architect, Julia Barfield, the design process of the mosque aimed to create a modern mosque that reflects the context of Cambridge, while also incorporating design principles from Islamic architecture.

The Muslim population of Cambridge had outgrown the existing mosque and wanted a new mosque that is reflective of community, which consists of

a large university related population. The mosque was designed for the community, with functions open to everyone, and an environmental and social focus. The sustainability considerations, speaks to the building being contemporary, as well as the use of materials, and approach to the internal spaces.

Nearby, King's College Chapel informed the design of the mosque as a local reference point, while the geometry of the building references the Kaaba in Mecca. The columns are of structural timber, appearing like trees from the streetscape and within the building, while a dome sits over the prayer hall.

A key consideration in the design was ensuring that the prayer space for women was flexible and accommodates the needs of all women. The main prayer hall features a timber screen to delineate the women's space, which can be removed to open up the space for all when required. Barfield highlights that this flexibility is important, as it caters for women who prefer the privacy of the screen, with the option to open up the space. The upper level includes a dedicated women's space for additional privacy when required.

The mosque promotes inclusiveness for people of all backgrounds by ensuring the public spaces like the garden, cafe, and teaching areas are welcoming

and accessible to the Muslim community, as well as the non-Muslim community. The focus was to create an integrated, inclusive environment rather than overly traditional or segregated spaces, ensuring all community members feel welcome.

The design process included working closely with the local community to understand the wide ranging needs and incorporate these into the design. The design promotes transparency and open communication about the mosque's purpose and activities, to build trust and understanding with the broader community.

Westermoskee, Amsterdam

Further afield, the Westermoskee in Amsterdam, built in 2015 and designed by Marc and Nada Breitman, has taken a more traditional approach. Situated on the banks of the river Schinkel, the architecture is in the Ottoman style, with a minaret, a dome and arches, while referencing the context through materiality and detailing. Although the form is traditional, the mosque is contemporary with its siting and use of materials.

This approach compared with the Cambridge example, highlights the many ways in which architects are designing contemporary mosques, while reflecting the community needs.

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series



Image: Cambridge Central Mosque



85

Cambridge Central Mosque

Location: Cambridge, U.K.
Architect: Marks Barfield
Year: 2019

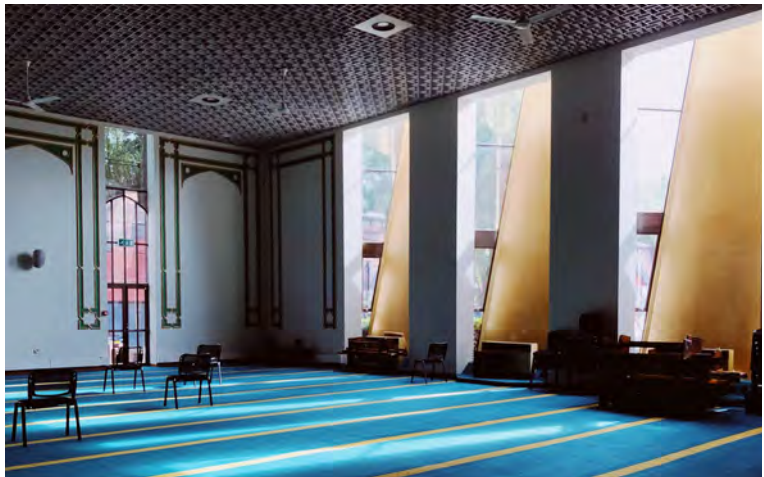




87

Westermoskee

Location: Amsterdam, Netherlands
Architect: Marc and Nada Breitman
Year: 2015



Glasgow Central Mosque

Location: Glasgow, U.K.
Architect: Copeland & Associates, with Coleman Ballantyne Partnership
Year: 1983

