

The Muzhir Family: Marriage as a Disaster Mitigation Strategy

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The Muzhir family (Banū Muzhir) was an elite Arab-Muslim civilian family in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, which produced six *kātib al-sirrs* (chief-secretary) of Damascus and Cairo for four generations. In the fifteenth-century Mamluk government, a large payment was required to assume a high-ranking office, and bureaucrats also faced the risk of arbitrary discharge and confiscation. In those situations, individuals needed to establish relationships with prominent figures in the government to seek recommendations and intercession. For this purpose, they used their family line as a ‘survival strategy,’ and marriage played a significant role in mitigating the potential extinction of a family line or a sudden downfall.

This paper begins to reconstruct the chronological process of how this family of Syrian origins established a foothold in Cairo. We then attempt to clarify the meaning of marriage for bureaucrat families by focusing on how their personal relationships, built by marriage, worked to develop members’ careers in the family line and thus served as safety nets against potential crises.

Banū Muzhir was counted as one of the most prestigious bureaucrat families in fifteenth-century Cairo. However, our investigation shows that they had largely sustained their genealogy by relying on connections built through marriage. For them, the most important factor for developing the careers of young family members, in addition to their father’s legacy and administrative offices, was to succeed in human relationships. They succeeded strategically through renewed relationships with other prominent civilian families built in the previous generations, and expanded these by concluding marriages. Their extended family networks served as safety nets to cope with the unstable situations of the fifteenth century; among these, marriage was of the utmost importance among bureaucrat families.

Keywords: Muzhir family, Mamluk sultanate, civilian elite, family, marriage

I. Introduction

Strained international affairs and financial crisis in the last decades of the Mamluk dynasty shook not only the sultan’s government administration but also the basis of the state system itself. That effect extended to the Arab civilian elites, who took charge of offices in the administration (*al-wazā’if al-dīwāniyya*).¹ To assume high-ranking office, it became quite common that large sums were required for the purpose of filling the deficit in the treasury.² Bureaucrats were also faced with the risk of arbitrary discharge due to power struggles, disagreement with the sultan’s opinion, and sudden confiscation of properties.

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¹ Unlike the difference between militant (*arbāb al-suyūf*) and non-militant officials (*arbāb al-aqlām*), civilian office-holders were either bureaucrats or religious officials who were involved in the judiciary; however, the division between the two categories was not strictly maintained. In this paper, officers of *dīwāns* are called bureaucrats for convenience.

² For the sale of offices as a custom in this period, see Martel-Thoumian 2005 and Miura 1997.

In this period, appointments to high offices were largely based on recommendations by influential figures in the regime; candidates were then required to offer large sums in payment. Therefore, the factors which were indispensable to the assumption of power and its maintenance can be summarised as follows: (1) the knowledge and competence of scribes required for their offices, (2) properties used to acquire and keep positions, and (3) connections required to receive recommendations and intercession when one fell from power. These three factors together needed to be selectively and systematically formed, maintained, and extended. Moreover, among these bureaucrats' 'survival strategies,' the family line played a very important role. In the unstable circumstances of the fifteenth century, many notable families of administrators had produced powerful civilian bureaucrats for several generations (Martel-Thoumian 1992). Of course, even in this period, it was possible for a person who did not have the genealogical background to ascend the social ladder,³ but there is no doubt that persons from notable families were in greatly advantageous positions to acquire higher office.

Taking into consideration the fluidity and importance of personal ties in Mamluk society and politics, the connection between an individual and the authorities sometimes had a greater meaning than one's status or position (Winter 2004, 66; Yukawa 1979, 24). Therefore, the bureaucrats' power base was formed by establishing their family line as a vertical axis, and by expanding relationships among rulers and influential mamluks as horizontal networks (Eychenne 2013, chapter 5, esp. 303–304).

For members of notable bureaucrat families in these situations, it is obvious that marriage had a great importance in establishing both vertical and horizontal relationships. The marriage of notable families in the fifteenth century was surveyed by Martel-Thoumian (Martel-Thoumian 1992, 365–372), but it is now necessary to consider how those connections worked to maintain the genealogy and to increase the influence and power of each family by means of case studies. Doing so will also allow some light to be shed on aspects of how bureaucrats yielded and maintained their power, an issue which has not been fully resolved to date.

In this paper, we will focus on a bureaucrat family of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, Banū Muzhir. The Muzhir family was an elite Arab-Muslim civilian family, which had produced six *kātib al-sirrs* (chief-secretary) of Damascus and Cairo over four generations. The most notable figure among them was Zayn al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn Muzhir al-Qāhirī al-Dimashqī al-Anṣārī al-Shāfiʿī (831–893/1428–88),⁴ who held the office of *kātib al-sirr* of Cairo, which was the head position of all scribes of the sultanate, for twenty-six years (9,496 days).⁵ This study investigates chronologically the process of how that local Syrian family went to Cairo and established a foothold as a distinguished bureaucrat family. We will then consider the meaning of marriage for bureaucrat families by focusing on how their personal relationships, built by marriage in each generation, formed members' careers and worked at moments of crisis in the family line.

³ In this period, Zayn al-Dīn 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ (d. 854/1450) would be a good example. He rose from the position of a scribe in Syria to the *nāẓir al-jaysh* of the central administration. For details of his career, see Igarashi 2013, 80–83.

⁴ According to Martel-Thoumian (1992, 451–454), there were thirty seven *kātib al-sirrs* (cumulative total number) in the late Mamluk dynasty; the average duration of their service was 1,307.9 days (48,394 days in total). Zayn al-Dīn's duration exceeds the second longest duration (6,171 days for three appointments) of Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Bārīzī.

⁵ For a profile of the Muzhir family and Zayn al-Dīn's detailed career, see Ota-Tsukada 2014 and 2015.

II. Banū Muzhir: Profile of the Family⁶

As a local and distinguished Syrian family centred in Nablus and Damascus, the Muzhir family had produced a number of administrators and scribes.⁷ The oldest mention of a direct descendant of the Muzhir family is Shihāb al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad (d. 690/1291), who was reportedly one of the Shāfi‘ite *imāms* and a *‘yān al-qurrā’* (notables of the Qur’ān reciters) (*Dhayl Raf’*, 470). Two of his grandsons are discernible [Fig. 1, ‘The First Generation’]. One of them is Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 781/1380), who was in charge of *muwaqqi’* (scribe) of Damascus and the *wakīl bayt al-māl* (agent of exchequer) (*Badā’i’*, vol. 1/2, 253; *Dhayl Raf’*, 471; *Inbā’*, vol. 1, 320; *Nujūm*, vol. 9, 227, vol. 11, 202; *Sulūk*, vol. 3/1, 376; *Wajīz*, vol. 1, 246).⁸

Their genealogy continued through the line of another grandson, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 793/1391, Badr al-Dīn I). Badr al-Dīn I was appointed to the *kātib al-sirr* of Syria twice and also served as a *mudarris* (professor) at al-Madrasa al-Shāmiyya al-Barrāniyya.⁹

