

# Marriages of Meccan Scholarly Families in 650–850/1252–1446

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Although many studies have argued for the frequency of cousin marriages and the significant role of marriage as an opportunity for employment or alliance between two families, extensive case studies on marriages within scholarly families have not been conducted. This paper is a case study on the marriages of four Meccan scholarly families from the mid-thirteenth to the late fifteenth centuries: the Ṭabarī family, the Nuwayrī family, the Fāsī family, and the Zuhayra family. It aims to examine the basic characteristics of these marriages, including the rate of consanguineous marriages and cousin marriages, and to reveal what kind of marriage strategies each family employed. This study is based primarily on the biographical dictionaries composed by contemporary intellectuals.

This study found that, first, each family utilized different marriage strategies. For example, as the only Ḥasanid *sharīf* family among these four families, the Fāsī family tried to connect with the family of the Meccan amirs who were also the Ḥasanid *sharīfs*.

Second, regarding the general tendency, nearly half of those with marriage records married their paternal relatives, and more than one third of consanguineous marriages were with sons and daughters of paternal uncles. The daughters of Shāfiʿī judges were apparently the most preferred candidates from other families. Among male members of the four scholarly families who married daughters of the Shāfiʿī judges, two-thirds succeeded in attaining the position of judge or deputy judge. In addition, around 40 percent of these men were sons of deputy judges. This indicates that judges and deputy judges tried to keep the legal offices within their extended families. Thus, extended households seem to have had a major role in marriages.

**Keywords:** marriage, Mecca, *ʿulamāʾ*, family, judge

## I. Introduction

Marriage has been a significant factor in constituting a society. In Mamluk studies, marriage has been studied in the following contexts. First, marriage has been analyzed in order to contradict the generally held view of patriarchy and to reveal women's everyday lives. Lutfi analyzes the social and economic positions of women during the fifteenth century, and argues that in some cases, economically independent women made their own choices (Lutfi 1981). Rapoport's study challenges the view of the legal inferiority of Muslim women and their dependence through the analysis of economic, legal, and social causes of Muslim divorce in Cairo, Damascus, and Jerusalem in the Mamluk period. He indicates that high divorce rates were sustained by economic independence of women, and argues that women challenged patriarchal domination (Rapoport 2005). Shoshan opposes Rapoport's view, arguing that divorce was not pervasive in Damascus and indicates a lack of evidence for Rapoport's hypothesis that women's economic independence resulted from their

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growing participation in the textile industry (Shoshan 2014).

Second, marriage was also one of the most effective ways to gain a job or to make ties with prominent families. It is frequently mentioned in biographical dictionaries that a scholar married a daughter of a prominent scholar and later obtained the office of the father-in-law (Escovitz 1984, 41–93). Petry argues that women of the Bulqīnī family, a prestigious Cairene family of scholars, were eligible for marriage to both *‘ulamā’* families and the Mamluk elite. He assumes that marriage alliances gave the family greater security (Petry 1981, 232–240). Martel-Thoumian shows lists of marriages from ten families that held the bureaucratic posts (Martel-Thoumian 1992, 183–325). Eychenne’s study analyzes marital strategies of administrative families (Eychenne 2013, 247–308).

Third, study of documents from the Mamluk period mentions marriage contracts. For example, Lutfī’s study on Mamluk Jerusalem mentions the marital statuses of men and women recorded in the Ḥaram documents including average number of children in the family briefly (Lutfi 1985: 254–257). A recently published study on 62 legal documents regarding marriage and separation in medieval Damascus indicates the formula of these documents, high divorce rate, prices of dowry, and different social groups that appeared in the documents (Mouton et al. 2013).

However, little is known about how several scholarly families living within the same city related through the marriage in the Mamluk period.<sup>1</sup> This study focuses on marital relationships among scholarly families in Mecca. Muslims came to Mecca from all over the world for pilgrimage, and some stayed there for a while in order to devote themselves to a pious life. We can find many examples in which newcomers married a local inhabitant and formed a new family in Mecca. Therefore, marriage is supposed to have played a significant role in forming connections between Meccan inhabitants and newly settled immigrants. Ahmed’s study on the religious elite families of the Hijaz during the early Islamic period also shows the importance of marital ties among those families (Ahmed 2011). Concerning the Mamluk period, although Bauden’s study on the Meccan Ṭabarī family mentions frequency of cousin marriage (Bauden 1995, 263), no extensive study on marital relations among scholarly families of Mecca has yet appeared.<sup>2</sup>

The families that are mentioned in the present study are as follows: the Ṭabarī family, the Nuwayrī family, the Fāsī family, and the Zuhayra family.<sup>3</sup> These four families had the most significant jobs in Mecca, including offices of judge (*qāḍī*), preacher (*khaṭīb*), and imams of the Sacred Mosque.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, most contemporary biographies were those of the members of these families, and they provide us sufficient information to reconstruct a family tree and to investigate marital relations. This present study will examine the members of the four Meccan families, who were born after 640/1242 (if the birth date is unknown, died after 700/1300) or died before 850/1446 (if

<sup>1</sup> Due to scarcity of sources, it is almost impossible to conduct a demographic research as is found in the field of Ottoman history. Concerning demographic research on the Ottoman period, see Duben and Behar 1991 and Okawara 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Previous studies on Meccan history during the Mamluk period tends to focus on the Meccan amirs who ruled Mecca. For example, see Mortel 1985, Meloy 2010, and Ota 2002. There are only few studies on scholarly families of Mecca. For example, see Mālikī. 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the family trees, see the figures at the end of the paper.

<sup>4</sup> In Mecca, offices of judge, preacher, and imam of the Sacred Mosque were most frequently recorded positions for religious and scholarly elite. For example, see ‘Abd al-Majīd 2010, 189–298. Concerning the judgeship, only Shāfi‘ī judgeship existed in the mid-thirteenth century. Judgeships for the other three Sunni schools of law were established at the beginning of the fifteenth century (Meloy forthcoming).

the death date is unknown, were born before 800/1397).<sup>5</sup> By focusing this period, we can see marriages since the mid-thirteenth century, when the Ṭabarī family became one of the most prominent families in Mecca, until the mid-fifteenth century, when the powerful Meccan amirs, who ruled Mecca entered into marital relationships with some women of these families, and the Ṣuhayra family started to hold prosperous positions including the judgeship.

## II. Meccan Scholarly Families

First, I will provide a brief introduction to each of these families. The Ṭabarī family was a scholarly family originally from Tabaristan. The founder of the family, Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ṭabarī (d. 613/1216) settled in Mecca in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (*ʿIqd*, vol. 8, 20–21; Bauden 1995, 260). They were the Husaynid sayyids. They seem to have adhered to the Shāfiʿī school of law. Until the mid-fourteenth century, the Ṭabarī family held the most prosperous offices including the judgeship, the preachingship, the Shāfiʿī imamate, and the professorship of the Rasulid *madrasas*<sup>6</sup> in Mecca (Bauden 1995, 260–263). They were one of the most eminent scholarly families in Mecca.