90



London Central Mosque

Location: London, U.K.
Architect: Frederick Gibberd
Year: 1977

91



92



Hamburg Central Mosque

Location: Hamburg, Germany
Architect: Unknown
Year: 1977

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

93



94



95



Edinburgh Central Mosque

Location: Edinburgh, U.K.
Architect: Basil Al Bayati
Year: 1998

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

96



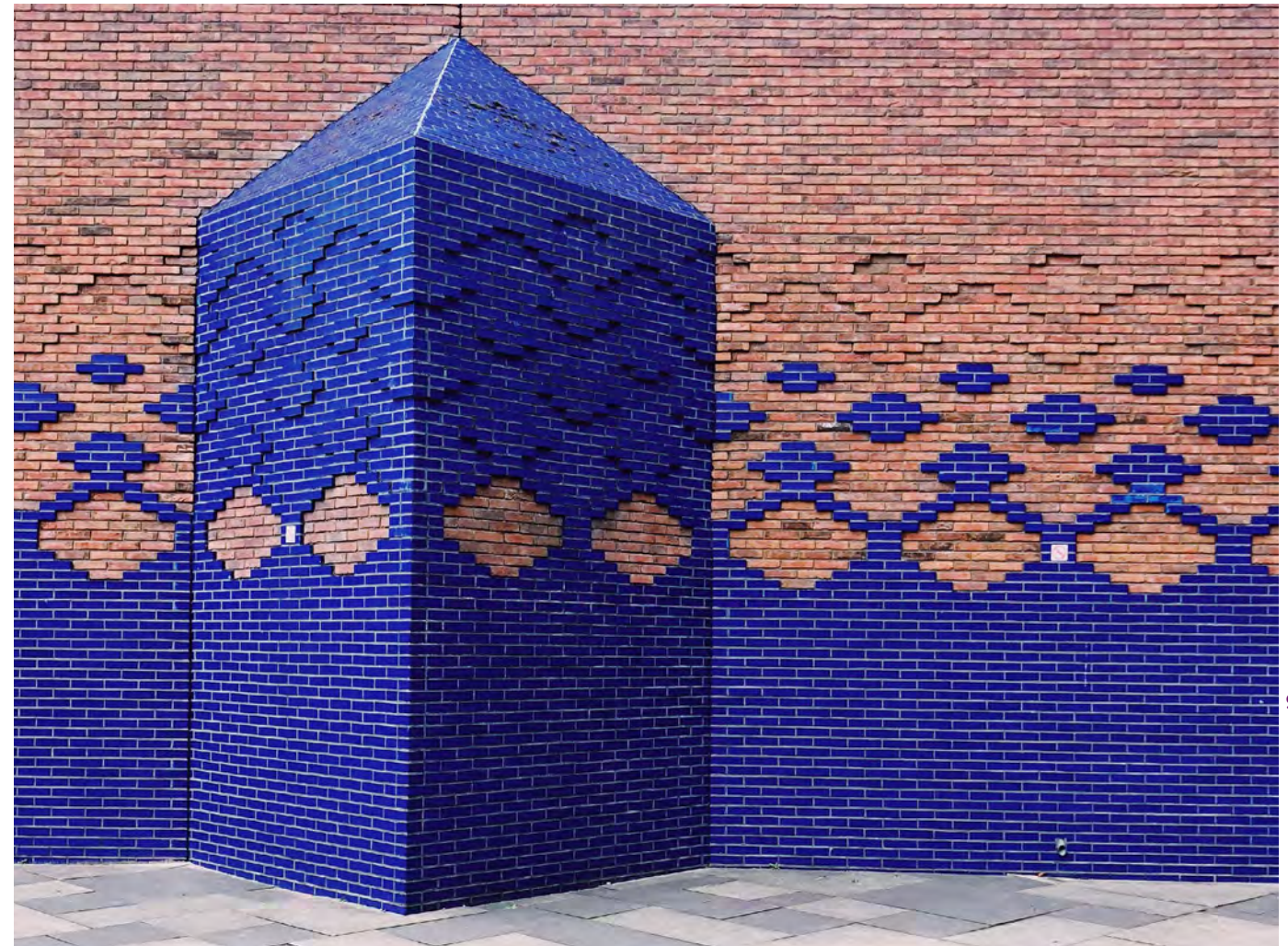
Great Mosque of Rome

Location: Rome, Italy
Architect: Paolo Portoghesi
Year: 1994

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

97





The Blue Mosque

Location: Amsterdam, Netherlands
Architect: Unknown
Year: 2008





101

Noor Cultural Centre

Location: Toronto, Canada
Architect: Raymond Moriyama
Year: 1963



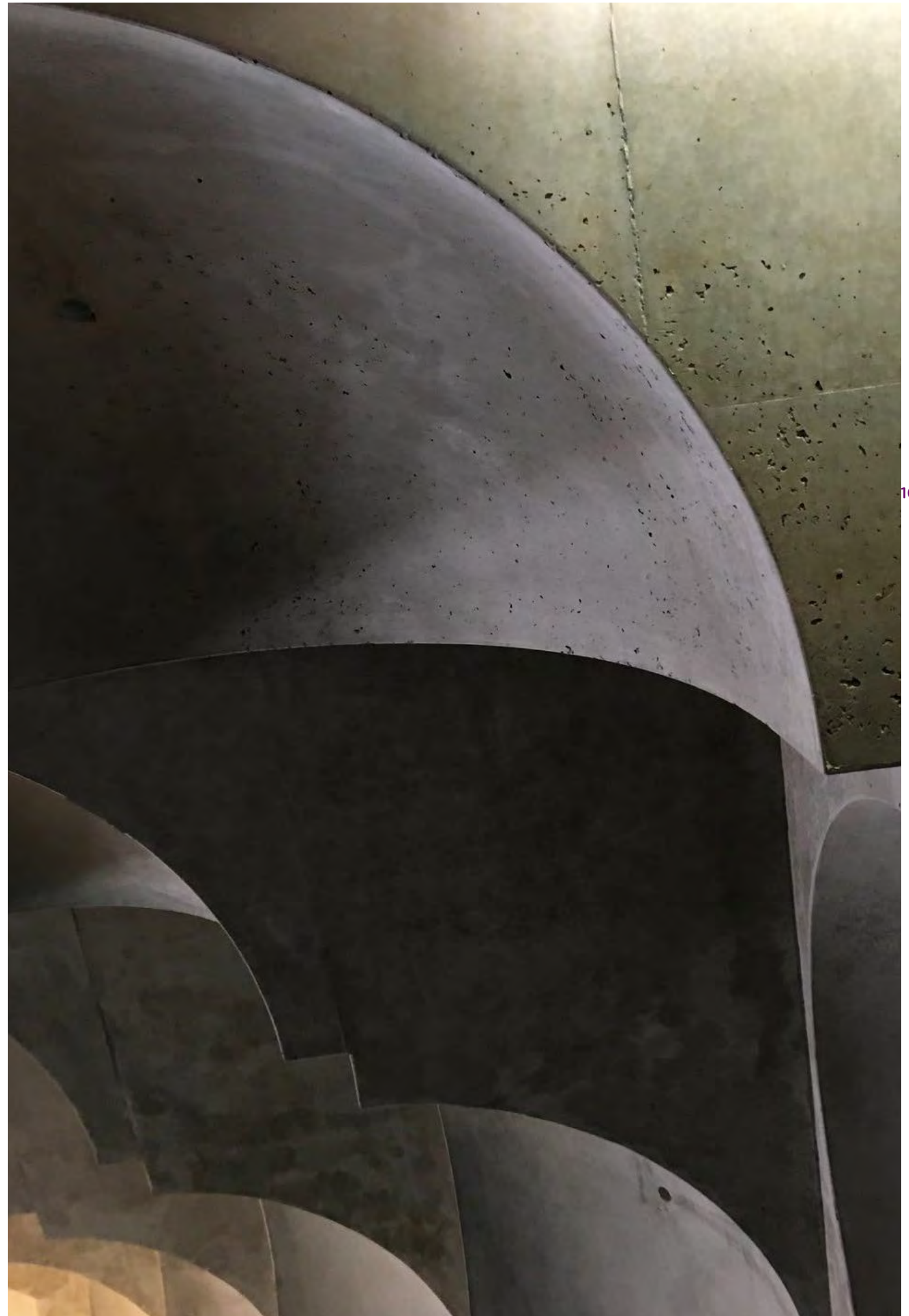
102



Punchbowl Mosque

Location: Punchbowl, Sydney, Australia
Architect: Candalepas Associates
Year: 2019

103





Grand Mosque of Paris

Location: Paris, France
Architect: Maurice Tranchant de Lunels
Year: 1926



106



107



108



Grand Central Mosque of Strasbourg

Location: Strasbourg, France
Architect: Paolo Portoghesi
Year: 2004

109



9

Re-Purposed Buildings, New Mosques



‘This is a beautiful, enormous space in Williamsburg and we’d like to spruce it up and open it up more — for social programs, cooking classes, interfaith lectures — and show people that Muslim Americans have been living in this country for over a century.’
 - Alyssa Ratkewitch

With the pressing issue of a sustainable future, there has been increasing awareness of the benefits of re-purposing buildings for new uses. The benefit of renewal and reuse is significant in lowering the carbon footprint, however, environmental sustainability is not the sole purpose of reuse. Often, there are economic considerations. It is usually simpler and cheaper to adapt an existing building, than build anew, though this can depend on the complexity of the brief and how it fits in with the existing structure.

Mosques, have a long history of being housed in re-purposed buildings, particularly in former churches, and even adapted houses. Churches feature a configuration that is easily adaptable, with a large space as a prayer hall already in place. Adapting houses is often most cost-effective, being located in residential areas and in close proximity to the community in which they serve. There may be spatial constraints, as well as planning constraints to convert these buildings into mosques and associated facilities. Nonetheless, there are several hundreds of mosques internationally that are housed in this way.

The adaption of existing buildings can be understood through the lens of Françoise Bollack in Old Buildings, New Forms, where five categories

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

are identified for adaptive reuse (Bollack 2013). These are; Wraps, Weavings, Juxtapositions, Parasites and Insertions, all of which are relevant to the adaptation of buildings into mosques.

This lens is the basis for understanding the several ways in which mosques make use of re-purposed buildings. They are located in either in:

- An existing building with minimal external changes and internal alterations
- An existing building with external and internal alterations
- An existing building, with a new portion above or adjacent

Several high-density cities feature mosques in re-purposed buildings, such as N.Y.C, Los Angeles (L.A.), London and Sydney. Mosques in existing buildings with a smaller budget, that are usually community funded, are similar in their appearance. They subtly identify themselves as a mosque, either through simple signage or the inclusion of a crescent or interpretation of a minaret. Examples of these are the Power Street Mosque in N.Y.C and the Brick Lane Mosque in London.

Internally, these mosques include prayer mats which align with the Qibla, a Mihrab, and Quran verses in Arabic calligraphy on the walls.

Islamic Centre of Southern California

In LA, along a typical street dotted with palm trees, food chains, offices and warehouse buildings, the Islamic Centre of Southern California (ICSC) addresses the street, taking up residence in a former insurance office building.

Re-purposed to accommodate the mosque and Islamic Centre in 1976, it appears as a typical office building from the street, with a sign that indicates the presence of an Islamic Centre.

The ICSC is contemporary in its approach to leadership, particularity the inclusion of women. In 2016, Hedab Tarifi, was the first woman to be elected as Chair of the board. The mosque prides itself on the ‘growing reputation as one of the most progressive mosques in the country,’ in relation to their approach to the religion. (Islamic Centre of Southern California 2023).

Power Street Mosque

Over on the east coast, N.Y.C. and its boroughs is home to over 275 mosques, the majority of which are housed in re-purposed buildings (Lisi 2023). These are located predominately within the boroughs of Queens and Brooklyn, but also feature in the Bronx, Staten Island and Manhattan. N.Y.C includes only one purpose built mosque, the Islamic

Cultural Centre of New York. However almost sixty years before that was built, the modest Powers Street Mosque was founded and housed in a former Methodist Church in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

The Powers Street Mosque was the first mosque in New York, dating from 1931. The mosque is important in identifying the link to the beginnings of mosques in N.Y.C. Today, the building is often closed, with the exception of significant events, like Eid, weddings and funerals, as the community has significantly dwindled over the decades. While the community is smaller than it originally began, there remains a community spirit and desire to utilise the building and re-engage with it as a vibrant mosque (Siddiqui 2018)

The place is looked after by a descendant of one of the former Imams, Alyssa Ratkewitch who says, ‘This is a beautiful, enormous space in Williamsburg and we’d like to spruce it up and open it up more — for social programs, cooking classes, interfaith lectures — and show people that Muslim Americans have been living in this country for over a century.’

The sentiment shown in Alyssa’s desire to engage with the non-Muslim community, acts as a reminder of the long history and presence of Muslims in N.Y.C,

‘Rather than trying to speak one language, buildings should speak a number of languages’, being in a sense ‘multi-vocal.’
 - Shahed Saleem

The mosque is a small, two-story building with a gable roof and timber panel clad. The street frontage includes external stairs leading up into the main hall. Situated on a typical street in Williamsburg, the only external indication of the place being a mosque is atop the turret, a white crescent moon, making the connection. This subtleness is typical of mosques housed in existing buildings.