The son of Badr al-Dīn I, namely, Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad (786–832/1384/5–1429, Badr al-Dīn II) [Fig. 1, ‘The Second Generation’], served as a *muwaqqi’* at the chancery of Damascus and enjoyed the favour of al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh, who was the governor of Damascus at that time and a future sultan (r. 1412–21) (*Inbā’*, vol. 8, 190; *Nujūm*, vol. 15, 155). After the murder of Sultan Faraj, he accompanied al-Mu‘ayyad Shaykh, and when he was enthroned, Badr al-Dīn II was selected for the *nāẓir al-iṣṭabl* (controller of the stables) (815/1412–13) (*Nujūm*, vol. 15, 155). In Shawwāl 823/October 1420, when Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Bārīzī (796–856/1394–1452) was appointed to the *kātib al-sirr*, Badr al-Dīn handled practical affairs as Kamāl al-Dīn’s deputy (*Badā’i’*, vol. 2, 56; *Nayl*, vol. 4, 69; *Nujūm*, vol. 14, 104; *Sulūk*, vol. 4/1, 540). While ‘Alam al-Dīn Dā‘ūd ibn al-Kuwayz (d. 826/1422), Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf al-Karakī (d. 856/1452), Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Harawī (767–829/1365/6–1426), and Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn Ḥijjī (d. 830/1427) were appointed to the *kātib al-sirr* in succession, actual management of the *dīwān* was handled by their deputy Badr al-Dīn II, who was thus called ‘*khalīfat kātib al-sirr*’ (*Inbā’*, vol. 8, 68). He was installed as the *kātib al-sirr* of Egypt in Jumādā II 828/May 1425 and wielded power, but after four years, at around fifty-years old, he died of an illness at the end of Jumādā II 832/May–April 1429 (*Badā’i’*, vol. 2, 123–124; *Ḍaw’*, vol. 9, 40; *Dhayl Raf’*, 471; *Durar al-‘Uqūd*, vol. 3, 443; *Inbā’*, vol. 8, 190–192; *Nayl*, vol. 4, 252; *Naẓm*, 97; *Nujūm*, vol. 7, 342, vol. 15, 155; *Nuzha*, vol. 3, 172–173; *Sulūk*, vol. 4/2, 814; *Wajīz*, vol. 2, 505–506).

Badr al-Dīn II had at least three sons and a daughter [Fig. 1, ‘The Third Generation’]. In Rajab 832/April 1429, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad (814–833/1411/2–30), the eldest son, succeeded

⁶ The Muzhir family seems to have continued before/after the dates shown in the genealogical table (later mentioned). In this paper, I mention Badr al-Dīn’s generation as ‘the first generation’ to produce the first *kātib al-sirr* in this family.

⁷ The outline and profiles of the members of the Muzhir family are described in Martel-Thoumian 1992, 267–281. However, I briefly reconstruct them again here with revisions concerning the identification of periods and figures, and my interpretations of sources.

⁸ According to *Sulūk*, he died at around forty years of age.

⁹ His first inauguration of *kātib al-sirr* was in Dhū al-Qa‘da, 777/April–May 1376 (*Inbā’*, vol. 1, 156; *Nayl*, vol. 2, 106; *Sulūk*, vol. 3/1, 257) and according to *Sulūk*, vol. 3/1, 349, his dismissal was at the end of 780/March 1379. His second inauguration was in 784/1383, and it was in Dhū al-Qa‘da/January 1383 (*Badā’i’*, vol. 1/2, 32; *Nuzha*, vol. 1, 53; *Sulūk*, vol. 3/2, 481). According to *Nujūm* (vol. 11, 229), he was appointed to that office after the Sultan returned from Giza to the Citadel on 29 Shawwāl/January 4. Only *Inbā’* (vol. 2, 90–91) indicates a different date (Rabī‘ II/June–July 1382). As for the date of dismissal, there is no indication of this in the sources, so it is likely that he held the office until his death.

to the office of *kātib al-sirr* at the age of eighteen (*Ḍawʿ*, vol. 9, 197; *Dhayl Rafʿ*, 472; *Husn*, vol. 2, 210; *Inbāʿ*, vol. 8, 170; *Nayl*, vol. 4, 253; *Nujūm*, vol. 7, 342, vol. 14, 326; *Sulūk*, vol. 4/2, 800), but after 155 days on 15 Dhū al-Ḥijja 832/14 September 1429, he was discharged (*Nujūm*, vol. 14, 334; *Nuzha*, vol. 3, 167; *Sulūk*, vol. 4/2, 810).¹⁰ On the following day, Jalāl al-Dīn was appointed to a *muwaqqiʿ* of Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 833/1430), Sultan Barsbāy's son (*Nujūm*, vol. 14, 334; *Sulūk*, vol. 4/2, 810); however, he was infected with the plague and died in Rajab 833/April 1430.¹¹ Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad was born around 820/1417–18 and had devoted himself to learning in many cities including Mecca and Jerusalem, but there is no indication of his appointment to administrative offices. Like his brother, he died from the plague in Rabīʿ I 853/May 1449 (*Ḍawʿ*, vol. 2, 171; *Ḥawādith al-Duhūr*, vol. 1, 238).¹²

Zayn al-Dīn Abū Bakr was born in Rajab 831/April–May 1428 in Cairo. His first administrative office was the *nāẓir al-iṣṭabl* (857–862/1453–57/8), and successively held high-ranking state posts, such as the *nāẓir al-jawālī* (controller of minority taxes) and the *nāẓir al-jaysh* (the chief of the military bureau) of Egypt in the 860s AH. He was appointed to the *kātib al-sirr* on 20 Dhū al-Qaʿda 866/16 August 1462 at the age of thirty-four, and held that office until he died on 6 Ramaḍān 893/14 August 1488 at the age of sixty.¹³

Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad (860–910/1455/6–1504, Badr al-Dīn III) [Fig. 1, 'The Fourth Generation'], who became Zayn al-Dīn's successor, experienced the office of *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ* (controller of privy funds) (876–880/1471/2–75) (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 68; *Nayl*, vol. 7, 25) and that of *muḥtasib* (market inspector) (887–891/1482–86),¹⁴ and subsequently succeeded to the *kātib al-sirr* (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 355). However, after Sultan Qāyṭbāy's (r. 872–901/1468–96) death, he was repeatedly arrested and imprisoned. On 11 Rajab 905/11 February 1500, he opposed Sultan Qānṣūh (r. 1498–1500), and his half-brother Kamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad (d. 910/1505) was instead installed in the office on that day (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 429; *Ḥawādith al-Zamān*, vol. 2, 371). After four months, on 5 Dhū al-Ḥijja 905/2 June 1500, he was reinstated in the *kātib al-sirr* (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 440). However, he was rearrested on suspicion of organizing a coup d'état against Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (r. 906–922/1501–16), and later died in prison (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 4, 67, 71; *Kawākib*, vol. 1, 178; *Shadharāt*, vol. 8, 74). In the same year, his brother Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf committed suicide (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 4, 76),¹⁵ and Kamāl al-Dīn also died from the plague on 25 Ramaḍān/2 March 1505 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 4, 75; *Kawākib*, vol. 1, 26). After that, there is no indication of any appointments of the Muzhir family members to administrative offices, and no one was confirmed among those who escaped to Istanbul at the end of the Mamlūk dynasty. There is a mention of their Damascene

¹⁰ *Badāʿiʿ* reports that it was Dhū al-Qaʿda of the same year (vol. 2, 126).

¹¹ As for the date of his death, *Ḍawʿ*, vol. 9, 197 indicates 10 Rajab, *Inbāʿ*, vol. 8, 220–221; *Nuzha*, vol. 3, 213 (the original text can be read as 26, but according to the footnote, the editor changed it to 16), *Nujūm*, vol. 15, 168; *Sulūk*, vol. 4/2, 848 reports it was 26. *Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 2, 133; *Nayl*, vol. 4, 281; *Wajīz*, vol. 2, 509 remarks it was just in Rajab.

¹² In *Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 2, 274; *Nayl*, vol. 5, 284; *Wajīz*, vol. 2, 638, the date of his death was simply mentioned as Rabīʿ I, but in *Dhayl Rafʿ*, 472, it was the thirteenth of that month.

¹³ For the details of Zayn al-Dīn's career and differences in the dates of appointments indicated in sources, see [Table 1: The Career of Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Muzhir].

¹⁴ There is no mention of the date of his installation. The duration of his office is based on Kikuchi 1983, 167–168.

¹⁵ There are various opinions about the year and reason for his death. *Kawākib*, vol. 1, 318 states that he hanged himself for fear of Sultan's wrath, but also indicates a different date of death (7 Rabīʿ II 916). In contrast, *Ḥawādith al-Zamān*, vol. 2, 437 indicates that he was murdered on 7 Shawwāl 908.

descendant (*Awlād ibn Muzhir*) in Jumādā II 926/May–June 1520 (*Mufākaha*, 402), so the Muzhir family seems to have continued to the beginning of the Ottoman Empire, at least in Syria.

