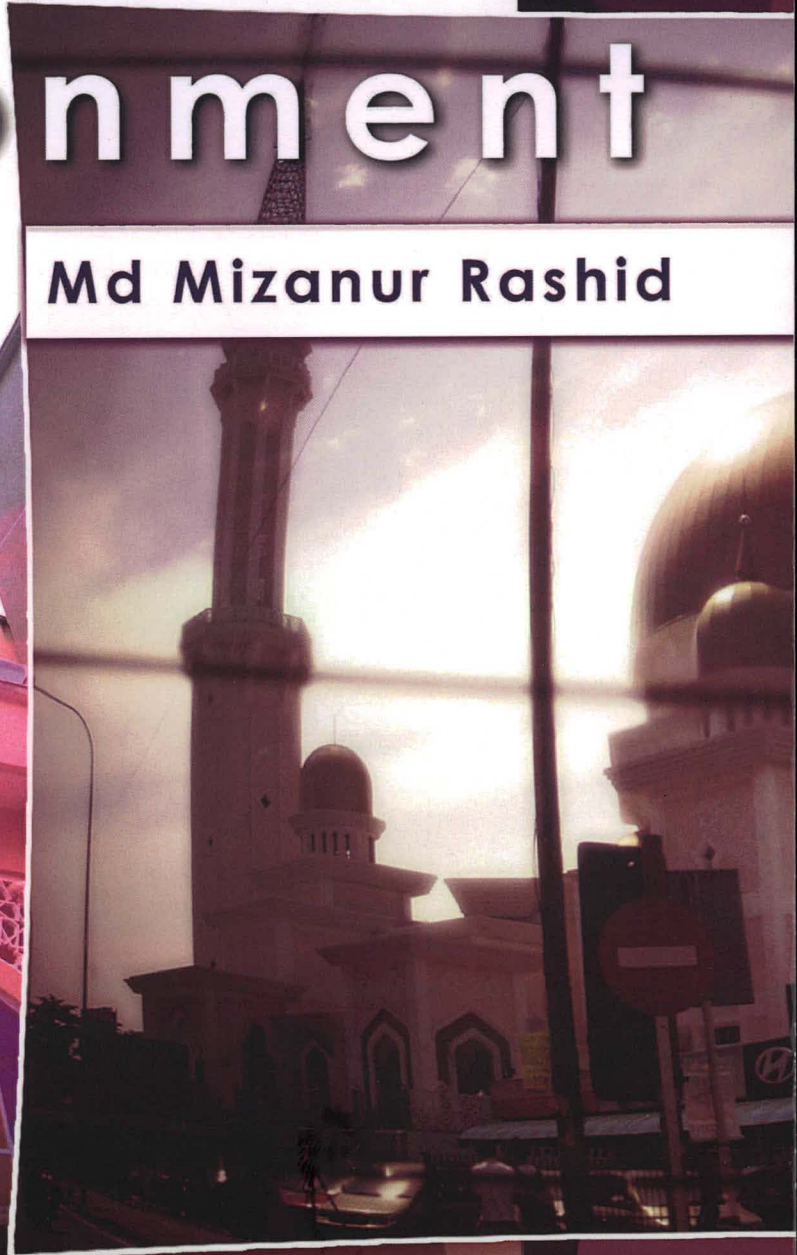
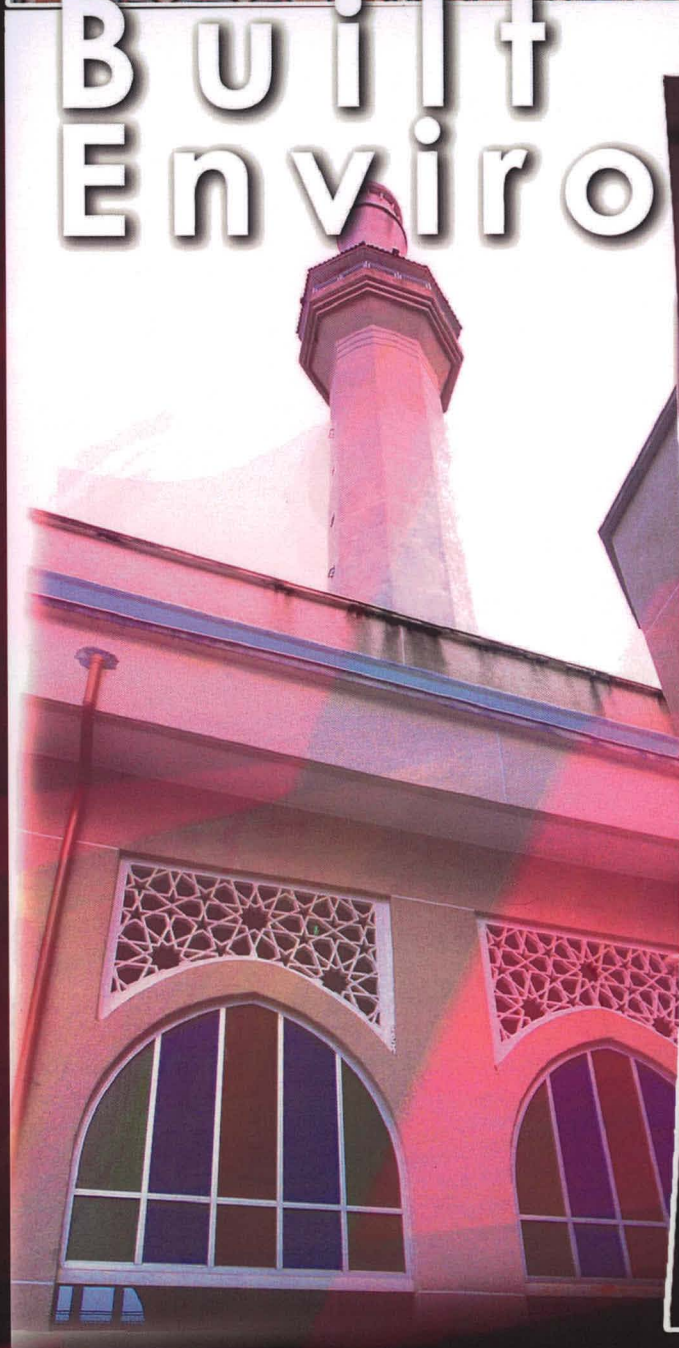