Alhikmah Mosque, Aberdeen

Europe also includes a number of mosques in repurposed buildings, particularly in dense cities. In the north of Scotland, within the granite city of Aberdeen, Architect Shahed Saleem has repurposed a former warehouse into a mosque, Masjid Alhikmah. Saleem explains, Aberdeen has a large university population, but also a cosmopolitan population because of the large oil industry and a mosque was required for this growing population.

The building is contemporary through the use of form, materials and the approach to the adaptation of the existing building. The rear portion of the building, which was originally an existing warehouse, has been retained, and the front portion facing the street is new construction.

The building is identifiable as a mosque through the facade, however not in a traditional sense, rather

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

through the interpretation of traditional patterns and symbols with contemporary materials. This façade was developed in conjunction with artist Lubna Chowdhary, using glass and glazed ceramic panels (Chowdhary 2015). Drawing on the context within the ‘granite city’ of Aberdeen, granite was used for the base of the building, with GRC panels above.

The building underwent several design iterations through the planning and consultation process, to achieve the building that exists today. In conversation, Saleem outlined the project went through a standard planning process. Early design proposals that were taller, were revised and brought down in height to address any massing concerns from the neighbors. Following these design changes, the whole process was fairly straightforward, with the main focus being on maximizing the usable floor space and integrating the new construction with the existing context.

Shahporan Masjid and Islamic Centre, London

Appearing as carved stone blocks, the Shahporan Masjid and Islamic Centre on Hackney Road, London, also designed by Shahed Saleem, is situated within a heritage conservation area and adds a new building to a heritage listed terrace.

Saleem outlined through our discussion that the design approach aimed to retain the visual character and language of the original terrace building, while incorporating new elements, and that ‘rather than trying to speak one language, buildings should speak a number of languages’, being in a sense ‘multi-vocal’, which is evident in Saleem’s work.

Re-purposed buildings can be met with constraints, such as heritage listed buildings, however these can also be opportunities. Saleem designed a contemporary mosque, within a heritage context, through the careful treatment of the facade, and the proportioned addition of a new building. The two buildings are connected centrally by a low level threshold.

The screen pattern to the facade is borrowed from the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking, the first purpose-built mosque in the U.K., while the main pattern of the façade draws on Anatolian tilework from 13th Century Turkey. This combination both considers the history of Muslims in the U.K., and the Islamic broader history, creating a unique and well considered building.

With regards to planning, the local council was relatively relaxed about the proposal. The main planning concerns were around the impact of higher

windows on the back of the original structure and ensuring the new building integrated well with the existing terrace. The council wanted to maintain a separation between the two linked buildings to preserve the visual character of the original terrace, which worked well for the composition of the form addressing the street.

Brick Lane Mosque

Housed in a building dating from the 18th Century, which was originally a Protestant Church and later a Synagogue, the Brick Lane Mosque is an important building in London for its history.

The building has undergone amendments, most notably, to incorporate a more direct route for the women’s entrance. Women have been leading the change in women’s spaces in mosques, across several countries. In LA for example, the Women’s Mosque of America, aims to create ‘movement to spark a women-led Islamic Renaissance — one that is led by Muslim women’s voices, leadership, and scholarship’ (Women’s Mosque of America 2023).

While, in the U.K., the ‘Open My Mosque’ campaign, founded by Anita Nayyar, aims to address this issue, to enable access for women to all mosques, through raising awareness, research and advocacy.

Results of a survey of 300 people across the U.K., found that '75 per cent said mosques must change to become more welcoming for women, while 45 per cent said they themselves, or someone they know, have had at least one negative experience at a mosque due to being a woman' (Javed 2022).

With this campaign comes a movement to appoint women on boards of mosques, and create dedicated committees led by women, for women (Aly 2018). Complaints made about the access in Brick Lane mosque, led to a change in the access route for women. The access was previously past a funeral service and through a dark corridor in the basement. It has since been moved to be adjacent to the men's entry with stairs directly leading to the prayer area.

These seemingly minor change to a building or circulation space as mentioned above, can have a significant impact on the experiences of people accessing spaces, creating a more positive experience. Brick Lane mosque has seen an increase in the number of women attending the mosque, which will lead to more positive change (Javed 2022).