III. Marriage of the Muzhir Family

1. Outline

The greatest anxiety of bureaucrats' families was to become extinct because of the absence of a successor. Above all, the simultaneous death of several members, especially the death of young members, for reasons such as the spread of the plague, must have been a serious problem. When Badr al-Dīn I of the Muzhir family died, Badr al-Dīn II was only seven years old and his uncle Shams al-Dīn had already passed away. Badr al-Dīn II also died from a sudden illness (it was said that he was poisoned: *Dhayl al-Durar*, 251; *Inbāʿ*, vol. 8, 251); among his sons, the eldest, Jalāl al-Dīn, was twenty years old and Zayn al-Dīn was only a year old. In addition, Jalāl al-Dīn and Shihāb al-Dīn had died from the plague in 1430 and 1449 respectively, as mentioned above.

In short, by the time Zayn al-Dīn was twenty, all members of the Muzhir family in Cairo had already died. Whenever a member died, the family needed to reconsider their survival strategies, and one of the most effective options was to expand the family network by marriage.

Marital relations in the Muzhir family are summarised by Martel-Thoumian (1992, 280), but we need to consider more comprehensively not only the facts of marriage, but also its timings, terms, personal careers, and who assumed responsibility for the children.

With regard to the Muzhir family's marriages, the names of spouses and their histories are clearly outlined beginning in the second generation. In the second generation, Badr al-Dīn II married Khadīja ibna Amīr Ḥājī ibn al-Baysarī (d. 878/1474) and Zayn al-Dīn was subsequently born.¹⁶ The daughter of Badr al-Dīn I married Muḥyī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Madanī (d. 820/1417).

The marriages of the third generation mentioned in the sources are all connected to Zayn al-Dīn. Zubayda ibna al-Bahā' Muḥammad ibn Ḥijjī had at least three sons: Najm al-Dīn, Kamāl al-Dīn, and Muḥammad. Badr al-Dīn III, who became Zayn al-Dīn's successor, was the child of Shakrbāy, one of his concubines (*surriyya*). Sa'd (Burhān) al-Dīn, who was the eldest of Zayn al-Dīn's children, was the child of another concubine.¹⁷ Zayn al-Dīn is also reported to have married Khadīja ibna al-Jamālī Yūsuf ibn Kātib Jakam (d. 892/1487), and Sitt al-Khulafā' (d. 892/1487), who was the caliph al-Mustanjid Billāh's daughter, but neither bore any offspring to Zayn al-Dīn, as described below.

In the fourth generation, Badr al-Dīn III married a daughter of amir Lājīn al-Zāhirī (d. 886/1481). Sa'd al-Dīn married Su'ād al-Mulūk, who was a daughter of Sharaf al-Dīn Mūsā al-Anṣārī (d. 881/1476), and had several children (*Ḍaw'*, vol. 1, 35). Zayn al-Dīn's daughter Bint Abū Bakr married the future sultan, amir Jānbulāt (r. 905–906/1500–01).

It is highly probable that Badr al-Dīn II's wife, Khadīja, originated from the military class as

¹⁶ Martel-Thoumian remarks that four children of Badr al-Dīn II were all born from this Khadīja (Martel-Thoumian 1992, 270). However, the duration of marriage between Badr al-Dīn II and Khadīja was only a year or two, after the death of her former husband Ibn al-Ḥijjī (d. 830/1427, later mentioned) until Badr al-Dīn II died (832/1429), therefore it can be said that Zayn al-Dīn was their only child.

¹⁷ Sa'd al-Dīn was the eldest in the fourth generation, but there is no mention of him acquiring a bureaucratic office. He reportedly had the physical feature of 'being hunchbacked (*aḥḍab*)' (*Ḍaw'*, vol. 1, 35).

her *nasab* indicates. In the third generation, Zayn al-Dīn married two daughters from bureaucrats' families and a daughter of the caliph. Concerning the fourth generation, the marriage of Sa'd al-Dīn and Su'ād al-Mulūk took place according to the wishes of Zayn al-Dīn. However, Bint Abū Bakr and his successor Badr al-Dīn married someone who originated from the high-ranking military class. In summary, the Muzhir family cemented relationships by intermarrying into both the civilian and military classes.¹⁸

Marital relationships in the Mamluk period generally occurred within the same social class. As the Mamluk class were originally Turkish, their marriages within the local Arab population were restricted so as to preserve their ethnicity. To assume higher administrative positions, personal relationships with the mamluks had already become important in the middle of the thirteenth century (Eychenne 2013, chapter 5, esp. 'La protection des émirs'), but their family networks, or marriages, were normally concluded among the civilian elite. However, in the fifteenth century, that principle was breached, and marriages between civilians and mamluks became remarkably common. Strong bonds with civilians might have divided the mamluks' loyalty to the Sultan, thus in 890/1485, Qāyṭbāy declared a prohibition on judges and witnesses from contracting weddings for his mamluks (*Badā'i*, vol. 3, 217; Petry 1999, 28). Marriage also involved some risks. If one lost a position, his relatives also shared the risk of being imprisoned and their possessions confiscated. Nevertheless, the fact that marriage was an attractive choice for reinforcing relationships between the civilian and military classes was clearly indicated in the marriages of one emerging bureaucrat, Sharaf al-Dīn al-Anṣārī. He successively married the daughters of military officers, including al-Zāhir Ṭaṭar's daughter Khafiyya and Zaynab ibna Jarbāsh al-Karīmī Qāshuq (d. 864/1460), the former wife of Sultan Jaqmaq (r. 842–857/1438–53) (*Daw'*, vol. 10, 186; Martel-Thoumian 1992, 367–368). Mamluks also married the daughters of religious intellectuals to no small extent (Lutfi 1981, 113). Among the eighty-three marriages studied by Martel-Thoumian, fifty-seven were contracted among bureaucrat families; fourteen were with mamluks, and seven were to religious intellectuals (Martel-Thoumian 1992, 365). It can be concluded that the tendency of the Muzhir family's marriages was to follow the common practice of the period.

2. The Reproduction of Bureaucrats: Education as a Scribe

The first role of marriage in bureaucrat families was 'to train bureaucrats.' In general, bureaucrats and religious intellectuals acquired the same basic Islamic education, and then went on to obtain the specialised knowledge required for each profession. It was regarded as desirable for this knowledge and the specialised skills needed for document production to be acquired systematically from childhood.¹⁹ Moreover, those skills were supposed to be acquired mainly by operational experience

¹⁸ Martel-Thoumian reported that nine marital alliances of the Muzhir family are documented. She states that three were with high-ranking bureaucrats, four were with members of the military class, and one was with the caliph (Martel-Thoumian 1992, 278). My own interpretation indicates that four were alliances with the civilian bureaucrat class (al-Madanī, Zubayda, Khadija, Su'ād al-Mulūk), three were with the military class (Badr al-Dīn II's wife Khadija, Jānbulāt, a daughter of Lājīn), and one was with the caliph. As for Ibn Salām, who was the spouse of Badr al-Dīn II's daughter, I could not find his identifiable information.

¹⁹ Al-Qalqashandī (d. 821/1418), who wrote famous manuals for scribes, gave a list of special qualities required by secretaries. According to Bosworth, the seven basic fields of their education were: (1) the Qur'ān and all the ancillary religious sciences; (2) the principles of government; (3) the poetry and proverbs of the Arabs; (4) the orations of eloquent persons and elegant epistles; (5) the history of past dynasties and the conduct of kings; (6) grammar and rhetoric; and

as an apprentice or a deputy to relatives, so that the process of the bureaucrat's education itself could be established within the family's network (Richards 1972, 373–374). If nepotism was not presupposed, the training they needed to begin involved accumulating experience as a scribe to an amir's household. Only after competitions and recommendation to the sultan, were scribes able to serve in the central government offices. Given this prolonged process, it was a great advantage for these candidates to have relatives who were already working as high-ranking officials.

