

Assignment 3. Report

Marriages in Muhammad's tribe

Introduction

A database for given project was provided by Dr. Majied Robinson with the title "Marriages in Muhammad's tribe". The database was represented in multiple tables, such as "Marriage Database", which is the main dataset with all the data and multiple sub-databases for every tribe and clan represented there (e.g. "Qurayshi marriages by clan"). The information of marriages in pre-Islamic and early Islamic period were classified by tribes or clans (subtribes). Aside from basic information such as names of men and women, tribes(subtribes) of both of them, number of children they had, generations of men and women were also indicated (Figure 1).

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with a large table. The columns are labeled A through AB. The rows contain data about marriages, including names of individuals, their tribes, and the number of children they had. The data is organized into multiple sections, with some rows highlighted in red. The spreadsheet also shows various Excel interface elements like the ribbon, formulas bar, and status bar.

Figure 1. "Marriages in Muhammad's tribe" excel table

By the information provided from dataholder the 5th generation is the generation of Muhammad, which means generations before 5th belong to pre-Islamic period while those after 5th belong to early Islamic period. The main interest of dataholder was the question how marriage traditions could affect politics at that time or how otherwise political and social factors probably had an impact on marriage traditions and behaviour.

Context

Basically, we did not intend to explore every detail of every clan in Quraysh tribe that is presented in our database, but to mainly focus on the major and the most powerful and influential clans which were the rulers of first arabic kingdoms (caliphates): Umayyads and Hashemite.

The reason why we chose them is the fact that a lot of historical sources argue that they were so called sworn enemies. For instance in the article with title "The Hashemite-Umayyad Divide and its Impact on the Future of Islam" (Hakim Y., 2016) author discusses how a conflict between those two clans affected the history of Islam centuries ago. Or as it stands in one of the reviews (Hamza M.Z., 2015) written on "Religious Scholars and the Umayyads: Piety-Minded Supporters of the Marwānid Caliphate" by Steven Judd: "*The Umayyad-Hashemite rivalry, like the patriarchal narratives of Genesis, emerged from a sibling rivalry between Muhammad's great-grandfather Hashem and his twin brother Abu Umayya, the eponymous ancestors of the fighting Meccan clans*". As well as in one of books dedicated to the history of Islam (Al-Ashmawy S.M., 1994) author argues that the conflict between them lead to the creation of Umayyad caliphate. So, it can be seen that those two clans had not the best types of relationships. But was it that bad? The information from given database somehow answers that question.

Findings

According to the dataset and derived graphs, we found that in Muhammad's tribe, the total number of marriages remains relatively low and stable from -16th generation to -5th generation. Then since -6th generation, the number of marriages starts to increase in an unapparent way. The significant growth begins in 1st generation and the total number of marriages peaks in 6th generation, which was the generation following Muhammad's generation. Then the number starts to decrease rapidly in the following four generations and drops to a low level in generation 10 and 11. Apparently, the turning point appears in 5th generation, when Muhammad was born and founded Islam. It can be inferred that during this period social forms and traditions could be shifted and marriage behavior would reflect these notable changes (Figure 2).

