

GENEALOGIES OF TRUST, LOVE AND UNITY: KINSHIP BETWEEN THE PROPHET'S FAMILY AND HIS COMPANIONS

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Abstract

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Shi'i theological narratives often portray early Islamic history as marked by deep and irreconcilable conflict between the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the family of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) and the *Sahabah* (the Prophet's Companions). Shi'ite often employ such claims to argue that early Islamic political authority was established at the expense of the Prophet's kin. This paper challenges such argument by presenting genealogical and historical evidence of widespread intermarriage, mutual respect, and sociopolitical cooperation between *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah*. Marriage alliances, in particular, functioned as expressions of social legitimacy and trust, thus undermining narratives of hostility and disunity. Focusing on documented matrimonial relationships, especially those involving the children of Ali ibn Abi Talib, Hasan ibn Ali, and Husayn ibn Ali, this paper argues that kinship served as a bridge of alliance and affection, not a symbol of betrayal and hatred. Ultimately, using a historical-sociological approach to early Islamic history, the paper contends that early Islamic society was characterised by cohesion, reverence, and shared theological harmony rather than conflict between the Prophet's family and his Companions.



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Introduction

Employing a polarised framework of loyalty and betrayal, Shi'i sources portray the early history of Islam as a scenario of conflict and hatred between the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Prophet's family) and the *Sahabah* (the Companions). In later Twelver Shi'i narratives, key Islamic figures such as *Abu Bakr*, *Umar*, and *Uthman* are depicted as political usurpers and active participants in the marginalisation or oppression of the Prophet's household (Momen, 1985; Modarressi, 2003). These narratives have shaped the theological foundations of sectarian identity, particularly within Twelver Shi'ism. However, closer scrutiny of both Sunni and Shi'i classical sources reveals a far more nuanced, and in many cases, socially integrated reality.

This paper challenges the purported narrative of hostility by examining genealogical ties and matrimonial alliances between *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Companions. These connections are well-documented in both Sunni historiography and Shi'i canonical works, such as Al-Majlisi (1404 AH, Vol. 21, p. 197); Al-Kulayni (n.d., Vol. 5, p. 346; Vol. 6, p. 115); Al-Amili (n.d., Vol. 3, p. 129) and many others.

The matrimonial ties between *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Companions were not incidental. In early Islamic society, marriage functioned as a strategic and symbolic act of trust, alliance, and political legitimacy (Donner, 2010; Crone & Hinds, 1986). Qur'anic injunctions further emphasise the gravity of family ties and condemn their severance (Qur'an 47:22–23). This suggests that public intermarriage was socially incompatible with enmity and belligerence. The existence of such bonds, sanctioned first, by the Prophet (ﷺ), and then subsequently *Ali ibn Abi Talib* and his sons, points to a publicly visible and widely accepted relationship of mutual regard and shared theological purpose.

Shi'i sources themselves contradict the narrative of enmity and rupture. For example, it was reported that *Abu Bakr* publicly emphasised the elevated status of the Prophet's (ﷺ) family, urging Muslims to “honour Muhammad by honouring his household” (Al-Majlisi, 1403 AH, Vol. 29, p. 199), while *Umar ibn al-Khattab* displayed affection for *al-Hasan* and *al-Husayn* by standing to greet them and praising their likeness to the Prophet (Al-Majlisi, 1403 AH, Vol. 43, p. 258). He even declared that the household of Muhammad (ﷺ) were the most beloved to him (Al-Majlisi, Vol. 22, p. 346). Conversely, reports also show that *al-Baqir* referred to *Abu Bakr* and *Umar* as “two truthful and righteous men” within the *Ummah* (Al-Majlisi, 1403 AH, Vol. 30, p. 372), and *Ali* invoking Allah's mercy upon the early emigrants and helpers (both from the Companions) for their service to Islam (Al-Majlisi, 1403 AH, Vol. 32, p. 90). These narrations indicate that public expressions of mutual respect were recognisable features of early Islamic communal life.