Compared with the Ṭabarī family, the Nuwayrī family was a relatively newly settled family. Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. al-Qāsim al-Nuwayrī (d. 737/1336), who was probably from Nuwayra, Egypt, moved to Mecca after 712/1312. He married a daughter from the aforementioned Ṭabarī family and taught the *ḥadīth* in one of the Rasulid *madrasas*, the Maṣūriyya in Mecca. Later, he divorced his wife, moved to Medina, and lived there until he died in 737/1336 (*Durar*, vol. 1, 184–185; *ʿIqd*, vol. 3, 78–79; *Naṣiḥa*, 133–137). His two sons, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad (727–786/1326–84) and Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī (724–798/1324–96), grew up in their mother’s family, the Ṭabarī family, after the father’s divorce. On the one hand, the descendants of the former adhered to the Shāfiʿī school of law and gained the offices of Shāfiʿī judge and preacher. On the other hand, most of the descendants of the latter adhered to the Mālikī school of law and obtained the offices of Mālikī judge and Mālikī imam of the Sacred Mosque. The family held these offices from the mid-fourteenth century onward.

The founder of the Fāsī family, Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fāsī (d. 719/1319), settled in Mecca in 686/1288. He was originally from Fez, and studied in Tunis and Egypt before coming to Mecca (*Durar*, vol. 4, 299; *ʿIqd*, vol. 2, 298–312). The Fāsī family claimed themselves as the Ḥasanid *sharīfs*. This family was divided into three branches. Two of them, descendants of Abū al-Khayr Muḥammad (678–747/1279–1346)<sup>7</sup> and Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī (708–769/1308–68)<sup>8</sup> adhered to the Mālikī school of law, and some became Mālikī judges and Mālikī imams from the mid-fourteenth century onward. The famous Meccan historian Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Fāsī (775–832/1373–1428)<sup>9</sup> was a grandson of Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī. In contrast, the third branch of this family, descendants of Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad (704–753/1305–52),<sup>10</sup> adhered to the Ḥanbalī school of law and became the judges and imams of the school.

<sup>5</sup> If both of spouses were from these four families, and one of them fit this case and another does not, we only count the former’s marriage in number. Members of these families who died in their childhood are excluded.

<sup>6</sup> Four Rasulid sultans of Yemen built *madrasas* in Mecca during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Mortel 1997).

<sup>7</sup> On his biography, see *Durar*, vol. 4, 225; *ʿIqd*, vol. 2, 334–336.

<sup>8</sup> On his biography, see *Durar*, vol. 3, 85; *ʿIqd*, vol. 6, 132–134.

<sup>9</sup> On his biography, see *Ḍawʿ*, vol. 7, 18–20; *Durr*, vol. 1, 3–12; *ʿIqd*, vol. 1, 331–363.

<sup>10</sup> On his biography, see *ʿIqd*, vol. 3, 170–171, vol. 8, 105.

The Zuhayra family had the *nisba* of “al-Qurashī al-Makhzūmī.” Banū Makhzūm is a clan of Quraysh tribe, and they were one of the prominent families in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods.<sup>11</sup> They appeared in the sources from the mid-twelfth century onwards. ‘Uṭayya b. Zuhayra b. Marzūq (d. 647/1249) is the first person mentioned in *‘Iqd*. He owned a great deal of property. He had approximately ten children, and one of his daughters was a wife of a Meccan amir (*‘Iqd*, vol. 6, 107–109). Information on this family before the mid-fourteenth century was scarce. Then, after great grandchildren of ‘Uṭayya b. Zuhayra obtained the Shāfi‘ī judgeship, they became one of the most prosperous families in Mecca. The members of this family held many positions, including offices of Shāfi‘ī judge and preacher of Mecca and Jedda, Mālikī judge of Mecca, and Mālikī imam of the Sacred Mosque.

In the following sections, we will analyze characteristics of marriages of each scholarly family. First, we will examine the marital strategies of each family. Then, we will consider the general tendency that we can see in marriages of these families.

### III. Marriages of the Ṭabarī Family

Historical sources mention forty-seven women from the Ṭabarī family who were born after 640/1242 or died before 850/1446. Seven of them do not have biographies in the sources, and they are only mentioned in others’ biographies. Therefore, I will examine forty female family members who have their own biographies. Eighty-eight percent (35 out of 40) got married. Among these married women, 17 percent (6 out of 35) got married three times, and the average number of marriages for these thirty-five women is 1.6 times. Considering that the sources might not have recorded every single marriage, the rate could have been much higher. Many of them, namely 26 percent (9 out of 35) married a Ṭabarī man once. In the second place, 34 percent (12 out of 35) married a man from a different scholarly family whose mother was a member of the Ṭabarī family at least once. Regarding cousin marriage, it is worth mentioning that 20 percent (7 out of 35) married a son of her paternal aunt, and only one woman married a son of her paternal uncle. This result suggests that while cousin marriage prevailed to a certain extent, it was not the major form of marriage. Marriage of a Ṭabarī woman with her paternal relatives was the most preferred arrangement, but marriages with men from other families but whose mother was a Ṭabarī was also highly preferred.

Regarding marriages with men from the other scholarly families, the Nuwayrī family seem to have been the most preferred. Twenty-three percent (8 out of 35) of Ṭabarī women who married Nuwayrī men. I will explain more about this marital relationship with the Nuwayrī family in the next section. In the second place, 20 percent (7 out of 35) married men of the Yāfi‘ī family. The founder of the Yāfi‘ī family, ‘Abd Allāh b. As‘ad al-Yāfi‘ī (ca. 698–768/ca. 1298–1367) was originally from Yemen. He accomplished the pilgrimage several times and visited Jerusalem, Hebron (Khalīl) and Egypt. He stayed in Mecca and Medina for a while and married Umm al-Khayr bt. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarī (d. 766/1364),<sup>12</sup> a daughter of Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-

<sup>11</sup> For Banū Makhzūm, see Hindos 1991. Ahmed 2011 mentions marital relationships among the religious elite and Banū Makhzūm. For example, see Ahmed 2011, 73–77.

<sup>12</sup> On her biography, see *‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 338.

Ṭabarī (686–750/1287–1349), the Shāfi‘ī imam of the Sacred Mosque and the *nā’ib* (deputy) of the judge (*Durr*, vol. 2, 352–354; *Iqd*, vol. 5, 104–115; *Naṣīḥa*, 158). They had three sons, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb and ‘Abd al-Hādī (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 338). Later, he married Zaynab (d. 776/1374), a daughter of the Meccan judge Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī (658–730/1260–1330). They lived together in Medina, and both wives died there (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 234, 338). His two sons, ‘Abd al-Hādī al-Yāfi‘ī<sup>13</sup> and ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Yāfi‘ī married their maternal cousins and other women of the Ṭabarī family (*Ḍaw’*, vol. 12, 65, 99; *Durr*, vol. 3, 1515–1516; *Iqd*, vol. 8, 271–272, 289).