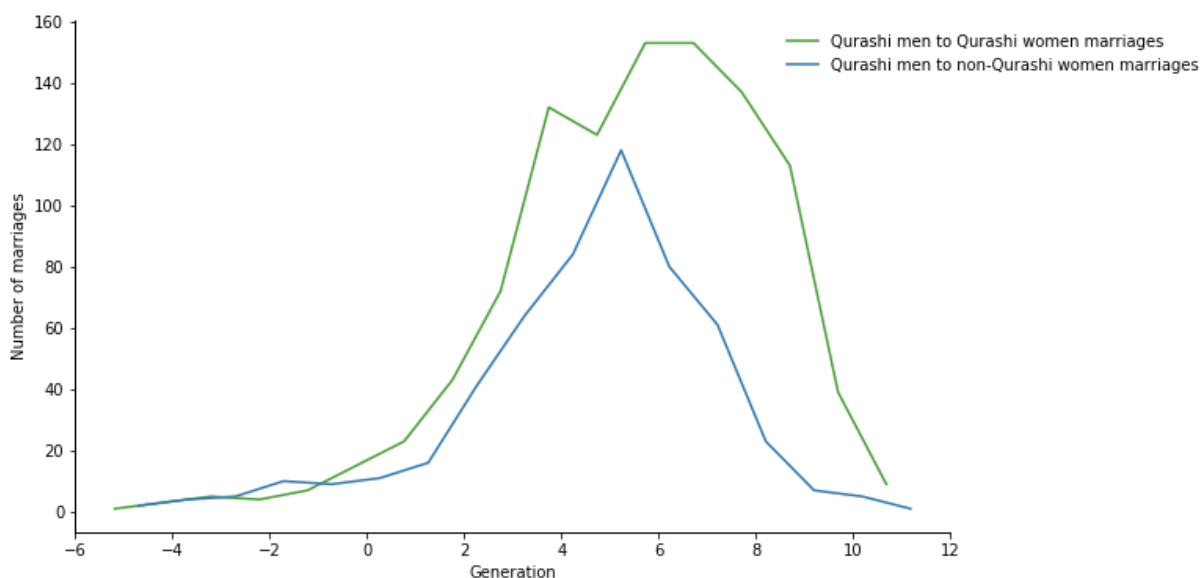


Figure 2. The marriages distribution throughout generations

By analyzing the husbands' generation and the wives' generation that corresponds, we also find that before the foundation of Islam, the combination of generation of husband and wife was relatively simple while after generation 5 various possibilities of combination appeared. We assume that the foundation of Islam reformed the conventions of how folks get married and who they get married with (Figure 3).

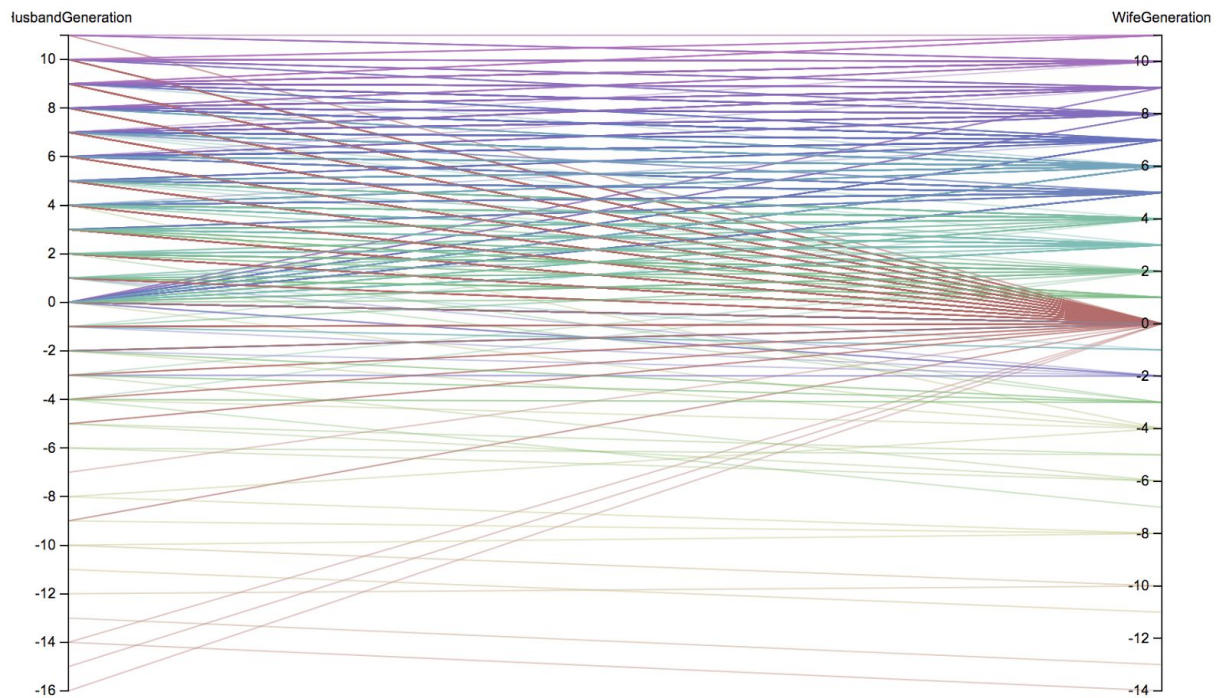


Figure 3. The combinations of generations between men and women

In terms of children in Muhammad's tribes, we find that in average boys outnumber girls and there can be numerous boys (more than 5) in a family (Figure 4).