This paper therefore argues that matrimonial alliances serve as empirical indicators of trust and cooperation. The paper offers a more grounded and historically faithful understanding of the relationship between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah* as one rooted in common theology and shared commitment to the nascent Islamic order.

Literature Review

The emergence of Islam in seventh-century Arabia transpired within a complex web of tribal affiliations, with kinship constituting a foundational principle of political legitimacy, social organisation, and collective identity (Crone & Hinds, 1986; Donner, 2010). Among the Qurashi elite, lineage and clan affiliation were more than social customs; they were strategic mechanisms for alliance formation, conflict mediation, status elevation, and trust-building (Crone & Hinds, 1986; Donner, 2010). Authority and leadership claims were embedded in familial networks, validated by noble descent and clan solidarity, a dynamic illuminated by Ibn Khaldun's concept of *asabiyyah*, or group solidarity (Ibn Khaldun, 1967; Madelung, 1997). The Qur'an itself underscores the sanctity of kinship ties as divinely mandated (Qur'an 47:22–23, Saheeh International). This review examines the scholarly discourse on the role of kinship in early Islamic polity, the historiographical challenges posed by sectarian divergence, and case studies illustrating the integrative function of kinship ties among the Prophet's (ﷺ) family (*Ahl al-Bayt*) and his Companions.

Reassessing Common Sectarian Objections

Indeed, later Shi'i polemical literature advances several recurrent counter-claims against the thesis of early harmony between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah*. These objections include Allegations of Coercion or political pressure in the *Umm Kulthum Marriage to Umar ibn al-Khattab* (Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 42, pp. 90–92; Al-Murtada, 1998, Vol. 4, pp. 272–274; Al-Ha'iri, n.d., Vol. 2, pp. 112–115). However, this assertion finds no support in the earliest Shi'i sources that record the marriage in neutral and factual terms, without reference to compulsion, protest, or resentment (Al-Kulayni, n.d., Vol. 6, p. 115; Al-Mufid, 1993, pp. 27–28; Al-Tabarsi, 1997, pp. 139–140; Al-Tusi, n.d., Vol. 3, p. 129). Moreover, within the socio-cultural context of seventh-century Arabia, marriage was a public, clan-

based institution involving guardians, witnesses, and communal acknowledgment (Crone & Hinds, 1986, pp. 11–14, 47–49; Donner, 2010, pp. 67–70). It is therefore implausible that a coerced marriage involving the Prophet’s granddaughter could occur openly, produce offspring, and leave no trace of contemporary objection. Claims of coercion thus remain speculative and historically unsubstantiated.

Another counter-argument holds that the naming of children after *Abu Bakr*, *Umar*, and *Uthman* by members of the *Ahl al-Bayt* was politically neutral or customary (Modarressi, 2003, pp. 31–33, 135–137; Momen, 1985, pp. 72–74). This reading is also sociologically weak. In Arab culture, naming is a deliberate act conveying admiration, loyalty, and positive association, particularly among elite families (Ibn Manzur, n.d., Vol. 13, pp. 24–26; al-Jahiz, n.d., Vol. 2, pp. 199–201). The sustained repetition of these names across generations of the *Ahl al-Bayt* cannot plausibly be dismissed as accidental or apolitical.

A third strategy invokes *taqiyyah* (precautionary dissimulation) to explain marriages and naming practices as merely tactical (Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 42, pp. 90–92; Vol. 45, pp. 56–62; Al-Murtada, 1998, Vol. 4, pp. 272–274). While *taqiyyah* is a recognised Shi’i legal doctrine, described in some narrations as constituting “nine-tenths of the religion” (Al-Kulayni, n.d., Vol. 2, pp. 217, 220), its indiscriminate application to public genealogical data is methodologically untenable. Such records are communal, multi-sourced, and preserved across sectarian boundaries. As Modarressi (2003) notes, later discomfort reflects evolving theological boundaries rather than new historical evidence. Narratives of irreconcilable hostility are therefore later constructions, not features of the formative Islamic period.