Concerning the Ṭabarī women who married into the other scholarly families, four of them married men of the Qaṣṭallānī family, and three of them did so with the men of the Shaybī family (*Durr*, vol. 2, 1420–1421, 1425–1426, 1433–1434; *Iqd*, vol. 8, 251, 267–268, 311–312, 329). The Qaṣṭallānī family was a prosperous scholarly family, which held the Mālikī imamate until the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>14</sup> The Shaybī family was known as keeper of the Ka‘ba (Gaufrey-Demombynes 1997). There were also marriages of Ṭabarī women with men from the Fāsī family and the Zuhayra family (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 289, 357).

Thus, women of the Ṭabarī family mainly married within the family. However, daughters of the judges, preachers, and imams had a particularly important role to play through marriage by forging connections between their family and the immigrants to Mecca.

Concerning the male members of the Ṭabarī family, fifty can be identified from the sources. However, it is more difficult to trace the marital relations of men from the biographical dictionaries because the biographies of men usually record their jobs or their learning places rather than their marital statuses. Marital relationships are usually mentioned in the biographies of women. We can find twenty-nine marriages contracted by only nineteen out of these fifty men. Among those who married, 21 percent (4 out of 19) married for three times, and the average number of marriages of the Ṭabarī men who were married was 1.5 times per a single person. More than half (10 out of 19) married female members of the Ṭabarī family; among them, 11 percent (2 out of 19) married daughters of their paternal uncles. In a different development from the marriages of female members of the family, only two Ṭabarī men married other families’ women whose mothers were themselves Ṭabarīs.

Regarding the marital relationship of Ṭabarī men with other scholarly families, the Qaṣṭallānī family’s women were preferred. Sixteen percent (3 out of 19) of Ṭabarī men married Qaṣṭallānī women. For example, the Shāfi‘ī imam of the Sacred Mosque Raḍī al-Dīn Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī (636–722/1239–1322) married ‘Ā’isha bt. ‘Umar al-Qaṣṭallānī, a daughter of the Mālikī imam (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1489, 1493). The Meccan judge Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī (703–760/1303–1359)<sup>15</sup> married Fāṭima bt. ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Qaṣṭallānī (d. 760/1359), a daughter of the Mālikī imam and also a sister of the Mālikī imam Khalīl Muḥammad (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 301). In addition, three Ṭabarī women married Yāfi‘ī women who were granddaughters of the Ṭabarī women who married into this family. There was one example of marriage with a Nuwayrī

<sup>13</sup> On his biography, see *Iqd*, vol. 5, 534–535.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on this family, see Otsuya 2018, 59–63; Sublet 2013.

<sup>15</sup> On his biography, see *Durr*, vol. 1, 317–318; *Iqd*, vol. 3, 161–166.

woman. The Shāfiī imam Muḥibb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarī (727–795/1326–1393) married Zaynab (765–823/1363–1420), a daughter of the Meccan judge Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (722–786/1322–1384) (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 232–233). Muḥibb al-Dīn Muḥammad inherited the Shāfiī imamate from his brother and passed it to his son. He also worked as a *nāʾib* of his father-in-law, the Meccan judge Kamāl al-Dīn al-Nuwayrī. Thus, compared with the marriages of Ṭabarī women, marriages of Ṭabarī men with women of other scholarly families were relatively few. This is probably because the men of the Ṭabarī family did not need to get married in order to obtain positions that their family already had. The situation contrasted with the fact that many women from this family married men of other scholarly families.

#### IV. Marriages of the Nuwayrī Family

Twenty-two female members of the Nuwayrī family can be identified in the sources. Seven of them do not have biographies. Among the other fifteen women, 87 percent (13 out of 15) were married. Two of them married more than twice, and the average number of marriages among them is 1.7. Fifty-four percent (7 out of 13) married their paternal relatives, and 46 percent (6 out of 13) married the sons of their paternal uncles. Only one marriage occurred between a female member of this family and a son of her paternal aunt. Compared with the marriage situation of the female members of the Ṭabarī family, it is remarkable that rate of cousin marriage and the rate of marriage inside the family were much higher. Concerning the marriages with men of other scholarly families, the Fāsī family was the most preferred. 31 percent (4 out of 13) married Fāsī men. In the next section, I will mention this marital relationship with the Fāsī family. Men of the Yāfiī family were the second most preferred; three Nuwayrī women married men of this family. Three marriages occurred with a man from the Zuhayra family, and only one marriage occurred with a man from the Ṭabarī family.

Twenty-one male members of the Nuwayrī family can be identified in the sources. Among these twenty-one men, no marriage record exists for nine. Among the twelve who have marriage records, 50 percent (6 out of 12) were married more than twice. The average number of marriages for Nuwayrī men is 2.3. Compared with the examples mentioned above, these numbers are remarkably high. Forty-two percent (5 out of 12) married at least one Nuwayrī woman, and 25 percent (3 out of 12) married at least one daughter of their paternal uncles. Two men married at least one daughter of their maternal uncles. Regarding marriages of Nuwayrī men with women of other scholarly families, the Ṭabarī family were apparently the most preferred. Forty-two percent (5 out of 12) married at least one Ṭabarī woman. It is remarkable that the rate is the same as that of marriages to the Nuwayrī women. This marital relationship with the Ṭabarī family began when the founder of the Nuwayrī family, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. al-Qāsim (d. 737/1336) married Kamāliyya (d. 755/1354), a daughter of the Meccan judge Najm al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī (658–730/1260–1330). Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī had two sons and one daughter from the marriage, and he lived together with his wife until the death of his father-in-law in 730/1330. However, when he visited Medina with her, he wanted to stay there. The Ṭabarī family insisted on her return to Mecca. He granted her a divorce and stayed in Medina until his



death (*Durar*, vol. 1, 184–185; *Iqd*, vol. 3, 78–79; *Naṣīḥa*, 134–136).

After his divorce, his two sons, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad (722–786/1322–84) and Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī (724–798/1324–96), grew up in their mother’s family, namely the Ṭabarī family. Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad became a *nā’ib* of his maternal uncle, the Meccan judge Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī. He succeeded to the judgeship in 763/1362. He also worked as a preacher in the Sacred Mosque and as a professor of the three Rasulid *madrasas* in Mecca (*Durar*, vol. 3, 415; *Iqd*, vol. 1, 300–308). He married his maternal relative, Juwayra bt. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarī (d. 795/1392), a paternal cousin of the Meccan judge Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarī (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 194–195). Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad had three sons and three daughters. One of his sons, Muḥibb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (752–799/1351–1397) inherited the judgeship, the office of preacher, and the professorship from his father. He married his distant maternal relative, Fāṭima bt. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī (d. 820/1417), whose father was a preacher and imam of the Sacred Mosque (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 289–290).

Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad’s younger brother, Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī inherited some property from his stepfather, the Mālikī imam of the Sacred Mosque, Khalīl Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qaṣṭallānī (688–760/1289–1359).<sup>16</sup> After the death of Khalīl’s nephew ‘Umar, Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī held the imamate. He also worked as a *nā’ib* of his brother the Meccan judge Kamāl al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (*Daw’*, vol. 3, 85; *Iqd*, vol. 6, 132–134). Like his brother, he married daughters of his maternal uncle the Meccan judge Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarī, Fāṭima (d. 758/1357), Zaynab (d. 793/1391), and Khadija (740–814/1339–1412) (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1568; *Iqd*, vol. 8, 205–206, 224–225). Thus, the male members of the Nuwayrī family gained advantages from these marriages with daughters of the judges and imams of the Ṭabarī family and the Qaṣṭallānī family and inherited their prestigious positions through the marital connections.

In the second place, three Nuwayrī men married Zuhayra women. For example, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Nuwayrī (762–832/1361–1429) married Umm al-Hudā (d. 827/1424), a daughter of the Meccan judge and preacher Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Zuhayra (718–792/1318–90) (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 358). He preached after his father-in-law resigned, and he also worked as a *nā’ib* of his relative, the Meccan judge ‘Izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (775–820/1374–1417) (*Durr*, vol. 1, 201). In addition, this ‘Izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī married a different woman from the Zuhayra family, ‘Ā’isha bt. ‘Abd Allāh b. Zuhayra (d. 827/1424) (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 272). He competed for the offices of judge and preacher with his wife’s brother, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Zuhayra (751–817/1350–1414) (*Iqd*, vol. 1, 372–375). Later, he divorced his wife, and his relative, ‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz b. ‘Alī al-Nuwayrī (778–825/1376–1422),<sup>17</sup> the judge of Ta’izz married her (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 272). Thus, we can find that the Nuwayrī family attempted to hold prosperous offices including the judgeship and office of preacher through marital connections with the Zuhayra family.

Regarding other marriages by Nuwayrī men, we can find one marriage with a woman of the Fāsī family and one with a woman of the Ḥarāzī family (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1532, *Iqd*, vol. 8, 248).

<sup>16</sup> Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī’s mother, Kamāliyya bt. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī married Khalīl Muḥammad al-Qaṣṭallānī before she married Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī. She married Khalīl Muḥammad again after she got divorced from Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 312).

<sup>17</sup> On his biography, see *Daw’*, vol. 4, 221–222; *Iqd*, vol. 5, 452–454.

The aforementioned Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Nuwayrī also married a daughter of the Meccan judge, Kamāliyya bt. Muḥammad al-Ḥarāzī (757–849/1356–1445) (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1532).

In sum, marriages within the family were more frequently observed in the Nuwayrī family than in the Ṭabarī family. It is also worth mentioning that the male members of this family exhibited a high divorce rate and married not only their cousins or their paternal relatives but also women of the other scholarly families, especially the Ṭabarī family and the Zuhayra family. This tendency marks a contrast with that of the Ṭabarī family, whose women more often married men from other scholarly families. The reason for this contrast is that the Nuwayrī family was a newly settled family in Mecca. Therefore, at the early stage, the male members of this family were unable to marry their paternal cousins because the founder of this family came to Mecca and settled there alone. The Nuwayrī men also preferred to marry Ṭabarī women in order to get the jobs.

### V. Marriages of the Fāsī Family

Twenty female members of the Fāsī family can be identified in the sources. Two are only mentioned in the others’ biographies. Among eighteen members who have biographies, 94 percent (17 out of 18) were married an average of 1.5 times; 18 percent (3 out of 17) were married three times. Fifty-three percent (9 out of 17) married their paternal relatives once, and 29 percent (5 out of 17) did so with the sons of their paternal uncles. Compared to women of the Ṭabarī family, the rate of consanguineous marriage among Fāsī women was high.

In addition, it is remarkable that we can find that 18 percent (3 out of 17) married men of the Qatāda family, another Ḥasanid *sharīf* family. This Qatāda family was the ruling elite, to which the Meccan amirs belonged.<sup>18</sup> All examples of marriages between Fāsī women and men from the Qatāda family occurred at the end of the fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century. As Mortel argued, the members of the Qatāda family originally adhered to Zaydism and then accepted Sunnism from the late fourteenth century onward. One of the earliest examples occurred in the mid-fourteenth century, when the Meccan amir ‘Ajlān b. Rumaytha was known for his respect for Sunni beliefs and was even praised as a protector of Sunnism. His son, the powerful Meccan amir Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān (d. 829/1426) is mentioned to have studied *ḥadīth* with Sunni scholars (Meloy forthcoming; Mortel 1987, 467–468). He also built a *madrasa* in the vicinity of the Sacred Mosque (Mortel 1997, 243–244). Thus, these marriages of the Fāsī women with the men of the Qatāda family should be considered in this context. Three women of the Fāsī family married members of the Qatāda family. First, Kamāliyya bt. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Fāsī (d. 827/1424) married the Meccan amir, Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān. Unfortunately, we only have scarce information about this marriage, with mentions of their marriage and their divorce (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 313). Kamāliyya’s brother, Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (785–824/1383–1421) was one of the rivals of the famous historian and the Mālikī judge Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Fāsī (775–832/1373–1428). Raḍī al-Dīn Muḥammad worked as a *nā’ib* of Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad and was appointed to the Mālikī judgeship for a brief period in 817/1415 when Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad was in Yemen (*Iqd*, vol. 2, 116–117).

Second, Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān also married Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad’s half-sister, Umm al-Hāni’ b.

<sup>18</sup> For more information on the Meccan amirs, see Meloy 2010, Mortel 1985, Mortel 1987, and Ota 2002.



Aḥmad al-Fāsī (d. 816/1413), in Muḥarram 805/August 1402. He divorced her that same year, and she gave birth to his son, ‘Abd Allāh (d. 806/1403), after the divorce (*‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 355). Her father, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Fāsī (754–819/1353–1416), worked as a *nā’ib* of the Meccan judges. In his biography, which was written by his son, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad was said to have composed some panegyric poems (sg. *madīḥ*) for the Meccan amirs. Among them was a poem for Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān. According to this biography, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad got acceptance for the marriage from Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān and became related to him by marrying off Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad’s daughter, Umm al-Hāni’, to Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān (*‘Iqd*, vol. 3, 110–111). In this case, it seems that Umm al-Hāni’'s father, not Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān suggested the marriage. After the divorce from Ḥasan b. ‘Ajlān, Umm al-Hāni’ got married again with another member of the Qatāda family, Jassār b. Qāsim (d. 811/1409).<sup>19</sup> After they had a son, Jār Allāh, they divorced, and Umm al-Hāni’ married another Ḥasanid *sharīf*, Ḥamza b. Jār Allāh b. Ḥamza (d. 816/1413).<sup>20</sup> They had a daughter before subsequently divorcing (*‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 355).

