



## MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY IN CHINESE MUSLIM MOSQUES TOWARDS UNIVERSALIZING ISLAM IN MALAYSIA

Received April 06th, 2022 | Accepted October 05th, 2022 | Available online December 20th, 2022 | DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.18860/jia.v7i2.15777> |

### Alice Sabrina Ismail

Department of Architecture,  
Faculty of Built Environment,  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia,  
Johor, Malaysia

### Corresponding Author:

[b-alice@utm.my](mailto:b-alice@utm.my)

### Nurul Syaheera Aziz

Department of Architecture,  
Faculty of Built Environment,  
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia,  
Johor, Malaysia

### ABSTRACT

Malaysia is the world's 43rd most populous country comprising multi-ethnic and multicultural societies. About half the population is ethnically Malay, with minorities of Chinese, Indians, and indigenous peoples. From this number, Chinese Muslims are minorities in Malaysia, and only 2 per cent of ethnic Chinese are Muslims. Nevertheless, there is a growing trend of accommodating Chinese cultural elements in Islamic preaching in Malaysia. Due to this recent emergence of Chinese Muslim cultural identities, Chinese cultural symbols and Islamic messages are combined to produce a new notion in Malaysian society that 'Chineseness' and Islam are compatible. For that reason, the Chinese Muslim association and dakwah movement in Malaysia, like MACMA (Malaysia Chinese Muslim Association), promulgate a cultural dakwah approach aiming to universalize Islam to spread the Islamic messages and invite non-Muslims to get closer to the Islamic faith. One of the approaches is building Chinese-style mosques throughout Malaysia as a symbol of preaching Islam through Chinese cultural signs and practices. However, no comprehensive studies have elucidated how mosques patronized by the MACMA universalize Islam for Muslims and non-Muslims. Therefore, this paper aims to identify and analyze how MACMA Islamic ideology influences the architectural design elements found in the MACMA mosques as a symbol of cultural dakwah to propagate and teach the values of Islam. This study used the hermeneutic method through the interpretivism paradigm. The two indicators of mosques, form-making, and spatial elements, act as a sign of Islamic values to propagate religious tolerance. The findings indicate how Islamic values and ideology involving the practising of Ihsan, Ikram, and Ihsan are translated into Mosque architectural elements as a symbol of dakwah to display communal-friendly mosque design. Based on these findings, this study will outline the best mosque design guidelines for designers that can function as a religious sign and symbol for transnational dimensions of cultural dakwah towards unity, equality, and spiritual rejuvenation.

### KEYWORDS:

MACMA (Malaysia Chinese Muslim Association); Chinese Muslim Mosques; Islamic values; universalizing Islam

### INTRODUCTION

The existence of the Chinese Muslim community amidst the Malaysian landscape dominated by the Malay-Muslim community has provided fresh ways of thinking about Islam, and more specifically, of thinking about Muslims and their relations to the challenges of urbanization, modernity, and plurality in contemporary Malaysia [1][2]. The existence of the Chinese Muslim community also marks a new approach to their involvement in building the Mosque as a symbol of religious inclusivity or, in other words, for the manifestation of cultural pluralism and religious tolerance [3]. In this sense, the Mosque built by this community becomes a social institution that can fulfil two objectives[4]. First, displaying communal-friendly characters in design can serve as a centre to strengthen the brotherhood ties between Chinese Muslims and Muslim society [5], [6]. Secondly, it serves as a place of worship that can foster efforts towards fortifying spiritual values for the Muslim and non-Muslim ummah and universally for the sake of overall

social development [7] [8]. However, the potentiality of these Chinese Muslim mosques in Malaysia is not well explored and documented. Furthermore, there is a lack of detailed research on discussing the being of Chinese-style mosques in Malaysia as a new phenomenon for the cultural dakwah approach towards negotiating Chinese Muslim identities in Malaysia. Past studies on mosques in Malaysia primarily focused on seven aspects which are documentation of a) mosque history and development, b) aesthetics and ornamentations in mosques design, c) the technology and technical aspect in mosques constructions, d) the role of mosques from the quranic and hadith perspective, e) maintenance and restoration of heritage mosques, f) crises in contemporary mosque architecture and g) study of social aspects and gender roleplay in mosque design.

Therefore, this study's main objective is first to identify the MACMA Islamic ideologies and dakwah values. Secondly, analyze the unique architectural features and elements in these Chinese Muslim

mosques in Malaysia influenced by the MACMA Islamic ideologies as a case study. This study is essential in understanding why and how these Chinese Muslim mosques showcase architectural elements as symbols to propagate the Islamic faith and values to unify Muslim Chinese in Malaysia, supported by the MACMA organization. The MACMA has become a bridge between the Chinese Muslim community, the Chinese (Muslim or not Muslim), and the local community. The research outcome will be a design guideline framework for designing a mosque that can universalize Islam to demonstrate its compatibility with Chinese culture and contribute to developing a local Muslim community. Although the Mosque was built in a Chinese style and managed by Chinese Muslims, it is a multi-ethnic religious institution that permits Muslims and non-Muslims from different ethnic groups to gather and interact, thus leading to inclusivity as a shared space for all.