These analyses demonstrate that later sectarian reinterpretations reflect evolving doctrinal priorities rather than historical reality. By systematically evaluating early sources, this framework provides a method for resolving other disputed narratives within early Islamic historiography.

Genealogical Case Studies

Far from reflecting political rupture or personal animosity, the documented kinship bonds between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ illustrate a pattern of intimate trust, sociopolitical alliance, and shared responsibility within the nascent Muslim community. Notable examples include the Prophet’s ﷺ own marriages to the daughters of *Abu Bakr* and *Umar*. Shi’i classical sources explicitly acknowledge the uncontested Prophet’s ﷺ marriages to both *A’isha bint Abi Bakr* and *Hafsah bint Umar*, as recorded in *Man la Yahduruhu al-Faqih* (al-Ṣaduq, Vol. 3, p. 255) and *Bihar al-Anwar* (al-Majlisi, Vol. 22, p. 220). According to *Nahj al-Balaghah*, Imam Ali explicitly acknowledged that *Uthman* “was the husband of two daughters of the Messenger of God” (al-Radi, 2009, Letter 19, p. 49), a fact corroborated by *al-Mufid* (1993, pp. 27–28) and *al-Ṭabarsi* (1997, pp. 139–140), both record that *Uthman* first married *Ruqayyah* and, following her death, *Umm Kulthum*.

The following genealogical case studies—drawn from both Sunni and Shi’i classical literature—illustrate how matrimonial ties served as bridges between families and ideological factions, demonstrating that such relationships cultivated cohesion, mutual respect, harmony, and collaborative commitment in the path of Allah (SWT) between the Prophet ﷺ’s family and his Companions.

Ahl al-Bayt and the Household of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq

The genealogical ties between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the household of *Abu Bakr al-Siddiq* reflect a deliberate pattern of harmony and alliance. Through these matrimonial ties, the descendants of the Prophet ﷺ and the descendants of *Abu Bakr* established enduring bonds that transcended political divisions, reaffirmed trust, mutual respect, and solidarity. Following marriages were documented in the Shi’i classical books:

- *Al-Hasan (or al-Husayn) and Hafsah bint Abd al-Rahman b. Abi Bakr* (Al-Mufid, 2007, pp. 213–214; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 43, pp. 351–352; Al-Tabari al-Shi’i, n.d., pp. 106–107).
- *Musa al-Jawn b. Abd Allah al-Mahd* (descendant of al-Hasan) *to Umm Salamah bint Muhammad b. Talhah* (Al-Fusti, n.d., pp. 94–95; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 48).
- *Shi’ite Imam, Muhammad al-Baqir and Umm Furwah bint al-Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr*, the mother of the Shi’ite Imam, Jafar al-Sadiq (Al-Mufid, 2007, pp. 269–270; Al-Kulayni, n.d.,

Vol. 1, p. 472; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 46, pp. 212–215). Viewing this lineage with pride, *Al-Sadiq* has this to say: “Abu Bakr gave birth to me twice” (Al-Saduq, n.d., p. 78)

- *Ishaq b. Abd Allah b. Ali b. al-Husayn and Kulthum bint Ismail b. Abd al-Rahman b. al-Qasim* (Al-Fusti, n.d., pp. 112–113; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 48).
- *Ishaq b. Abd Allah b. Jafar b. Abi Talib and Umm Hakim bint al-Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr* (Al-Fusti, n.d., pp. 121–122; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 48)

Umm Kulthum bint Ali and Umar ibn al-Khattab

The marriage between *Umar ibn al-Khattab*, the second caliph, and *Umm Kulthum bint Ali ibn Abi Talib*, the granddaughter of the Prophet ﷺ through *Ali* and *Faṭimah al-Zahra* is another compelling sign of love and harmony between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Companions. According to Sunni sources, *Umar* formally proposed to *Ali* for his daughter's hand for his desire to strengthen ties with the family of the Prophet ﷺ (Ibn Sa'd, n.d., Vol. 8, p. 463; Ibn Kathir, 2013, Vol. 7, p. 148). *Ali* consented, and the marriage produced at least one son, *Zayd ibn Umar*.