Third, Umm al-Hudā bt. Muḥammad al-Fāsī (d. 855/1451) got married with the Meccan amir ‘Alī b. ‘Inān al-Ḥasanī (d. 833/1430) after she was divorced by his first husband, the Ḥanbalī imam ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Fāsī (772–806/1371–1403). She was a daughter of the Ḥanbalī imam of the Sacred Mosque and had his son ‘Inān (d. 833/1430). Later, she got divorced from him (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1633–1634). It was probably in 828/1425, when ‘Alī b. ‘Inān was resigned from the Meccan amirate, went to Cairo with the pilgrimage caravan, and was arrested and confined at the Cairene Citadel until his death (*Durr*, vol. 2, 1047–1048). Thus, the Fāsī family gained advantages through marriages with the Qatāda family because they were also Ḥasanid *sharīfs*. Previous studies on ‘Alid families show that women of ‘Alid families preferred to marry within the family or to marry other ‘Alids (Mauriello 2014). Considering these marriages with the Qatāda family in addition to marriages within the Fāsī family, 65 percent (11 out of 17) of Fāsī women had Ḥasanid *sharīf* husbands at least once. We can therefore consider that preference for marriages with Ḥasanid *sharīfs* was reflected in the situation.

Concerning marriages with members of other scholarly families, we can find three marriages with those of the Dukkālī family. The origin of the Dukkālī family lies in the settling of a scholar, ‘Abd al-Mu’min b. Khalīfa al-Dukkālī (fl. 731/1330), in Mecca in the first half of the fourteenth century. He most probably came from Dukkāla in Morocco, studied in Mecca, and worked as a *nā’ib* of the Meccan judge Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī and the Mālikī imam Khalīl Muḥammad al-Qaṣṭallānī. He married a daughter of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fāsī (d. 719/1319), who was a founder of the Meccan Fāsī family. They had two sons named Khalīl (d. 749/1348)<sup>21</sup> and Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 769/1367)<sup>22</sup> (*‘Iqd*, vol. 5, 519). Later, Bahā’ al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Mu’min married a daughter of his maternal uncle, Zaynab bt. Muḥammad al-Fāsī (d. after 778/1376). They had a son, and later Zaynab was separated from her husband by death (*‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 234). Bahā’ al-Dīn’s son, Muḥammad married

<sup>19</sup> On his biography, see *‘Iqd*, vol. 3, 412.

<sup>20</sup> On his biography, see *‘Iqd*, vol. 4, 226.

<sup>21</sup> On his biography, see *‘Iqd*, vol. 4, 328–329.

<sup>22</sup> On his biography, see *‘Iqd*, vol. 2, 129–130.

a daughter of the paternal uncle of his stepmother, Fāṭima bt. ‘Alī al-Fāsī (d. 827/1424) (*‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 303). Thus, the marital relations between Fāsī women and Dukkālī men continued for three generations. There are only three examples of marriages between Fāsī women and men from other scholarly families: one with a man of the Zuhayra family, one with a man of the Qastallānī family, one with a man of the Nuwayrī family, and one with a man of the Āmidī family. The Āmidī family held the Ḥanbalī imamate of the Sacred Mosque until the mid-fourteenth century (*‘Iqd*, vol. 2, 134–136, 316, vol. 6, 50–53). Sharīfa b. Aḥmad al-Fāsī (d. 786/1384) married the Ḥanbalī imam Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Āmidī (d. 759/1357) (*‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 225). After his death, Sharīfa’s brother, Sirāj al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Laṭīf b. Aḥmad al-Fāsī (d. 772/1371), gained the position and the Fāsī family inherited it from that time forward (*‘Iqd*, vol. 5, 487).

Twenty-five male members of the Fāsī family can be identified in the sources. No marriage record exists for eleven of them. Among the fourteen for whom a record exists, only two married more than once. The total number of marriages are seventeen, and the average number of marriages is 1.2 times each. Compared with the aforementioned cases, the number is few. Forty-three percent (6 out of 14) married female members of their own family; 29 percent (4 out of 14) married daughters of their paternal uncles. Concerning marriages with women of other scholarly families, the Nuwayrī family, the Yāfi‘ī family and the Ṭabarī family are the most prevalent. Two men of the Fāsī family married women of each family.

For example, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Fāsī (754–819/1353–1416) married Sa‘āda bt. Muḥammad al-Nuwayrī (744 or 745–832/1343 or 1344–1429), a daughter of the Meccan judge, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1578–1580). Her brother, Muḥibb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Nuwayrī (752–799/1351–1397) held the Meccan judgeship, and her husband worked as his *nā’ib* (*‘Iqd*, vol. 3, 110). Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Fāsī also married Zaynab bt. ‘Alī al-Nuwayrī (775–827/1373–1424), a daughter of the Mālikī imam (*‘Iqd*, vol. 8, 231–232). Her father worked as a *nā’ib* of the Meccan judge, and Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Fāsī also held the office of his father-in-law.

Thus, it is indicated that the Fāsī family had its own strategy of marriage, especially for marriages of female members. As we have seen above, most of the women married *sharīfs* including their paternal relatives, and members of the Qatāda family in order to keep their lineage from the Prophet. In addition, the Fāsī men married women from the Dukkālī family over three generations. It is worth mentioning that the two families have many common features: Both had a root in the Maghrib and settled in Mecca in the first half of the fourteenth century. These factors should have improved ties between the two families. Apart from the Nuwayrī family, we unfortunately cannot find any information on the marriage of the founder of this family. However, we can see that the male members strove to connect with other scholarly families through marriages, and to obtain positions through their in-laws.