The scope of this study will focus on two Chinese Muslim mosques: Muhammadiyah Mosque, Ipoh, Perak, and Beijing Mosque, Rantau Panjang, Kelantan. These two mosques are essential to portray Mosque as a religious symbol that creatively indicates the harmonious coexistence between Islam and Chineseness in Malaysia and asserts a new identity of architectural mosque style through local negotiations and acceptance. In this sense, apart from understanding that the Mosque is an inspiration for providing insight into Chinese Muslim cultures in Malaysia, the Mosque's structural and ornamental elements are embedded with symbolic values to promote Islamic practice to create a religious atmosphere to reduce the boundaries of mosques and to create close ties with the community. For the benefit of the study and to fulfil the objectives, section two is divided into two parts. The first part will define the role of the Chinese Muslim community in Malaysia, focusing on the MACMA association's approaches and methods of promulgating Islam followed by their Islamic ideologies to develop the Muslim Chinese and Muslim community in Malaysia. The second part will review and establish relevant indicators of how the MACMA Islamic ideologies shaped Chinese Muslim mosques in Malaysia. This Mosque also includes the documentation of the characteristics of Chinese Muslim mosques in Malaysia to establish appropriate design guidelines to appreciate differences in cultural identities in the country.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### THE CHINESE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN MALAYSIA

In Malaysia, the Chinese Muslim community comprises 1% to 2% of the total population of the Muslim community based on the recent demographics recorded by the National Consensus (Department of Statistics, 2022). Interestingly, the history of the Chinese Muslim community has a long chronicle in this region, covering at least 600 years since the establishment of the Malay world [1].

The Malaysian context portrays a unique composition of Chinese Muslim communities

comprising ethnic Hui Chinese (Mandarin-speaking Muslims originating from China) who settled in Malaysia in the 15<sup>th</sup> century [9]. However, the increasing number of Hui migrants began in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Many primarily originate from the northwestern parts of China and have chosen Malaysia for business, education, and religious purposes. The Hui's preference to choose Malaysia is due to the existing contextual environment that offers a Muslim-friendly destination to learn and practice Islam freely [10], [11]. Not only that but also the local Chinese Muslims in Malaysia are predominantly Han converts and ethnically different from Hui Muslims. Nevertheless, according to many scholars, the Hui Muslims are the ones who contributed much to the formation of Chinese Muslim cultural identities in Malaysia [12], [13]. In addition, there is also the third or fourth generation of non-Muslim Chinese migrants from southeastern China who also embraced Islam in Malaysia.

According to past scholars, the settlers and development of the Chinese Muslim community in Malaysia can be traced through different historical periods [1]. The first phase was in the late 14th to 17th century; the second was during British rule's subjugation during the 18th to early 19th century; the third was during the late 19th century until the present [6]. These three phases will be explained in turn. The first phase of Chinese existence in Malay was evident from voyages and naval activities. This phase was stated in many archival documents indicating the role of Admiral Zheng He (Cheng Ho), a Muslim from Yunnan. He visited Malacca with his Chinese Muslim crews and created a sphere of influence, including establishing the Chinese Muslim community settlements at important trade centres within the Malay peninsula. The active role played by Cheng Ho initiated and strengthened the expansion of the Chinese Muslim communities, which indirectly influenced the Malay peninsula's social, political, and economic scenes. The Chinese Muslim communities are well-emulated and assimilated into the local ethnic majority population. Their presence is well accepted through local negotiations, which has allowed the Chinese Muslims to maintain their Chinese identity and Islamic religiosity.

The second phase under colonial rule showed the continuation of the Chinese Muslim identity in the local context. This phase was evident when the British companies imported large numbers of labourers from India and China to work at the tin mines and plantations [10], [13]. At this time, the trans-local formation of the Chinese Muslim cultural identity was widely ingrained and well assimilated through many intermarriages with the local Malay Muslims. These Chinese migrants embraced Islam, and according to scholars [5] [14], the Chinese Muslim populace in the Straits Settlements and the Confederated Malay States in the early 19th century was 3% of the total populace of an estimation of 581,598 Chinese people [7], [15]. Nevertheless, the Chinese Muslims still retain their Hui

Muslim culture in China as Islamic reference points to inspire identity formation, like architectural Mosques built form in Malaysia. It can be seen in many local religious buildings that adopted Chinese carpentry skills to form original construction and architectural methods in the 18th century. These Chinese craftsmen played a role in constructing the religious building adapted from the remnants found in Southern China during the Ch'ing Dynasty [2], [11]. Examples are the Kampung Hulu Mosque, Kampung Keling Mosque, and Tengker Mosque, the oldest mosques in Melaka. Over time, the Chinese Muslim community grew, which led to the establishment of a Chinese Muslim religious group that actively promulgated Islam headed by Chinese Muslim clerics. This extensive effort was widely seen after Malaysia achieved independence during the third phase of the late 19th century [16], [17]. The ruling government also promoted the practice of Islam and Islamic cultural identity, including celebrating the Chinese multi-cultures in Malaysia. The formation of PERKIM (Pertubuhan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia) was a welfare association for Muslims initiated by Tunku in 1960, along with founding members like Haji Ibrahim Ma. The PERKIM marked the beginning of formal government support to bridge the racial gap between Malays and Muslim Chinese. This act deepens Malay leaders' understanding of Islam in Malaysia and improves the local Malay Muslim perception of this minority ethnic Chinese Muslim group in the country. Utilizing PERKIM as a platform, the dissemination of Islam by the Chinese Muslim community was spread through publications, religious public talks and sermons, education, cultural, and various social activities such as charities and social service. In addition, the Chinese Muslim community in Malaysia, dominated by the Hui's, also spread the message of Islam through their trading, business, and daily engagements, as they have frequent interactions with local Muslims in both realms. In parallel to this, MACMA (Malaysian Chinese Muslim Association), a non-government missionary organization that differed in its founding objectives from PERKIM, has targeted similarities in helping religious harmony through Chinese-Muslim welfare efforts and relationships with non-Muslims significantly to religious harmony in Malaysia. The idea of establishing this organization resulted from a consultation held between members of the MACMA organization and YB Dato' Dr Abdul Hamid Othman, Deputy Prime Minister in the Prime Minister's Department of Malaysia, on July 27, 1994 [14]. It will be explained in detail in the following.