Image: Brick Lane Mosque



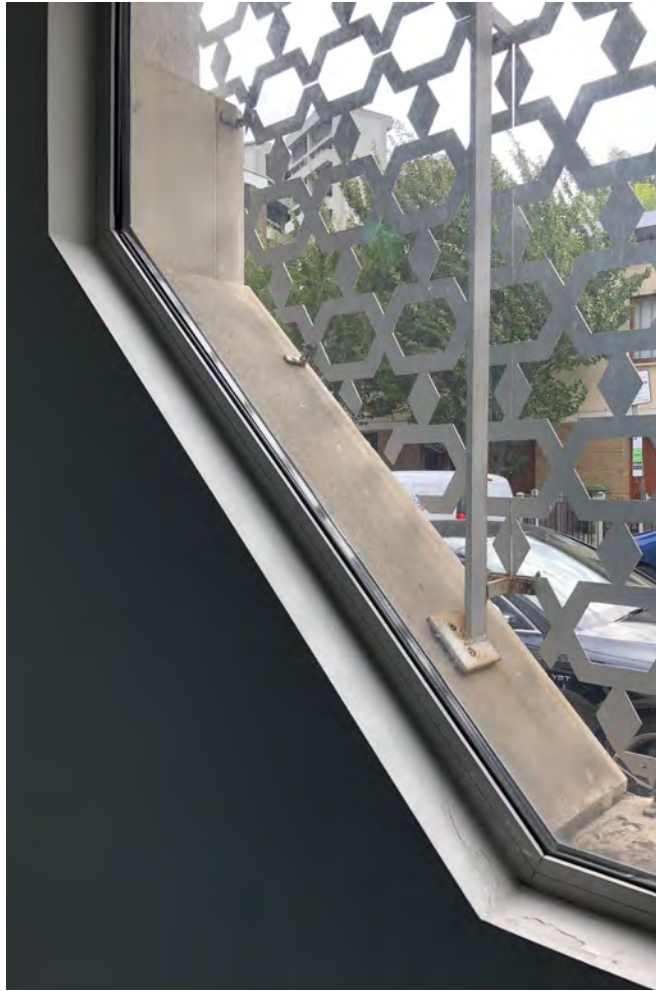
Shahporan Mosque & Islamic Centre

Location: Hackney, London, U.K.
Architect: Shahed Saleem (Makespace)
Year: 2014

120



121



122

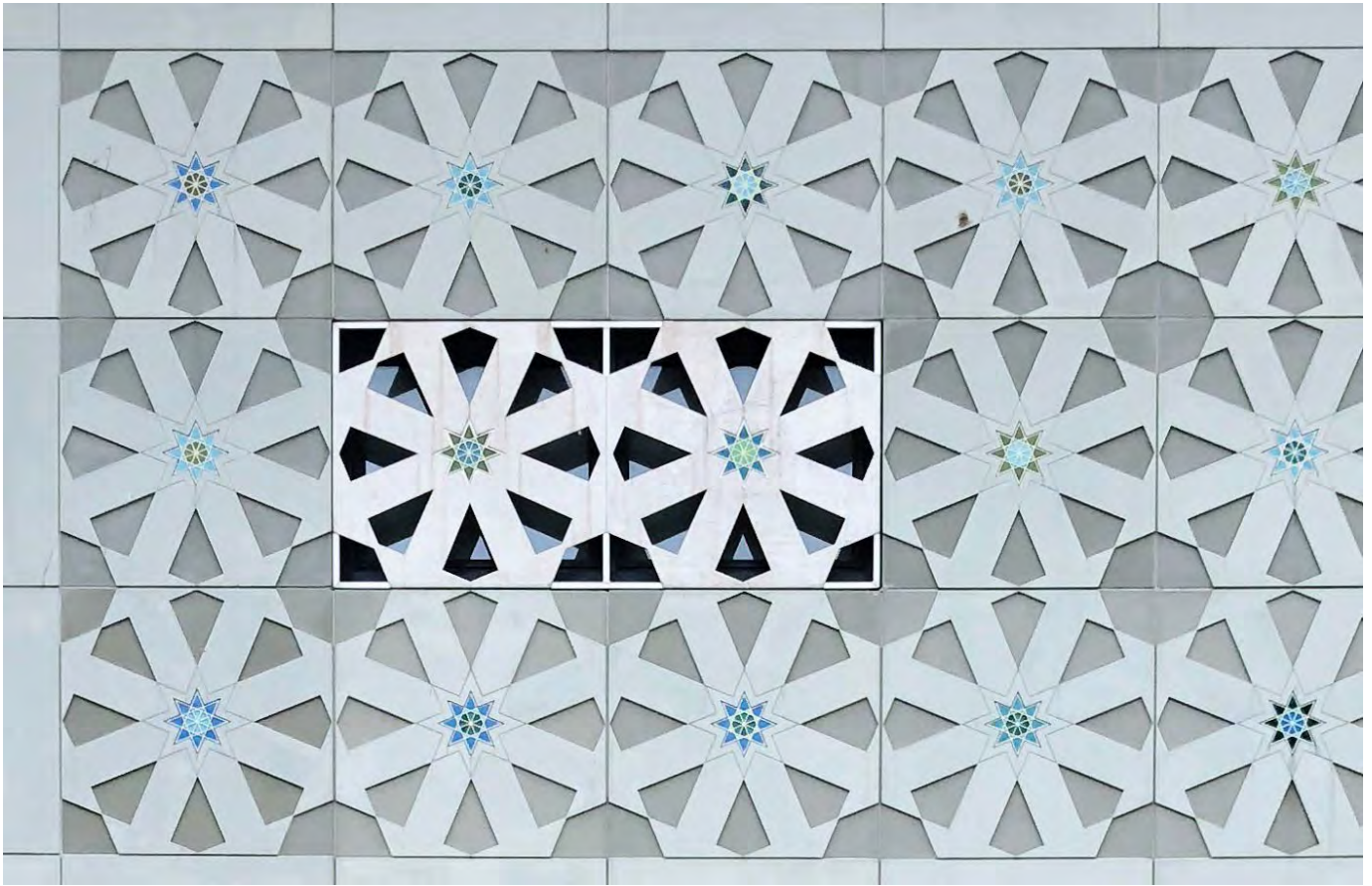


Masjid Alhikmah and Community Centre

Location: Aberdeen, Scotland, U.K.
Architect: Shahed Saleem (Makespace)
Year: 2017

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

123



124



125



Brick Lane Mosque

Location: London, U.K.
Architect: Nicholas Hawksmoor (building)
Year: Built 1743, Mosque 1976

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

126



Islamic Centre of Venice

Location: Venice, Italy
Architect: Unknown (Re-purposed building)
Year: Unknown

127



Islamic Cultural Centre

Location: Venice, Italy
Architect: Unknown (Re-purposed building)
Year: Unknown

128



Islamic Cultural Centre of Southern California

Location: LA, California, U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Adapted building)
Year: 1970s

129



130



131



Masjid Al Taqwa

Location: Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Adapted building)
Year: 1981

132



133



New York - Brooklyn 104 Powers Road

Location: Brooklyn , N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Adapted building)
Year: 1907

134



Masjid Tawhid

Location: Brooklyn, N.Y.
Architect: Unknown
Year: Unknown

135



Al Abedin Islamic Centre

Location: Brooklyn, N.Y.
Architect: Unknown
Year: Unknown

136



Islamic Guidance Centre, Ahul al bayt

Location: Brooklyn , N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Re-purposed building)
Year: Unknown

137



Masjid Al Farooq

Location: Brooklyn , N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Re-purposed building)
Year: Unknown

138



139

Baitush Sharaf Jame Masjid Islamic Center

Location: Brooklyn , N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Re-purposed building)
Year: Unknown

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series



140

Assafa Islamic Centre

Location: Manhattan, N.Y, U.S.A.
Architect: Azza Aboualam (addition)
Year: 1998



141

142



Masjid Malcom Shabazz

Location: Manhattan (Harlem), N.Y, U.S.A.
Architect: Sabbath Brown (adaptation)
Year: 1956 (mosque)



Madina Masjid, Islamic Council of America

Location: Manhattan (East Village), N.Y, U.S.A.
Architect: Unknown (Re-purposed)
Year: 1976

10

Unbuilt,
On Hold



Although the House of One has not been built yet, there is already a house full of life. Partnerships throughout the world, events and school projects make tangible that religions can be an asset - putting a model of a peaceful coexistence opposed to all atrocities committed in the name of religion.

- House of One

There are usually several reasons why a project is placed on hold or never built. For example, budget constraints, approvals being stalled or the client changing the course of a project’s direction. With mosques, there is an additional amplified constraint, that is, opposition from the non-Muslim community, as highlighted by various surveys and studies (Pew 2012, Charles Sturt 2021). One of the most publicised opposition to a new mosque is that of Park51 in New York.

Park51

Visiting N.Y.C. allowed for the exploration of the tensions around designing, funding and developing a mosque and how the increasing Muslim population of N.Y.C. has looked for alternate forms in which they congregate. The study afforded the opportunity to interview the Architect, Michel Abboud from SOMA, to understand the concept and subsequent reinvention of Park51, a project dating from 2010, which was labelled ‘the Ground Zero Mosque’ by those opposed to its construction, due to its proximity to the World Trade Centre (Padalka 2010). The after effects of 9/11 reverberated in community consultations.

Despite the publicity, the mosque was actually named the Islamic Cultural Centre, incorporating 23 floors with community functions, modelled on

community centres like the YMCA, common in N.Y.C. neighbourhoods. The project underwent the usual planning process which involved a public forum that drew opposition and media attention, prior to the design images of the mosque being released. Abboud reflects that the mere mention of the word Islamic, created a collective mental image of what this building will look like within the context of N.Y.C., and the opposition began from that point.

The public planning meeting galvanized those opposed with sentiments such as “This is humiliating that you would build a shrine to the very ideology that inspired the attacks of 9/11!” and that “it was atrocious that anyone would even consider allowing them to build a mosque near the World Trade Center” (Ackerman 2021). This highlights the conflation of Islam with terrorism and non-Muslim community perception of what it meant to build a mosque in that location, at that time.

The design approach was a contemporary merging of cultures. The parametric façade, merged Abrahamic religious symbols, which included the eight point star, the six point star and a cross, into a lattice like pattern, drawing on the mashrabiya that is common in traditional Islamic architecture.

Despite the well thought out design, as a result of the negative publicity, securing funders proved difficult, so the project as it was conceived, was ultimately shelved. The project transformed into a much smaller building, three levels in height, focusing on Islamic Art with a sanctuary as a prayer space, and open to all.

House of One, Berlin

In Berlin, House of One aims to be a multi faith building, with a mosque, a church and a synagogue. The building would be shared by all three Abrahamic faiths, unified under one roof. The building is designed to fit into the context of Berlin, with solid volumes, and a joined up entry space.

The project began as an initiative from the Protestant church community, and joined by the Jewish and Muslim communities of Berlin, commissioned through an architectural competition.

‘The House of One is a contemporary expression of religious life and as such must be expressed in an equally modern architectural language. With this in mind, the initiators placed an enormous amount of importance on the architectural competition’ (House of one).

Speaking with the Architect, Anna Naumann, from Kuehn Malvezzi, the project involved extensive dialogue between the three clerics and the congregations, as well as communities outside the three faiths, to ensure the centre is inclusive and functional to a wide range of people.

The House of One is designed to be a public space, with a central hall that connects the three spaces of a church, mosque and synagogue. The building includes community facilities and educational spaces. Located on an archaeological site of a former church, the building’s layout is based on the foundations of the former church, with walls that rise out of the past to create something new.

The building has been undergoing funding drives through widespread community donations for a number of years, and remains unbuilt.



House of One: Mosque, Church, Synagogue

Location: Berlin, Germany
Architect: Kuehn Malvezzi Architects
Year: Unbuilt

152



Park51

Location: Manhattan, N.Y., U.S.A.
Architect: Michel Abboud
Year: 2010 (unbuilt)

Byera Hadley Travelling Scholarships Journal Series

153



Masjid Bilal Mosque and Islamic Center

Location: Los Angeles., U.S.A.
Architect: Langdon Wilson Architects
Year: Under Construction



154

North Harrow Cultural Centre

Location: London, U.K.
Architect: Mangera Yvars Architects
Year: Under Construction



155

Islamic Community Centre & Mosque

Location: Copenhagen, Denmark
Architect: Henning Larsen
Year: Existing building unknown,
Renewal Unbuilt

156



157

Venice Biennale, Mosque Installation

Location: Venice, Italy
Artist: Nora Akawi & Nourah Al Sayeh, Bahrain Pavilion
Year: 2018

11

Inventory of Mosques Visited



The following pages highlight an analysis of the data collected in this study, beginning with a list of the 50 mosques visited, by country.

