

Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean

Comparative Perspectives

Edited by

Alexander Beihammer
Stavroula Constantinou
Maria Parani



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CHAPTER FOUR

THE ARCHITECTURE OF ALLEGIANCE IN EARLY ISLAMIC LATE ANTIQUITY: THE ACCESSION OF MU'ĀWIYA IN JERUSALEM, CA. 661 CE*

Andrew Marsham

Introduction

The public accession in Jerusalem of the fifth caliph, Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān, is unique among early Islamic ceremonies of accession because of the existence of a near-eyewitness account of events. An anonymous Syriac fragment, now known as the *Maronite Chronicle*, explains that, having been “made king” by the “Arab nomads,” Mu'āwiya went up to Golgotha, where a complex of Christian churches stood. There, he sat down and prayed, before setting out for Gethsemane, outside the east wall of the city, where he visited the church of the tomb of Mary, and prayed. A separate report states that “in July of the same year” the “emirs and many Arab nomads gathered.” They “proffered their right hand” to Mu'āwiya. An order went out that he should be “proclaimed king in all the villages and cities of his dominion;” their inhabitants were ordered to “make invocations and acclamations to him.” Coins were struck that lacked the cross that had been a feature of Roman coinage. Mu'āwiya chose not to wear a crown, unlike “other kings in the world.”¹

For the historian familiar with the early Islamic historical tradition, at least some of this is unsurprising. Nonetheless, it is important, because no Islamic historical text took its extant form as early as the *Maronite Chronicle*, and so the chronicle confirms many aspects of Islamic ceremonial which are

* I would like to thank the three organizers of the conference at the University of Cyprus, Alexander Beihammer, Stavroula Constantinou and Maria Parani, for the opportunity to present aspects of this paper in November 2010, and the other participants in the conference for many useful comments and much informative discussion. I would also like to thank the organizers for the opportunity to publish the written version of this paper, and for their editorial work, Alain George for guidance on the architectural history, John Healey for advice on Syriac and Simon Loseby for some useful critical comments. I, of course, remain entirely responsible for any errors in what follows.

¹ For the full text and references, see pp. 93–94, below.

otherwise only firmly attested about a century later. The proffering of the right hand was a standard gesture of allegiance throughout the ancient and late antique Near East, and it found its Islamic corollary in the *bay'a*, 'the pledge of allegiance', which was contracted by a handclasp (*ṣafqa*)—as in a commercial sale, to which the term *bay'a* is related. In early Islamic thought, this "sale" or contract expressed the covenant between Man and God, first concluded between God and Adam at Creation.² The promulgation of the accession of the caliph throughout his dominions is also familiar.³ The striking of coins for an accession is known from later accession rituals;⁴ a case has been made that extant gold "Arab-Byzantine" coins, which have been modified so that they lack a cross may be related to Mu'āwiya's accession.⁵

Whereas an historian who knew only the later Islamic tradition would be unsurprized by much of the account, they might find the visits to Golgotha and Gethsemane a little more remarkable. There appears to be one precedent: following his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, which is usually dated to 637 or 638, the second caliph, 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, is said to have chosen to pray outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was adjacent to Golgotha and inside the Church of Mary. However, there are serious problems with this material, which may indicate that it was retrospectively connected with 'Umar.⁶ If it is accepted that the account of Mu'āwiya's actions is based in fact—and there are good reasons to believe that it is—then this is an important insight into a particular moment in the history of the political culture of early Islam, which may help to contextualize the more tenuous evidence about 'Umar's actions.

Of course, accounts of ceremonial, like all literary historical evidence, are composed with a purpose—very often a polemical one. In this case, the

² On the pledge of allegiance in Islam, see A. Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy: Accession and Succession in the First Muslim Empire* (Edinburgh, 2009); the accession of Mu'āwiya is discussed on pp. 86–90; on the Islamic source material, see pp. 11–16.

³ A. Silverstein, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 42–59; Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 136–38, 157. On the invocation of the caliph's name at Friday prayer, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam. Second Edition*, 13 vols. (Leiden, 1960–2004) (hereafter *EI²*), "Khuṭba" (A. J. Wensinck).

⁴ *EI²*, "Māl al-bay'a" (H. Kennedy); Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 218, 260.

⁵ C. Foss, "A Syrian Coinage of Mu'āwiya?," *Revue Numismatique* 158 (2002), 353–67. As was first noted by Michael Bates, Mu'āwiya's striking of silver on which crosses had been removed seems unlikely. However, Foss has recently suggested that this refers to the import of Sasanian silver struck in Mu'āwiya's name: C. Foss, "Mu'āwiya's State," in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria*, ed. J. Haldon (Farnham, 2010), p. 86. Silver coins were struck only in post-Sasanian Iran and Iraq, where they were modelled on Sasanian types; the currencies in post-Roman Syria were gold and copper.

⁶ See below, pp. 102–03.

Maronite (“monothelete”) compiler of our source is critical of the Jacobite (“miaphysite”) Christians’ close relationship with their Arab rulers. The chronicler is also loyal to the Byzantines, downplaying Arab successes against them.⁷ Furthermore, the accession rituals of Mu’āwiya appear to have deliberately been juxtaposed with natural disasters—earthquakes follow two of the pledges of allegiance and a withering spring frost, which destroyed grapevines, is placed adjacent to a third account. The use of natural disasters to indicate God’s disapproval is a common feature of late antique and early medieval chronography. Indeed, here it appears that the compiler may have altered both his chronology and selection of material in order to achieve this effect.⁸ However, selecting and organizing material for polemical reasons is different from fabricating it, and there are good reasons to think that the account is accurate in most of its details. Indeed, as Philippe Buc has noted, in order to be persuasive even a highly partial account of a ritual needs to respect the forms that such rituals usually take.⁹ Furthermore, the chronicle is close to being a contemporary source, and may be based on eyewitness accounts of the accession. It is extant in an eighth- or ninth-century manuscript. The monothelete (Maronite) and pro-Roman stance of its compiler indicates that it was certainly composed before 727, and quite possibly before 681.¹⁰

As a near-contemporary account of an accession ritual, the chronicle serves as a reminder of four general points about the historical record of ritual. First, ritual tends to bring the symbolic world of its participants into sharp focus, and so it remains a very useful tool in understanding their worldview—for all that the agenda of the source must be borne in mind.¹¹ Second, even where rituals are superficially similar, much of their

⁷ A. Palmer, S. Brock and R. Hoyland, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool, 1993), pp. 29, 35.

⁸ Palmer, *Seventh Century*, p. 24, 35.

⁹ P. Buc, “Text and Ritual in Ninth-Century Political Culture: Rome, 864,” in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. G. Althoff, J. Fried and P. J. Geary (Cambridge, 2002), p. 138; G. Althoff, “The Variability of Rituals in the Middle Ages,” in *ibid.*, p. 87.

¹⁰ Palmer, *Seventh Century*, p. 29; J. D. Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 175–76.

¹¹ For scepticism about such uses of anthropological ideas about ritual in history, see P. Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton, 2001). But cf. G. Koziol, “Review article: The Dangers of Polemic: Is Ritual still an Interesting Topic of Historical Study?,” *Early Medieval Europe* 11 (2002), 367–88. On the particular importance of accession rituals and royal progresses to the performance of monarchy, see C. Geertz, “Centers, Kings and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power,” in *Culture and Its Creators: Essays in Honor of Edward Shils*, ed. J. Ben-David and T. Nichols Clark (Chicago, 1977), p. 153.

meaning to participants is rooted in their precise context; and so they should be read as belonging to a specific historical moment, which must be reconstructed as carefully as possible. Third, ritual has an essentially communicative nature: political ritual is a form of argument—a dialogue that depends upon the mutual intelligibility of the symbolism it deploys.¹² Fourth, where rituals make extensive use of space, movement and gesture, they have the merit of great polyvalence—they can appeal to diverse constituencies, and can, if used carefully, emphasize shared values rather than contradictory ones.

All of these general points about ritual are relevant to Mu‘āwiya’s accession. Diverse constituencies were present, and so the polyvalence of such ritual was important. The accession also took place at a very specific historical moment, before many of the “orthodoxies” of Islamic religion and politics had taken shape. With hindsight, we know that when Mu‘āwiya was proclaimed caliph on the Temple Mount in 661, the ceremony was equidistant in time between the triumphal restoration of the True Cross to Jerusalem by the Roman emperor, Herakleios, in 630 and the completion of the Dome of the Rock on the same Temple Mount by ‘Abd al-Malik in 692. The status of Jerusalem as a holy city in the new dispensation of Islam was yet to be fully worked out and certainly differed from later orthodoxies; its status was also contested—a symbolic term that could be manipulated for political gain. As Mu‘āwiya brought the civil war with ‘Alī and his son al-Ḥasan to a close, the recent triumphal entry of Herakleios, and perhaps also of ‘Umar, served as a template for his own triumph.