What the lineage of the Muzhir family points to is that the upbringing and training of young members after the death of the head of the family was assumed by matrimonial relations that had been entered into in the previous generations. After the death of Badr al-Dīn, his children might have had financial difficulties even if these were only temporary.²⁰ Fortunately, however, Badr al-Dīn II's sister married al-Madanī, who was one of the Damascene notables. Al-Madanī took responsibility for him as a guardian (*waṣī*) and 'fostered him in the best way' (*Durar al-ʿUqūd*, vol. 3, 442). When al-Madanī took charge of the office of *kātib al-sirr* of Damascus, he appointed Badr al-Dīn as his *muwaqqiʿ*, which led to al-Muʾayyad Shaykh, who was the governor of Damascus, discovering Badr al-Dīn's talent (*Inbāʿ*, vol. 8, 190).

It was not only al-Madanī and Badr al-Dīn, but also Ibn al-Kuwayz, Nāṣir al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Bārīzī (769–823/1368–1420), and ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ who emigrated from Damascus to Cairo on al-Muʾayyad Shaykh's assumption of power. All of them were promoted to the central government during the reign of Shaykh and acquired high-ranking offices, such as *kātib al-sirr* and *nāẓir al-jaysh*.

Although children of the third generation were orphaned by the sudden death of Badr al-Dīn II, they were raised in a favourable environment by means of their father's legacy, and many scholars were invited to teach them. The above-mentioned 'immigrants from Damascus' became strong supporters, especially of Zayn al-Dīn. After achieving primary education, Zayn al-Dīn went on to specialised education with children of the Bārīzī family under protection of prominent bureaucrats, such as Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bārīzī, ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ, and Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Kātib Jakam (d. 862/1458) (*Dhayl Rafʿ*, 474, 477). All of them were on close terms with Badr al-Dīn II. The description of Zayn al-Dīn being familiar with 'the language which was indispensable to communicate with the Turks' indicates that Turkish was required if one was to aim for the top stratum of the administrative institutions.²¹ Zayn al-Dīn also studied under ʿAlam al-Dīn Ṣāliḥ al-Bulqīnī (791–868/1389–1464), who became the fourth spouse of Zayn al-Dīn's mother Khadīja, and gained licences (*ijāza*) in teaching (*tadrīs*) jurisprudence, and in issuing legal opinions (*iftāʾ*) (*Dhayl Rafʿ*, 476).

In the context of the bureaucrats' reproduction, in addition to the establishment of relation-

(7) the more narrowly professional skills needed by a secretary (Bosworth 1964, 296). Ibn Taghrī Birdī remarks that the one who takes charge of the office of *kātib al-sirr* needs to have a perfect command of law, grammar, poetry and verses, and documents and letters. He also remarks that he needs to be well informed about history, and the chronicles and conduct of predecessors (*Nujūm*, vol. 14, 174–175).

²⁰ A court document exists (Dhū al-Qaʿda 11, 793/10 October 1391) in which Badr al-Dīn's children asked permission to sell their father's legacy under Sharaf al-Dīn ʿIsā al-Khazrajī (d. 797/1395), who was a Shāfiʿite judge of Jerusalem. According to the document, the children could not afford to maintain four slave girls, a mamlūk, and a mule from their inheritance and wished to sell them (*Haram* 649; the document is revised and analyzed in Little 1982, 18–28).

²¹ Mamluks were taught Arabic in the process of training, but continued to speak Turkish in the army. Therefore, many children of prominent bureaucrats learned Turkish to enter the court (Petry 1981, 217; Martel-Thoumian 1992, 275).

ships with other prominent civilian elites, the succession of personal connections and skills was ensured by concluding marriages with bureaucrat families. Zubayda, who seemed to have played a central role among the wives of Zayn al-Dīn, was a daughter of Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥijjī (812–850/1409–46), who served as the *nāẓir al-jaysh* of Syria and Egypt, and Zaynab, who was a daughter of Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bārīzī.

To summarise the descriptions of circumcisions among the fourth generation, there were at least three sons between Zubayda and Zayn al-Dīn.²² According to al-Sakhāwī's (830–902/1427–97) biography, Zubayda was forced to endure hardship by outliving her children, her full-brother Najm al-Dīn Yaḥyā (838–888/1435–83), and Zayn al-Dīn. She was a well-educated woman, who had learned not only reading and writing but also the Ḥadīth through *al-'Arba'ūn* of al-Nawawī (631–676/1233–77) and *'Umdat al-Aḥkām* of al-Maqdisī (541–600/1146–1203), and gave her brother's and Zayn al-Dīn's children the best upbringing (*Daw'*, vol. 12, 37). In 895/1490, after Zayn al-Dīn's death, she invited many high-ranking officials of the government to attend a splendid circumcision ceremony for the four sons of Zayn al-Dīn, which included two of her own.²³

Zayn al-Dīn took two women of bureaucrat families including Zubayda and a daughter of the caliph in marriage, and these marriages were regarded as the most 'prestigious unions' (Martel-Thoumian 1992, 276) for bureaucrats. Khadīja, another wife of a bureaucrat's family, was a child of the marriage between Jamāl al-Dīn Yūsuf ibn Kātib Jakam and Fāṭima, a daughter of Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bārīzī, thus Khadīja was a cousin of Zubayda. Khadīja first married Khayrbak al-Ẓāhirī (d. 879/1474) (*Daw'*, vol. 4, 209); after he died, she married Shāhīn, who was her father's mam-luk. According to her biography, the term of marriage with Zayn al-Dīn lasted only 'several days' (*Daw'*, vol. 12, 32) between the death of her former husband and her marriage to Shāhīn, so it is doubtful that their marriage was genuine and possible that it was in name only. Sitt al-Khulafā' was a granddaughter of Zayn al-Dīn's stepfather 'Alam al-Dīn Ṣāliḥ al-Bulqīnī. The term of marriage with Zayn al-Dīn is not mentioned, but she married three times during the thirty-two years of her life (Rapoport 2005, 26, 80), and when she died in 892/1487, she was a wife of the 'son-in-law (*ṣihr*) of Ibn Q(K)āwān'²⁴; therefore it is highly probable that their marriage was also very short (*Daw'*, vol. 12, 55). The mothers of Sa'd al-Dīn,²⁵ who was born in 858/1454, and Badr al-Dīn III, who was born in 860/1455–56, were concubines (*Wajīz*, vol. 3, 1032). Sa'd al-Dīn and Badr al-Dīn were educated by Zayn al-Dīn, who appointed their instructors from among his intimate circle of religious intellectuals.²⁶ However, Zubayda took responsibility for fostering the young sons at the time of Zayn al-Dīn's death (893/1488). Given her involvement, it was Zubayda, who among Zayn al-Dīn's 'prestigious unions,' fulfilled her role as a bureaucrat's wife.

²² One of them was Yaḥyā, who was born in 876, but he died in 888/1483 at the age of twelve (*Daw'*, vol. 10, 224).

²³ Among these four boys, one was called Yūsuf and other three were named Muḥammad. Two of them were sons of Zubayda (*Nayl*, vol. 8, 188; *Wajīz*, vol. 3, 1133).

²⁴ This was Ishāq al-Qazwīnī (*Daw'*, vol. 2, 277–278). His *nisba* is mentioned as 'al-Burdīnī' in *Badā'i'*, vol. 3, 241.

²⁵ According to his obituary, 'he was born in 8' (*Nayl*, vol. 8, 201). He was older than Badr al-Dīn, who was born in 860 AH, and the two were circumcised at the same time, so his birthdate should be read as '858.'