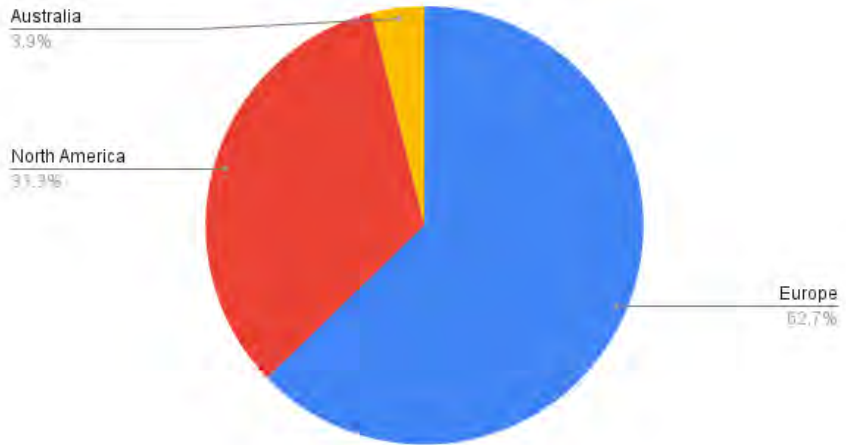
Australia
Australian Islamic Centre, Newport, Victoria
Punchbowl Mosque, Sydney, NSW
U.S.A.
Masjid Bilal Mosque and Islamic Center, L.A.
Islamic Center of Southern California L.A.
Baitush Sharaf Jame Masjid, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Islamic Guidance Center Ahul al Bayt, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Masjid Al-Farooq, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Masjd At-Taqwa ,Brooklyn, N.Y.
Masjid Tawhid, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Al-Abedin Islamic Centre, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Power Street Mosque, Brooklyn, N.Y.
Islamic Council of America, Manhattan, N.Y.
Islamic Cultural Centre of New York, Manhattan N.Y.
Assafa Islamic Centre, Manhattan N.Y.
Park51, (unbuilt) Manhattan N.Y.
Islamic Cultural Centre, Manhattan N.Y.
Masjid Malcom Shabazz, Manhattan N.Y.
Islamic Society of North Americ, Plainfield, Indiana

Canada
Ismaili Centre, Toronto, Ontario
Noor Cultural Centre, Toronto, Ontario
U.K.
Central London Mosque, London, England
Shahporan Mosque, London, England
North Harrow Cultural Centre, London, England
Finsbury Mosque London, England
Ismaili Centre, London, England
Cambridge Central Mosque, Cambridge, England
Alhikmah Mosque, Aberdeen, Scotland
Edinburgh Central Mosque, Edinburgh, Scotland
Glasgow Central Mosque, Glasgow, Scotland
Italy
The Great Mosque of Rome, Rome
Islamic Centre of Venice Venice
Islamic Cultural Centre, Venice
Venice Biennale, (mosque installation), Venice

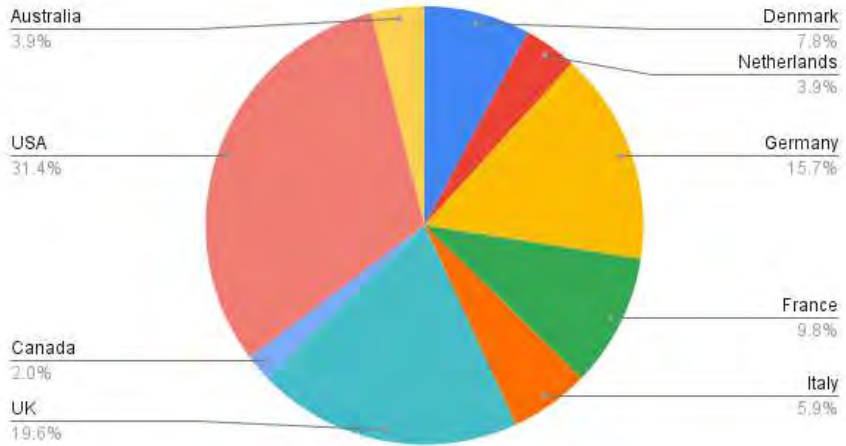
France
Grand Mosque of Paris, Paris
Institute of Islamic Culture, Paris
Alhashimi Mosque Saint Ouen, Paris
Bondy Mosque, Paris
Grand Centrel Mosque of Strasbourg, Strasbourg
Germany
Cologne Central Mosque, Cologne
Duisburg Cathedral0 Mosque, Duisburg
Social Complex, Gelsenkirchen
Penzberg Mosque, Penzberg
Islamic Centre of Munich Munich
House of One, Berlin
Hamburg Central Mosque, Berlin

Netherlands
The West Mosque (Westermoskee), Amsterdam
Turkish Cultural Centre, Doetinchem
Denmark
The Blue Mosque, Copenhagen
Islamic Community Centre & Mosque, Copenhagen
The Imam Ali Mosque, Copenhagen

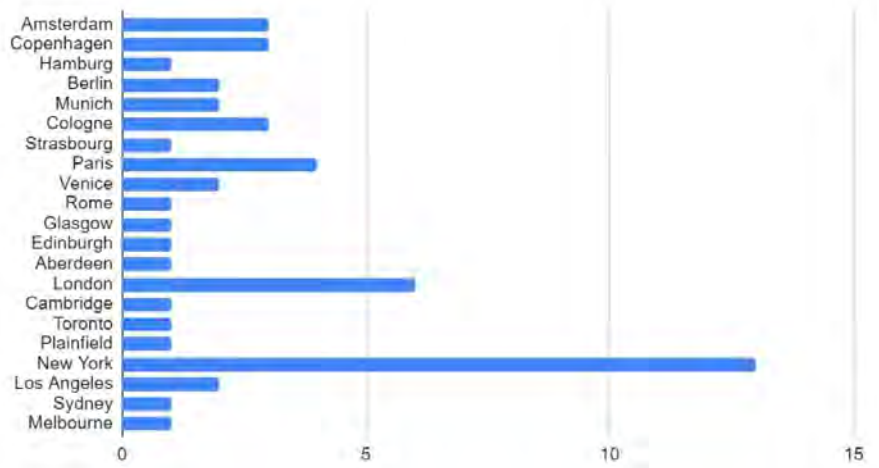
Percentage of mosques visited: By Continent



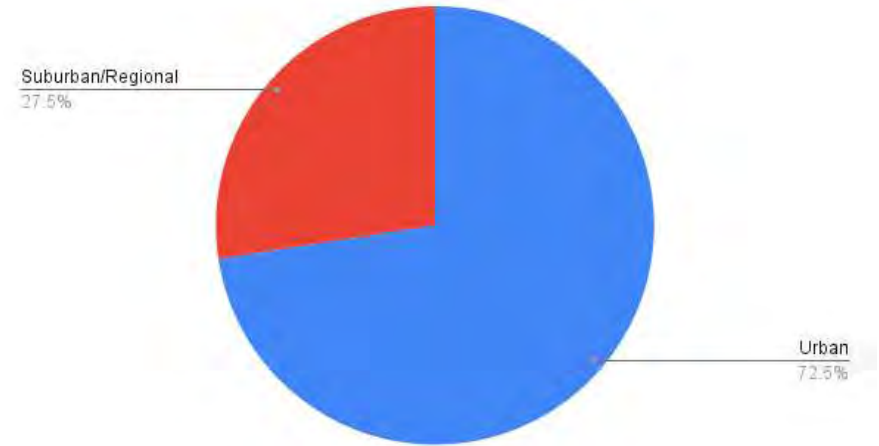
Percentage of mosques visited: By Country