In what follows, the sources for the accession of Mu‘āwiya are presented, and the difficulties of their chronologies resolved as far as is possible. Then, the evidence for the congregational mosque and its use as the location for the taking of the pledge of allegiance is set out, followed by a reconstruction of Mu‘āwiya’s pilgrimage itinerary. Finally, the question of participation in the rituals, and the meaning of the symbolism deployed to the participants, is discussed.

Chronology and the Sequence of Events

Mu‘āwiya’s accession took place in the context of the civil war, or *fitna*, of AH 36–41/656–661 CE. This was the first time that extensive violent

¹² On ritual as persuasion, see D. Cannadine, “Introduction: Divine Rites of Kings,” in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. by D. Cannadine and S. Price (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 1–19. On the communicative dimension of ritual, see Althoff, “Variability of Rituals,” pp. 71–87, esp. 73–76.

conflict had taken place within the Ḥijāzī (West Arabian) ruling elite of the new monotheist polity. In the Islamic historical tradition the war is said to have been triggered by the murder of the third caliph, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān (r. 644–656). Following ‘Uthmān’s death, the Prophet’s cousin, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, was proclaimed caliph at Medina in Arabia, before moving the caliphal capital from there to Kufa, in Iraq. ‘Alī was not universally recognized as caliph—not least because ‘Uthmān’s assassins were among his supporters. Mu‘āwiya, who was at that time the long-standing governor of the province of Syria, was among those who did not declare his allegiance, but neither did he participate in an alliance against ‘Alī. ‘Alī defeated this alliance at the “battle of the Camel” in Jumāda II 36/December 656. At this juncture Mu‘āwiya took up arms against ‘Alī, demanding that he hand over ‘Uthmān’s assassins. A battle at Ṣiffin, on the northern Euphrates, was inconclusive, and the two parties agreed to a truce and negotiations. Some of ‘Alī’s followers rebelled at this decision, and ‘Alī was forced to fight them. ‘Alī won, only to be assassinated by one of the rebels in the congregational mosque at Kufa—an event usually dated to mid-to-late Ramaḍān 40/late January 661. ‘Alī’s son, al-Ḥasan, was proclaimed caliph in Iraq, but surrendered shortly thereafter to Mu‘āwiya and his Syrian army.

These events remained central to some of the fiercest doctrinal disputes in early Islam. In part because of the importance of the civil war for on-going doctrinal debates, a vast amount of literature about it was generated in the first centuries of Islam, much of it contradictory and confused. That Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān (r. 661–680) emerged as the victor is of course beyond doubt, but the chronology and sequence of events is not at all clear. Here, we are concerned specifically with the formal recognition of Mu‘āwiya as caliph.

The early Islamic tradition mentions at least seven occasions on which a pledge of allegiance (*bay‘a*) to Mu‘āwiya took place:

1. Mu‘āwiya is said to have received the *bay‘a* as *amīr*, ‘commander’, and for “avenging the blood of ‘Uthmān” at some point between ‘Alī’s call for allegiance after ‘Uthmān’s death (ca. 18 Dhū al-Ḥijja 35/ca. 17 June 656) and the failure of arbitration discussions (Dhū al-Qa‘da 37/April–May 658).¹³ The pledge as *amīr*, ‘commander’, is implicitly or explicitly contrasted with a later pledge to him as *amīr al-mu‘minīn*, ‘commander

¹³ Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh al-rusul wa’l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, 3 parts in 15 vols. (Leiden, 1879–1901), 2:199 (‘Umar [b. Shabba]—‘Alī [al-Madā’ini]: *wa-kānu qablu bāya’ūhu ‘alā ṭalab bi-dam ‘Uthmān*). Cf. *ibid.*, 2:4–5.

- of the faithful’,—the latter being the title of the caliph, the former merely one of his sub-commanders.¹⁴
2. Following the failure of negotiations with ‘Alī’s representatives, a *bay‘a* was given to Mu‘āwiya as caliph (as opposed to merely *amīr*) by the Syrian army in Dhū al-Qa‘da 37/April–May 658, or after Sha‘bān 38/January 659.¹⁵
 3. During the conflict with ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, Mu‘āwiya and the conqueror and former governor of Egypt, ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ, made an agreement between themselves in Jerusalem, described as a *bay‘a* by the sources, perhaps in 38/June 658–June 659.¹⁶
 4. In 40/May 660–May 661 Mu‘āwiya received a *bay‘a* as caliph in Jerusalem.¹⁷
 5. Immediately after the defeat of ‘Alī’s son, al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, at Kufa in Dhū al-Qa‘da 40, Rabī‘ I, Rabī‘ II, or Jumāda I 41/March–April or July–September 661 Mu‘āwiya received a pledge of allegiance from al-Ḥasan and his followers.¹⁸

¹⁴ See the discussion in E. L. Petersen, “‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah: The Rise of the Umayyad Caliphate 656–661,” *Acta Orientalia*, 23 (1959), 176.

¹⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, ed. de Goeje, 1:3396 (s. a. 38/June 658–May 659; Abū Mikhnaf: *bāya‘a ahl al-Shām Mu‘āwiya bi’l-khilāfa*), 2:198–9 (citing ‘Umar [b. Shabba]—‘Alī [al-Madā‘inī]: *bāya‘a ahl al-Shām . . . 92 bi’l-khilāfa fi sana 37 fi Dhī l-Qa‘da hīna tafarraqa al-ḥakamān*); cf. Abū Ḥanīfa al-Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār al-tiwāl*, ed. V. Guirgass (Leiden, 1888), p. 215. For the failure of negotiations being in 37/658–9, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, ed. de Goeje, 1:3354–60; for Sha‘bān 38/January 659, see *ibid.*, 1:3360; see, also, E. L. Petersen, *‘Alī and Mu‘āwiya in Early Arabic Tradition: Studies on the Genesis and Growth of Islamic Historical Writing until the End of the Ninth Century* (Copenhagen, 1964), p. 30.

¹⁶ On this agreement, see A. Marsham, “The Pact (*amāna*) between Mu‘āwiya ibn Abī Sufyān and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ (656 or 658 CE): ‘Documents’ and the Early Islamic Historical Tradition,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 57 (2012), pp. 69–96.

¹⁷ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, ed. de Goeje, 2:4 (s. a. 40/May 660–May 661: *wa-fi hādhihī l-sana būyā‘a li-Mu‘āwiya bi’l-khilāfa bi-‘Ilyā*). Cf. al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-Bad‘ wa’l-ta’rikh*, ed. C. Huart, 6 vols. (Paris, 1899–1913; repr. 1975), 4:87 (see below, p. 97). See further: L. Caetani, *Chronographia Islamica ossia riassunto cronologico della storia di tutti i popoli musulmani dall’anno 1 all’anno 922 della Higraph (622–1517 dell’Era Volgare)*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1912–1922), 1:453; J. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall*, trans. M. G. Weir (Calcutta, 1927), p. 101; A. A. Duri, “Jerusalem in the Early Islamic Period: 7th to 11th Centuries AD,” in *Jerusalem in History*, ed. K. J. Asali (London, 1997), pp. 108–9, who also cites, Anonymous, *Ta’rikh al-khulafā’*, ed. P. A. Gryaznevich (Moscow, 1967), fol. 50b, line 17. See also Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 86–90; Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, p. 482.

¹⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’rikh*, ed. de Goeje, 2:3–4, 198–99; al-Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār*, ed. Guirgass, pp. 231–2; Aḥmad b. Abī Ya‘qūb al-Ya‘qūbī, *Ta’rikh*, ed. M. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1883), 2:256; ‘Izz al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi’l-ta’rikh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, 13 vols. (Leiden 1862–1876; repr. Beirut, 1965–1967), 3:404–7. See also Caetani, *Chronographia*, 1:462; Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, pp. 385–6.

6. Following the surrender of al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī, in late Rabī‘ I 41/late July 661 “the people as a whole pledged allegiance to Mu‘āwiya, and so it was called ‘the year of unity’.”¹⁹ Other traditions date this to Rabī‘ II 41/August 661,²⁰ or to Jumāda I 41/September 661.²¹
7. According to al-Mas‘ūdī, “Mu‘āwiya received the pledge of allegiance in Shawwāl of the year 41/February 662 in Bayt al-Maqdis [i.e. Jerusalem].”²²

The various Arabic sources are chronologically confused. Furthermore, they could scarcely be more laconic about the pledges of allegiance—most merely stating that Mu‘āwiya took or was given the pledge of allegiance (*bay‘a*). As we have seen, some of the same sources also locate the accession to the caliphate in Jerusalem (*Īlyā* or *Bayt al-Maqdis*). We would know almost nothing more of the accession of Mu‘āwiya than this, were it not for the *Maronite Chronicle*’s account of events.