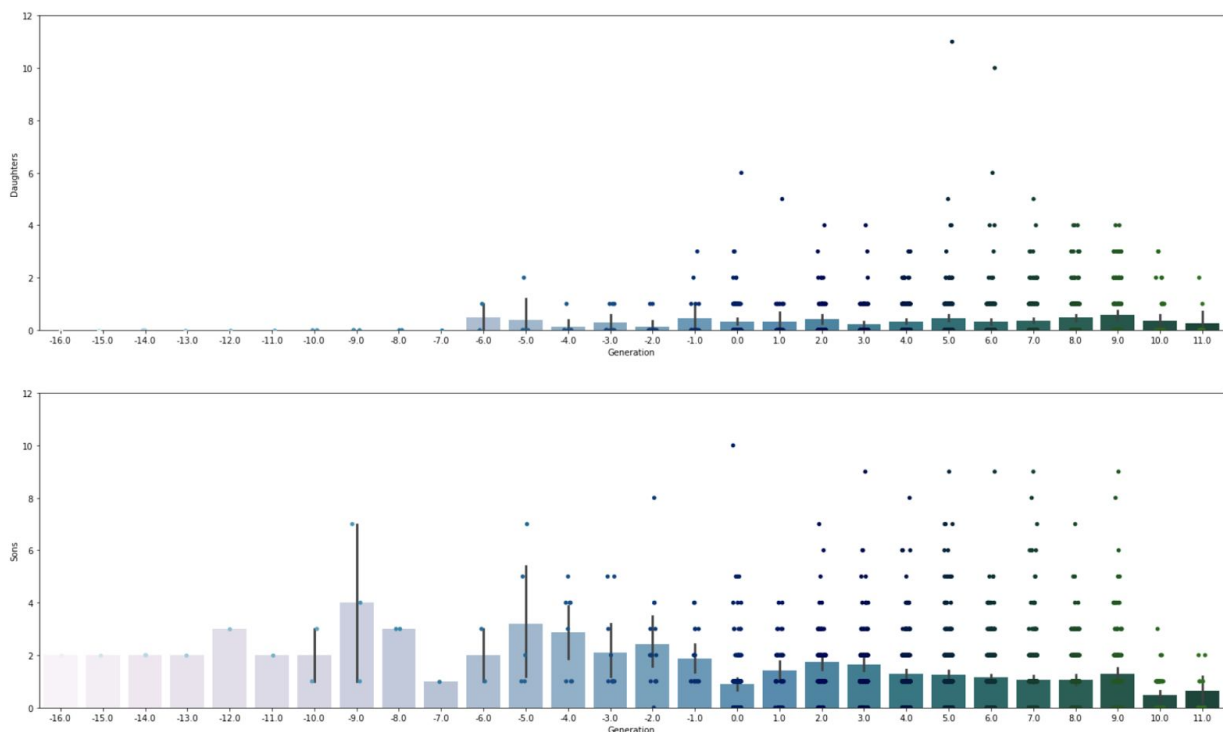


Figure 4. Average number of girls and boys in each generation

By plotting an overall graph of all generations we have in our database, we found that Quraysh undoubtedly has the biggest proportion of all marriages, then followed by Qays Aylan, Khuza'a, Kinana and etc. The rest are obviously minor tribes (Figure 5).