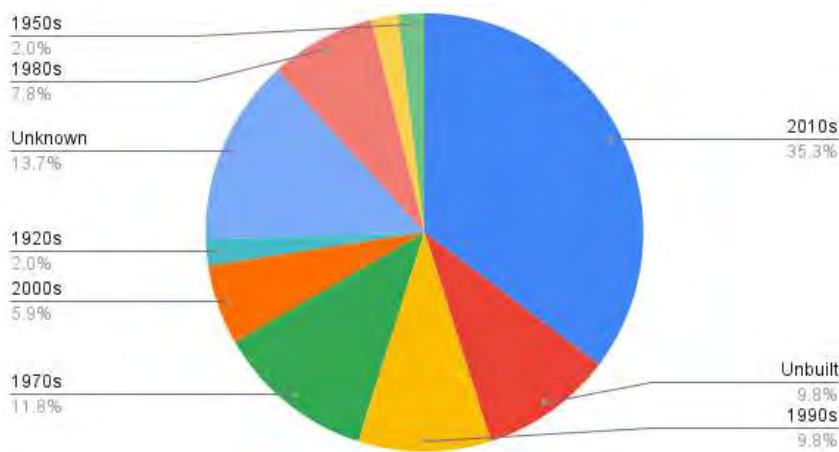
Percentage of mosques visited: By Cities



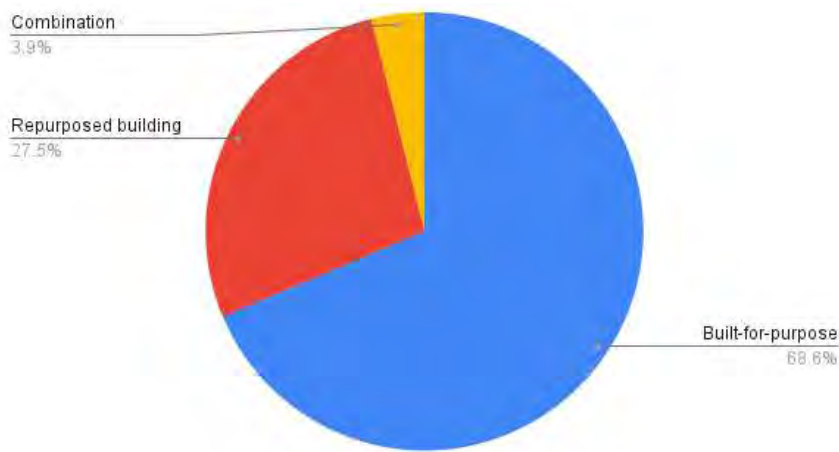
Mosques Visited: Urbanity



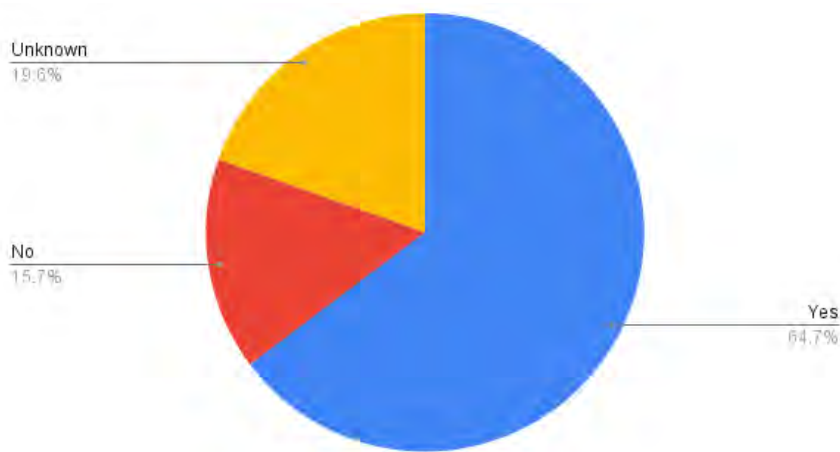
Mosques Visited:
Year Built



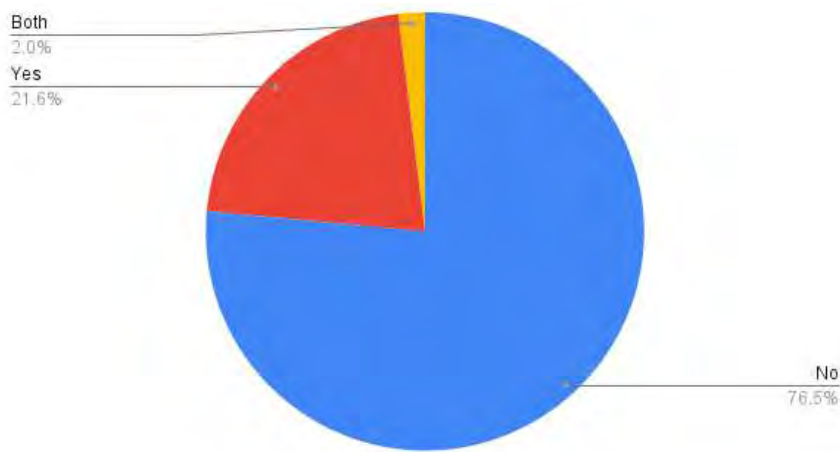
Mosques Visited:
Built-for-Purpose or
Re-purposed



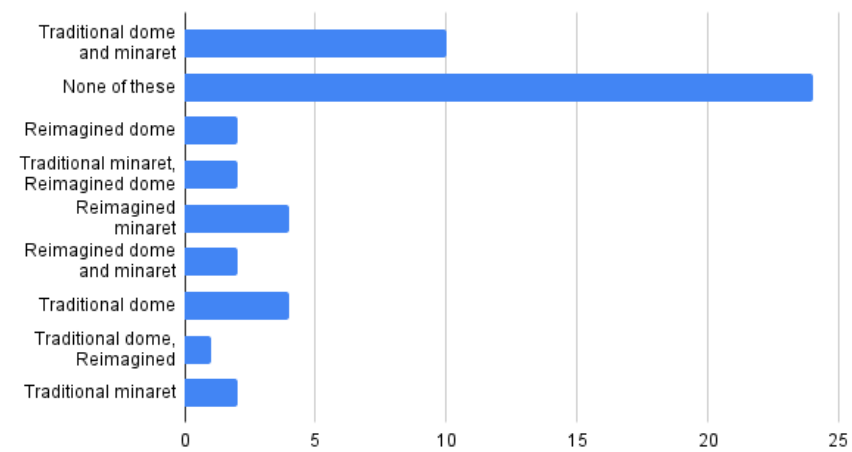
Mosques Visited:
Architect Designed



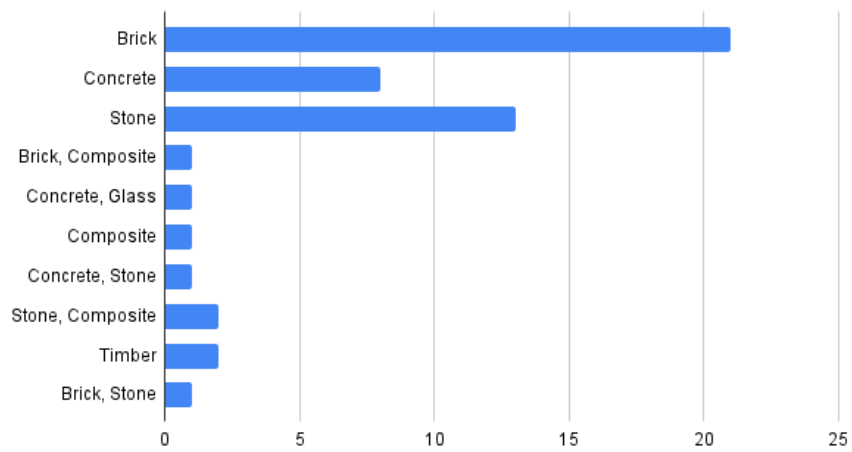
Mosques Visited:
Muslim Architect Involvement



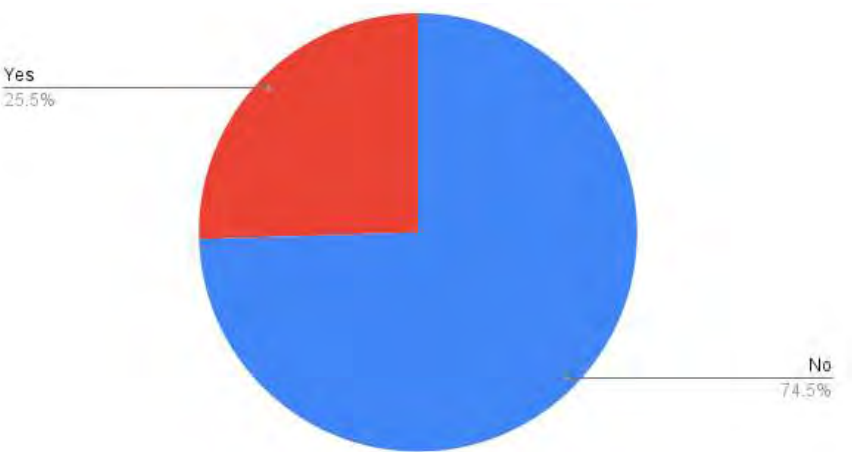
Mosques Visited:
Traditional or Re-imagined