#### **THE ROLE OF MACMA AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ISLAM DAKWAH AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHINESE MUSLIM COMMUNITY**

MACMA was officially established on September 8, 1994, striving to achieve three main goals. Firstly, these goals are to share the universal message of Islam with the broader Chinese community. Secondly, to develop the knowledge and practices of Islamic Chinese Muslims. Third, to address

any cultural misunderstandings that arise. The role of MACMA is to take care of its members' welfare and organize activities for mutual assistance based on 'maqasid syariah' (intent, objective, and purpose with a desire to create harmony with others); this relates to welfare and interest for the benefit of the ummah and members of the Malaysian Muslim Chinese Association (MACMA) [1], [13]. This non-governmental da'wah organization has five main focuses comprising of promulgating the teaching of Islam through possible means for spiritual and religious motivation, conducting and promoting Islamic activities with other bodies, developing networking and strengthening interrelationships with Muslim communities in Malaysia, supporting and establishing Islamic centres or Chinese Muslim mosques for Islamic preaching (dakwah), including building and developing credible Chinese Muslim community in Malaysia [6], [7]. However, MACMA is more interested in developing and promoting the Mosque's role as the social, cultural, educational, and dakwah religious centre for the Chinese and non-Chinese in Malaysia. By 2000, the MACMA had 17 branches opened throughout Malaysia in major cities, with four Chinese Muslim mosques located in Kelantan, Perak, Malacca, and Negeri Sembilan. These mosques have unique architectural styles that resemble the mosque building in Beijing, China, Niu Jie Mosque, and are similar to the design of Cheng Ho Mosque in Indonesia. The architecturally built Mosque looks like a temple (house of worship of "Tri Dharma"). It is not surprising as Indonesia also has a related organization like MACMA known as "PITI/ Persatuan Islam Tionghoa Indonesia" (Unity of Islamic Chinese in Indonesia) [6], [8]. PITI has become a bridge between the Chinese Muslim community, the Chinese (Muslim or not Muslim), and the local Chinese community (non-Chinese) in Indonesia. PITI also strongly connects with MACMA, in which these two organizations often conduct religious dakwah activities to preach Islam to the Chinese community in both countries. Like the Chinese-style mosques in Indonesia, this trend also has become a new phenomenon and fad for negotiating Chinese Muslims identities in Malaysia. Therefore, the next part will focus on three things which are the definition of Islamic values from MACMA's ideological perspective, followed by the need and the importance and how Islamic values are portrayed in architecture by taking past examples referring to the Chinese mosque to reflect the ideology and values of Islam that MACMA is trying to highlight through their mosques. This section will also explain the study method of China Muslim mosques to reflect the Islamic ideology of MACMA and its spread in the design of the architectural elements of the Mosque.

#### **MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY AND VALUES**

MACMA, a non-governmental dakwah organization, is actively involved in providing a peaceful approach to reaching out to society to return Islam to a society based on the reform (tajdid) of Islamic thought. For that reason, MACMA upholds that

in dakwah, moral values are human actions that should be based on the Quran as focused on life through four things, namely equality (wisdom), Adil (implementation of something beneficial), Iffah (self-control), and Syajaah (transparent and truthful). In other words, it practices equality of standards between people regardless of rank or wealth by being respectful and open [2], [17]. These are moral values for every human being to be moderate and respect each other. Secondly, doing something worthwhile. MACMA promotes for Muslims to reduce the hardships of others. It is the responsibility of all Muslims to build a better community and be united. Hence, reaching out to society and completing life suitably with appropriate orders is crucial. These qualities should be carried out boldly as traits of dakwah for preaching Islam with righteous moral values. This is needed to create human acceptance, integration, respect, and tolerance to provide a good mood in self-improvement through dakwah. Concerning this, in brief, MACMA focuses on three main principles and values for dakwah: i) creating Ihsan, a religious atmosphere through the charity of mosques to strengthen the bonds between members of the movement, the community, and the Mosque by practising openness; ii) promote the implementation of dakwah and live the Prophet's way continuously through manners for (Islah and Tajdid) based on the Quran and Sunnah by practising order and moderation; iii) Adopt community life with Ikram to avoid gaps between the Chinese Muslim community with a sense of responsibility for mutual respect [11], [18]. The four primary Islamic values propagated by MACMA are openness, order, moderation, and responsibility towards the Muslim ummah. It can be seen emblematically in the MACMA logo that portrays the Chinese word – Nian (Syahadah or act of faith), Li (Doa or prayers), Zhai (Sawm or Fasting), Ke (Zakat or almsgiving) and Chao (Hajj or congregation) symbolize the proper practice of Islam, unity and harmonious cooperation in Muslim communities [16], [19]. Hence, these values will be the leading indicators in this paper to prove that the ideology of the dakwah movement influenced the Mosque's architecture by the MACMA missionary movement in Malaysia and elucidate how the architecture of the MACMA mosque is seen as a symbol of dakwah by this missionary movement. Thus, the ideological relevance of the MACMA missionary movement is linked to moral values in religious ideology and its relevance to the elements in architecture in showing it as a 'sign'. The MACMA missionary movement is actively developing and demarcating mosques as their main dakwah centre. The following section discusses the Chinese Muslim mosque's architecture as a symbol of MACMA Islamic religious ideology and values to showcase the development of the Chinese mosque as the centre of da'wah in Malaysia.