## VI. Marriages of the Zuhayra Family

Nineteen female members of the Zuhayra family appear in the sources. Two Zuhayra woman does not have a biography. Among seventeen women who have their own biographies, 82 percent (14

out of 17) married. One got married four times, and the average number of the marriages per woman is 1.3 times. Compared with the previous examples, this number is relatively low. This is probably because the family did not hold such prosperous offices as the judgeship, office of the preacher, imamate, or the professorship, and thus there is less information on this family than on the other families. Fifty-seven percent (8 out of 14) married their paternal relatives, and only one married a son of her paternal uncle. There are relatively few examples of marriages between *Ẓuhayra* women and men from other scholarly families. As mentioned above, two *Ẓuhayra* women married men from the Nuwayrī family, and one of them married two Nuwayrī men. As mentioned in the previous section, there is only one example of marriage between a *Ẓuhayra* woman and a Fāsī man. Concerning the marriages between *Ẓuhayra* women and men from other families, we can find some marriages with foreign scholars who came to Mecca and settled there. For example, Fāṭima bt. Aḥmad b. *Ẓuhayra* (fl. 760s/1358–1368) married the Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn ‘Uthmān b. Muḥammad al-Tawzarī (630–713/1233–1313) (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 294–295). He was born in Fayyūm in Egypt and learned *ḥadīth* and Mālikī *fiqh*. He came to the Hijaz in 657/1259. Later, he settled in Mecca and stayed there until his death (*Durar*, vol. 3, 64; *Iqd*, vol. 6, 41–47). The sources mentioned many scholars who learned from him in Mecca. Fāṭima bt. Aḥmad’s niece, Fāṭima bt. *Ẓuhayra* (fl. 745/1344), also married a scholar from Egypt (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1504–1505). Her husband, Najm al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Yūsuf al-Aṣḥūnī (699–750/1299–1350) was born in Aṣḥūn in Upper Egypt. He learned Shāfi‘ī *fiqh* in Isnā. Then, he lived in Qūṣ, and visited Mecca from ‘Aydḥāb by sea at least three times. Later, he settled in Mecca, where he lived until his death. Al-Fāsī described him as a *muftī* of Mecca (*Iqd*, vol. 5, 415–418). Their son, Muḥammad (d. after 760/1358), grew up in Mecca, returned to his father’s hometown, Aṣḥūn and died there (*Iqd*, vol. 2, 120–121). One marriage with a Ḥarāzī man is also mentioned in the sources. Umm al-Khayr bt. Muḥammad b. *Ẓuhayra* (d. 827/1423) married the *faqīh* ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Ḥarāzī, a son of the Meccan judge Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ḥarāzī (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1594).

Forty-four male members of the *Ẓuhayra* family can be identified in the sources. No marital record exists for fifteen of them, although three of these fifteen had children. The average number of marriages is 1.3 times per person. Thirty-four percent (10 out of 29) married female members of the family, and 10 percent (3 out of 29) did so with daughters of their paternal uncles. There are also examples of marriages to women from various scholarly families. Four examples exist of marriages to Nuwayrī women and three exist of marriages to the Ḥarāzī women. All four marriages with the Nuwayrī women were contracted with daughters of the Nuwayrī judges. For example, Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh b. *Ẓuhayra* (751–817/1350–1414) married Zaynab bt. Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Nuwayrī (765–823/1363–1420) in 795/1392 (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 232–233). Her father, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (722–786/1322–84), held the Meccan judgeship from 763/1362 until 786/1384 (*Durar*, vol. 3, 415; *Iqd*, vol. 1, 300–308). Later, her husband competed for the judgeship with her nephew, ‘Izz al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Nuwayrī (775–820/1374–1417).

Concerning the marriages with the Ḥarāzī women, Shihāb Aḥmad b. *Ẓuhayra* (718–792/1318–90) married Fāṭima (d. 818/1415), a daughter of the Meccan judge Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ḥarāzī (*Iqd*, vol. 8, 288–289). He worked as a *nā’ib* of his father-in-law (*Iqd*, vol. 3, 53). He

later became the first person who held the Meccan judgeship in the Zuhayra family in 786/1385. Although he only held the office for a year and some months, it was the starting point of the age when the Zuhayra family held prosperous offices, including the judgeship and the office of preacher, in the fifteenth century. In addition, Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Zuhayra (765–820/1363–1418) married Kamāliyya (757–849/1356–1445), a daughter of the Meccan judge Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ḥarāzī (*Durr*, vol. 3, 1532; *Dawʿ*, vol. 12, 120). Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad also became a Meccan judge (*Iqd*, vol. 2, 287–290). Thus, most marriages with other scholarly families occurred from the late fourteenth century on. This corresponds with the time when the Zuhayra family rose to the most significant offices in Mecca.

In sum, women of the Zuhayra family were more likely to marry their paternal relatives compared to women from the other families. There are relatively few examples of marriages between Zuhayra women and men from the other prominent scholarly families of Mecca. This is probably because, as noted above, the Zuhayra family only began to ascend to significant offices in Meccan society at the end of the fourteenth century. Rather, they tended to marry foreign scholars who came to Mecca and helped them to establish families in Mecca. Examples of male members, marrying daughters of the Meccan judges exist. Such marriages helped Zuhayra men to rise to the Meccan judgeship and also maintain it in some families that were related through various marriages.

## VII. General Tendency of the Marriages of the Meccan Scholarly Families

The sections above investigated marriages in Mecca family by family, and it reveals that there are specific marriage strategies for each family. In order to broaden the view and generalize marriage preferences, it is necessary to combine the examples and take an average. First, ninety women with biographies from the Meccan scholarly families are argued. Eighty-eight percent (79 out of 90) were married: 120 total cases of marriages, an average of 1.5 marriages per woman, are recorded in the sources. Among those who were married, one-third (27 out of 79) were married more than once, and 15 percent (12 out of 79) were married more than twice. According to Rapoport's study on marriages of 168 Cairene women in the late fifteenth century, 40 percent were married more than once, an average of two marriages per woman (Rapoport 2001, 204). Compared with his results, the rate of women who were married more than once and the number of marriages is lower in our study. Moreover, Rapoport's study includes any woman from various social groups including women of the military households as long as their marriages are recorded in his source, al-Sakhāwī's *Dawʿ*. Unfortunately, since Rapoport does not indicate the respective number of women of each social group, we cannot simply compare his result with ours in order to know the regional difference.

However, the comparison is still meaningful to an extent. For example, 42 percent (33 out of 79) married men of their paternal family at least once. Among them, 16 percent (13 out of 79) married sons of their paternal uncles, and 10 percent (8 out of 79) married sons of their paternal aunts. Moreover, more than half of the women of Mecca's scholarly families married men of their paternal family or sons of their paternal aunts. Thus, paternal families played a main role in the choice of women's husbands. As we have seen above in the case of marriage between a daughter

of the Ṭabarī judge and the founder of the Nuwayrī family, when women divorced, the paternal family took care of them. Rapoport emphasizes that “marriage and, even more so, divorce were primarily a contract between two persons. [...] conjugal relations mattered much more than the extended household” (Rapoport 2005, 88). However, marriages inside the extended family constituted the most common and preferred pattern of marriages. As Lutfi argues in her study on women in Jerusalem during the fifteenth century, it was quite common that marriages of young girls were totally arranged by their families, and even adult women seemed to be still under the responsibility of men of the family (Lutfi 1981, 112). Thus, the extended family seems to have had a major function in choosing women’s future-husbands.