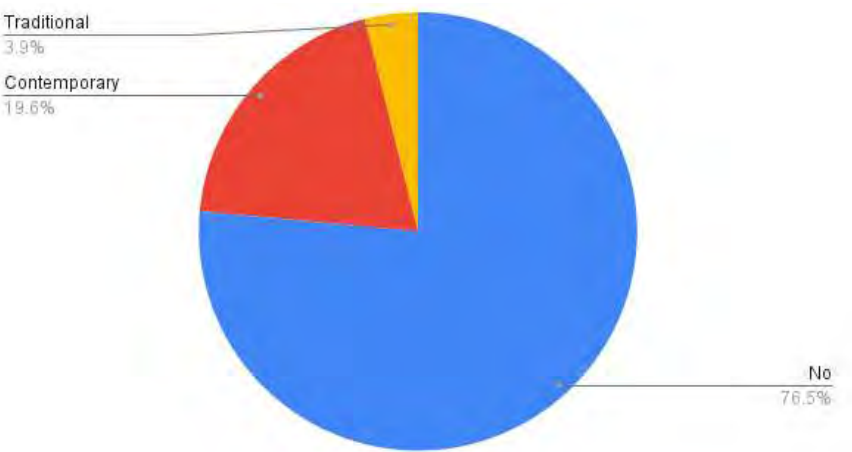
Mosques Visited:
Dominant Building Material



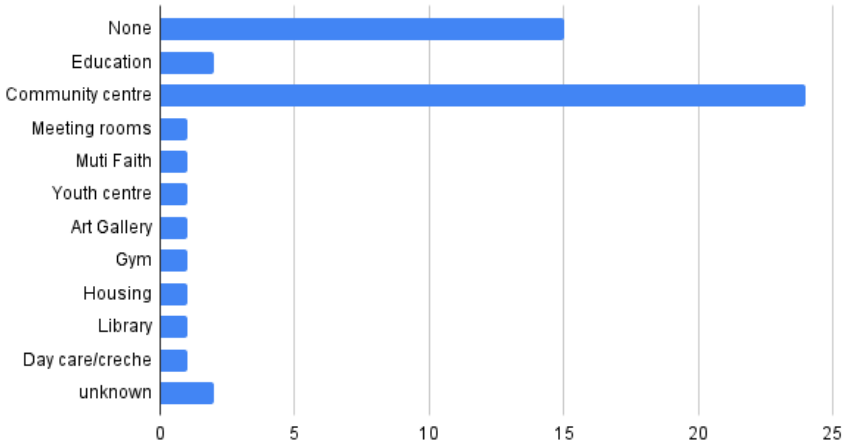
Mosques Visited:
Landscape Component



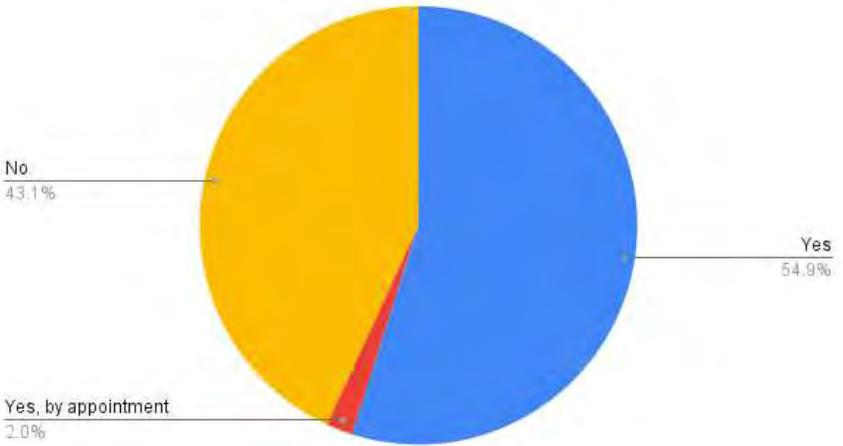
Mosques Visited:
Commissioned Artwork



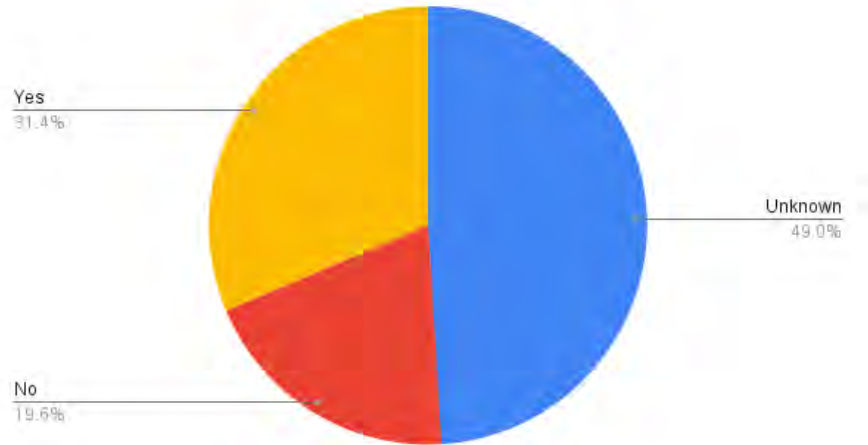
Mosques Visited:
Spaces for Community



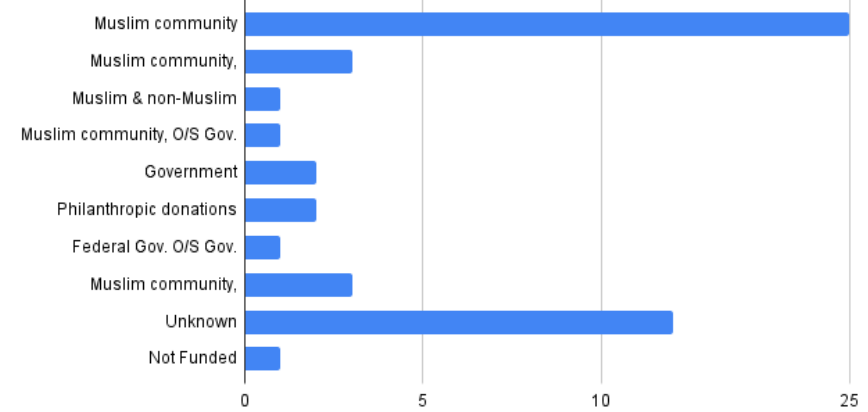
Mosques Visited:
Open days to wider public