(‘A’) [*Lacuna in the MS, followed by a very short fragment*] ... ‘Alī, too, threatened to go up once again against Mu‘āwiya, but they struck him while he was at prayer at al-Ḥīra and killed him. Mu‘āwiya went down to al-Ḥīra, where all the nomad (*Tayyāyē*) forces there pledged allegiance to him (lit. “proffered their right hand to him,” *yhab(w) leh idā*), whereupon he returned to Damascus. In 970 of the Seleucid era, the 17th year of Constans, on a Friday in June [June 659; Muḥarram-Ṣafar 39], at the second hour, there was a violent earthquake in Palestine ... [*A short discussion of the Jacobite Christians’ relations with Mu‘āwiya follows here*].

... (‘B’) In 971 of the Seleucid era [39–40/September 659–August 660], Constans’ 18th year [39–40/Autumn 659–Summer 660], many nomads gathered at Jerusalem and made Mu‘āwiya king (*w-‘abdū(h)y malkā l-Ma‘ūwiyā*) and he went up and sat down on Golgotha; he prayed there, and went to Gethsemane and went down to the tomb of the blessed Mary to pray in it. In those days, when the nomads were assembled there with Mu‘āwiya,

¹⁹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’riḫh*, ed. de Goeje, 2:199 (‘Umar [b. Shabba])—‘Alī [al-Madā’īnī]: ... *wa-sallama lahū al-amr sana 41 li-khams baqīn min shahr rabī‘ al-awwal fa-bāya’ū al-nās jamī’an Mu‘āwiya fa-qīla ‘am al-jamā’a*).

²⁰ Khalifa b. Khayyāt al-‘Uṣfurī, *Ta’riḫh*, ed. S. Zakkār, 2 vols. (Damascus, 1968), 1:234.

²¹ Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta’riḫh*, ed. de Goeje, 2:199 (Hishām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī); Khalifa, *Ta’riḫh*, ed. Zakkār, 1:234.

²² Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Mas‘ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma‘ādin al-jawhar*, ed. C. Pellat, 7 vols. (Paris, 1966–1979), 5:14 (*wa-būyi’a Mu‘āwiya fi Shawwāl sana iḥdā wa-arba’in bi-bayt al-Maqdis*). Cf. al-Maqdisī, *al-Bad’ wa’l-ta’riḫh*, 4:87 (see below, p. 97); Caetani, *Chronographia*, 1:466. There is some evidence that in earlier texts “Bayt al-Maqdis” refers specifically to the Temple Mount, whereas in later ones it refers to the city of Jerusalem as a whole: *ET*², “al-Ḳuds. A. 2. Names” (O. Grabar).

there was an earthquake and a violent tremor and the greater part of Jericho fell ... [*short description of the damage wrought by the earthquake*] ...

(‘C’) In July [*Tamūz*] of the same year [Šafar-Rabī I 40/July 660] the emirs and many nomads (*āmīrē w-Ṭayyāyē*) gathered and pledged allegiance (*yhab(w) yāmīnā*, lit. “proffered their right hand”) to Mu’āwiya. Then an order went out that he should be proclaimed king (*netkrez malkā*) in all the villages and cities of his dominion and that they should make acclamations and invocations (Gk., *klēseis, phōnás*) to him. He also minted gold and silver, but it was not accepted, because it had no cross on it. Furthermore, Mu’āwiya did not wear a crown (*klilā*) like other kings in the world (*(a(y)k malkē (‘)hrānē da-hwaw b-‘ālmā*). He placed his throne (*kūrsīs*) in Damascus and refused to go to Muḥammad’s throne.

The following year [40–41/660–661] there was frost in the early morning of Wednesday 13 April [*NB weekday in fact fits 17 Dhu al-Hijja 41/662*], and the white grapevines were withered by it.²³

The first notable thing about this account is that it contradicts the Islamic tradition on the date of ‘Alī’s assassination (‘A’). Whereas most of the Islamic tradition dates ‘Alī’s death to Ramaḍān 40/January 661,²⁴ this chronicler appears to place the assassination of ‘Alī in 969 of the Seleucid Era, or Rabī II 38–Jumāda I 39/October 658–September 659. This dating is echoed by the Greek chronographer Theophanes (d. ca. 818). He places an account of the assassination deriving from Theophilus of Edessa (fl. ca. 750) in *anno mundi* 6151, which equates with September 658–August 659:

... While the Arabs were at Sapphin [Šiffīn], ‘Alī (the one from Persia) was assassinated and Mauias [Mu’āwiya] became sole ruler. He established his kingly residence at Damascus and deposited there his treasury of money.²⁵

On the basis of these two non-Muslim sources, it has recently been suggested that ‘Alī was in fact assassinated “in 658 at the latest,” rather than in Ramaḍān 40/January 661, as the Islamic tradition tends to indicate.²⁶ This possibility must be accepted: the confusion of the Arabic tradition does suggest serious difficulties with the chronology of the civil war. However,

²³ *Chronica Minora (Textus)*, ed. E. W. Brooks, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 3, Scriptorum Syrii 3 (Louvain, 1955), pp. 69–71; trans. Palmer, *Seventh Century*, pp. 29–32, with slight alterations.

²⁴ Caetani, *Chronographia*, 1:451, where the alternative date of Rabī II 40/August–September 660 is also noted. Given the symbolic importance of Ramaḍān, this alternative should perhaps be taken seriously.

²⁵ Theophanes, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813*, ed. C. Mango and R. Scott (Oxford, 1997), p. 485; see also the discussion of chronology, pp. lxiv–lxvii.

²⁶ Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, pp. 385–86. Cf. Palmer, *Seventh Century*, p. 30, n. 134. On the Islamic tradition, see above n. 24.

neither non-Muslim source appears to have a very robust chronology itself. The *Maronite Chronicle* takes pains to juxtapose both Arab and Jacobite Christian successes with natural disasters.²⁷ Theophanes' world-chronicle has very well-known problems with its chronology,²⁸ and a recent attempt to reconstitute Theophilos' chronicle, upon which it depends here, has argued that the chronology of this source should be seen as relative rather than accurate.²⁹ Both sources also see the death of 'Alī as the end of the civil war, making no mention of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī. This almost certainly was not the case—there is good evidence that hostilities did not completely end until the surrender of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī in Iraq in 41/661.³⁰

After the death of 'Alī, two more pledges of allegiance then follow in the Syriac account—the second ('B') at an unspecified point between September 659 and August 660 (Rabī' II 39–Rabī' II 40), the third ('C') in July 660 (Şafar-Rabī' I 40). The earthquake that coincides with the former may, if it indeed occurred, have been an aftershock from the earthquake of June 659, also mentioned by the *Maronite Chronicle*, and in a number of other sources.³¹ However, it is odd that the day of the month in the next notice, for “the following year” (i.e. 972/661) in fact corresponds with 973/662 (i.e. when 13 April was indeed a Friday). Either a year has been skipped, perhaps to make the second accession account immediately precede the withering frost, or Mu'āwiya's accession has been moved forward a year from 661 to 660, perhaps to coincide with the earthquake.³² If the latter is the case, it is notable that July 661 would coincide with 26 Şafar to 27 Rabī' I 41, matching al-Ṭabarī's dating of the pledge by “the people as a whole” to “five days before the end of Rabī' I 41 (27 July 661)” (no. 6).³³

²⁷ See above, p. 89 and below, following passage on this page.

²⁸ Theophanes, *Chronicle*, pp. lxiv–lxvii.

²⁹ Theophilos of Edessa, *Theophilus of Edessa's Chronicle and the Circulation of Historical Knowledge in Late Antiquity and Early Islam*, trans. and ann. R. G. Hoyland (Liverpool, 2011), pp. 21–22.

³⁰ See n. 18 and 19 to nos. 5 and 6, above.

³¹ K. W. Russell, “The Earthquake Chronology of Palestine and Northwest Arabia from the 2nd through the Mid-8th Century A.D.,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 260 (Autumn, 1985), 46–47, citing for the aftershock: D. J. Chitty, “Two Monasteries in the Wilderness of Judaea,” *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* 60 (1928), 176; D. J. Chitty, “The Monastery of St. Euthymius,” *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* 64 (1932), 196.

³² Palmer, *Seventh Century*, p. 31 and n. 141 (though here the chronology is confused—the editors seem to read this account as placing the accession in 659, whereas in fact it more likely dates it to the first half of 660); Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, p. 178, n. 52.

³³ If this dating is correct, it would suggest that Hishām al-Kalbī and al-Mas'ūdī both misdated the same ceremony to Jumādā I and Shawwāl 41/September 661 and February 662, respectively (nos. 6 and 7).

A related problem raised by the *Maronite Chronicle* is the number of ceremonies that it in fact describes. As we have seen, the chronicle implies that two formal accession ceremonies took place—the first between September 659 and July 660 (Rabīʿ II 39 and Rabīʿ I 40) and the second in July 660 (Şafar-Rabīʿ I 40). (Or if, as seems likely, the chronicle is one year out—the first between September 660 and July 661 [Rabīʿ II 40 and Rabīʿ I 661] and the second in July 661 [Şafar or Rabīʿ I 661]). In the first, “many nomads gathered at Jerusalem” and “made Muʿāwiya king” (‘B’). This was followed in July (‘C’) by the gathering of “emirs and many nomads” in an unspecified location, who “proffered their right hand.” Wellhausen, following Nöldeke, concluded that these are “two different narratives of the same event,” compiled from earlier accounts by the Maronite chronicler.³⁴ This is plausible.³⁵ However, it seems more likely that they were closely related but separate events—the first (‘B’) an accession ceremony in Jerusalem at some point in late 660 or early 661; the second (‘C’) reflecting the widespread acknowledgement of Muʿāwiya as caliph later in July of the same year, probably following the defeat of ‘Alī’s son, al-Ḥasan, in Iraq.