In contrast to the result that nearly half of women of the four families married their paternal relatives, the previous sections feature many examples of the daughters of Shāfi‘ī judges, preachers, and imams being preferred as wives. As it is well-known and indicated by many previous studies, marriages with a woman whose father had a prosperous job gave an opportunity to pass a job to her husband. Meloy also indicates that the Meccan judges were related through the marriages (Meloy forthcoming). Among seventy-nine women whose marriages are recorded in the sources were twenty-one daughters of Shāfi‘ī judges. The total number of marriages was thirty-four, and the average number of marriages is 1.6. This number is slightly higher than the average of all marriages. The number of marriages involving the daughters of the Ṭabarī judges is 1.9, that of those of the Nuwayrī judge is 1.7, and that of the daughters of the Ṣuhayra judges is 1.2. This owes to the fact that five out of the six daughters of Ṣuhayra judges were daughters of the Meccan judge Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ṣuhayra (718–792/1318–90). He held his office for only a year and some months. All of his daughters are recorded to have married only once. If we exclude the marriages of his daughters, the total number of marriages is twenty-nine, and the average number of marriages is 1.8 times per woman. It is remarkable that 90 percent (26 out of 29) of marriages were contracted with men of other scholarly families. Particularly, there are no recorded marriages of the daughters of the Ṭabarī judges to Ṭabarī men. All of them married scholars from other families. Thus, daughters of the judges were the most preferred wives, and their paternal family also preferred to marry them to men from other scholarly families rather than their paternal relatives including sons of their paternal uncles.

On the other hand, 140 men from the Meccan scholarly families are attested in the sources; unfortunately, 112 cases marriage of only seventy-four men are recorded. The average number of marriages is 1.5. Among those who were married, 32 percent (24 out of 74) were married more than once, and 16 percent (12 out of 74) were married more than twice. Forty-two percent (31 out of 74) married women from their paternal family at least once; among these men, 16 percent (12 out of 74) married daughters of their paternal uncles. Only two of them married daughters of their maternal uncles, and only one of them married a daughter of his paternal aunt. It is interesting that these numbers are not significantly different from those of the women. Most marriages of men were contracted with the women of their own family.

We argued above that the daughters of Shāfi‘ī judges were the most preferred choices for wives. We can find eighteen men who married daughters of Shāfi‘ī judges. Five of them ascended to the judgeship, and seven of them became deputies of the judges. Although the men who married

judges' daughters could not always inherit the jobs of their father-in-law, they had by far more opportunities to gain the judgeship or the deputy judgeship than others. However, they did not always seem to have chances to get married with daughters of the judges on their own: Seven of these men were the sons of deputy judges. This indicates that children of judges both entered into repeated intermarriages and tried to keep their jobs among close relatives.

### VIII. Conclusion

This study investigated the marriages of members of the four scholarly families of Mecca and revealed the following findings. First, marriages between two people from the same paternal family constituted the most common pattern. Nearly half of those whose marriages were recorded married with a spouse from the paternal side of their family. More than one third of consanguineous marriages were with sons and daughters of paternal uncles. For women, marriages not only with sons of their paternal uncles but also with sons of their paternal aunts prevailed; men, meanwhile, mostly married the daughters of their paternal uncles. The extended family seems to have had a major function in choosing future-husbands and wives. As we have seen above, each family had its own marriage strategy based on the family's historical background and status.

Second, the daughters of the Shāfi'ī judges were preferred candidates for marriage. It is attested by the fact that 90 percent of them married not their paternal relatives but scholars of other families. Among male members of the four scholarly families who married daughters of the Shāfi'ī judges, two-thirds succeeded in attaining the position of judge or deputy judge. However, not every man had the same amount of opportunities to marry daughters of Shāfi'ī judges even if they were themselves members of the Meccan scholarly families. Around 40 percent of these men were sons of deputy judges. Thus, marriage was one of the ways of maintaining the position among those who held a legal office.