²⁶ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Qāsim al-Maqṣī (ca. 817–893/1414/5–88), who was an educator of Badr al-Dīn III for jurisprudence, served as the *mudarris* of Sufism and *khaṭīb* (preacher) in al-Madrasa al-Muzhiriyya, which was founded by Zayn al-Dīn (*Daw'*, vol. 8, 283; Ota-Tsukada 2015, 150–151).

IV. Support for Assuming Office: Khadīja and ‘Alam al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī

The second role is to support family members for their appointment to important offices by means of recommendation. Badr al-Dīn II had been notorious for his miserliness and left a large inheritance that reportedly amounted to 200,000 dinars, thus children of the third generation, including Zayn al-Dīn, were able to receive an adequate education (*Dhayl al-Durar*, 251; *Inbā’*, vol. 8, 190–191).²⁷ However, his first successor Jalāl al-Dīn, despite providing half (100,000 dinars) of his father’s legacy, which was the highest sum for an appointment fee to the *kātib al-sirr* in the late Mamluk period,²⁸ was discharged from the office after short period. In contrast, Zayn al-Dīn had been able to steadily acquire important positions in the government from his late twenties to early thirties. What deserves attention as the background of his success in administration is the powerful support of Zayn al-Dīn’s birth mother and his stepfather in acquiring prestigious positions.

Before her marriage to Badr al-Dīn II, Zayn al-Dīn’s mother Khadīja²⁹ was the wife of Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar ibn Ḥijjī, who served as the judge of Hama, Tripoli, Damascus, and the *kātib al-sirr* in Egypt. Najm al-Dīn Yahyā,³⁰ who contested the post of *nāẓir al-jaysh* with Zayn al-Dīn when he was young, and Zubayda, who became Zayn al-Dīn’s wife, were the grandchildren of Najm al-Dīn ‘Umar. Immediately after his murder in Damascus in 830/1427, she married Badr al-Dīn II, and gave birth to Zayn al-Dīn in Rajab 831/April–May 1428. However, Badr al-Dīn II died of illness in Jumādā II the following year/March–April 1429. After that, she married Sa’d al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn Marra (*Ḍaw’*, vol. 1, 184–185), who was the *nāẓir* of Jedda, moved to Hijaz, and remained there. After the death of Ibn Marra in 844/1440, she married ‘Alam al-Dīn Ṣāliḥ al-Bulqīnī. After al-Bulqīnī’s death in 868/1464, she remained under the protection of her son. She founded a *ribāṭ* for widows, probably because all of her four marriages had ended in bereavement (*Ḍaw’*, vol. 12, 26).

Among sources concerning Khadīja, we can find several examples that clearly demonstrate that she wielded political influence during her marriage with al-Bulqīnī. According to al-Sakhāwī, one of the reasons that enabled al-Bulqīnī to stay at the post of chief Shāfi‘ī judge in the reign of Īnāl (r. 857–865/1453–61) was because of his wife, who had won the favour of the sultan’s wife (Khāwand al-Kubrā), Zaynab ibna Ḥasan ibn Khāṣṣ Bak (d. 884/1479–80) (*Ḍaw’*, vol. 12, 25).³¹ Zaynab is described as having been an exceptional figure for her influence, and the excessive deference and obedience of the sultan to her authority (*Ḍaw’*, vol. 12, 45); she intervened in state politics and personnel affairs, and this resulted in a bad reputation for Īnāl himself, who connived at her arbitrariness (*Nujūm*, vol. 16, 159).³² Khadīja, by winning Zaynab’s deep confidence, exercised influence on the sultan through his wife (*Ḍaw’*, vol. 12, 25; *Izhār*, vol. 3, 52).

Khadīja’s powerful presence in the government can be glimpsed in the processes involved

²⁷ For details of the third generation’s education, see *Dhayl Raf’*, 471–477; Ota-Tsukada 2014, 50–52.

²⁸ The sum was reported as 90,000 dinars in *Sulūk*, vol. 4/2, 800, and 100,000 dinars in *Inbā’*, vol. 8, 192; *Nayl*, vol. 4, 253. For the amounts of provision required of candidates for the *kātib al-sirr* in this period, see Martel-Thoumian 1992, 88.

²⁹ It is reported that Khadīja died around the age of seventy, so her year of birth is presumed to be in the 800s to early 810s AH. Her marriages are based on *Ḍaw’*, vol. 12, 25–26.

³⁰ Concerning Najm al-Dīn’s appointment to the *nāẓir al-jaysh* in Dhū al-Qa’da 865/August 1461 instead of Zayn al-Dīn, see Ota-Tsukada 2014, 55–57.

³¹ Al-Bulqīnī held the office of chief judge seven times, and his sixth term of office (Ṣafar 857–Shawwāl 865/March 1453 to July 1461) coincided with the reign of Īnāl.

³² Her life is studied in detail in Johnson 2000, 114–119.

in Zayn al-Dīn's acquisition of administrative offices in the 860s AH. On 27 Dhū al-Ḥijja 862/4 November 1458, Zayn al-Dīn, who held the office of *nāẓir al-jawālī* of Egypt at that time, was suggested as a candidate for the office of *nāẓir al-jawālī* of Syria as well, but his appointment was withdrawn the same day (*Dhayl Rafʿ*, 479; *Iẓhār*, vol. 2, 401; *Nujūm*, vol. 16, 127). According to al-Biqāʿī (809–885/1407–80), his appointment was the result of her mother's efforts in the inner palace; a fact that was disclosed at the moment Zayn al-Dīn received the robe of honour (*khilʿa*). Īnāl was persuaded not to appoint him, and Zayn al-Dīn stayed at the Citadel and emphasise that he, himself, had declined the offer (*Iẓhār*, vol. 2, 401).

Khadīja was also reported to have concerned herself with the discharge of Sharaf al-Dīn al-Anṣārī from the *nāẓir al-jaysh* in the following year (Rajab 863/May 1459). Zayn al-Dīn desired the office of *nāẓir al-jaysh*,³³ and Khadīja slandered al-Anṣārī to Īnāl's wife Zaynab by claiming that he had misappropriated the sultan's property. Īnāl arrested al-Anṣārī and took him into custody at the *khāẓindār* (treasurer) to investigate the sum of money that had been passed to al-Anṣārī and the facts of the embezzlement. Al-Anṣārī's property was confiscated and he was fined. However, the subsequent lawsuit found no proof that indicated embezzlement on the part of al-Anṣārī.³⁴

Al-Biqāʿī's descriptions indicate that al-Anṣārī was dismissed from the office by Khadīja's plot. Zayn al-Dīn could not acquire the office of *nāẓir al-jaysh* at this stage, but he was appointed to that office in the next year (864/1460). Although there is no mention of the date, Zayn al-Dīn inherited the post of controller of al-Madrasa al-Sharīfiyya from al-Bulqīnī (*Dhayl Rafʿ*, 482).

As mentioned previously, Zayn al-Dīn became the only male member of the Muzhir family at the age of twenty by the death of his elder brother Shihāb al-Dīn. It was the office of *nāẓir al-istabl* in Rajab 857/July 1453 to which Zayn al-Dīn was appointed as his first position, at the age of twenty-five. It is noteworthy that his appointment was immediately after the enthronement of Īnāl (Rabīʿ I 857/March 1453). After al-Biqāʿī, the end of Īnāl's reign and the dethronement of his son Aḥmad (r. 1461) became significant turning points for young Zayn al-Dīn. He lost further influence in Shawwāl 865/July 1461 because of the dismissal of al-Bulqīnī from the position of chief judge (*Iẓhār*, vol. 3, 343), and in fact handed the office of *nāẓir al-jaysh* over to Najm al-Dīn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥijjī in that year. Given the circumstances, the reason for Zayn al-Dīn's ascension within the administrative institution without the backing of members of the Muzhir family, could be attributed to his birth mother who exercised influence over personnel affairs of the state during the reign of Īnāl.

