

Maḳām Ibrāhīm, denotes, according to Qurʾān, II, 125 (... *wa-ttakbiḏhū min maḳāmi Ibrāhīmi muṣallan* ...) a place of prayer. Some commentators interpreted, however, the word *muṣallan* as “a place of invocations and supplications”, a definition which would considerably modify the status of the place. The reading of the verb in the phrase became the subject of discussion. Several scholars read it in the perfect tense “... *wa-ttakbiḏhū* ...”, and they rendered it ... and they took to themselves Abraham's station for a place of prayer”, linking it with the preceding clause ... “and when We appointed the House to be a place of visitation for the people and shelter and they took to themselves ...” (see e.g. Muḏjāhid, *Tafsīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sūrātī, Islāmābād n.d., i, 88, 89 n. 1; al-Shawkānī, *Fath al-ḳadīr*, Beirut n.d., i, 138; Ibn Muḏjāhid, *Kitāb al-Sabʿa fī l-ḳirāʾāt*, ed. Shawḳī Ḍayf, Cairo 1972, 169, no. 45; al-ʿAynī, *Umdat al-ḳārī*, Cairo 1348, repr. Beirut, ix, 212). In the other version, the verb is read as an imperative “... *wa-ttakbiḏhū* ...” and rendered “... and take to yourselves ...”; this is the reading preferred by the majority of Muslim scholars. The verse was connected with the person of ʿUmar, who according to tradition approached the Prophet asking him to establish the spot on which the stone known as *maḳām Ibrāhīm* was located as a place of prayer. After a short interval, God revealed to the Prophet the verse of *sūra* II, 125 “... and take to yourselves ...”. This is one of the miraculous cases in which ʿUmar's advice proved to be congruent with the will of God, the Qurʾānic verses lending confirmation to his suggestion (see Abū Nuʿaym, *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ*, Cairo 1351/1932, iii, 302, 377, iv, 145; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muḏjam al-ṣaḡhīr*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Muḥammad ʿUṯmān, Cairo 1388/1968; al-Muttaḳī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿummāl*, Hyderabad 1390/1970, xvii, 99, nos. 283-5; al-Faḫr al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Cairo n.d., xxiii, 86; Amīn Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb, *Fath al-malik al-maʿbūd, takmilat al-manhal al-ʿadhb al-mawrūd, sharḥ sunan al-Imām Abī Dāwūd*, Cairo 1394/1974, ii, 11; al-ʿAynī, *op. cit.*, ix, 212; Ḳurṭubī, *Tafsīr [al-Djāmiʿ li-ḅḳām al-Ḳurʾān]*, Cairo 1387/1967, ii, 112; al-Shawkānī, *op. cit.*, i, 140 inf.;

Anonymous, *Manāḳīb al-ṣaḥāba*, ms. Br. Mus., Or. 8273, fol. 3a). Ibn al-Djawzī is reported to have wondered why ‘Umar had asked for a practice from the faith of Abraham (*millat Ibrāhīm*) to be introduced into the ritual of Islam despite the fact that the Prophet had forbidden him to quote passages from the Torah. Ibn al-Djawzī tries to explain this, saying that Abraham is revered in Islam as an *imām*, the Qur’ān urges people to follow in his steps, the Ka‘ba is linked with his name and the prints of his feet are like the marks of the mason; that is the reason why ‘Umar asked to turn the *maḳām* into a place of worship (see al-‘Aynī, *op. cit.*, iv, 145; Ibn Ḥaḍjar, *Fatḥ al-bārī*, Cairo 1300 [repr. Beirut], viii, 128). One of the commentators states that the injunction is linked with *sūra* II, 122 (“... Children of Israel, remember my blessing...”) and that the Children of Israel are those who were addressed by it (al-Fakhr al-Rāzī, *op. cit.*, i, 472); another one says that the injunction is incumbent upon the Jews at the time of the Prophet (al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, ed. Maḥmūd and Muḥammad Shākir, Cairo n.d., iii, 31); a third commentary connects the injunction with II, 124: “... and when his Lord tested Abraham ...”. According to this last interpretation, the *maḳām Ibrāhīm* is one of the words of the Lord by which Abraham was tested (al-Shawkānī, *op. cit.*, i, 139; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, Beirut 1385/1966, i, 291).