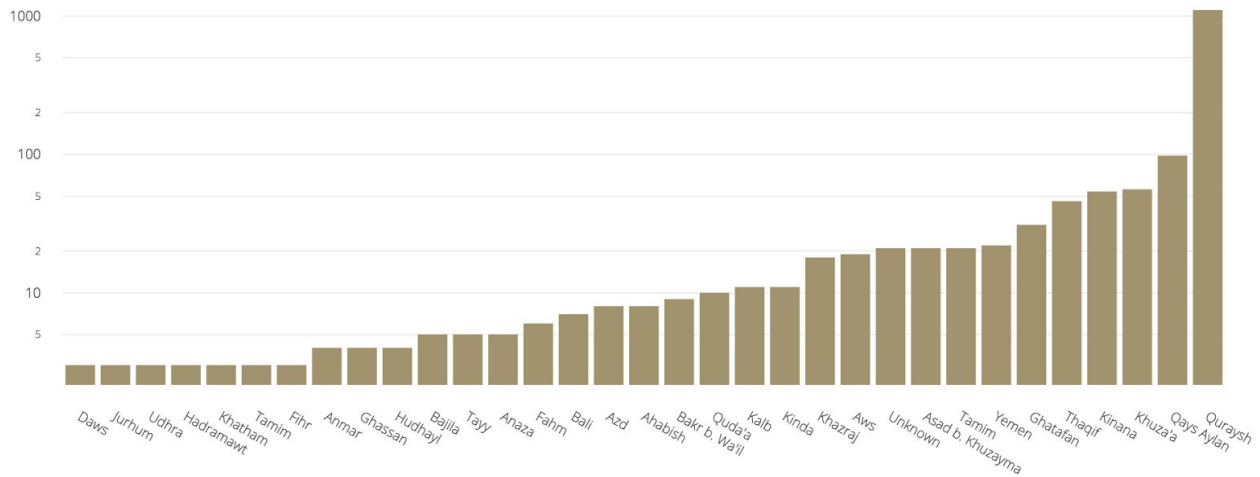


Figure 5. The number of marriages of Qurayshi men

If we look at the distribution of marriages separately in each generation, we found that in 4th generation, top 3 would be Quraysh, Kinana and Qays Aylan. In the next generation, similar distribution remained but right after 5th generation, which as mentioned, was the generation of Muhammad, the situation changed: Quraysh remained top but the second most numerous was Ghatafan, which even did not appear in the comparison in 4th generation. It was virtually the same situation in 7th generation whereas in the 8th, only 6 tribes still appeared and Ghatafan disappeared for some reason and besides Quraysh, the rest 5 tribes took a very little part in total number of marriages. And in the 9th generation, only two tribes remained, which were Quraysh occupying more than 98% of marriages and Ghatafan as an absolute minority (Figure 6).

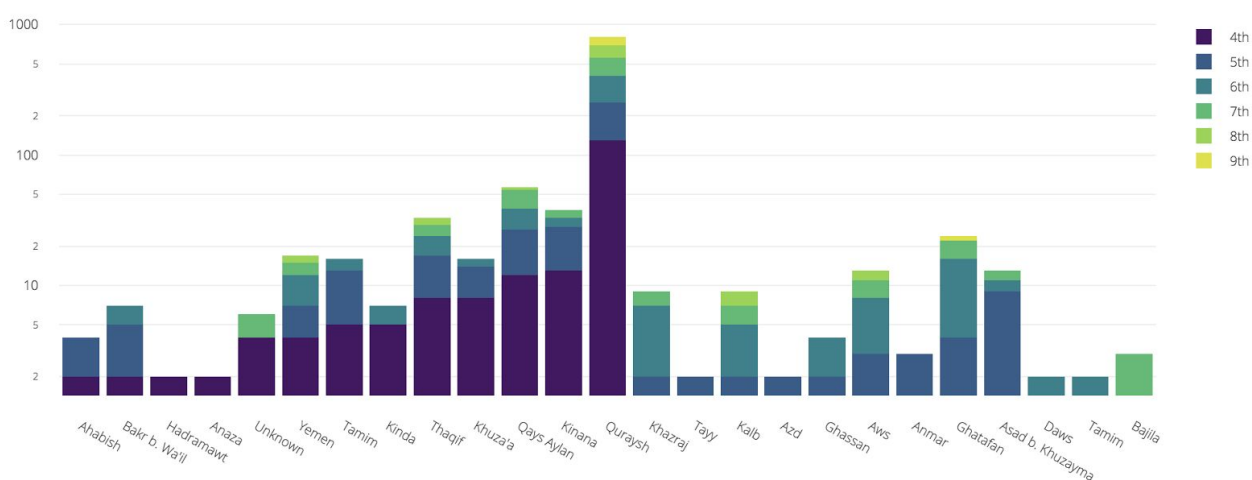


Figure 6. The number of marriages throughout 6 generations

Then we particularly focus on the marriages of Umayyad and Hashemites from 4th to 9th generations. In terms of Umayyad, one point that remained the same during the entire period was that men in this tribe could marry wives from different tribes while women there were only

married to Quraysh men. In detail, from 4th generation to 8th generation, men of Umayyad married wives from all kinds of tribes (Figure 7) but in 9th generation, which was the very end of their dominance, they only or perhaps could only marry Quraysh women. It is understandable if we accept the fact that marriages of that age were often deemed as bonds of power and a reflection of politics (Figure 8).