The classical Shi'i books admitted to this marriage. *Al-Kulayni*, *Al-Shaykh al-Mufid*, *Al-Ṭabarsi* and *Al-Ṭusi* have explicitly mentioned *Umar* marrying *Umm Kulthum* and fathering children with her (al-Kulayni, n.d., Vol. 6, p. 115; al-Mufid, 1993, pp. 27–28; Al-Tabrasi, 1997, pp. 139–140; al-Ṭusi, n.d., Vol. 3, p. 129). *Al-Murtada* also mentions the marriage in *al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyyah*, emphasising its role in linking the Prophet's ﷺ household to *Umar*'s family (al-Murtada, 1998, pp. 212–213).

These marriages demonstrate that *Ali* did not perceive *Umar* as an oppressor of *Ahl al-Bayt*. Entrusting a daughter to someone in marriage signified respect, trust, and familial alliance. Given Arab norms, it is inconceivable that *Ali* would marry his daughter to a man he believed was guilty of injustice toward his family or that of the Prophet ﷺ.

Descendants of al-Hasan and al-Husayn in Qurayshi Alliances

Over successive generations, the descendants of *Al-Hasan* and *Al-Husayn* entered into strategic marriage alliances with prominent *Qurayshi* families, including the *Umayyads*, *Banu Taym*, and *Banu Adi*. These relationships are recorded in Sunni works such as *al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya* and *Jamharat Ansab al-Arab by Ibn Hazm*, as well as in Shi'i works like *Bihar al-Anwar* (Al-Majlisi, 2008). For example, descendants of *Ali* married into the Umayyad elite, including marriages with descendants of *Marwan ibn al-Hakam*, who ruled as caliphs in Damascus. *Ibrahim al-Ghamr*, a grandson of *al-Hasan*, married a daughter of *Hisham ibn Abd al-Malik*, an Umayyad caliph (Ibn Hazm, n.d.).

These patterns are not merely genealogical; they indicate enduring social cohesion, mutual respect, and theological continuity between the Prophet's ﷺ family and the Companions.

Naming Practices by the Ahl al-Bayt

Naming practices among the *Ahl al-Bayt* after the key Companions demonstrate a deliberate, respectful, and harmonious interaction with the Companions. *Ali ibn Abi Talib* did not hesitate to name one of his sons *Abu Bakr*, another *Umar*, and a third *Uthman*, all of whom were born during the caliphates of the three companions themselves (al-Mufid, 2007, pp. 268–269; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 45, pp. 56–57). His son *Hasan* also followed this practice, naming one child *Abu Bakr* and two others *Umar*, with a conscious reasoning for repeatedly using the name *Umar* (Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 45, pp. 57–58). *Husayn* maintained this tradition, naming one of his sons *Abu Bakr* and another *Umar* (Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 45, pp. 59–60). Similarly, his son, *Zain al-Abidin* named one of his children *Umar*, another *Uthman*, and himself preferred the kunya *Abu Bakr* (Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 45, pp. 60–61). The pattern continued with subsequent generations of the *Ahl al-Bayt*: *Imam Kazim* named one of his sons *Abu Bakr* and another *Umar*, while his son *al-Rida* used the kunya: *Abu Bakr* (Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 45, pp. 61–62).

These practices reveal the symbolic and social significance of naming within the *Ahl al-Bayt*. Not only did it honour the prominent Companions, but it also reinforced communal memory, ideological continuity, and the intertwining of personal, spiritual, and social identity. Through these recurring names,

the *Ahl al-Bayt* expressed both reverence for the key Companions and a deliberate cultivation of ties between them.