Hence, taken together, the Islamic tradition and the non-Muslim sources tend to suggest the following sequence of accessional rituals:

- i. Pledges to Muʿāwiya as “emir” early in the civil war (no. 1), perhaps followed by pledges to him from the Syrians as “caliph” (no. 2).
- ii. A pledged agreement between ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ and Muʿāwiya, perhaps in 38/658–659 (no. 3).
- iii. Muʿāwiya’s accession in Jerusalem, at some point in late 660 or early 661, either before or after the death of ‘Alī (‘B’ and no. 4).
- iv. Pledges to Muʿāwiya in Iraq in 41/661, after the defeat of al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī in 41/661 (no. 5).
- v. A “general pledge of allegiance” to Muʿāwiya, most likely in Rabīʿ I 41/ July 661 (‘C’ and no. 6, preferring the dating of al-Madāʿinī’s version of ‘6’, as transmitted by al-Ṭabarī).

³⁴ Wellhausen, *Arab Kingdom*, p. 101, citing T. Nöldeke, “Zur Geschichte der Araber im 1. Jahrh. d. H. aus syrischen Quellen,” *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 29 (1875), 85, 89, 95–96.

³⁵ This analysis is tentatively accepted in Marsham, *Rituals*, p. 88; I have now changed my mind on this point. For alternative assessments, see Petersen, “‘Alī and Muʿāwiyah,” pp. 176–77; Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, p. 177.

It must be stressed that the chronology of the civil war remains highly problematic, and can only be relative, and somewhat tentative. However, whereas the chronology, and even the number of separate ceremonies, cannot be tied down with certainty, it is possible to say rather more about participation in and performance of the accession at Jerusalem, and hence to consider what these tell us about the physical spaces used for the ceremonial, about the accession rituals themselves, and what all this suggests about the character of very early Islamic political culture. These questions are addressed in turn in what follows.

Location: Jerusalem and the Mosque on the Temple Mount

It is very likely indeed that the specific location for Mu‘āwīya’s taking the pledge of allegiance at Jerusalem was the sole congregational mosque of the city. This mosque had originally been constructed on the Temple Mount by the second caliph, and conqueror of Jerusalem, ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 634–44). There is also evidence that Mu‘āwīya himself had further developed the same site, while he was governor of Syria.

Al-Muṭaḥhar b. Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī (fl. 966) specifically states that Mu‘āwīya received the pledge in the mosque on the Temple Mount, and implies that he had already developed the site while he was governor. In laconic Arabic, al-Maqdisī explains that the origins of the sanctuary go back to the Prophet Jacob and his vision of the ladder, when God bequeathed the Holy Land to him and commanded him to build a mosque there. Subsequent rulers either destroyed or rebuilt it:

...Jacob marked out [a mosque] there. Then, after him (there was) the Dome of Aelia [i.e. Jerusalem], which was [constructed by] al-Khiḍr. Then David developed it after him, Solomon completed it and Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it. God inspired Cyrus, the Persian King of Kings, so he restored it. Then Titus the Cursed Roman destroyed it and it remained destroyed until Islam came and ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb restored it. Then Mu‘āwīya b. Abī Sufyān [developed it], and he received the pledge of allegiance for the caliphate there.³⁶

³⁶ Al-Maqdisī, *al-Bad’ wa’l-ta’riḫ*, 4:87:...*fa’khtaṭṭa ‘alayhi Ya’qūb [masjidan] thumma ba’dahū qubbat Ilyā wa-huwa al-Khiḍr thumma banā ba’dahū Dāwūd wa-atammahū Sulaymān wa-kharrabahū Bukht Naṣr fa-awḥā Allāh ‘azza wa-jalla ilā Kawshak malik min mulūk Fāris fa-‘ammarahā thumma kharrabahā Ṭiṭus al-Rūmī al-Mal’ūn fa-lam yazal kharāban ilā an qāma al-Islām wa-‘ammarahū ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb raḍiya Allāh ‘anhu thumma Mu‘āwīya b. Abī Sufyān wa-bihī bāya’ūhu li’l-khilāfa...*

This account of Mu'āwiya's building work is partially corroborated by the apocalyptic Hebrew *midrash*, which refers to Mu'āwiya building the walls of the Temple Mount.³⁷

Little if any of this mid seventh-century mosque is architecturally extant.³⁸ However, it is nonetheless possible to reconstruct its location and character with a degree of confidence. Theophilos of Edessa, as cited in the ninth century *Chronicle of Siirt*, indicates that it was adjacent to a palace, which is typical of the administrative centres of many Umayyad urban foundations:³⁹

'Umar ordered that a mosque be built on the place of the tomb [*sic, sc.* temple]⁴⁰ of Solomon, son of David, and a palace (*qaṣr*) next to it. Then he left and returned to Medina. He entrusted Syria to Mu'āwiya ibn Abi Sufyan...⁴¹

Mention of the 'tomb' (*sc.* 'temple') of Solomon indicates that the mosque was built on the Temple Mount, in East Jerusalem. The "palace next to it" was probably a precursor of the complex of administrative buildings that has been excavated just to the south of the Temple Mount, which have been dated to the early Marwanid period.⁴²

Further information about the mosque can be gleaned from Adomnan's *De Locis Sanctis*. This Latin text purports to be based on a travel account by one Arculf, an Anglo-Saxon pilgrim in the 670s. Although significant doubt has now been cast on Arculf's historicity, the description of Jerusalem is certainly based on knowledge about the Holy Land circulating in northern

³⁷ I. Levi, "Une apocalypse Judéo-Arabe," *Revue des Études Juives* 67 (1914), 178–79; A. Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimage* (Leiden, 1995), p. 24 and n. 8.

³⁸ R. Grafman and M. Rosen-Ayalon, "Two Great Syrian Umayyad Mosques: Jerusalem and Damascus," *Muqarnas* 16 (1999), 1–15.

³⁹ A. Walmsley, *Early Islamic Syria: An Archaeological Assessment* (London, 2007), p. 88.

⁴⁰ Other versions of this material refer to the temple of Solomon, not his tomb. See Theophilos, *Chronicle*, trans. Hoyland, pp. 126–27, and n. 301.

⁴¹ *Histoire Nestorienne (Chronique de Séert)*, seconde partie, fasc. 2, ed. and trans. S. G. M. Addai Scher and R. Griveau, *Patrologia Orientalis* 13.4 (1919), p. 624: . . . *wa-amara an yubnā bihā masjid fi mawḍi' qabr Sulaymān b. Dāwūd wa-qaṣr ilā jānibihī wa'nṣarafa wa-'āda ilā al-Madīna wa-qallada Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān al-Shām*; see also Theophilos, *Chronicle*, trans. Hoyland, p. 127.

⁴² M. Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple: The Discovery of Ancient Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1985), pp. 293–321; M. Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Ḥaram al-Sharif: An Iconographic Study* (Jerusalem, 1989), pp. 8–11; Theophilos, *Chronicle*, trans. Hoyland, p. 127, n. 301.

Europe no later than the end of the seventh century.⁴³ Despite the clearly polemical contrast of the former “magnificent Temple” and the Saracens’ “house in ordinary style,” the more objective aspects of the description of the structure may well be accurate:

... in that renowned place, where once the Temple had been magnificently constructed (*magnifice constructum*), placed in the neighbourhood of the [city] wall from the east, the Saracens now frequent a quadrangular house of prayer, which they have made with upright slabs (*subrectis tabulis*) and large beams (*magnis trabibus*) on top of the remains of some ruins, in an ordinary style (*vili fabricati*); this house can, it is said, hold about 3,000 men at once.⁴⁴

Modern formulas for mosque design would imply a building with an area of about 2,100 m²—perhaps 70m wide and 30m deep, or, alternatively, 45m square.⁴⁵ If this estimate is combined with Adomnan’s description, and with what is known of the design of slightly later, extant Umayyad mosques, then a square or oblong covered prayer-hall stretching across the southern end of the Temple Mount should be imagined. The hall would be in hypostyle form. It probably had internal marble decoration (“upright slabs”).⁴⁶ This is also implied by mention of one archdeacon Johannes, a specialist in marble construction, being involved in building it.⁴⁷ The roof would have been constructed of wood (“large beams”), probably

⁴³ T. O’Loughlin, *Adomnán and the Holy Places: The Perceptions of a Biblical Monk on the Locations of the Biblical Drama* (London and New York, 2007). The total absence of reference to the Dome of the Rock strongly suggests a date of before 692 for the text.