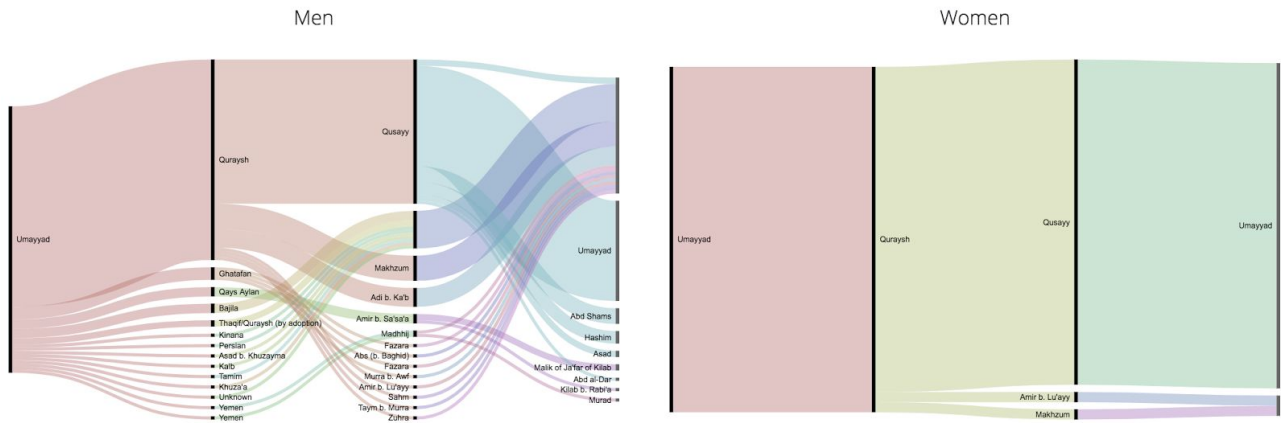


Figure 7. Marriages of Umayyad men and women in 7th generation

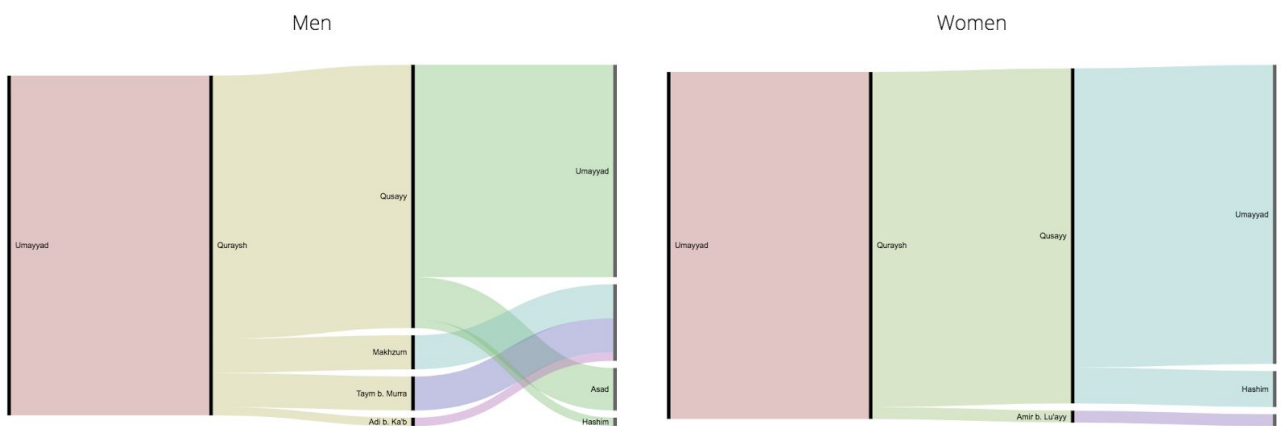


Figure 8. Marriages of Umayyad men and women in 9th generation

It was practically the same case with the trends in marriages of Hashemites between 4th and 8th generation. But in contrast with Umayyads marriages, for Hashemites of 9th generation the trend almost didn't change (Figure 9).

