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Leiden  
The Netherlands

## **The architectural representation of Islam : muslim-commissioned mosque design in the Netherlands**

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### **Citation**

Roose, E. R. (2009, May 6). *The architectural representation of Islam : muslim-commissioned mosque design in the Netherlands*.

Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/13771>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift:

**The Architectural Representation of Islam.  
Muslim-Commissioned Mosque Design in The Netherlands**

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1. The analysis of a building must aim at establishing the meanings that those involved in its design intended it to have, not at establishing the meanings that those outside this circle of creation think were intended.
2. Each building should be viewed as a composite of meaningful elements purposefully transformed from earlier contexts to a new context because of their strategic associations, not as a phase in some typology of architectural progress.
3. During the design process for a building, different design producers may have selected different building elements to represent different realities, and its complex end-result should not be interpreted by a focus only on one party.
4. The rejected sketches and pictorial references used in the design process for a building, especially for one of a religious nature, are crucial analytical materials for establishing intended meanings.
5. Dutch municipalities and Muslim patrons strategically select, steer, and replace their mosque designers and are therefore best analyzed as full-blown producers of design, not as circumstantial variables in an architect's design task.
6. In Dutch mosque design, patrons architecturally represent their vision of Islam, architects their vision of modernity, and municipalities their vision of nationality – all of these towards rivals within their own realities, and not towards Dutch society at large.

7. The more a Dutch mosque design producer has publicly propagated his own representation as an empirical truth, the less inclined he is to accept that his fellow producers might have represented completely different realities by means of the same design.
8. That most Dutch analysts of mosque design do not position themselves as architectural historians but as critics in debates on Islamic-architectural modernity, means that they aim at mobilizing public opinion instead of creating public understanding.
9. The chance that there will someday be a single Dutch Islam is as realistic as the chance that there will someday be a single Dutch Christianity, and the belief that there will ever exist such a thing as a coherent European Islam borders on the absurd.
10. The assumption that Dutch churches, as compared with Dutch mosques, have architecturally moved with the times, is not an indication of the lack of modern Dutch Muslim patrons but of the lack of representational research on Dutch churches.
11. Few things can be so orientalist as the assumption that recognizably Islamic buildings designed or commissioned by contemporary Muslims must come out of self-inflicted orientalism.
12. Since the infinitely variable 'domes and minarets' are the most obvious means to represent the ever-shifting and divergent visions of Islam of rival Muslim patrons, they will continue to be applied both in the Islamic countries and in the Muslim diaspora.
13. The belief that there is a Genius Loci or a Zeitgeist in the built environment is no less religious than the belief that there is a God in heaven.