⁴⁴ Adomnan, *De Locis Sanctis* 1.1.14, CCSL 175:186. Cf. Bede, *De Locis Sanctis* 2.3, CCSL 175:257, who depends on Adomnan. Cf. R. G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey of Jewish, Christian and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, 1997), p. 221; J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, 2nd ed. (Warminster, 2002), pp. 170, 219.

⁴⁵ See, e.g., *Architectural Graphic Standards: The American Institute of Architects* (New Jersey, 2007), p. 510, which allocates 0.62m² per person for praying; 0.7m² has been used here. Cf. Grafman and Rosen-Ayalon, “The Two Great Syrian Umayyad Mosques,” p. 1, where they propose a much larger area of 4,800 m² on the basis of 1.5 m².

⁴⁶ On the earliest mosques, see: O. Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art. Revised and Enlarged Edition* (New Haven, 1987), pp. 104–13; J. Johns, “The ‘House of the Prophet’ and the Concept of the Mosque,” in *Bayt al-Maqdis: Jerusalem and Early Islam*, ed. idem, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 9.2 (Oxford, 1999), pp. 107–12.

⁴⁷ B. Flusin, “L’esplanade du Temple à l’arrivée des Arabes, d’après deux récits byzantins,” in *Bayt al-Maqdis: ‘Abd al-Malik’s Jerusalem*, ed. J. Raby and J. Johns, Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 9.1 (Oxford, 1992), p. 29, citing Johannes Moschos, Georgian Add. Nr. 19; A. Kaplony, *The Haram of Jerusalem 324–1099*, Freiburger Islamstudien 22 (Stuttgart, 2002), pp. 210–11 and n. 4.

carved as in other Umayyad buildings.⁴⁸ These dimensions would make Mu'āwiyā's mosque about a quarter of the size of the Umayyad Great Mosque of Damascus.

Given what is known architecturally of all the earliest mosques, it is almost certain that the building was oriented towards Mecca, with a south-facing *qibla*.⁴⁹ However, it should be noted that there are some hints in the sources of prayer north towards the rock near the centre of the platform being a possibility.⁵⁰ There is also some indication that the Jewish community of Jerusalem may have shared the Temple platform space with their Arab conquerors.⁵¹

The mosque was probably located centrally on the southern end of the Temple platform—that is, with its north-south axis a little to the east of that of the modern Masjid al-Aqṣā. The al-Aqṣā is aligned 'off-centre', but with its central axial aisle in line with the rock over which the Dome of the Rock stands to north. Buildings on the eastern side of the current al-Aqṣā are remembered in some accounts as the *Jāmi' Umar*, 'Umar's Congregational Mosque'. Within them is the *miḥrāb Umar*, 'Umar's mihrab. The extant mihrab is not seventh century but, given its alignment with the centre of the Temple platform (now marked by the Dome of the Chain adjacent to the Dome of the Rock), it seems likely to indeed commemorate the middle of the *qibla* wall of the seventh-century mosque (Fig. 4.1).⁵²

A pre-existing underground gate led up from the city south of the Temple Mount onto the level of the platform, probably emerging near the mosque. Some pre-Islamic buildings had occupied the southeast corner of the platform and these may have been incorporated into the mosque. The interior of the platform, to the north was strewn with debris and was overgrown. Two thirds of the way north along the east wall of the platform was the eastern Golden Gate, from where a path led down to Gethsemane (Fig. 4.2).⁵³

⁴⁸ Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments*, p. 4; R. Hillenbrand, "Umayyad Woodwork in the Aqṣā Mosque," in *Bayt al-Maqdis* (see above, n. 47), pp. 271–310, with references.

⁴⁹ Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments*, pp. 4–5; Kaplony, *Ḥaram*, p. 209.

⁵⁰ Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments*, p. 4; Kaplony, *Ḥaram*, pp. 34–5, 209, 229. See also: S. Bashir, "Qibla musharriqa and early Muslim prayer in churches," *The Muslim World* 81 (1991), 267–82.

⁵¹ Kaplony, *Ḥaram*, pp. 34, 373–75.

⁵² See Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments*, pp. 4–5, 25–29; Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem*, pp. 76–77; Kaplony, *Ḥaram*, p. 212.

⁵³ On the pre-Islamic and early Islamic Temple Mount, see Kaplony, *Ḥaram*, pp. 23–27, 179–212, with references.

The Pilgrimage Itinerary

Account 'B' in the *Maronite Chronicle* reports Mu'āwiya's peregrinations in and around Jerusalem immediately after he was "made king" by the nomads:

... many nomads gathered at Jerusalem and made Mu'āwiya king (*w-'abdū(h) y malkā l-Ma'wīyā*) and he went up and sat down on Golgotha; he prayed there, and went to Gethsemane and went down to the tomb of the blessed Mary to pray in it...

The churches at Golgotha and Mary's Tomb near Gethsemane were both important Christian pilgrimage sites in seventh-century Jerusalem. They were located each side of the Temple Mount: the Church at Golgotha stood on the hill overlooking the Temple Mount from the northwest—about 400 metres away. To the west, about 200m down a steep hill below the Golden Gate lay the Church of the Tomb of Mary (Fig. 4.3).

According to Adomnan, there was a large church at Golgotha itself. This adjoined the rotunda of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which dominated both late Roman and very early Islamic Jerusalem. A church of the Virgin Mary was also located nearby.⁵⁴

[The Holy Sepulchre] is a very large church, entirely made of stone, and built on a remarkable round plan... Next to the round church we have been describing (it is called *Anastasis*, meaning 'Resurrection', and was built at the place of the Lord's resurrection) is a rectangular church of Saint Mary the Lord's Mother... Further to the east has been built another huge church on the site which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. From the roof hangs a large bronze wheel for lamps, and below it stands a silver cross...⁵⁵

Exactly which of these churches Mu'āwiya visited is not made completely clear, although the impression is that it was the church on Golgotha—where the relic of the True Cross was located. Besides the site of the cross, and nearby, Christ's tomb, Golgotha and its environs had accrued a number of other important associations for late antique pilgrims. The reconstructed text of the late fourth-century *Breviarum* indicates that it was already known as the site of the creation of Adam and the location of relics from the anointing of David and the execution of John the Baptist.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of the evidence for these sites, see Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, pp. 361–68.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 171–73.

The late sixth-century source, *The Piacenza Pilgrim*, also associates an altar there with Abraham's sacrifice and the altar of Melchizedek.⁵⁶

The church at the tomb of Mary in Gethsemane was another major centre of late antique Christian pilgrimage. This two-story, domed martyrium lay on the other side of the Temple Mount, in the valley outside the late antique walls of the city, near the garden of Gethsemane. It is mentioned by the *Breviarum*, the *Piacenza Pilgrim* and by Adomnan, who presents a detailed description of the building:⁵⁷

It is a church built at two levels, and the lower part, which is beneath a stone vault, has a remarkable round shape. At the east end there is an altar, on the right of which is the empty rock tomb in which for a time Mary remained entombed... The upper Church of Saint Mary is also round, and one can see four altars there.⁵⁸

Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem in late antiquity would have visited a number of other sites, but these two locations, Golgotha and the Tomb of Mary were among the most important locations in that itinerary. Furthermore, these places had very significant imperial associations in the decades prior to Mu'awiya's accession. According to the Jerusalem Lectionary, the emperor Maurice (r. 582–602) is said to have built the church of the tomb of Mary.⁵⁹ Just 30 years before Mu'awiya's accession, Herakleios (r. 610–641) had made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem and, on 21 March 630, publicly restored the relic of the cross to Golgotha.⁶⁰ It has also been suggested, by Cyril Mango, that the Golden Gate, on the east side of the Temple Mount, directly to the west of Gethsemane and Mary's Tomb, might also have been built by Maurice or Herakleios, in either the late sixth century or in 630.⁶¹ Herakleios's triumphant visit was well within living memory for anyone in their forties; even Maurice may have been remembered by some.

Mu'awiya's actions may also have recalled those of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, whose entry into Jerusalem Mu'awiya himself is said to have witnessed, as a senior commander present at the fall of the city. In the earliest accounts, which can be dated to the mid-eighth century, 'Umar is said to have

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 3–4, 9, 93, 362–63.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 93, 138, 177–78, 306.

⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 177–78.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 7–8.

⁶⁰ J. W. Drijvers, "Heraclius and the *Restitutio Crucis*: Notes on Symbolism and Ideology," in *The Reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and Confrontation*, ed. G. J. Reinink and B. H. Stolte (Leuven, 2002), pp. 175–90.