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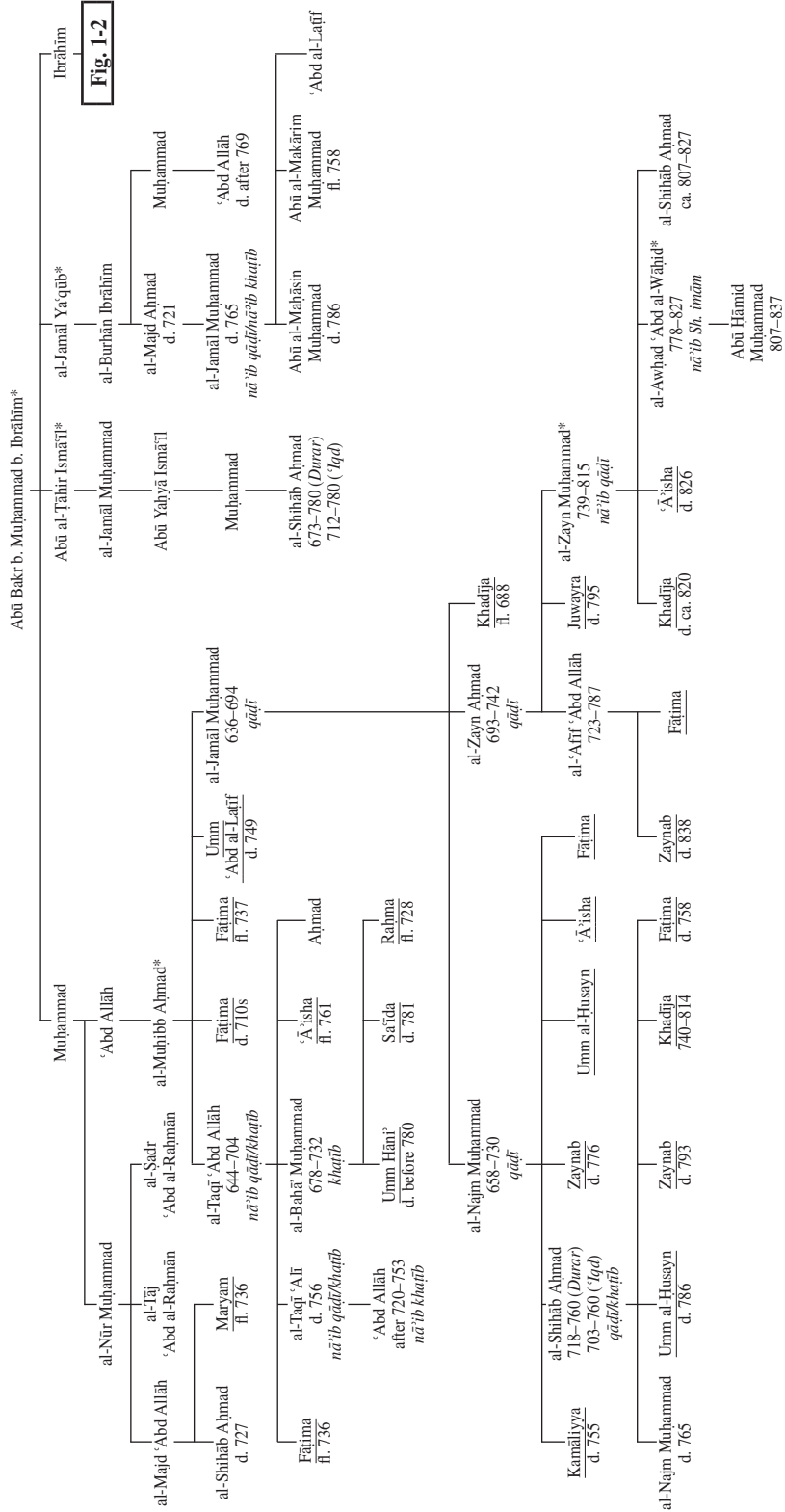
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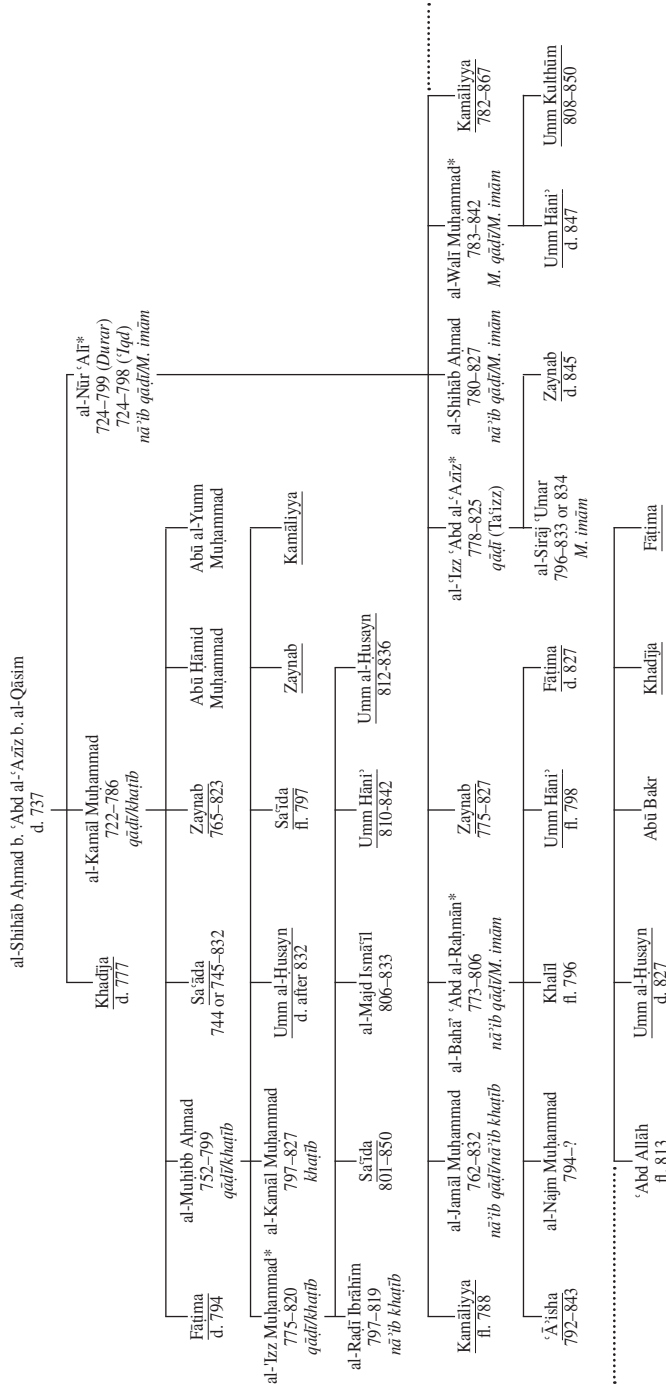
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**Fig. 1-1: The Ṭabarī Family (1)**

This table is based on Bauden 1995.  
 Individuals with an asterisk indicate that they have other child/children not shown in the table.  
*Sh.* is the abbreviation for Shāfiʿī.





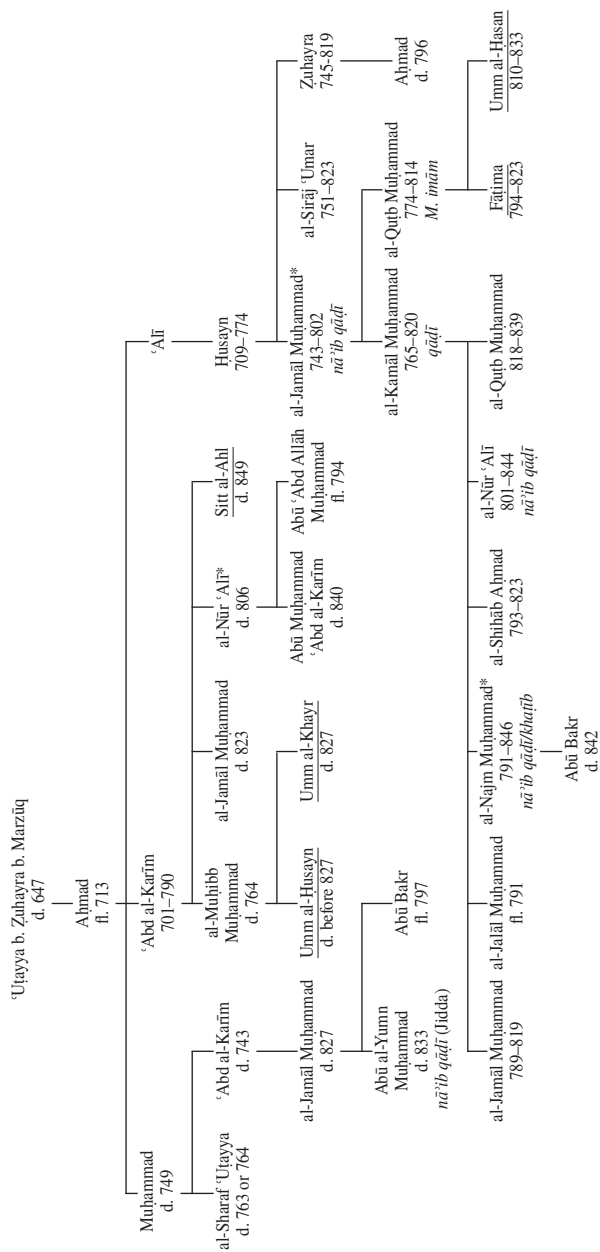
**Fig. 2: The Nuwayrī Family**

Individuals with an asterisk indicate that they have other child/children not shown in the table.  
M. is the abbreviation for Mālikī.









**Fig. 4-2: The Zuhayra Family (2)**

Individuals with an asterisk indicate that they have other child/children not shown in the table. M. is the abbreviation for Mālikī.