There was disagreement among Muslim scholars as to the significance of the expression *maḳām Ibrāhīm*. Some of them claimed that the expression denotes the whole place of the pilgrimage, others said that ‘Arafa, Muzdalifa and the *Djīmār* are meant; a third group maintained that *maḳām Ibrāhīm* refers to ‘Arafa only, while the fourth view identifies it with the *Ḥaram* of Mecca (see e.g. al-‘Aynī, *op. cit.*, iv, 130, ix, 212; Abu ‘l-Baḳā’ Muḥammad b. al-Ḍiyā’ al-‘Adawī, *Aḥwāl Makka wa ‘l-Madīna*, ms. Br. Mus., Or. 11865, fol. 84b; Amīn Maḥmūd Khaṭṭāb, *op. cit.*, ii, 11). The great majority of the scholars identified *maḳām Ibrāhīm* with the stone in the sanctuary of Mecca which commonly bears this name (see e.g. al-‘Aynī, *op. cit.*, ix, 212; A. Spitaler, *Ein Kapitel aus*

den Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān von Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim b. Sallām, in *Documenta islamica*, Berlin 1952, 6, nos. 29-30) and behind which the Prophet prayed when he performed the circumambulation of the Ka'ba (see e.g. al-Wākidī, *al-Maghāzī*, ed. M. Jones, London 1966, 1098; al-Ḥarbī, *al-Manāsik*, ed. Ḥamad al-Djāsir, al-Riyāḍ, 1389/1969, 433, 500; al-Ṭabarānī, *op. cit.*, i, 22; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *al-Ḳirā li-ḳāṣid umm al-ḳurā*, ed. Muṣṭafā al-Saḳḳā, Cairo 1390/1970, 342 sup.).

The sanctity of the stone was enhanced by the fact that it bears the footprints of Abraham (see e.g. al-Isfarā'īnī, *Zubdat al-a'māl wa-ḳbulāṣat al-af'āl*, ms. Br. Mus., Or. 3034, fol. 6b). The footprints of the Prophet had exactly the same size as the footprints in the *maḳām* (see e.g. al-Ṭabarsī, *I'lām al-warā*, ed. 'Alī Akbar al-Ghaffārī, Tehran 1379, 73; al-Kāzarūnī, *Sīrat al-nabī*, ms. Br. Mus. Add. 18499, fols. 70b, 88a, 89a). Some traditions say that the miracle of Abraham's footprints in the stone appeared when Abraham built the Ka'ba; when the walls became too high he mounted the *maḳām* which miraculously rose and went down in order to let Ismā'īl hand him the stones for the building (see e.g. al-Sindjārī, *Manā'ih al-karam bi-akḥbār Makka wa 'l-Ḥaram*, ms. Leiden, Or. 7018, fol. 22b; al-Sayyid al-Bakrī, *I'ānat al-ṭālibīn 'alā ḥall alfāz fatḥ al-mu'īn*, Cairo 1319, repr. Beirut, ii, 295 inf.-296 sup.; al-Isfarā'īnī, *op. cit.*, fol. 83b; al-Khargūshī, *Lawāmi'*, ms. Vatican, Arab. 1642, fol. 67b; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Ḥāwī li 'l-fatāwī*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, Cairo 1378/1959, ii, 201; al-Ṣāliḥī, *Subul al-budā wa 'l-rashād fī sīrat ḳhayr al-'ibād*, ed. Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Wāḥid, Cairo 1392/1972, i, 181; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, 343); other traditions claim that the miracle occurred when the wife of Ismā'īl washed the head of Abraham (see e.g. al-Mas'ūdī, *Ithbāt al-waṣiyya*, Nadjaf 1374/1955, 39 inf.-40 sup.; Abu 'l-Baḳā' al-'Adawī, *op. cit.*, fol. 85a; al-'Aynī, *op. cit.*, ix, 212); a third tradition says that it happened when Abraham mounted the *maḳām* in order to summon the people to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca (see e.g. Abu 'l-Baḳā' al-'Adawī, *loc. cit.*; al-Ṣāliḥī, *op.*