⁶¹ C. A. Mango, "The Temple Mount AD 614–638," in *Bayt al-Maqdis* (see above, n. 47), pp. 1–16.

prayed on the Temple Mount on this occasion. Islamic material, which dates in its extant form from a little later, also mentions his prayers outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and in the tomb of Mary. In these accounts, 'Umar's decision to pray outside the Holy Sepulchre is said to have been motivated by a concern not to claim the shrine for Islam and he is said to have regretted praying in the tomb of Mary because Muḥammad had associated the valley east of Jerusalem with the Valley of Hell. These details show that this Islamic evidence is tendentious, reflecting the concerns of later religious communities. However, it is certainly possible that it does reflect aspects of actual events at or around the conquest. If so, Mu'awiya's actions may have recalled not just those of Heraclius in 630, but also those of 'Umar in c. 637.⁶²

Participation and Meaning

At his accession Mu'awiya is said to have been between 53 and 65 years old. Since 634 he had served as a commander and then a governor in Syria, and was said to have been present at the fall of Jerusalem in c. 637. He had then ruled all Syria for more than ten years, having inherited power over much of the province from his brother, Yazīd, who had died of plague in 639, and then having been appointed to the whole province by 'Uthmān, probably in 646 or 647.⁶³ Two of Mu'awiya's most senior advisors were of Syrian heritage: Sarjūn b. Manṣūr al-Rūmī ('the Byzantine') was said to have served as his head of the fiscal administration during his caliphate;⁶⁴ the head of his chancery (*dīwān al-rasā'il*) was one 'Ubayd Allāh b. Aws al-Ghassānī ('the Ghassanid').⁶⁵ It is very likely that both had served him when he was governor, and they may well have contributed to the planning of the accession rituals in Jerusalem.⁶⁶

⁶² *EP*², "Al-Ḳuds" (O. Grabar); H. Busse, "'Omar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb in Jerusalem," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5 (1984), 73–119; idem, "'Omar's image as the conqueror of Jerusalem," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 8 (1986), 149–68; O. Grabar et al., *The Shape of the Holy: Early Islamic Jerusalem* (Princeton, 1996), 46 and n. 63. Both Busse and Grabar doubt that 'Umar in fact visited Jerusalem at all. In contrast, Howard-Johnston finds it likely that 'Umar did indeed visit, a few years after the city was first captured: Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, 173 and n. 39.

⁶³ *EP*², "Mu'awiya I b. Abi Sufyān," (M. Hinds).

⁶⁴ D.W. Biddle, "The Development of the Bureaucracy of the Islamic Empire during the Late Umayyad and Early Abbasid Period," PhD dissertation, University of Austin, Texas, 1972, p. 146.

⁶⁵ Biddle, "Development of the Bureaucracy," p. 154.

⁶⁶ For the central role of such administrators in later accession rituals, see Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 159–61.

Likewise, Mu'āwiya's military support was derived primarily not from the Arabian conquerors of Syria—whose numbers appear to have been relatively small—but from the indigenous nomads of the Syrian steppes.⁶⁷ The federations of Kalb and Tanūkh were two of the most important sources of Syrian military power. The centres of Tanūkhid settlement were in northern Syria, near Aleppo and Qinnasrīn.⁶⁸ The Banū Kalb occupied the steppes north of Damascus and led the much wider Syrian federation of Quḍā'a, of which they were the most powerful sub-tribe. One of 'Uthmān's wives, Nā'ila b. al-Farāfiṣa, was from the Banū Kalb. Mu'āwiya also married two Kalbī women, including Maysūn, the daughter of the Kalbī chief, Baḥdal b. Unayf (d. before 657). Baḥdal's sons and grandsons served as commanders at Ṣiffīn, and partisans of the Umayyads continued to be known as Baḥdaliyya, because of the importance of this clan and the federation of Quḍā'a to their power.⁶⁹ Other important tribal groups included the Ṭayyi', who were settled in northern Syria, near Aleppo and Qinnasrīn;⁷⁰ further south, Quḍā'a and Ghassān were settled in al-Urdunn; in Filasṭīn—in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem—were Judhām and Lakhm.⁷¹

The *Maronite Chronicle's* reference to the Ṭayyāyē as the group that made Mu'āwiya “king,” strongly suggests that the “Arab nomads,” who were the mainstay of Mu'āwiya's military strength, were the main participants in the accession ritual. It also suggests one of the reasons for Mu'āwiya's visits to the holy sites of Christianity—most of these Syrian tribal groups had converted to Christianity in Roman times, and many clearly remained Christian under early Islam: at least one of the sons and two of the daughters of Baḥdal b. Unayf, chief of Kalb until the mid 650s, were Christian;⁷² Tanūkh remained Christian down to the caliphate of al-Mahdī (r. 775–785);⁷³ some of Ṭayyi' are said to have remained Christian in the seventh century.⁷⁴

⁶⁷ On Mu'āwiya's army at Ṣiffīn, see M. Hinds, “Banners and Battle Cries of the Arabs at Ṣiffīn,” *Al-Abḥāth* 24 (1971), 3–31.

⁶⁸ *EI*², “Tanūkh,” (I. Shahīd).

⁶⁹ *EI*², “Baḥdal b. Unayf” (H. Lammens), “Kalb b. Wabara” (Ed.); for the marriage of Nā'ila b. 'Umāra, see al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, ed. de Goeje, 2:204–5.

⁷⁰ *EI*², “Ṭayyi'” (I. Shahīd).

⁷¹ M. Gil, *A History of Palestine, 634–1099* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 76–77.

⁷² *EI*², “Baḥdal b. Unayf” (H. Lammens); R. S. Humphreys, *Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire* (Oxford, 2006), p. 61.

⁷³ *EI*², “Tanūkh,” (I. Shahīd).

⁷⁴ *EI*², “Ṭayyi'” (I. Shahīd).

Such congregations of nomad tribal federates at a centre of monotheist pilgrimage was an established feature of the politics of late Roman Syria;⁷⁵ there is also some evidence that Jerusalem itself was important to the Ghassanid Roman federates. This political culture seems to have been one deliberately perpetuated by Mu'āwiya, who combined Roman imperial tradition with the customs of the encounter between an Arab federate phylarch and his following.⁷⁶ Many of the centres developed by the Umayyad caliphs had earlier Ghassanid associations; of particular relevance is the debt owed by Mu'āwiya's audience hall at Sinnabra/Khirbat al-Karak to Ghassanid prototypes.⁷⁷ The monotheist pledge of allegiance to a ruler before God was also a familiar ritual to the Christianized Syrian Arabs;⁷⁸ it seems likely that it would have been quite easily adapted in what appears to have been a highly syncretic environment. For this constituency of the Arab nomads, the accession ritual was a display of unity and power—a reaffirmation that their support for Mu'āwiya was a wise course of action.

The mosque on the Temple Mount would have been well suited to the large congregation that gathered for the pledge of allegiance. Not only the mosque, but perhaps the Temple Mount itself could be used for an assembly—echoing in monumental form the use of the “desert palace” audience hall and its environs by both the Ghassanids and the Umayyads.⁷⁹ In later Islamic ceremonial, the *bay'ā* ceremony was elaborately hierarchical, usually involving both palace and mosque.⁸⁰ In contrast, in almost all Umayyad accounts, there is just one public ceremony, in the main congregational mosque.⁸¹ This Umayyad use of the congregational mosque as the single location of the accessional pledge reflects the less hierarchical political context: the early mosques are comparatively egalitarian, open spaces, in which the monarch meets his subjects in person without being separated from them by a whole series of courtyards and antechambers.

⁷⁵ E. Key Fowden, *The Barbarian Plain: Saint Sergius between Rome and Iran* (Berkeley, 1999), esp. pp. 141–73.

⁷⁶ I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century* 2/2: *Economic, Social and Cultural History* (Washington, D.C., 2009), pp. 69–70.

⁷⁷ D. Whitcomb, “Khirbat al-Karak identified with Sinnabra”, *Al-Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā* 14 (2002), 1–6.

⁷⁸ For a *foedus* concluded with the Arabs, see I. Shahîd, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century* 1/1: *Political and Military History* (Washington, D.C., 1995), p. 8.

⁷⁹ S. Helms, *Early Islamic Architecture of the Desert: A Bedouin Station in Eastern Jordan* (Edinburgh, 1991).

⁸⁰ Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 185, 196–98, 201–5.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 134–38.

This early egalitarianism may also be reflected in the idea of “God’s true sovereignty”—a theme in the Qur’ān but also with important precedents in pre-Islamic Syriac Christianity—which seems to have prompted Mu’āwīya’s decision not to “wear a crown like other kings in the world.”⁸²

The use of a new building on the Temple Mount also symbolized the new religio-political dispensation. The Temple Mount had for the centuries before Islam been, as Kaplony neatly puts it, “a place of non-architecture.”⁸³ For the Christians it was a location that had been superseded by the “New Covenant,” represented by the monuments on Golgotha; for the Jews, it was a location where the destruction of the Temple was mourned and where there had recently been an attempt to restore it.⁸⁴ The new ruling elite that constructed and developed this building must have been fully conscious of the symbolism of the restoration of the Temple, but what they built was probably now oriented south, towards Mecca—reflecting the restoration of the true covenant, as re-established by Muḥammad and maintained by his successors.