#### **INFLUENCE OF MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY ON MOSQUE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS AS DAKWAH CENTRE AND**

#### **SYMBOL OF UNIVERSALIZING ISLAMIC VALUES**

The MACMA organization was established based on Islamic ideology that upholds the five pillars of faith (*Rukun Islam*) and is based on the Islamic values as the Prophet Muhammad PBUH practiced. These Islamic values are translated and implemented in MACMA's dakwah movement. This dakwah to Muslims is necessary because of the need to create awareness for Muslims to live the proper Islamic way of life. To non-Muslims, dakwah will be more accessible if Muslims themselves show good moral values. In this sense, MACMA prefers peaceful implementing dakwah through wisdom (*bi al hal*) using primary methods inviting and adapting to local conditions referring to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH moral values [12]. Dakwah, from moral values, can be implemented through three intermediaries: speech, writing, and human action. These actions include art, performance, song, architecture, etc. For the benefit of this study, the mosque architecture will be described in detail as it can portray a sign to symbolize the Islamic moral values as propagated by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. It is because architecture is a tool and translation of religious ideology in its design. After all, the architecture is a sign system (sign) consisting of language or code that can communicate the wishes and desires of the patron of the building to users. In other words, architecture can be a tool and translation of religious ideology because it can show the belief in 'supernatural' power that gives a picture of a religion's beliefs and theology. Religious ideology-based design and space give meaning when the role of a building is translated into a system of codes for the user. For example, design elements in religious buildings, such as ornamentation, symbols (domes, stars, crosses), typology, roles, structures, designs, and characters, can give meaning in the form of codes. This code can then be processed explicitly and implicitly, giving the user meaning to the building. Based on this, architecture can be used as an intermediary to convey the religious ideology translated into the form and architectural space of the building. The relevance of religious ideology involves the formation of moral values. Thus, the architecture can potentially translate moral values in religion directly and indirectly to users through the elements contained in the building. The following section explains the study method and analysis technique of the Chinese mosque to reflect the Islamic ideology of MACMA and its spread in the design of the architectural elements of the Mosque before elucidating the interrelationship between religious ideology and architectural elements in the findings section.

#### **METHODS**

This study utilizes case studies as the research strategy under qualitative methods and approaches. Since the study focuses on two different branches of study, namely the study of mosques and studies on texts, books, documents, and records by MACMA,

thus, the appropriate type of paradigm is chosen-structuralism and Interpretivism. Structuralism involves an in-depth study of the structural logic of a cultural product, while Interpretivism involves the study of reality that an individual shapes through an implicit meaning. The study will focus on the structure of the mosque building built and used by the Tabligh missionary movement. Interpretative will be conducted to find why and how this movement shaped the construction of their Mosque. Since this study requires an understanding of the hidden meaning behind an object, semiotics is applied to unveil the meaning behind the construction of two Chinese Muslim mosques by the MACMA movement in Malaysia.

On the other hand, interpretivism processes data subjectively adjusted to the selection of hermeneutic approaches. This approach makes it easier for researchers to understand and process data in a social phenomenon that can answer why, how, and what happens, involving reading speech texts, documents, books, and others. Hermeneutics allows researchers to understand the purpose of a person or an organization for their actions. In this study, the MACMA founders' ideological thinking was studied in terms of their principles and actions. This ideology is conducted to identify MACMA's Islamic values, which influence their ideological thinking, and to evaluate the relevance of

the MACMA movement towards shaping the Chinese Muslim mosque's architecture as the centre of dakwah. As for the data collection method, direct observation is used to observe the selected case studies, whereas interview with selected officials and professionals is to obtain knowledge of the history and background of the Mosque and the purpose of the elements and architecture of the Mosque. The analysis was based on an explanation built by Yin [14]. This analysis can explain the phenomenon based on specific causes and effects. Therefore, the analysis of the Mosque by MACMA is divided into two phases: The first phase analysis is done separately, based on the observational analysis of Muhammadiyah Mosque, Ipoh, Perak and Beijing Mosque, Rantau Panjang, Kelantan, followed by documentation analysis related to mosques and interviews. The analysis also includes studying dakwah documents by the MACMA movement and activities in Malaysia. The second phase of analysis identifies the similarities and differences of each Mosque to underline the characteristics and elements of mosques patronized by MACMA. Later, studies on the ideology of the MACMA missionary movement were linked to identify the factors that shaped their Islamic ideology. Finally, both analyses were combined to determine how the Islamic ideology brought about by the MACMA movement affected the Mosque used as the centre of the dakwah (refer to Diagram 1.0 Research Framework).