Methodology

This paper adopts the methodology of a comparative genealogical analysis based on classical biographical and historical works; *Hadith* compilations from both Sunni and Shi'i traditions; and narratives of intermarriage, birth, naming customs, and inheritance. The paper identifies patterns of cohesion that contradict the later polemical claim of sociopolitical severance through mapping out intermarriages between the Prophet's descendants and the families of the Companions.

In the course of analysis, the paper pays particular attention to chains of narration surrounding marriages and family ties, mutual acknowledgment of these relations in both Sunni and Shi'i sources, and silences or denials in later Shi'ite literature, and how these diverge from earlier historical consensus.

This paper seeks to show that the historical record, when examined through the prism of kinship sociology, does not support the claim of systematic exclusion or betrayal of *Ahl al-Bayt* by the *Sahabah*. This comparative genealogical approach not only clarifies relations between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah* but also provides a replicable framework for assessing other contested early Islamic events, such as debates over succession, political allegiance, or contested *hadith* transmission.

An essential part of this methodology involves the critical use of both Sunni and Shi'i classical sources in order to expose internal contradictions within the polemical positions that emerged centuries after the events in question. For example, the marriage of *Umm Kulthum bint Ali* to *Umar ibn al-Khattab* is attested in Sunni texts such as *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* (Ibn Sa'd, n.d.) and *al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya* (Ibn Kathir, 2013), and also in the Shi'i canonical source, *al-Kafi* (al-Kulayni, n.d., Vol. 6, p. 115).

Shi'i historian *al-Ya'qubi* mentions the cordial relations between leading figures of *Banu Hashim* and their *Qurayshi* counterparts (al-Ya'qubi, 2002). This advances the view that enmity narratives were not promoted in early Shi'i literature.

This comparative approach allows the paper to disentangle historical fact from theological embellishment by triangulating from early sources.

Findings

The analysis of early Islamic sources demonstrates that kinship functioned as a central and operative mechanism of political legitimacy, social cohesion, and communal trust during the formative period of Islam. Across Sunni and Shi'i classical literature, kinship ties, expressed through marriage alliances, lineage integration, and naming practices, consistently reflect patterns of cooperation and mutual recognition between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the leading Companions of the Prophet ﷺ.

First, the findings confirm that matrimonial alliances between the Prophet's ﷺ family and prominent Qurashi figures were neither isolated nor contested in early historiography. The marriage of *Umm Kulthum bint Ali* to *Umar ibn al-Khattab* is recorded neutrally and without controversy in foundational Sunni and Shi'i sources, including *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra*, *Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya*, and *Al-Kafi*. No early source associates this union with coercion, political pressure, or dissimulation. Similarly, Shi'i historiographical works such as those of *Al-Ya'qubi* do not advance narratives of irreconcilable hostility between the Prophet's ﷺ family and the senior Companions.

Second, genealogical evidence reveals sustained intermarriage between the descendants of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the households of *Abu Bakr*, *Umar*, and other Qurashi elites across multiple generations. These alliances are documented extensively in Shi'i canonical sources, including works by *Al-Mufid*, *Al-Kulayni*, and *Al-Majlisi*. Such continuity indicates enduring social cohesion rather than episodic or opportunistic relationships. The absence of polemical discomfort in early Shi'i records further suggests that later sectarian reinterpretations represent doctrinal developments rather than historical realities.

Third, naming practices among the *Ahl Al-Bayt* provide additional corroboration of positive relational dynamics. The repeated naming of children after *Abu Bakr*, *Umar*, and *Uthman* by *Ali ibn Abi Talib*, *Hasan*, *Husayn*, and subsequent generations is consistently recorded in Shi'i sources. Given the

sociocultural significance of naming in Arab society, particularly among elite families, these practices signify admiration, respect, and symbolic affiliation. The systematic recurrence of these names across generations cannot plausibly be explained as neutral, incidental, or coerced.