V. Intercession: Safeguards against Downfall

The third role was to serve as safeguards against a sudden downfall. For administrative officials, to assume an office and to remain in it were somewhat different matters. Even once they assumed a higher administrative office by offering considerable sums of property and recommendations,

³³ It was said that Zayn al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Kuwayz (805–877/1402/3–73) of the *nāẓir al-khāṣṣ* and Muḥibb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn al-Shihna (d. 890/1485) of the *kātib al-sirr*—both of whom had opposed al-Anṣārī—instigated Zayn al-Dīn's desire to take al-Anṣārī's position (*Iẓhār*, vol. 3, 51).

³⁴ It was also mentioned that Zaynab had done this in revenge for Zaynab ibna Jarbāsh al-Karīmī Qāshuq who was al-Anṣārī's wife. When Zaynab ibna Jarbāsh was Jaqmaq's wife, she had tormented Īnāl's wife Zaynab obstinately (*Iẓhār*, vol. 3, 52). *Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 2, 353 also attributes the reason for al-Anṣārī's arrest to his marriage to Zaynab ibna Jarbāsh.

there was no guarantee that they would hold that office for life. They needed to remove other candidates and prepare for arbitrary dismissal, imprisonment, and confiscation by accumulating property and building connections during, or even before, they assumed the office.³⁵ Intercessions to the sultan by prominent military officers or, needless to say, by civilian elites, were very effective for reinstatement or release, so marriage to an individual in the military class served as a powerful defence against crises.

In the case of the Muzhir family, marriages to high-ranking military officials in the fourth generation deserve special attention. Badr al-Dīn III married a daughter of Lājīn al-Zāhirī, who was an amir of a thousand and served as the *amīr al-majlis* (amir of the council) (*Dawʿ*, vol. 6, 233). Lājīn went on a pilgrimage as the *amīr maḥmil* (amir of the caravan) with his son-in-law Badr al-Dīn III in 880/1475–76 in the reign of Qāyṭbāy (*Dawʿ*, vol. 6, 233),³⁶ but except for this mention, there is no proof of their interaction; unfortunately, it is still unclear what form of merit the marriage brought to each of them.

However, Zayn al-Dīn's daughter Bint Abū Bakr's marriage to the future sultan Jānbulāt brought direct merit to Badr al-Dīn III. Badr al-Dīn himself appears to have arranged their wedding (Shaʿbān 899/1504) (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 302).

Badr al-Dīn III had experienced five arrests and periods of imprisonment in his lifetime, and was released from four of them by payments and the intercession of military officials.³⁷ It was during his second imprisonment that the merit of her marriage to Jānbulāt is clearly indicated. In Rajab 905/February 1500, Badr al-Dīn III, having incurred Sultan Qānṣūh's displeasure, was discharged from his office as *kātib al-sirr* and imprisoned in al-ʿArqāna prison within the Citadel. His younger brother Kamāl al-Dīn assumed the office instead of him (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 429). Jānbulāt interceded with the sultan for his release and paid the sum imposed on Badr al-Dīn; his release was implemented in Shaʿbān/April–May 1500 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 430).

In Dhū al-Ḥijja 905/June 1500, Badr al-Dīn was reinstalled in the *kātib al-sirr* by the new Sultan Jānbulāt (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 440). Immediately after his installment, Badr al-Dīn undertook confiscation of property on a large-scale (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 442–443).³⁸ However, an apparent injustice occurred together with some disturbance, so Jānbulāt dismissed Badr al-Dīn, who had been responsible, from his office and had him beaten. Badr al-Dīn was imprisoned in al-ʿArqāna and again had payments imposed upon him (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 451–452).

Badr al-Dīn III was released in Jumādā II 906/January 1501 by the enthronement of Ṭumān Bāy (r. 1501) (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 461). However, on the 19 Rabīʿ I 910/30 August 1504, he was rear-

³⁵ For example, in 842/1439, Sultan Jaqmaq suddenly removed ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ from his offices and imprisoned him. However, he was spared harsh treatment and the amount of confiscated money was largely reduced by the intercession of Kamāl al-Dīn al-Bārīzī and his sister Mughul who was Jaqmaq's wife (Igarashi 2013, 82).

³⁶ Lājīn, who had served as the *amīr al-majlis*, assumed the title of *amīr ḥājj al-maḥmil* in Ramaḍān 880/December 1475–January 1476 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 113; *Nayl*, vol. 7, 147).

³⁷ The first arrest was Rajab 902/March–April 1497 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 277); the second arrest was 11 Rajab 905/11 February 1500 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 429–430); the third arrest was Shaʿbān 905/April–May 1500 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 430, 438); and the fourth arrest was Rabīʿ II 906/October–November 1500 (*Badāʿiʿ*, vol. 3, 452, 461). Badr al-Dīn's misgovernance and the process of his imprisonments will be discussed in a forthcoming paper.

³⁸ Badr al-Dīn III seized property of the communities (*ṭāʾifa*) of Jews and Christians, groups (*jamāʿa*) of prominent merchants, and eunuchs.

rested for treason against the new Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī (*Badāʾiʿ*, vol. 4, 67),³⁹ and this turned out to be his final imprisonment. Badr al-Dīn III was tortured harshly, and died in prison at the age of fifty-three on 4 Rajab 910/11 December 1504.

Because of the imprisonment of Badr al-Dīn III, the genealogy of Banū Muzhir as a notable bureaucrat family was destroyed. However, Badr al-Dīn III was not the first in the family to be imprisoned or discharged for having opposed a ruler. Badr al-Dīn I and Badr al-Dīn II also experienced imprisonment.⁴⁰ Zayn al-Dīn was suddenly dismissed in Rajab 886/August–September 1481 by Qāyṭbāy for his support of the chief Shāfiʿī and Mālikī judges. Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Khayḍarī (d. 894/1489) had been informally promised the post of the next *kātib al-sirr*. However, after 18 days, Zayn al-Dīn was reinstated to his previous position by payment of a considerable sum of money and the intercession of several amirs.⁴¹

The fact that marbles, which had embellished the halls of the Muzhir family's residence, were torn off for rebuilding the Duhaysha (*qāʿa* of the Citadel) was a symbolic incident that indicates the downfall of Banū Muzhir (*Badāʾiʿ*, vol. 4, 80). Why did the Muzhir family lose their power so rapidly?

Based on descriptions of the circumcision ceremony in 895/1490, Zayn al-Dīn must have had another two sons whose *laqabs* were not mentioned, and reportedly his eldest son Saʿd al-Dīn left descendants by Suʿād al-Mulūk. Therefore, in addition to Ibn Ṭulūn's remark concerning Zayn al-Dīn's descendants in 926/1520, as mentioned above, it is not very likely that the Muzhir family's genealogy was completely extinguished, but it is probable that there was no adult male at the time of Kamāl al-Dīn's death in 910/1505.

As a safety net that was expected to avoid the risk of the family's extinction, children of the fourth generation contracted two marriages with the military class and one with the civilian class, but none of those marriages lasted until the time Badr al-Dīn III was put to death. The conditions were almost the same when Badr al-Dīn II died, as successors were still young and there were no marital relationships with prominent figures. At that time, it was not Badr al-Dīn's widow (i.e. Khadija) who assumed responsibility for educating the children as administrators but other civilian elites in Cairo. As for the Muzhir family, to renew and reinforce relationships with other powerful bureaucrats was the surest way to maintain their genealogy, and marriages to them could be placed in the same context. It is probable that the fourth generation failed to develop the kind of relationship that could be passed down to the next generation by marriage or other measures.

On the other hand, from the viewpoint of the regime, the success of the Muzhir family's strategy itself may have become the reason why the regime excluded them as a threat. Their success in the central government was because sultans preferred bureaucrats of Syrian origin who had no power base in Cairo (Petry 1982, 207), as well as the competence of Badr al-Dīn II as an administrator. However, in the succeeding generation, the family was entwined with al-Bulqīnī, the most

³⁹ Badr al-Dīn reportedly made a list of supporters in order to enthrone Qāyṭ al-Rajabī of the *Atābak* (commander-in-chief) and had money distributed to them. In regard to the banishment of Qāyṭ al-Rajabī, see Petry 1994, 170.