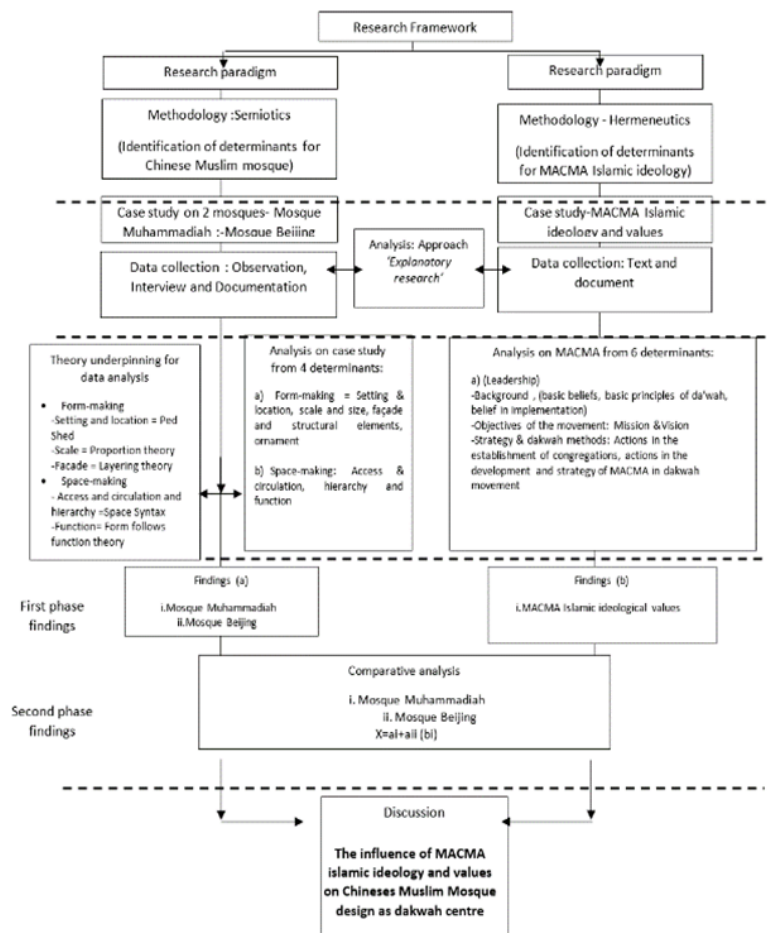


Figure 1. Research framework [source: Author]

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Mosque architectural elements can be a translation for communicating with users and their environment. In this sense, the mosques' form-making and spatial arrangement can convey the local community's message. Previous researchers have stated that mosque symbols such as prayer halls, towers, domes, minbar (Qibla direction), mihrab, Sahn, dikka, ablution space, and geometric elements convey Islamic messages, ideology and values to society.

Scholars outlined that the architectural elements in the Chinese Muslim mosques can indirectly describe the nature of monotheism by practising *Islah*, *Ikram* and *Ihsan* in Islam because it relates to human principles and events, hence becoming a symbol of *dakwah*. In this regard, Chinese Muslim mosques' architecture should demonstrate continuous and indirect interaction with the Muslim community and the surrounding context through its functional role and physical symbolism (Refer to Table 1).

**Table 1 Relationship between MACMA Islamic ideology and Mosque architecture [source: Author]**

MACMA Islamic Ideology and values	Islamic ideology and values and relationship with architecture	Representation of values in mosque architecture
<b>Ihsan:</b> Create a religious atmosphere through the charity of mosques to emulate the Nabawi mosque during the Prophet PBUH [3]	-Produce an architecture that practices openness	Islamic values are represented by the appropriate building location, placement and access.
<b>Islah :</b> Apply specific manners during da'wah continuously for the efforts of <i>Islah</i> and <i>Tajdid</i> based on <i>sunnah</i> and <i>Al-Quran</i> [1]	-Produces orderly and functional architecture	Islamic values are represented through space-making with appropriate hierarchy and spatial arrangements with functional facades and structures.
<b>Ikram :</b> Implementing the nature of <i>Ikram</i> while performing da'wah (relationship with humans-congregation)[6].	-Produce an architecture that respects context and society and is responsible for human needs	Islamic values are represented through mosque façades and structures involving proportioned scale and size using functional materials with appropriate structures.

From the description, it is clear that the Mosque's architecture, which is centred on Islamic principles, can translate and convey the message of Islam to the community, which can indirectly be considered an agent to claim Islam to non-Muslims. To understand this, these two case studies are explained below. Findings indicate that the Islamic ideology of MACMA influences the Mosque's architecture and can also show how the Mosque's architecture is seen as a symbol of *dakwah* for the MACMA missionary movement.