This political context, where the settled population of the city was also an important constituency, was another reason for Mu’āwīya’s visits to the pilgrimage sites of the city. Although the numbers of Jews may have been small, following persecutions in the wake of the Byzantine re-conquest of the city in 628,⁸⁵ there is no doubt that the use of the Temple Mount resonated with Jewish ideas about the city as much as with Christian ones. However, the impression from the pilgrimage itinerary is that it was the dialogue with the Christian conception of the sacred status of Jerusalem that was particularly important. The population was probably predominantly Jacobite (“miaphysite”) Christian, with significant minorities of other Christian denominations. Mu’āwīya’s reference to the Roman imperial tradition and his veneration for the key Christian sites in the city asserted his claim to rule the Christian population of the city as a legitimate monotheist monarch. Even though our Maronite source is a hostile

⁸² For God’s sovereignty in the Qur’ān, see Q 20:114; 23:116. For Syriac Christian ideas, see P. Wood, *We Have No King But Christ: Christian Political Thought in Greater Syria on the Eve of the Arab Conquests (c. 400–585)* (Oxford, 2010). On the absence of crowns from early Islamic caliphal ritual, see Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 140–41.

⁸³ Kaplony, *Haram*, p. 23.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁸⁵ The status of the Jews of Jerusalem in the wake of the early Islamic conquests is not clear, but it seems likely that some of the population had returned by the mid-seventh century: J. Raby, “In Vitro Veritas. Glass Pilgrim Vessels from 7th-Century Jerusalem,” in *Bayt al-Maqdis* (see above, n. 47), pp. 158–61.

witness, its author was left in no doubt that Mu‘āwiya was an imperial monarch—a “king in the world.” Others, whose relations with the Arabian monotheists were more cordial, may have been more willing to see him as an effective protector of their interests.

Conclusions

In order to be effective, rituals need to deploy a symbolic vocabulary with which their participants are familiar—they are theatrical acts of communication.⁸⁶ The primary term in the symbolic vocabulary of this accession was the city of Jerusalem itself. Jerusalem had been a major centre of the Roman province of Palestina I and retained this position in the Islamic *jund* (Syrian province) of Filastīn, but its real significance lay in its importance as the pre-eminent focus of Judaeo-Christian pilgrimage and as the recent location of triumphal progressions by imperial monarchs. Jerusalem was literally the centre of the universe, associated with the Creation of Adam (and hence God’s first covenant with Man), the kingship of David and Solomon, and the mission, execution and resurrection of Christ. When Herakleios had entered the city in 630, it was to proclaim the reunification and renewal of the Roman Empire after the crisis of the war with Iran.⁸⁷ If ‘Umar indeed visited Jerusalem in c. 637, then his visit would have recalled this earlier occasion. In 661, Mu‘āwiya was also reunifying a monotheist empire after the crisis of a violent and divisive war; for him as for Herakleios, and perhaps also ‘Umar, the city was ideally suited to emphasizing the sacred charisma of a monotheist sovereign.

However, although the rituals deployed some of the symbolic vocabulary of Roman imperial and provincial practice, their forms and meanings were transformed by the new political realities following the Arab conquests. Indeed, the *Maronite Chronicle* provides an insight into a very early moment in the formation of the Muslim polity, when the new rulers of Syria appear to already have a sense of themselves as a distinct religious community, but before discourse about legitimate leadership in Islam had assumed its “classical” form. Many of Mu‘āwiya’s military following were Christian, others were very recent converts to Islam; most were former Christian Arab federates of Rome, or their descendents; all

⁸⁶ See above, n. 12. For other discussions of the meaning of the ritual, see Humphreys, *Mu‘āwiya*, p. 84; Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses*, pp. 177–78.

⁸⁷ Drijvers, “Heraclius and the *Restitutio Crucis*,” 183.

were steeped in the political culture of post-Roman Syria. Veneration of Jesus and Mary (as well as Adam, Abraham, David, and Solomon) was deployed by Mu'āwiya in polyvalent fashion—resonating simultaneously, and sufficiently ambiguously, with expectations about how both a triumphant *basileus* and the newly acclaimed *amīr al-mu'minīn* should act.

This last point appears to have been especially important to Mu'āwiya in 661. Some aspects of his actions were fairly unequivocal in a region where Christian Roman political culture was ubiquitous—like Herakleios, he was a monotheist imperial sovereign, who had inherited the mantle of David and Solomon (and ultimately, Adam);⁸⁸ like them, he venerated Jesus, a prophet of the monotheist God, and his mother Mary. However, Mu'āwiya's actions were polyvalent, in that they spoke to both Syrian Christians and Arabian monotheists, and to both the settled population of the city and the nomads who had gathered there from across *Bilād al-Shām*.

Hence, while the ritual spoke to diverse audiences, it also affirmed recently established hierarchies. The *Maronite Chronicle* witnesses events as a fairly hostile outsider, viewing the *Ṭayyāyē* as “the other,” but it is in no doubt that the “nomads” are in power—the *Ṭayyāyē* are the political actors who “make Mu'āwiya king.” In this context of Arab political dominance, the pilgrimage to the Christian holy sites was probably also intended to affirm Mu'āwiya's role as the protector of the holy sites of the city, and hence the protector of the Christian population, too.⁸⁹

The extent of the doctrinal divide between the Arabian conquerors and the conquered population at this point has been the subject of long debate. Certainly, it seems likely that the labels “Islam” and “Muslim” had yet to gain currency.⁹⁰ However, although it is hard, in the light of

⁸⁸ On the importance of Old Testament kingship for later Roman emperors, see G. Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (Cambridge, 2003). For the succession of the covenant from Adam in Syriac Christian thought, see Pseudo-Ephraim the Syrian, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*, trans. E. A. W. Budge (London, 1927).

⁸⁹ It is notable that the chronicle places the accession immediately after an audience for the Maronite and Jacobite Christians at Damascus, which had included an agreement for payment of annual tribute from the Jacobites in return for protection from the Muslims: Palmer, *Seventh Century*, pp. 30–31. For the story of another adjudication of a dispute by Mu'āwiya, in which he was said to find favour with Christians over Jews, see Bede, *De Locis Sanctis*, 4.1–2; Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, pp. 220–21.

⁹⁰ For a recent statement of the case for very blurred doctrinal boundaries in early Islam, see F. M. Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers at the Origins of Islam* (New York, 2010); also F. M. Donner, “From Believers to Muslims: Confessional Self-Identity in the Early Islamic Community,” *al-Abhāth* 44 (2002–3), 9–53.

Mu'āwīya's visit to Golgotha, to imagine that the later, classical Islamic understanding of Jesus' crucifixion was widely-held by his Arabian following, it does seem very likely that there was already a mutual sense of a religious distinction between the Arabians and other monotheists, in which the anti-Trinitarian stance was already salient.⁹¹ Any such religious distinction was complicated by the fact that identities also had an ethnic dimension which overlapped with, but was not identical to, the religious one (as we have seen, Arab Christians were important to Mu'āwīya's military power). The evidence strongly suggests that many of the new ruling elite viewed themselves as the adherents of a religion specific to the Arabs, who were to remain separate from the "protected" conquered populations.⁹² They probably did conceive of themselves as a movement of "believers," or "emigrants," rather than "Muslims," but they already had their own Arabian Prophet and, very likely, an Arabic scripture, and distinctive ritual practice, which almost certainly included some prayer in the direction of Mecca, not the Temple. That is, the rituals performed at Jerusalem are reflective of a complex and highly dynamic religio-political environment—one in which the new political hierarchies partially overlapped with new distinctions between existing monotheisms and a new Arabian confession.

The choice of Jerusalem as the site for the pledge of allegiance should also be viewed in this wider history of the nascent Islamic movement. Mu'āwīya's interest in Jerusalem is well-attested in the later Islamic tradition—one tradition describes Mu'āwīya, with his son Yazīd, as "the king of the Holy Land."⁹³ His accession was probably not the first pledged agreement he had made there.⁹⁴ In contrast, the first three caliphs had been proclaimed at Medina, in Arabia, which was the site of the foundation of the new community by Muḥammad, and leadership of the pilgrimage to Mecca, 300 kilometres to the south, seems to have already become an important ceremonial of legitimacy. Once Mu'āwīya had regained

⁹¹ As noted by Donner, *Muḥammad and the Believers*, pp. 58–59.

⁹² P. Crone, "The Early Islamic World," in *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, ed. K. Raaflaub and N. Rosenstein (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), pp. 311–12; reprinted in eadem, *From Arabian Tribes to Islamic Empire: Army, State and Society in the Near East c.600–800* (Aldershot, 2008), no. IX.

⁹³ Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Zakkār, 1:258 ('Abd Allāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ; *malik al-arḍ al-muqaddasa Mu'āwīya wa-ibnuhū*). For traditions on Mu'āwīya's interest in Jerusalem, see Abū Bakr, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Wāsiṭī, *Faḍā'il al-Bayt al-Muqaddas*, ed. I. Hasson (Jerusalem, 1979), Arabic introduction, pp. 19–20, French introduction, pp. 18–19.