⁴⁰ Arrest of Badr al-Dīn I: *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, 336; Imprisonment of Badr al-Dīn II: *Ḍawʿ*, vol. 9, 40; *Inbāʿ*, vol. 8, 190.

⁴¹ For details of Zayn al-Dīn's dismissal, see Ota-Tsukada 2015, 161–163. In Muḥarram 869/September–October 1464, al-Khayḍarī, who was the *kātib al-sirr* of Syria, appealed directly to Sultan Khushqadam to appoint him to that office in Egypt by offering a large number of gifts, but he was not able to remove Zayn al-Dīn.

prominent scholar in Cairo, and celebrated figures represented by the caliph by means of marriage. This must have served to strengthen their network in Cairo. Marriage to the military class was also a useful way to enhance their power base.

It is not hard to imagine that the financial status of the Muzhir family worsened because of the repeated payments to release Badr al-Dīn III. The reason for his harsh treatment or why his release did not eventually occur may be attributed to their not being able to afford the required sum. It seems quite probable that, for the sultan, the news of Badr al-Dīn's conspiracy became an opportunity to reduce the influence of the Muzhir family, which had gradually become localised over three generations.

VI. Conclusion

Given their careers, the members of Banū Muzhir appear to have expanded their power quite smoothly in the hundred years from the end of fourteenth century. However, in fact, they had barely sustained their family genealogy by relying heavily on relationships built by the marriages of previous generations or the person in question. What was required to develop the careers of young members after the head of the family's death was to succeed in human relationships in addition to maintaining their father's legacy and offices, and it was a great merit to be born into a bureaucrat family.⁴² Family members strategically succeeded and renewed relationships with other prominent families that were built in their father's generation, and expanded and reinforced those relationships by marriage. Marriage must have had positive and negative effects on the family's financial status and also influenced appointments to administrative offices. For the Muzhir family, the relevance of both strategies was not clearly apparent, but that is a subject for future analysis.

Considering that genealogies overlap and cross among bureaucrat families, some of the features found in the Muzhir family can be said to be common features of bureaucrat families. Marriage to those in the military class was an especially common phenomenon throughout the civilian elite. For the military class, the issue of renewing relationships in each generation is estimated to have been more striking than in bureaucrats' and scholars' families.

Concerning the Muzhir family's marriage to the military class, Badr al-Dīn III married a daughter of Lājīn, but when Lājīn died, Badr al-Dīn III was twenty-six years old and there is no mention of how this marriage played a role in Badr al-Dīn's career. On the other hand, Bint Abū Bakr's marriage to Jānbulāt clearly was favourable to Badr al-Dīn (even though there might have been a 'limit'; Martel-Thoumian 1992, 278). Unlike marriage among bureaucrat families, which presupposed the reproduction of bureaucrats, the effect of marriage to the military class was limited principally to the period in which their partner mamluk seized power.⁴³ To conclude the background of why marriage between bureaucrats and the military class became so common and what kind of merit this activity sought, we need to accumulate case studies of each family. In that respect, it is also necessary to take into consideration whether there was any difference in merit according to sex and generation on either side.

⁴² The importance of human network succession is also pointed out in Eychenne 2013, 301.

⁴³ The reason Khadija could wield power in the inner palace was not clearly mentioned, but we need to consider the 'unique' relationship between Īnāl and Zaynab and the social reputation of her husband 'Alam al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī, in addition to her birth in the military class.

The relationship with military officials was inevitably renewed in each generation (Eychenne 2013, 307). Therefore, for bureaucrats, it was the only factor which could not be inherited between father and sons, and this was more so the case for mamluks, who were originally outsiders. Mamluks, by building close reciprocal ties with civilian elites by marriage, must have increased the probability of benefits, such as recommendations and intercession. Moreover, as seen in Badr al-Dīn's final arrest, they could expect financial and human support from prominent bureaucrats when they assumed the reins of government. Essentially, mamluks were only tied to their master and colleagues, so they needed to build more and varied safety nets; to consolidate their local power bases, they adopted the efficient option of marriage with a member of the civilian class.

Finally, if we turn our attention to fifteenth-century Mamluk society as a whole, we see that it was a society in which one could take up the option of remarriage in a flexible manner. Three out of ten marriages in Cairo ended in divorce, and it was not uncommon to repeat marriage and separation throughout one's life (Rapoport 2005, esp. 83). Repeated marriages naturally engendered age differences among the descendants, and this stood in its favour for notable civilian families. If a father passed away young, the eldest son, who already had an important official position, or the daughter who had married a prominent figure, could foster young children, and consequently pass on their position to the same generation. It was also possible to bond more efficiently and advantageously in a marital relationship after enhancing one's social status. Moreover, marriage was not limited to the class of one's origin. Taking all these factors into consideration, it seems reasonable to conclude that the marriage of bureaucrats in the fifteenth century should be understood as an issue for the upper social class, rather than being categorised with marriage to military officials, bureaucrats, or religious intellectuals, as it was based on the survival strategy of each family or individual. Layered networks stretched by marriages were safety nets intended to mitigate any kind of risk, and were of the utmost strategic importance among bureaucrat families.

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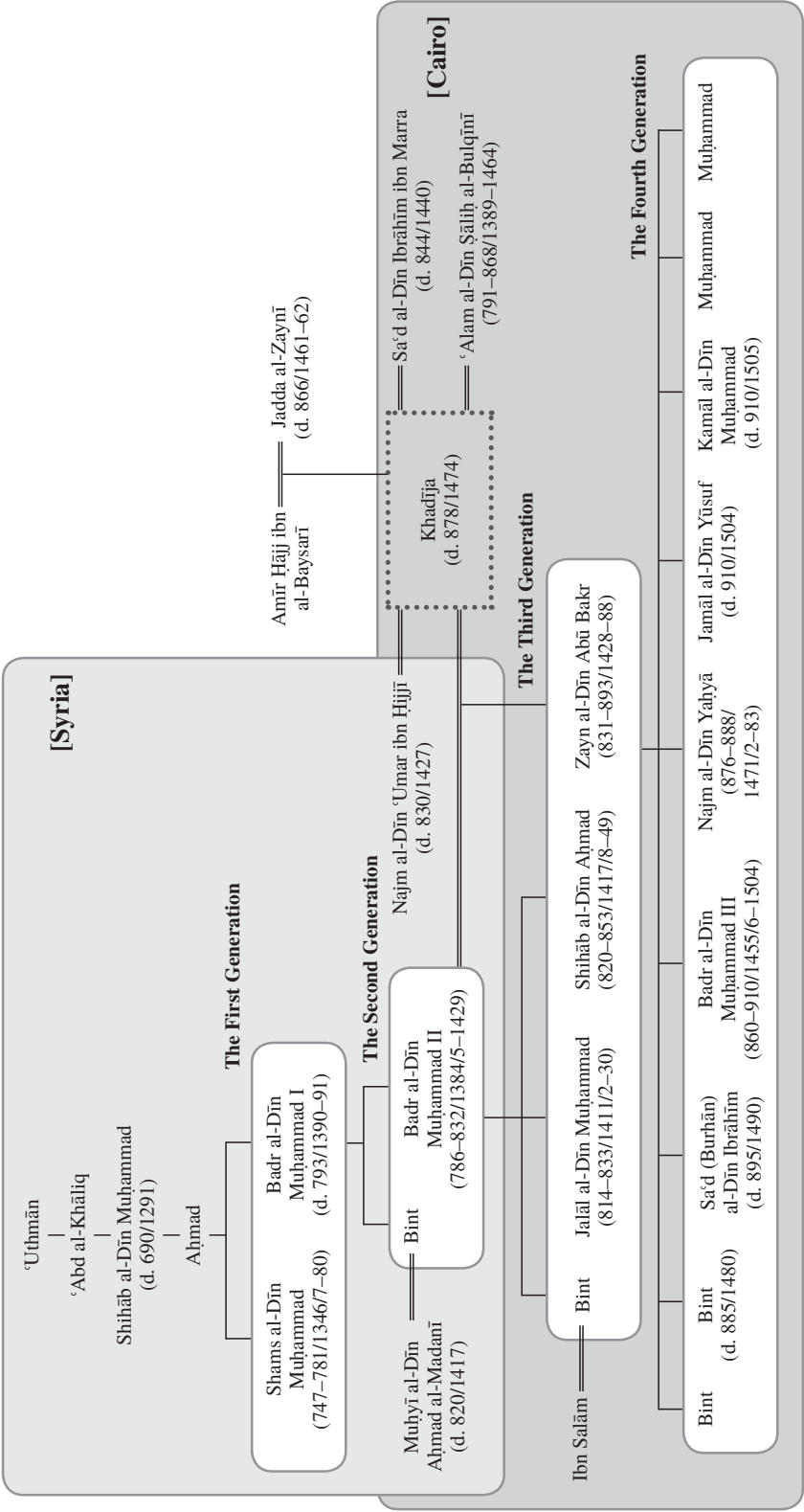