**CASE STUDY 1: MUHAMMADIAH MOSQUE, IPOH, PERAK**



**Figure 2. Muhammadiyah Mosque, Ipoh in Perak [source: Author]**

This Chinese Mosque is in Taman Tasek Jaya, Ipoh, Perak. The Mosque is a continuation of a small *surau* built in 1980. The Muhammadiyah Mosque,

worth more than RM4 million, was built on November 24, 2011, on 3,776 square meters and completed in July 2013 to accommodate about 1,000 worshippers. It is the second Chinese Muslim Mosque built based on Chinese architecture in Malaysia.

**CASE STUDY 2: BEIJING MOSQUE, KOTA BHARU, KELANTAN**



**Figure 3. Beijing Mosque, Rantau Panjang, Kelantan [source: Author]**



This Mosque is known as the Beijing Mosque or Perak Jubilee Mosque of Sultan Ismail Petra, Kelantan and is the first Mosque with a Chinese concept in the state. The Beijing Mosque is built on 3.7 acres of land, capable of accommodating 1,000 worshippers at a time. Construction of the Beijing Mosque began on September 12, 2005. It was completed in 2009. It is a unique design that combines Chinese and Islamic

architects and resembles the Neujie Mosque in Beijing, which is over 1000 years old. The construction of this Mosque gives the impression that Islam is a universal religion that should belong to the entire community regardless of language and cultural differences. To illustrate how the ideology and Islamic values of the MACMA movement are applied in the architectural design of the Chinese mosque in Malaysia. The following section will elucidate this in detail.

**INFLUENCE OF MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY AND VALUES ON MOSQUE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS**  
**MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY AND VALUES: IHSAN**

The values of Ihsan, which define performing good deeds to others, and doing something in the best way from an open attitude, are essential in promulgating the Islamic religion to others. In this sense, the Mosque, which is a place for dakwah need to be designed in an accessible manner to promote the value of Ihsan. The values are explained in table 2.

Table 2. Values of Ihsan in MACMA mosque design [Author]

Determinants	Description
<p><b>Location and placement</b></p>  <p>Site plan of Muhammadiyah mosque, Ipoh, surrounded by residential housing (source: Author)</p>  <p>Site plan of Beijing mosque, Kelantan, surrounded by public facilities (source: Author)</p>	<p>Both mosques are located within the city in the middle of the populated suburban area. It is situated beside the main road and has a low and minimum-height fence. The strategic location makes it easier for the Mosque to be seen by the public from far, thus increasing community involvement with the Mosque.</p>
<p><b>Access</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both mosques have permeable access, but the main primary access faces the populated areas and the main road. Hence, the number of mosque accesses provides welcoming nature for visitors to enter the Mosque.</li> <li>• The direct access is directed towards the main prayer hall, which can quickly identify as free flow. Therefore, it can be seen that the entrance stage to the main prayer room of both mosques is simple and not limited (unrestricted).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Facades &amp; Structures</b></p>  <p>Facade of Muhammadiyah mosque with rhythmic expression (Source: Author)</p>  <p>Facade of Beijing mosque with hierarchical expression (Source: Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both mosques have a straightforward façade arrangement and hierarchy due to their axial nature. These mosques have clear and visible elements of Chinese architecture.</li> <li>• The Mosque's transparent external access façade with a rhythmic expression and a clear axial structure makes it easier to identify.</li> <li>• Both Mosque displays the use of clear horizontal, axial and symmetrical structures and different colours to enable visitors to quickly identify the primary access to the Mosque's prayer room. Although axial and symmetrical properties are associated with autocratic structures, using transverse properties of its façade eliminates those properties.</li> <li>• The openness of the façade is essential not only not to hinder the public's view into the Mosque to see the activities but facilitate the overflow of activities to be conducted externally and internally within the mosque compound. It provides interaction from the public, either Muslims or non-Muslims, to see the natural Way of Muslim life.</li> </ul>

**MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY AND VALUES: ISLAH**

The values of Islah are vital in building ukhuwah ties among societal members as it promotes and advocates a sense of moral advancement based on the rudimental standards of the Qur'an and Sunnah. For

that reason, the value of Islah can be portrayed through the mosque design elements as a symbol of Muslim society. This is vital as the mosque design will be reflected as more orderly and functional. The values of Islah are elucidated in table 3.

Table 3. Values of Islah in MACMA mosque design [Author]