Islam and Built Environment

Md Mizanur Rashid



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ISLAM AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

MD MIZANUR RASHID



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TAWHID AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Spahic Omer
Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design
International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia
spahico@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the Islamic notion of *tawhid* (the Oneness of Allah) and its implications for Islamic architecture. The paper is divided into two major parts. Firstly, the meaning and significance of *tawhid*, as a cornerstone of the Islamic belief system, is presented. Secondly, *tawhid*'s most important implications for perceiving, creating and using Islamic architecture are explained. The paper seeks to enhance the awareness, both of the professionals and general readership, as to the centrality of the role of the concept of *tawhid* in correctly conceptualizing and practicing Islamic architecture. The nature of the paper, along with its content, methodology and conclusions, is conceptual and philosophical, rather than empirical. The paper concludes that Islamic architecture is an architecture that embodies the message of Islam. It both facilitates Muslims' realization of the Islamic purpose and its divine principles on earth, and promotes a lifestyle generated by such a philosophy and principles. The implications of *tawhid* for Islamic architecture are ideological, rather than technical. Such is the profundity of the influence the concept of *tawhid* exerts on Islamic architecture – and on Islamic culture and civilization, in general – that it gives the latter its conspicuous soul and identity. Without the effect of *tawhid*, no architecture deserves to be dubbed 'Islamic'.

Keywords: *Tawhid*, Islamic architecture, Islam, Muslims, Sinan

TAWHID (GOD'S ONENESS)

The notion of *tawhid* is the most important cornerstone in the conceptual framework for Islamic architecture. *Tawhid* means asserting the unity or oneness of Allah. *Tawhid* is the Islamic concept of monotheism. The word *tawhid* is derived from the words *wahid* and *ahad* which mean "one", "unique" and "peerless". Based on the concept of *tawhid*, Muslims believe that God cannot be held equal in any way or degree to any other being or concept.