Finally, the findings indicate that later polemical strategies, such as attributing these kinship practices to *taqiyyah*, lack methodological viability when applied to public genealogical data. Marriages, offspring, and names were communal facts preserved across sectarian boundaries and transmitted through multiple independent channels. As such, claims that reinterpret these practices as concealment or coercion reflect later theological anxieties rather than contemporaneous evidence.

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that early Islamic society was characterised by integrative kinship networks linking the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Companions. The historical record consistently contradicts narratives of inherent hostility, instead revealing a community structured by alliance, trust, and shared religious identity.

Discussion

The genealogical evidence outlined in the preceding section presents a sustained pattern of intermarriage, familial trust, and political cooperation between the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ family and his senior Companions. These kinship connections falsify the claim that the *Ahl al-Bayt* were socially or politically marginalised.

The persistence of marriage alliances, shared household names, and cross-clan cooperation suggests a more cohesive early Muslim community than typically portrayed in later polemics. This section draws together the case study data to present a threefold challenge to those narratives.

Marriage as an Instrument of Alliance and Harmony

The genealogical evidence reveals that marriage functioned as a principal mechanism of political and social alliance and harmony in early Islamic society. In tribal Arabia, and particularly among the *Quraysh*, matrimonial alliances were public declarations of trust, honour, and reciprocal reverence (Donner, 2010; Crone & Hinds, 1986). Within this framework, the marriage of *Umm Kulthum bint Ali* to *Umar ibn al-Khattab* stands as a decisive indicator of harmonious relations between their households. Both Sunni and early Shi'ite sources, including *al-Tabaqat al-Kubra*, *al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya*, *al-Kafi*, *al-Irshad*, and *al-Istibsar*, affirm that the marriage occurred openly and produced a son, *Zayd* (Ibn Sa'd, n.d.; Ibn Kathir, 2013; Al-Kulayni, n.d., Vol. 6, p. 115; Al-Mufid, 1993, pp. 27–28; Al-Tusi, n.d., Vol. 3, p. 129). Socially, culturally, logically, and theologically, such a union would have been inconceivable if *Ali* perceived *Umar* as an oppressor or usurper. No early source records undue influence, coercion, or resentment; such claims emerge centuries later in the context of sectarian polemic.

This pattern is not confined to one marriage. The unions between the households of *Abu Bakr*, *Talhah*, and even the *Umayyads* likewise reflect reciprocal love and trust rather than submission (Al-Mufid, 2007, pp. 213–214; Al-Fusti, n.d.; Al-Majlisi, 2008). Therefore, these marriages signalled mutual respect and theological unity.

Kinship Continuity and Networks of Cohesion

Across multiple generations, the descendants of the Prophet ﷺ remained central actors within *Qurayshi* elite networks. Marriages such as that of *Zaynab bint Ali* to *Abd Allah ibn Jafar*, or the alliances between later *Hasanid* figures and the *Umayyads*, illustrate cohesion not isolation. Even during periods of political turmoil, individuals like *Abd Allah ibn Jafar* enjoyed respect and influence under successive administrations (Madelung, 1997).

These kinship connections falsify claim that the *Ahl al-Bayt* were socially or politically marginalised.

Naming Practices as Indicators of Reverence

The practice of naming children of *Ahl al-Bayt* after the senior Companions reflect the honourable and affectionate relationship that existed between them. *Ali* named his sons *Abu Bakr*, *Umar*, and *Uthman*; *Hasan* named sons *Abu Bakr* and *Umar*; *Husayn* named sons *Abu Bakr* and *Umar*; and later *Imams* such as *Zain al-Abidin*, *Musa al-Kazim*, and *Ali al-Rida* maintained these naming traditions (Al-Mufid, 2007, pp. 268–269; Al-Majlisi, 2008, Vol. 45, pp. 56–62).