cit., i, 184-5; anon., *ʿArf al-ṭīb*, ms. Leiden, Or. 493, fol. 70a; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, 342; al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 28b; al-Madjlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, Tehran 1388, xcix, 182, 188). Certain traditions affirm that Abraham took the stone as a *qibla*; he prayed at the stone turning his face to the Kaʿba (see e.g. al-Isfarāʾīnī, *op. cit.*, fol. 83b; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *loc. cit.*; Abu ʿl-Baḳāʾ al-ʿAdawī, *loc. cit.*). Some scholars, however, defined the stone merely as a means to mark the *qibla*, bidding the believer to have the stone placed in front of himself while facing the Kaʿba (al-ʿAynī, *op. cit.*, iv, 130: *fa-inna ʿl-maḳāma innamā yakūnu qiblatah idbā djaʿalahu al-muṣallī baynahu wa-bayna ʿl-qibla*). Certain scholars pointed out that the prayer at the *maḳām* is not obligatory (al-ʿAynī, *op. cit.*, ix, 212: *wa-biya ʿalā waḍḥ al-ikhtiyār wa ʿl-istiḥbāb dūn al-wuḍḥ ...*).

Numerous traditions about the qualities and virtues of the *maḳām* report that the stone was sent down from Heaven, that supplications at the *maḳām* will be answered and sins will be forgiven (see e.g. al-Ṣāliḥī, *op. cit.*, i, 204; al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 23b; anon., *ʿArf al-ṭīb*, fol. 73b; al-Madjlisī, *op. cit.*, xcix, 219, 230, 231; al-Fāsī, *Tuḥfat al-kirām*, ms. Leiden Or. 2654, fol. 66b; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, 324; Shīblī, *Maḥāsīn al-wasāʾil fī maʿrifat al-awāʾil*, ms. Br. Mus., Or. 1530, fol. 38b; al-Isfarāʾīnī, *Zubdat al-aʿmāl*, fols. 76b-77a; al-Kh^warazmī, *Mukhtaṣar ithārat al-tarḡīb wa ʿl-taḥwīk*, ms. Br. Mus., Or. 4584, fols. 11a-13a; Ḳazwīnī, *Āṭḥār al-bilād*, Beirut 1382/1962, 118; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, Hyderabad 1390/1970, iv, 108-9; ʿAbd al-Razzāḳ, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿzamī, Beirut 1392/1972, v, 32, no. 8890; al-Sayyid al-Bakrī, *op. cit.*, ii, 295). The sanctity of the *maḳām* was associated with that of the *rukḥ* and with *zamzam*; 99 prophets are buried at this spot, among them Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Nūḥ and Ismāʿīl (see e.g. al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 26a; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-mantḥūr*, Cairo 1314, i, 136). Prayer at the graves was permitted on the ground that this was a cemetery of prophets; as prophets are alive in their graves, prayer is not only permitted but even meritorious (cf. al-Sayyid al-Bakrī, *op. cit.*, ii, 277). Scholars criticised the practice of

kissing the stone, stroking it, and even performing a kind of circumambulation round it (see Ibn Abī Shayba, *op. cit.*, iv, 61, 116; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, 357, no. 109; anon., *ʿArf al-ṭīb*, *loc. cit.*; but see Ibn Djubayr, *al-Riḥla*, Beirut 1388/1968, 55, ... *tabarraknā bi-lamsihi wa-taḳbīlihi...*).

The *maḳām* is a stone of small dimensions: 60 cm. wide by 90 cm. high (see the data recorded by al-Fāsī, *Tuḥfat al-kirām*, fol. 67a; measured by al-Fāsī *anno* 753 AH; and see al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 23a). It is now “closely surrounded by glass and bars set into a polygonal base, the whole structure, capped by a much narrower kind of 'helmet', being about three yards above ground level” (A. J. Wensinck-J. Jomier, art. Kaʿba). In the early periods of Islam, the stone, encased in a wooden box, was placed on a high platform so as to prevent its being swept by a torrent. During the prayer led by the ruler or his deputy, the box used to be lifted and the *maḳām* shown to the people attending the prayer; after the prayer, the box was again locked and placed in the Kaʿba (cf. al-Muḳaddasī, 72). It was sad to see how al-Ḥadjjādī tried with his leg to set up the *maḳām Ibrāhīm* back to its place after it had moved (see ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *op. cit.*, v, 49, no. 8959).

