

The background of the cover is a composite image. The top portion shows a night view of the Kaaba in Mecca, with its illuminated minarets and the surrounding city lights. The bottom portion shows the interior of the Grand Mosque of Mecca, with its vast, vaulted dome and the Kaaba in the center, surrounded by a large crowd of pilgrims. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of gold, brown, and white.

The History
and
Architecture
of

AL-MASJID
AL-HARAM

SPAHC OMER

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Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	ix
Chapter 1: The Origins and Purpose of al-Masjid al-Haram	1
Introduction	1
Inseparability between Life, Islam and Mosques	3
Prophets and Mosques	7
From Prophet Adam to Prophet Ibrahim	8
Prophets Ibrahim and Isma'il, and al-Masjid al-Haram	11
After Prophet Isma'il	20
A Critical Analysis of the Subject of the Origins of al-Masjid al-Haram	28
Chapter 2: Al-Masjid al-Haram from Prophet Ibrahim to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)	61
Introduction	61
Prophets Ibrahim and Isma'il, and Building of the Ka'bah	66
Reconstruction of the Ka'bah by Qusayy b. Kilab	86
The Quraysh Tribe and Reconstruction of the Ka'bah	93
The Triumph of Monotheism (<i>Tawhid</i>)	111
The Significance of the Two <i>Qiblahs</i>	130

Chapter 3: Al-Masjid al-Haram after Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)	141
Introduction	141
Expansion of al-Masjid al-Haram by Caliphs Umar and Uthman	142
Al-Masjid al-Haram and the Second Civil War	144
Caliph al-Walid b. Abd al-Malik and al-Masjid al-Haram	161
Al-Masjid al-Haram under Abbasid Caliphs al-Mansur and al-Mahdi	168
Al-Masjid al-Haram and the Mamluks	187
Al-Masjid al-Haram under the Ottoman Turks	204
Conclusion	231
Islamic or Muslim Architecture	233
<i>About the Author</i>	239
<i>Bibliography</i>	241
<i>Index</i>	247



The History *and* Architecture of AL-MASJID AL-HARAM

This book deals with the themes of the history and architecture of al-Masjid al-Haram. The time-frame covered in the book is one commencing with Prophet Adam and ending with the first half of the era of the Ottoman Turks. The importance of the book lies in the fact that the history of al-Masjid al-Haram in many ways embodied the history and development of Islamic civilisation. Moreover, on account of al-Masjid al-Haram phenomenon being an institutional marvel, a structure and an architectural space, it likewise embodied and reflected, to a large extent, the history and evolution of the identity of Islamic architecture. Concurrently with the development of al-Masjid al-Haram, Islamic art and architecture were also acquiring their trademark identities, breaking through and ultimately dominating the world's cultural and civilisational scenes. It thus can be deduced that the three: al-Masjid al-Haram, Islamic civilisation and Islamic architecture, were advancing together, one influencing and being influenced by the others. Studying thoroughly any one of them connotes studying a great deal of the other two as well. So integral and inter-reliant were they that irrespective of which one could be the cause and which one the effect, they – and indeed the whole Muslim community (*ummah*) with them – are bound to rise and wane together. The book, it follows, offers some essential lessons on the theory, history and philosophy of Islamic architecture – as well as civilisation – based on the colourful history and development of al-Masjid al-Haram.

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