In Arab culture, naming expresses respect, loyalty, and social alignment. These practices reveal an enduring admiration for the early Companions. Had the *Ahl al-Bayt* harboured lasting hostility toward *Abu Bakr*, *Umar*, or *Uthman*, the use of their names within their own lineage would have been unimaginable.

Sectarian Memory, Silence, and Historical Reinterpretation

A striking outcome of this research is the divergence between early historical memory and later sectarian polemic accounts. Early Shi'ite sources such as *Tarikh Al-Yaqubi* mention cross-family relations, including the marriage of *Umm Kulthum* to *Umar*, without criticism (Al-Yaqubi, 2002). Even *Shaykh al-Mufid's al-Irshad* preserves these genealogical links in neutral terms.

However, from the 10th century onward, theological and political imperatives reshaped the narratives. As *Madelung* (1997) and *Modarressi* (2003) argue, later Shi'ite polemics sought clearer boundaries between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the Companions, reinterpreting or suppressing earlier records that conflicted with emerging doctrinal frameworks. In this process, marriages, naming practices, and mutual gestures of affection were often omitted or reframed.

Beyond illustrating early Islamic cohesion, this genealogical framework provides a template for examining other contested narratives within Islamic history. By prioritising early sources, contextualising later interpretive strategies, and distinguishing factual evidence from sectarian polemic, scholars can more accurately reconstruct the formative period. Furthermore, recognising the historically documented interconnectedness of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah* offers a foundation for contemporary Sunni-Shi'i engagement grounded in shared historical realities rather than inherited polemics.

Conclusion

This study has examined early Islamic history through the lenses of genealogy and kinship alliances. It has demonstrated that the narrative of entrenched conflict and hostility between the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah* finds no credible support in the historical record. Instead, both Sunni and Shi'i classical sources consistently attest to patterns of intermarriage, familial trust, and sustained social cooperation between the family of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his senior Companions.

From the marriage of *Umm Kulthum bint Ali* to Caliph *Umar ibn Al-Khattab*, to the strategic marital unions formed by *Hasanid* and *Husaynid* descendants with *Qurayshi* elites, the available historical data depicts a deeply interconnected community. These marriages were neither anomalies nor acts of concealment; rather, they functioned as public affirmations of alliance, shared moral values, and mutual respect. Far from being adversaries, the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah* were bound together by faith, lineage, and a shared commitment to preserving the Prophet's ﷺ legacy.

Shi'i canonical sources such as *Al-Kafi* and *Al-Irshad*, despite later doctrinal developments, continue to preserve records of these kinship ties. Their unembellished transmission of such material underscores that subsequent polemical reinterpretations, including claims of coercion or retrospective appeals to *taqiyyah*, reflect evolving theological sensibilities rather than historically substantiated realities.

By returning to early, cross-sectarian sources and situating marriage within its proper social and political context, this study offers a reconstruction of early Islamic unity grounded in credible and methodologically sound evidence, largely unencumbered by later confessional distortions. In doing so, the paper challenges polemical Shi'i narratives that portray early Islam as irreparably divided along

familial and ideological lines.

Beyond its historiographical contribution, this framework carries important implications for contemporary Sunni–Shi'i dialogue. Recognising the historically documented interconnectedness of the *Ahl al-Bayt* and the *Sahabah* can help mitigate absolutist sectarian claims and foster engagement grounded in shared historical foundations rather than inherited polemics. Methodologically, the approach employed here, prioritising early sources, contextualising later interpretive strategies, and distinguishing historical data from theological rationalisation, can be fruitfully applied to other contested early Islamic narratives, including debates over succession, political allegiance, hadith transmission, and representations of early Companions. Such applications would further contribute to a more balanced, nuanced, and academically rigorous understanding of the formative period of Islamic history.

Co-Author Contribution

Author 2 carried out the initial draft/the whole article's write up. Authors 1 carried out the proofreading and the standardization of the article.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

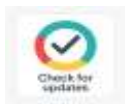
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