In 160/777 the *maḳām* was brought to the abode of Maḥdī in Mecca when he performed the pilgrimage. In the next year, when the *maḳām* was raised carelessly by one of its keepers, it fell down and cracked; it was repaired at the order of Maḥdī and its upper and lower parts were braced with gold. Al-Mutawakkil in 241/855-6 improved the pedestal of the *maḳām*, embellished the *maḳām* itself with gold and ordered the building of a cupola over the *maḳām* (cf. al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 120b). In 252/866 the *maḳām* was stripped of its gold by the governor of Mecca Djaʿfar b. al-Faḍl; the gold was then melted down for minting *dīnārs*, which he spent in his struggle against the rebel Ismāʿīl b. Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm (see al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fols. 120a ult. - 120b, 121a; on

Ismā'īl b. Yūsuf, see al-Fāsī, *al-ʿIkd al-ṭhamīn*, ed. Fu'ād Sayyid, Cairo 1383/1963, iii, 311, no. 783). A thorough restoration of the *maqām* was carried out in 256/870 by the governor 'Alī b. Ḥasan al-Hāshimī (see on him al-Fāsī, *op. cit.*, vi, 151, no. 2050). Al-Fākihī gives a detailed description of the stone in its place (cf. *Le Muséon*, lxxxiv [1971], 477-91). When the stone was brought to the *dār al-imāra*, al-Fākihī noticed the inscription on it and tried to copy parts of it. R. Dozy reproduced the inscription and tried to decipher it (R. Dozy, *Die Israeliten zu Mekka*, Leipzig 1864, 155-61). His reading and interpretation are implausible (Prof. J. Naveh's opinion, communicated verbally).

Lengthy and heated discussions took place among the scholars about the place of the *maqām*. The traditions about whether the stone was established in its place are divergent and even contradictory (see e.g. Ibn Abi 'l-Ḥadīd, *Sharḥ Nabḍj al-balāgha*, ed. Muḥammad Abu 'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, Cairo 1964, xii, 160; al-Ḳuḍā'ī, *Ta'rīkh*, Bodleian ms. Pococke 270, fol. 58a; al-Ḥarbī, *al-Manāsik*, ed. Ḥamad al-Djāsir, 500; Shibli, *op. cit.*, fol. 38a-b; al-Muttaḳī al-Hindī, *op. cit.*, xvii, 97-9, nos, 278-81; Ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī, *al-Thiḳāt*, Hyderabad 1395/1975, ii, 218; 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī, *ʿIlal al-ḥadīth*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, Cairo 1343, i, 298). These traditions were divided by al-Sindjārī into five groups. According to some reports, 'Umar was the first who removed the stone. Others say that in the time of Abraham the stone was in the same place as it is now, but in the time of the Djāhiliyya it had been attached to the Ka'ba and so it remained during the periods of the Prophet and of Abū Bakr and for some time during the caliphate of 'Umar, who returned it to its proper place. A third series of traditions claims that the Prophet removed the stone from its original place (next to the Ka'ba) and put it in its present location. A fourth tradition maintains that 'Umar moved the stone to its present place and returned it to the same spot after it had been swept away by a torrent. Finally, some scholars say that the *maqām* has always

been in the place where it is nowadays; ‘Umar re-installed it to this place after it was swept away by a torrent (see al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fols. 23a-b, 76b-78a). A tradition which contains new aspects of the location of the *maḳām* is recorded by Ibn Kathīr. The stone was in the Ka‘ba; the Prophet took it out of the Ka‘ba and attached it to its wall (i.e. of the Ka‘ba). Then he said, “O people, this is the *ḳibla*” (Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, ii, 322). It is noteworthy that in this tradition there is no mention of ‘Umar, of his advice or of the changes carried out by him. It is quite plausible that ‘Umar's change had to be legitimised and duly justified. Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Ṭabarī tries to explain this discrepancy by reporting that ‘Umar inquired after the death of the Prophet about the place in which Abraham put the stone. In the time of the Prophet, the stone was indeed attached to the wall of the Ka‘ba; but ‘Umar was aware of the Prophet's will to follow the *sunna* of Abraham, and returned the *maḳām* to its original place, the place in which it had been put by Abraham (*al-Ḳirā*, 347; quoted by Abu ‘l-Baḳā’ al-‘Adawī, *Aḥwāl Makka wa ‘l-Madīna*, fols. 86b-87a). A divergent report is recorded by al-Sindjārī on the authority of Ibn Surāḳa. Between the door of the Ka‘ba and the place of Adam's prayer (where God accepted his repentance) there were nine cubits; it was the place of *maḳām Ibrāhīm* and there the Prophet performed two *rak‘as* after finishing the *ṭawāf* and after receiving the revelation of the verse “... and take the *maḳām Ibrāhīm* as a place of prayer ...”. It was the Prophet himself who later removed the stone to the place where it is nowadays, sc. at a distance of 20 cubits from the Ka‘ba (al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 77a). Instructive is the report of Ibn Djubayr. The ditch (*ḥufra*) at the door of the Ka‘ba (in which the water gathers when the Ka‘ba is washed) is the place of the *maḳām* in the time of Abraham; the place is crowded by believers who pray there; the stone was moved by the Prophet to the present place (see *al-Riḥla*, 55 inf. - 56; al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, fol. 78a). The change of the place of the *maḳām* and the possibility that the stone should be moved to another place of the *ḥaram* led to a disturbing question: would it be incumbent upon the believer to pray, in such a case, in the new place (since the