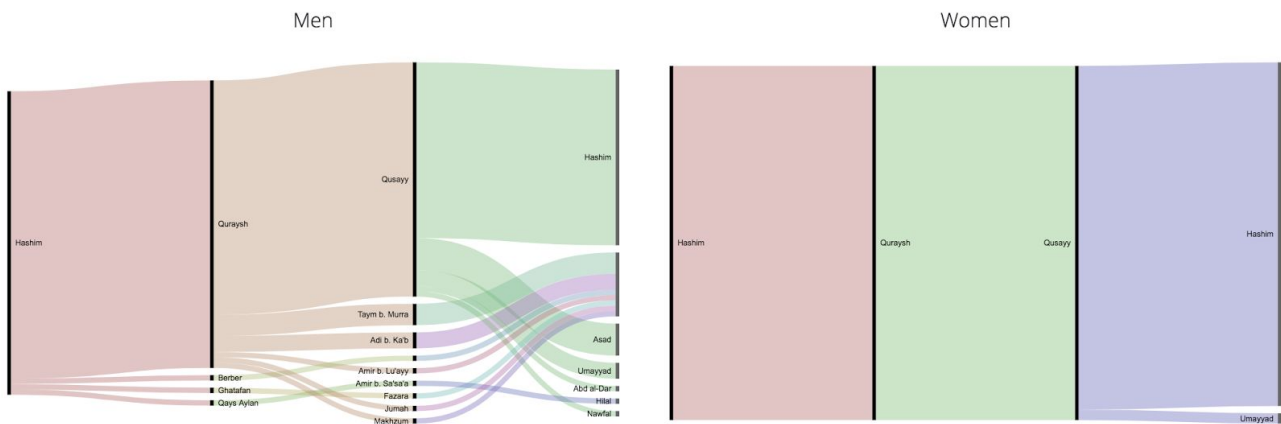


Figure 9. Marriages of Hashemites men and women in 9th generation

Afterwards, we tried to discover if it is true that, as it mentioned earlier, Umayyads and Hashemites were mortal enemies and thus had no kin relations whatsoever. Actually, we found that there was at least one case of marriage between these two tribes in each generation from 4th to 9th (Figure 10).

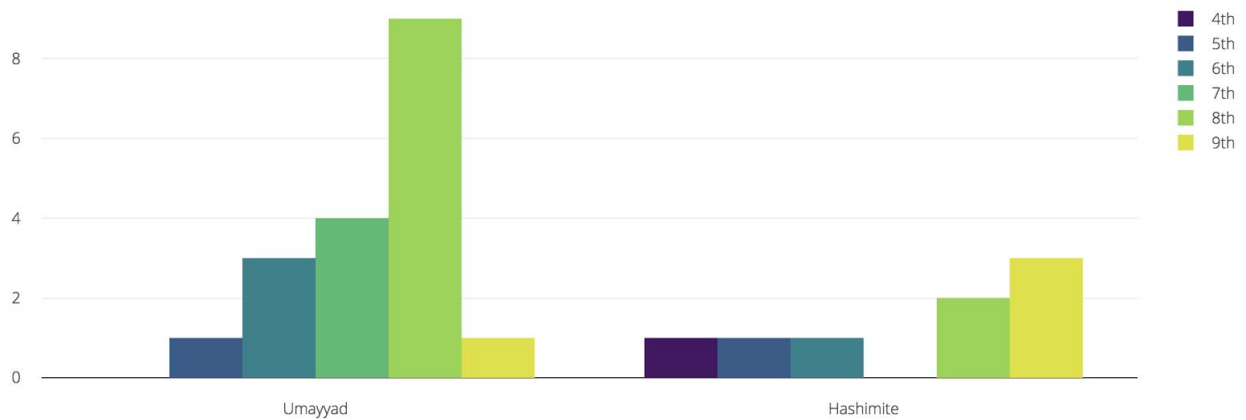


Figure 10. The number of marriages between Umayyads and Hashemites throughout 6 generations

Based on data analysis, we still cannot infer that they were or not mortal foes. But we could come to conclusion that relationships between them were complicated, however it was not as bad as it could be described.

Demo

The link to the website with some interactive graphs and charts: <http://bit.ly/early-islam>

References

Hakim Y. (2016) The Hashemite-Umayyad Divide and its Impact on the Future of Islam. *The Muslim Word*, 106 (1), pp. 83-96. doi: 10.1111/muwo.12125

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Judd S. (2014) *Religious Scholars and the Umayyads: Piety-Minded Supporters of the Marwānid Caliphate*. Routledge

Al-Ashmawy S. M. (1994) *Islam and the Political Order*. CRVP