Fig. 1: Lineage of the Muzhir Family

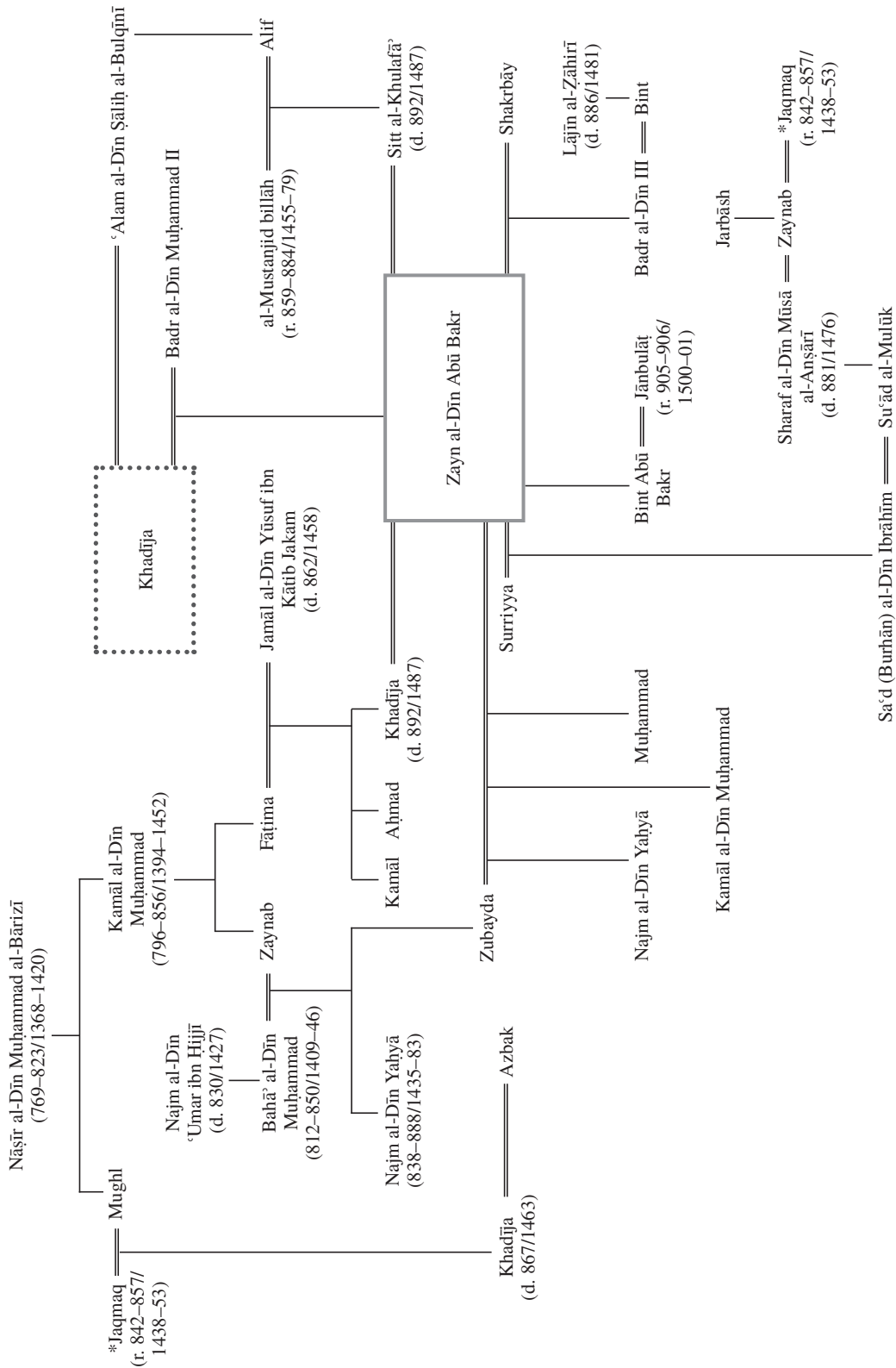


Fig. 2: Marriage of the Muzhir Family

Table 1: The Career of Zayn al-Dīn Ibn Muzhir

A=Appointment, R=Removal

Position	Source	<i>Badā'i</i> ^c	<i>Ḍaw'</i>	<i>Dhayl Raf'</i>	<i>Izhār</i>	<i>Nayl</i>	<i>Nujūm</i>	<i>Wajīz</i>
nāzīr al-istābl	A	857. RJ 2: 314	unknown 11: 88	857. RJ. 11 p. 479		857. RJ 5: 403		unknown 3: 1042
	R			864. DhQ. 18 p. 480				862 2: 713
nāzīr al-jawālī (Egypt)	A	860. DhQ 2: 335	unknown 11: 88	862. DhH. 9 p. 479		860. DhH 5: 466		unknown 3: 1042
	R			864. SB. 19 p. 480				
nāzīr al-jawālī (Syria)	A		unknown 11: 88	863. RJ. 23? p. 480	862. DhH. 27 2: 401		862. DhH. 27 16: 127	
	R				862. DhH. 27 2: 401		862. DhH. 27 16: 127	
nāzīr khānqāh Sa'īd al-Su'adā'	A		unknown 11: 88	863. RJ. 23 p. 479				unknown 3: 1042
	R	864. DhQ 2: 362		864. DhQ. 18 p. 480		864. DhQ 6: 89		
nāzīr al- Sharīfiyya	A			unknown p. 482				
	R							
wakīl bayt al-māl	A		unknown 11: 88	863. RJ. 23 p. 479				
	R			864. DhQ. 18 p. 480				
nāzīr al- dhakhīra	A			863. RJ. 23? p. 480				
	R							
nāzīr al-jaysh	A	865. MH 2: 363	unknown 11: 88–89	864. SB. 17 p. 480		864. SB 6: 85	864. SB. 17 16: 148	unknown 3: 1042
	R	865. DhQ 2: 385		865. DhQ. 3 p. 480	865. DhQ. 3 3: 344	865. DhQ 6: 123	865. DhQ. 3 16: 261	
	A	866. SF 2: 390		866. SF. 2 p. 480		866. SF 6: 134	866. SF. 2 16: 265	
	R	866. DhQ 2: 399		866. DhQ. 20 pp. 480–481		866. DhQ 6: 148	866. DhQ. 20 16: 272	
kātib al-sirr (-893. RM)	A	866. DhQ 2: 399	866. DhQ 11: 89	866. DhQ. 20 p. 481		866. DhQ. 20 6: 148	866. DhQ. 20 16: 272	866 3: 1042