injunction clearly makes it necessary to take the *maḳām* as a place of prayer), or to stick to the original place? (See al-Sindjārī, *op. cit.*, 77b and also fol. 78a: the former *maḳām* occupied half of the ditch (*ḥufra*) at the *ḥidjr*).

Shīʿī scholars were aware of the change carried out by ʿUmar. Shīʿī *imāms* are said to have recommended prayer at the former place of the *maḳām Ibrābīm*. This “former place” is described as being between the *rukn al-ʿirāqī* and the door of the Kaʿba. Second in merit is the prayer behind the present *maḳām* (cf. al-Maḍjlisī, *op. cit.*, xcix, 230, no. 4, 231 nos. 6-7). Ibn Bābawayh sketches the history of the changes as follows. Abraham attached the stone to the Kaʿba, stood on it and summoned the people to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca; on that occasion his footprints were moulded in the stone. The people of the *Djāhiliyya* then removed the stone and put it in its present place in order to make the circumambulation of the Kaʿba easier. When the Prophet was sent, he reinstalled the *maḳām* in the place where it had been put by Abraham. ʿUmar asked where its location had been during the period of the *Djāhiliyya*, and returned it to that place; hence the present place of the *maḳām Ibrābīm* is the same as it was in the time of the *Djāhiliyya* (see Ibn Bābawayh, *ʿIlal al-ṣharāʿi*, ed. Muḥammad Ṣādiq Baḥr al-ʿulūm, Nadjaf 1385/1966, 423, *bāb* 160; quoted by al-Maḍjlisī, *op. cit.*, xcix, 232, no. 1; cf. anon., untitled ms. Vatican Arab. 1750, fol. 32b).

Some traditions related by al-Fākihī add certain peculiar details about the change carried out by ʿUmar. A report traced back to Saʿīd b. *Djubayr* says that Abraham placed the stone in front of the Kaʿba. ʿUmar removed the stone and placed it in its present spot, as he was afraid that people performing the *ṭawāf* might tread on it; it is now facing the former *maḳām*. Another report given on the authority of Hishām b. ʿUrwa and transmitted to him by his father ʿUrwa says that the Prophet prayed facing the Kaʿba; afterwards, both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar in the early part of his caliphate prayed in

the same direction. But later ʿUmar announced that God, blessed He is and lofty, says “... and take to yourselves the *maḳām Ibrāhīm* as a place of prayer ...”; thereafter, he moved the stone to the (present) place of the *maḳām* (al-Fākihī, *Taʿrīkh Makka*, fol. 331a). Both these reports recorded by al-Fākihī are sober, concise and devoid of miraculous features or of obligatory divine injunctions, and deserve a fair degree of confidence. The conclusion must be that it was ʿUmar who relocated the place of the *maḳām*, probably out of pragmatic considerations.

The latest change in the place of the *maḳām* has been carried out by the Saʿūdī government: the *maḳām* was moved to the rear in order to widen the path for the circumambulation of the Kaʿba (see in al-Ḥarbī, *op. cit.*, 500, n. 2 of Ḥamad al-Djāsir).

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In addition to references given in the text, see the bibl. in *Le Muséon*, lxxxiv (1971), 477-91.

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