⁹⁴ Marsham, "The pact (*amāna*)," pp. 69–96.

control of Mecca, he also went there on pilgrimage and to take a pledge of allegiance.⁹⁵ However, he visited Mecca far less frequently than the first three caliphs. Furthermore, it is notable that Syrian centres—and especially Jerusalem—remained very important to the Umayyads.⁹⁶ In 684 Marwān b. al-Ḥakam was recognized at the old Ghassanid centre of al-Jābiya;⁹⁷ Marwān's son, 'Abd al-Malik, at Jerusalem, again in the context of civil war in 685.⁹⁸ The "classical" position of Mecca as the holiest location in Islam may not have been completely cemented.⁹⁹ Certainly, for the early Umayyads, Jerusalem was a major holy city, association with which affirmed their sacred status as monarchs; their capital was Damascus, but the proper venue for their accession was Jerusalem.

Hence, Mu'āwiya's accession was very much more than that of a Ghassanid phylarch associating himself with Christian holy sites. A new architecture of assembly and prayer was at the centre of Mu'āwiya's accession ceremonial, and Mu'āwiya was not claiming leadership of Roman federates, but of a new world-empire. Indeed, the Arabs of West Arabia and post-Roman Syria seem to have been far less encumbered by a consciousness of inhabiting Hauck's "late antique margins" than their German precursors.¹⁰⁰ They were confident appropriators and manipulators of the semiotic *koine* of the defeated empires. It seems that all the elements of Mu'āwiya's accession rituals at Jerusalem were never again combined: the political and ideological circumstances of the empire moved on. But the pledged covenant in the mosque remained, as did exuberant experimentation with the inheritance of late antiquity.

⁹⁵ Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Zakkār, 1:240, 250, 258; Marsham, *Rituals*, pp. 90–92.

⁹⁶ Tradition has 'Alī's governors (all sons of al-'Abbās) lead the pilgrimage in 36–39/657–660 (the year 39/660 may have been contested). In 40/April 661, an ally of Mu'āwiya's al-Mughira b. Shu'ba is said to have led it. See Caetani, *Chronographia*, 1:370, 397, 413, 431, 444, 453; Khalifa, *Ta'rikh*, ed. Zakkār, 1:214, 217, 225, 227 (for conflict and negotiation over the pilgrimage in 39/660), 228. See also: M. E. McMillan, *The Meaning of Mecca: The Politics of Pilgrimage in Early Islam* (London, 2011), 29–61.

⁹⁷ *EI²*, "al-Djābiya" (H. Lammens [J. Sourdel-Thomine]).

⁹⁸ Marsham, *Rituals*, p. 135 and n. 2.

⁹⁹ Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, p. 222. On the development of the *hajj* rituals, and the status of Mecca, see: G. Hawting, "The *Hajj* in the Second Civil War," in *Golden Roads: Migration, Pilgrimage and Travel in Mediaeval and Modern Islam*, ed. I. R. Netton (Richmond, 1993), pp. 31–42; McMillan, *The Meaning of Mecca*.

¹⁰⁰ Cited in J. Nelson, "Symbols in Context: Rulers' Inauguration Rituals in Byzantium and the West in the Early Middle Ages," in eadem, *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London, 1976), p. 265.

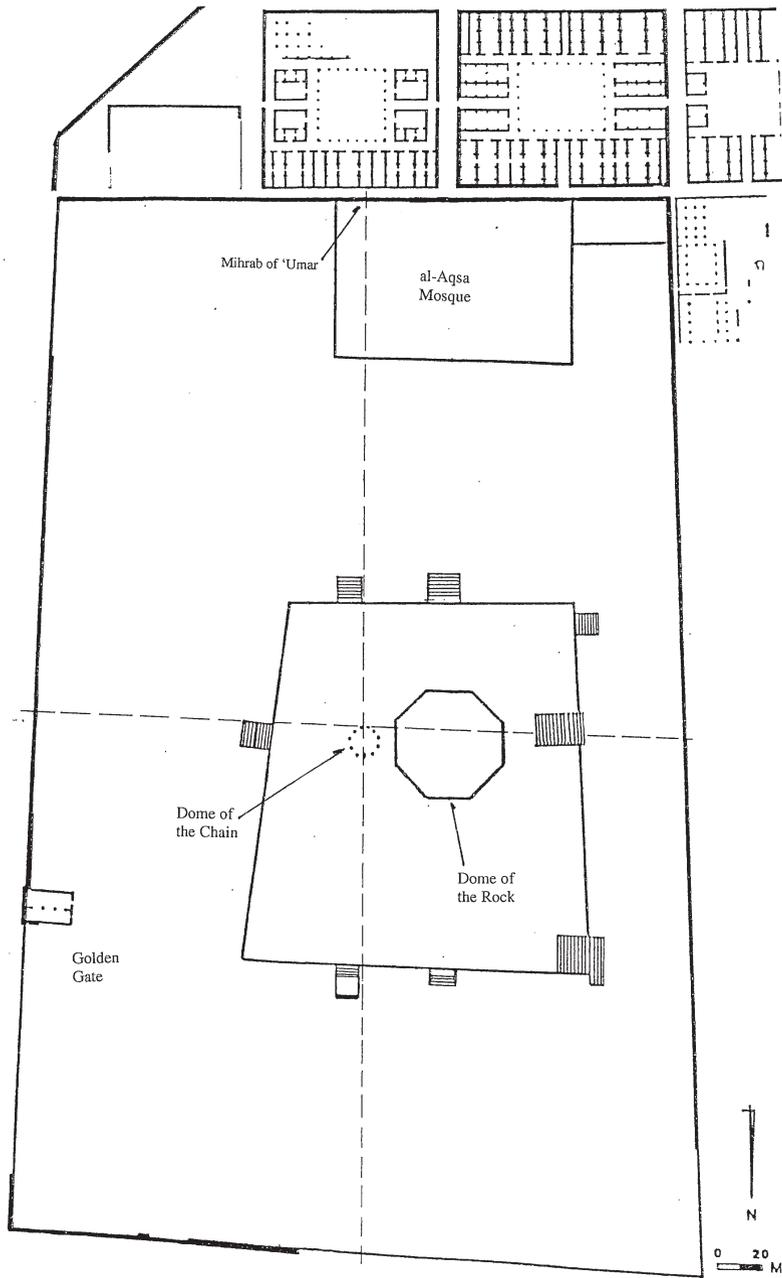


Fig. 4.1. Plan of the Temple Mount, with Marwanid-era buildings and imaginary lines of axes (after Rosen-Ayalon).

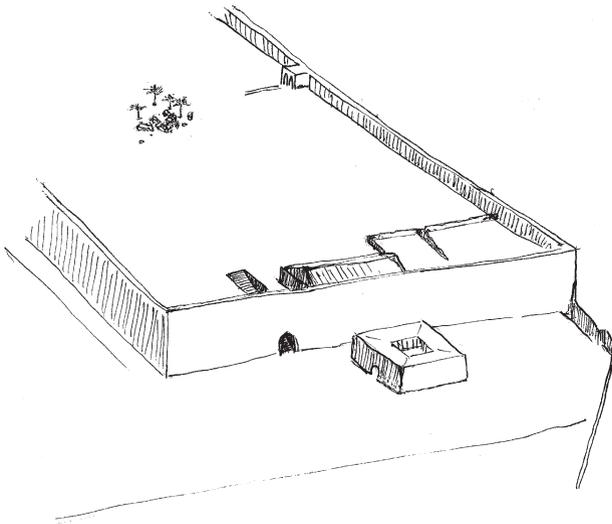


Fig. 4.2. Speculative reconstruction of Mu'awiya's mosque and palace at the Temple Mount.

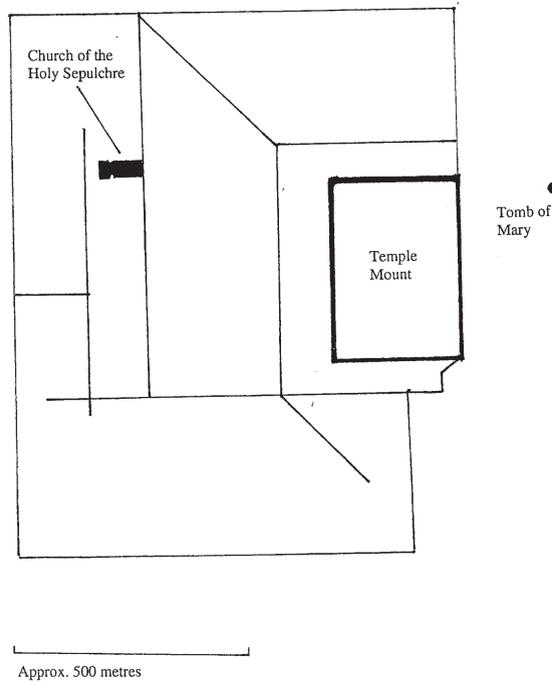


Fig. 4.3. Schematic plan of Jerusalem, with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Temple Mount and the Tomb of Mary (after Kaplony).