Determinants	Description
Hierarchy and functions of space	
 <p>Muhammadiyah Mosque prayer hall exclusive arrangement according to appropriate zoning (Source: Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both mosque utility areas are segregated from the main prayer hall. The wudhu' space acts as a secondary node and is connected to the men's and women's prayer spaces within a few steps of the distance. However, the Mosque has proper separation of pathways between spaces for women and men and particular pathways for the public and dakwah (Jemaah) activities. The evidence is for privacy and to protect women's dignity (aurat). This mosque space arrangement follows the correct Islamic principles in providing an example of manners or adab to show good morals and practices.</li> </ul>
 <p>Beijing Mosque prayer hall axial arrangement facing direct entry (source: Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mosque has an open courtyard that separates the public open porch entry from the main prayer space. This open courtyard is a garden and paved areas, which can be used as an overflow place of prayer when the situation requires it. This open courtyard allows natural ventilation and brings light into the main area. To the side area of this open courtyard are bazaar plots where social and economic activities can be carried out, including creating an Islamic bank. A public space on the right side of the open courtyard houses kindergarten and fardhu ain classes. It shows that the planning portrays a practical sense of order for all user levels.</li> </ul>
 <p>Beijing Mosque open courtyard spaces for public and communal activities (source: Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The arrangement of the prayer hall is not exclusive, and the positioning of the main prayer hall is within an axis line of the asymmetrical floor plan, which produces a solid visual for visitors to identify the prayer room quickly. It creates a religious atmosphere from the mosque entry point toward the internal spaces.</li> </ul>
 <p>Muhammadiyah Mosque open courtyard spaces in garden form for public spaces (Source: Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The mosque space arrangement prioritizes qibla direction and route to avoid interfering with other ibadah activities and worship. The mosque planning layout is based on widespread and comprehensive horizontal arrangements. This horizontal spatial arrangement prioritizes the first row (saf) to be maximized. The geometry of the floor plan mosque is according to transverse orientation.</li> </ul>
External façade	<p>The external façade portrays a three-layered hipped roof shape, which breaks the verticality of the façade. This Mosque did not use a dome but reflects Chinese architectural style with floral decoration and red, gold, and green colours, proving Islam is a universal religion and celebrates diversity. The external façade is also made of ceramic (durable) building materials; brick and wood are natural building materials that create a local spirit according to the Malaysian climate.</p>
Internal façade	<p>The internal façade is decorated with Islamic geometric patterns in colourful shades of striking colours and lotus flower motifs at its central ceiling. The four façade walls have many openings allowing natural daylight to enter the main prayer hall and spaces. An economic post and beam construction system with minimal expression supports the internal façade structure.</p>
Scale & Size	<p>The Mosque is built modestly according to the human proportion that integrates with the context and is not monumental. The scale of the built form is well integrated with the overall building function showing the practice of simplicity and humility in the Islamic religion.</p>



### MACMA ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY AND VALUES: IKRAM

The value of the Ikram is significant as the foundation for the empowerment of Muslim society as it emphasizes the role of respect and manners as well as being considerate and responsible towards living context and humanity. Thus, in making the Mosque a center of dakwah, which holds the concept of Ikram, The Beijing and Muhammadiyah Mosque portrays well-designed architectural elements from the use of materials and elements on its facades systems and structures.

Table 4. Values of Ikram in MACMA mosque design  
[Author]

Determinants	Description
Spatial organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The hierarchical space arrangement is according to worship and community facilities. The mosque spaces functioned well with the requirement of the user for ibadah. The evolvement of the mosque spaces is based on the needs of dakwah and congregation.</li> <li>• The Mosque's social interaction space is categorized as the primary node. Spaces in both mosques are well arranged to cater for all levels of activities like worship, dakwah and social space. For the use of space, both mosques provide universally usable space. The percentage of multifunctional space is maximum.</li> </ul>
Structure and construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both Mosque attempts to integrate with the local climate and culture in line with local building materials and technology. Both mosques maximize the placement of openings in the area with maximum lighting in the Mosque and interact with the local climate, showing how it reflects an architecture responsive to the context.</li> </ul>

In sum, the MACMA Mosque clearly shows the architectural characteristics of Islamic values encompassing Islah, Ihsan, and Ikram elements. It is reflected in the Mosque's location near the residents to provide awareness of the existence of the MACMA dakwah movement to attract the community more efficiently. In addition, the scale and use of local materials and technologies adapt this dakwah movement to the Malaysian context to facilitate this idea of being absorbed in and reducing the gap between the missionary movement and the locals, named the non-Muslims. Because when a new ideology absorbs into an area, integration between the locals and new ideologies must take precedence to facilitate the process of assimilation. The MACMA movement prefers a modest mosque architectural design that can universalize Islam's values, which has a sense of inviting and welcoming, rather than initiating the construction of monumental and luxurious mosques that focus on aesthetical aspects, which

evokes a feeling of intimidation or seclusion. In addition, the provision of suitable spaces and circulation in the design of the MACMA Mosque for the congregation indicates a sense of responsibility put forth by MACMA towards the needs of Chinese Muslim and Muslim communities as a whole. It clearly shows that the Islamic ideology practiced by MACMA champions the principles and practices of the Prophet PBUH's dakwah to develop spiritual aspects. Based on the findings, the framework of the architectural elements described by the MACMA movement can be used as a guideline and reference in designing a dakwah mosque that is not only interesting in terms of architectural form and style but has meaning and values that can convey the universal Islamic message to all levels of society either the Muslim or non-Muslim communities.

### CONCLUSION

This study can explain the relationship between the dakwah movement and architecture, which is the ideological method of the Islamic movement by MACMA whereby the message of dakwah is conveyed to the Muslim community and non-Muslims, especially the Chinese Muslim community through the design of mosques. This research demonstrates how the MACMA patrons influence the mosque architecture as a sign. In this sense, it shows how architecture is an intermediary agent that communicates the builder's message in the form of architectural physical manifestations through systems of codes. This study has merit as it adds new knowledge to existing studies focused on MACMA mosques and Chinese Muslim dakwah movements in Malaysia. Among the new knowledge highlighted is how a missionary organization regulated by the Chinese Muslim community in Malaysia can impact the development of mosques in Malaysia as a translation of the Islamic ideological values of their movement. It provides a reality phenomenon towards the development of mosques based on reformative Islamic principles in Malaysia to universalize Islamic values.