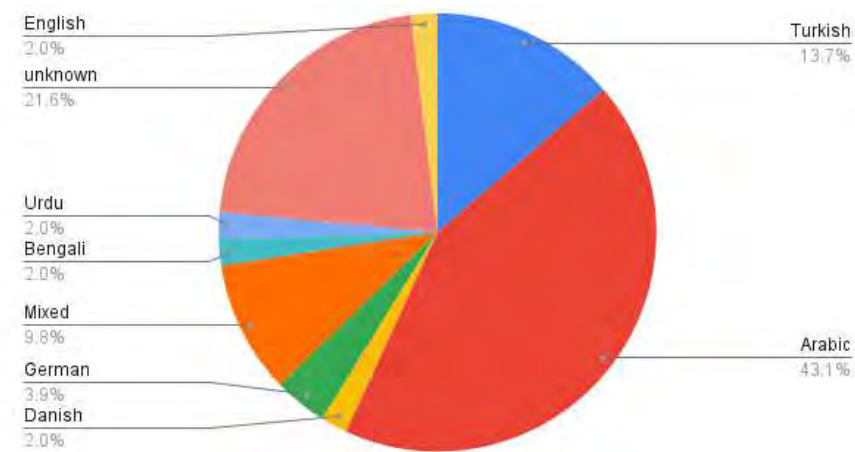
Mosques Visited:
Community Consultation



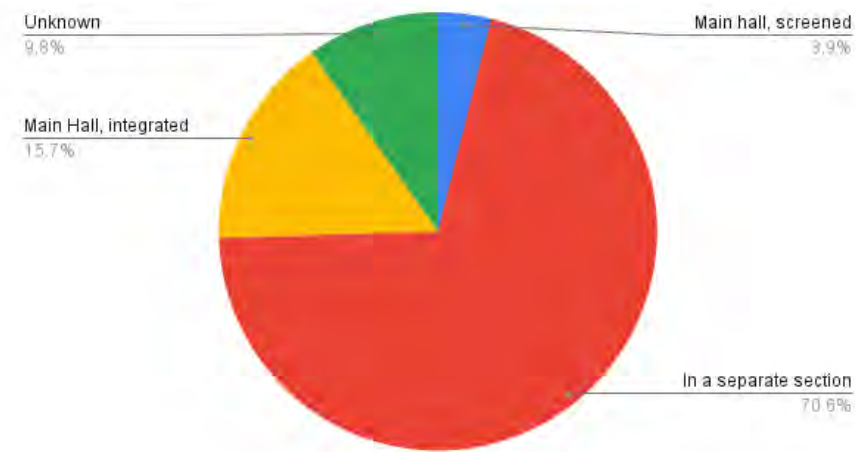
Mosques Visited:
Funding



Mosques Visited:
Dominant Community
Language



Mosques Visited:
Separate Women's Space



12

References



Ackerman, Spencer. *The Scariest Thing I've Ever Seen in My Life”: How the “Ground Zero Mosque” Meltdown Set the Table for Trump*. 2021. 1 June 2023. <<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2021/08/how-the-ground-zero-mosque-meltdown-set-the-table-for-trump>>.

Adwell, Alyssa. *Becoming Dutch*. 2015. 1 June 2018. <<https://depts.washington.edu/chidint/journal/2015/03/becoming-dutch/>>.

Alavi, Rehan. 'A privilege': How Ramadan helps this Indigenous Australian embrace his Muslim faith. 2023. 1 June 2023. <<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/urdu/en/article/a-privilege-how-ramadan-helps-this-indigenous-australian-embrace-his-muslim-faith/7as33f2nl>>.

Aly, Remona. *UK mosques must make space for women – not turn us away*. 2018. 1 June 2023. <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/19/british-muslim-women-open-mosque-initiative>>.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. *Sydney - South West*. 2016. 30 May 2023. <<https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2016/127#:~:text=Demographics%20%26%20education,-demographics%20%26%20education%20%7C%20cultural&text=In%20the%202016%20Census%2C%20there,up%201.1%25%20of%20the%20population.&text=The%20median%20ag>>.

Barnard, Anne, New York Times. *Painful memory for Muslims: Outrage over a proposed Islamic center in Manhattan* 2021. 1 Oct 2021. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/11/nyregion/muslim-islamic-center-9-11.html> >.

Bollack, Françoise. *Old Buildings, New Forms*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2013.

Cambridge University Press. *Cambridge Dictionary*. 2023. 1 July 2023. <<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>>.

Candalepas, Angelo. *Angelo Candalepas: Australian Islamic Mission*. Sydney: Uro Publications, 2019.

Charles Sturt University. *Violence and hatred against Australian mosques widespread according to new research*. 2021. 1 July 2023. <<https://news.csu.edu.au/opinion/violence-and-hatred-against-australian-mosques-widespread-according-to-new-research>>.

Chowdhary, Lubna. *Al Hikma Mosque*. 2015. 1 June 2023. <<https://lubnachowdhary.co.uk/commissions/al-hikma-mosque-aberdeen/>>.

Croaker, Trisher, Sydney Morning Herald. *Glenn Murcutt on mosque without minarets, and architecture designed to transform*. 2016. 1 June 2023. <<https://www.smh.com.au/national/glenn-murcutt-on-mosque-without-minarets-and-architecture-designed-to-transform-20161202-gt2dah.html>>.

Divisare. *Mosque of Rome*. 2018. 1 July 2023. <<https://divisare.com/projects/386206-paolo-portoghesi-mi-chenxing-mosque-of-rome>>.

House of One. The Architecture. 1 July 2023. < <https://house-of-one.org/en/architecture>>.

Institut des Cultures d’Islam. *Place of Gathering*. 2023. 1 May 2023. <<https://www.institut-cultures-islam.org/en/place-of-gathering/>>.

Islamic Centre of Southern California. *Settling in at 434 Vermont*. 2023. 1 July 2023. <<https://www.islamiccenter.com/1975-first-youth-group/>>.

Javed, Saman. *Bleak, hidden and uninviting: It's time to improve women's prayer spaces in UK mosques*. 2022. 1 June 2023. <<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/women/womens-prayer-spaces-mosques-islam-uk-b2124674.html>>.

Khalidi, Omar, American Studies Journal 52. *Mosques in North America* 2008. 1 Oct 2021. <<http://www.asjournal.org/52-2008/mosques-in-north-america/#:~:text=It%20should%20employ%20a%20form,universality%20and%20unity%20of%20Islam>>.

Lewins, Dean, The Conversation. *Graffiti, arson, death threats: new research finds widespread violence against Australian mosques*. 2021. 1 July 2023. <<https://theconversation.com/graffiti-arson-death-threats-new-research-finds-widespread-violence-against-australian-mosques-156843>>.

Lisi, Clemente. New York Mosques Can Broadcast Call To Prayer Without A Permit. 30 August 2023. 30 Sep 2023. <<https://religionunplugged.com/news/2023/8/30/new-york-city-mosques-can-broadcast-muslim-call-to-prayer-without-a-permit>>.

LMA. *Eid al-Fitr* 2023. 1 Oct 2023. <<https://lma.org.au/community-serivces/islamic-services/eid/>>.

Madain Project. *Masjid an-Nabawi at the time of Prophet Muhammad*. 2023. 15 June 2023. <https://madainproject.com/masjid_al_nabawi_at_the_time_of_prophet_muhammad#plan-and-orientation>.

MEND. Muslim Census Report Compounds the Need for Effective Mosque Security. 2022. 1 July 2022. <<https://www.mend.org.uk/mosque-security-report/>>.

Momigliano, Anna, Washington Post. In Italy, Islam doesn't officially exist. Here's what Muslim's must accept to change that. 2017. 1 July 2023. <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/02/08/in-italy-islam-doesnt-officially-exist-heres-what-muslims-must-accept-to-change-that/>>.

Mosqpedia. *Grand Mosque in Paris*. 2023. 1 May 2023. <<https://mosqpedia.org/en/mosque/301>>.

Museum, Met. *The Dome of the Rock*. 2012. 30 June 2023. <<https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2012/byzantium-and-islam/blog/where-in-the-world/posts/dome-of-the-rock>>.

New South Wales Government. *State Heritage Inventory - Broken Hill Mosque*. 2023. 30 June 2023. <<https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5051563>>.

New York Times. *Building a Mosque in France, Never Easy, May Get Harder*. 2021. 30 June 2023. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/31/world/europe/france-islam-law-mosques.html>>.

O'Brien, Susie. *There is little to like on the ugly side of mosque pro United States Departmenttest*. 2014. 1 June 2018. <<https://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/there-is-little-to-like-on-the-ugly-side-of-mosque-protest/news-story/ba720aece5aab7248ff2fda86a6244f7>>.

O'Connell, Ronan. *Tracing the cameleers who brought Islam to Australia*. 2021. 15 June 2023. <<https://www.thenationalnews.com/lifestyle/travel/tracing-the-cameleers-who-brought-islam-to-australia-1.1148862>>.

Padalka, Alex. *Michel Abboud: Designer of Park51*. 2010. 1 June 2023. <<https://www.enr.com/articles/20346-michel-abboud-designer-of-park51>>.

Pew Research Centre. *Controversies Over Mosques and Islamic Centers Across*. 2012. 1 July 2023. <<https://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/11/2012/09/2012Mosque-Map.pdf>>.

Saleem, Shahed. *The British Mosque: An Architectural and Social History*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018. 3.

Siddiqui, Zhua. *America;s Olders Surviving Mosque is in Williamsburg*. 26 December 2018. 15 June 2019. <<https://www.thenationalnews.com/lifestyle/travel/tracing-the-cameleers-who-brought-islam-to-australia-1.1148862>>.

SWANA Alliance. *What is SWANA?* 2023. 1 July 2023. <<https://swanaalliance.com/about>>.

UNESCO. *Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls*. 2023. 1 July 2023. <<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/148/>>.

Women's Mosque of America. *Women's Mosque of America*. 2023. 1 June 2023. <<https://womensmosque.com/>>.

World Population Review. *Muslim Population By Country*. 2021. 20 June 2023. <<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/muslim-population-by-country>>.



Image: Turkish Cultural Centre
Doetinchem, Amsterdam