### REFERENCES

- [1] R. W. Ma, "Shifting Identities: Chinese Muslims in Malaysia," *Asian Ethnicity*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 89–107, Jun. 2005, doi: 10.1080/14631360500135146.
- [2] W. K. M. Mujani and A. Q. A. Razak, "Historical Development of the Chinese Muslim Society in Malaysia," *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2012.
- [3] H. W. Weng, "Beyond 'Chinese Diaspora' and 'Islamic Ummah': Various Transnational Connections and Local Negotiations of Chinese Muslim Identities in Indonesia," *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, vol. 29, no. 3, pp. 627–656, 2014.
- [4] R. Rahmawati, K. Yahiji, C. Mahfud, J. Alfin, and

- M. Koiri, "Chinese ways of being good Muslim: from the Cheng Hoo Mosque to Islamic education and media literacy," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 225–252, Dec. 2018, doi: 10.18326/ijims.v8i2.225-252.
- [5] C. Mahfud, "Chinese Muslim Community Development in Contemporary Indonesia: Experiences of PITI in East Java," *Studia Islamika*, pp. 471–502, Dec. 2018, doi: 10.15408/sdi.v25i3.6755.
- [6] H. P. Koon, "THE CHINESE BUSINESS ELITE OF MALAYSIA," in *Southeast Asian Capitalists*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2018, pp. 127–144. doi:10.7591/9781501718793-006.
- [7] R. Ab Rashid, N. Abdullah, and M. F. M. Abdelgelil, "Meneladani Muamalat Nabi dan Para Sahabat Terhadap Non Muslim Serta Pengalaman Macma Di Terengganu," *Jurnal Islam Dan Masyarakat Kontemporer*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 194–206, 2021.
- [8] C. Mahfud, "THE ROLE OF CHENG HO MOSQUE: The New Silk Road, Indonesia-China Relations in Islamic Cultural Identity," *JOURNAL OF INDONESIAN ISLAM*, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 23, Jun. 2014, doi:10.15642/JIIS.2014.8.1.23-38.
- [9] P.-C. Wu, "Looking beyond ethnicity: the negotiation of Chinese Muslim identity in Penang, Malaysia," *Asian Ethnicity*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 78–91, Jan. 2015, doi: 10.1080/14631369.2013.870838.
- [10] C. B. Ngeow and H. Ma, "More Islamic, no less Chinese: explorations into overseas Chinese Muslim identities in Malaysia," *Ethn Racial Stud*, vol. 39, no. 12, pp. 2108–2128, Sep. 2016, doi: 10.1080/01419870.2016.1199889.
- [11] W. K. Mujani, A. Q. A. Razak, A. Kasri, M. I. M. A. Nasir, and N. I. Ya'akub, "The Chinese Muslim Community: Their Economic, Political and Social Involvement in Malaysia," *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 417–422, 2012.
- [12] T. Gomez, *Chinese business in Malaysia: Accumulation, Accommodation, and Ascendance*. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- [13] R. Vollmann and T. W. Soon, "Chinese identities in multilingual Malaysia," *Grazer Linguistische Studien*, vol. 89, pp. 35–61, 2018.
- [14] R. K. Yin, *Applications of Case Study Research*. Sage, 2011.
- [15] Malaysia Department of Statistics, "Malaysia Census 2022," *MyCensus*, 2022. <https://www.mycensus.gov.my/> (accessed Oct. 03, 2022).
- [16] S. A. Shaharuddin, A. H. Usman, and M. Y. Marlon, "Malay Culture in Chinese Muslim Newly Convert (Muallaf) Perspective: Selangor Case Study," *Mediterr J Soc Sci*, Mar. 2016, doi: 10.5901/mjss.2016.v7n2s1p325.
- [17] M. W. Mahmud and S. S. Shah Haneef, "Expectations from Chinese Muslim Converts for Islamization of Society in Malaysia: Lessons from Life of the Companions (Angkaan Pengubahsuaian Cina Islam untuk Pengislaman Soci-ety di Malaysia: Pelajaran dari Kehidupan Para Sahabat)," *Journal of Islam in Asia* ">(E-ISSN: 2289-8077), vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 278–296, Apr. 2019, doi: 10.31436/jia.v16i1.783.
- [18] A. E. M. Zain, S. Ismail, N. A. A. Hassan, N. D. H. N. Sad, and S. Z. Mual, "Bahasa Mandarin Sebagai Medium Dakwah: Kajian Terhadap Malaysian Chinese Muslim Association (MACMA)," *Jurnal Sains Insani*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 116–127, 2021.
- [19] S. N. S. Hassan, A. A. Halim, W. M. Said, A. Salaeh, N. Zakaria, and R. A. Mohd, "Persepsi Cina Muallaf Terhadap Keberkesanan Kelas Pengajaran Quran Anjuran Organisasi Dakwah Di Malaysia," in *PROCEEDINGS THE 7TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON QURAN AS FOUNDATION OF CIVILIZATION (SWAT)*, 2021, pp. 601–610.