

The Process of Socialising the Mothers of Shi'a Imams and Social Mobility

TAHEREH RAHIMPOUR AZGHADI

Ferdowsi University of Mashhad- Iran.

MOHSEN NOGHANI DOKHT BAHMANI

Ferdowsi University of Mashhad - Iran

ABSTRACT: Shi'ism as a religious-political movement has always been suppressed by hostile regimes. This research seeks to explore the resources and facilities used by the mothers of Shi'a Imams to preserve and promote Shi'ism. The authors believe that under the educational system of the Infallible Imams they gained a suitable social base to allow social participation. This paper, drawing on historical documents and the technique of open content analysis, aims to examine their social base in the stratified system of the Imamate. The findings suggest that although these mothers did not have any capital to propagate Shi'a causes at the outset, after marrying Imams, they engaged in the process of secondary socialisation and achieved social, cultural and symbolic capital as a result of social mobility, which was a key factor in preserving the lives of the Imams and advancing Shi'a causes.

KEYWORDS: Shi'a Movement, Mothers of the Twelve Imams, Bourdieu Capital typology

Introduction

After the demise of the Prophet Muḥammad (S), Muslims were divided into two groups, Sunni and Shi'a, over the issue of the caliphate. In the Shi'a belief system, the Caliphate is a position that belongs exclusively to Imam 'Alī (A) and his descendants - any ruler other than them is considered a usurper. In Sunni belief, the Caliphate is earned by someone who is endorsed by the consensus of the Muslims or a group of trustees and scholars of shariah (Ṭabāṭabā'i, 1992, p. 625 quoted in Rahmati, 2014, p. 74). Hence, the Sunni opponents of the rule of Imam 'Alī (A) (Umayyad and Abbasids) presented the Shi'a as a minority opposition group, so that they were constantly the subject of security-political pressures. Indeed, the lives of eleven Shi'a Imams were taken by forces affiliated with a ruling regime. Therefore, one of the major concerns of the Imams was to protect the succeeding Imam and the propagation of the Shi'a school.

Historical studies reveal that Imams adopted various strategies to deal with hostile regimes. For instance, Imam 'Alī (A) resorted to forbearance as a means of protest (Nahj al-Balāgheh, the Shaqshaqieh sermon) while Imam Ḥusayn (A) staged an uprising to reform society and guide people (Majlesī, 2014, p. 44, p. 329). Imam Ṣādiq's strategy to establish the Shi'a presence was to promote scientific and educational activities, while Imam Riḍā (A) sought to propagate Shi'a views by entering the political structure of the ruling regime (Majlesī, 2014, p. 50, pp. 151 and 194). It is clear that the Infallibles, in order to advance the objectives of their movement, required dedicated and faithful followers. Therefore, finding companions and disciples who were trustworthy and willing to support them in the face of adversity to contribute to the advancement of the Shi'a cause, was a challenging task. Undoubtedly, it is only natural that those close to the Imams or their wives, mothers and descendants, were in this circle of loyal followers. It is one of the considerations that had a bearing on the marriages of Imams, as only women who trained under the guidance and teachings of Imams could qualify as the wife of an Imam or the mother of the subsequent Imam. Among the wives of the Imams, only four women were from respectable and noble families and the rest came from the stratum of slaves and maids who after marriage gained their freedom and managed to reach elevated positions under the Imams' guidance and teachings. It should be noted that this style of marriage was

practised as a tradition by all Imams for various reasons. It is also worth mentioning that in some cases, a hostile regime forced certain Imams into marriages, placing them in mortal danger, as exemplified by the murders of Imam Hasan and Imam Jawād by their wives (Qahraminejād, 2010, p. 284).

Despite the fact that the mothers of the Imams struggled with political/security restrictions and existing social beliefs and norms, they played a pivotal role in advancing the causes of the Shi'a movement. These women, who had faith in Shi'ism and the political rule of the Imams, were responsible for the socialisation of their progenies as the next Imams and potential rulers of the Islamic world. Therefore, it is important to consider their position in the secure circles of the Imams with respect to their maternal role. Hence, the main question is "What was the social position of these women and what capital was at their disposal to help propagate Shi'ism?"

Until recently, little attention has been paid to the role of women in Shi'a history. That is, in women's historical studies, we often encounter lack of information and resources, which is rooted in a subordinate and unoriginal view of women in Islamic societies. In addition, as we get closer to the time of Occultation, the life of Shi'ism as a minority movement comes under greater pressure, with the strategy of *Taqiyya* playing a critical role in protecting the life of the Imams and those around them. There is little known about the life of women in this era.

Therefore, the paucity of independent sources on the history of women is urgently felt, with the extant sources sufficing to offer a simple introduction to women irrespective of their social roles. For example, Ibn Tayfūr in the book "*Balāghat al-Nasā*", explores certain aspects of the life of a handful of women, or in "*Tarājem*" where usually following the titles and sobriquets of men, there is a section, often at the end of the book called "*Babu al-Nesa*" which describes the wives and affiliates of the Imams. These works reflect the active role of women in Shi'a history, especially the mothers of the Imams, but they are mostly descriptive and lack a historical analytical perspective. Instances are the articles of Tayyebī (2005) Rohāni and Siāmak Amāni (2003) Gharāwī Naīnī (2007) and the works of the Qahremānīnejād Shaegh (2010) and Zahīrī (1999), which explore the biography of the Imam's mothers without a discussion of the resources available to these women and their social capital. In

general, the above works, relying on Shi'a books and resources and using a discursive approach, give an account of the life of Imams' mothers that mainly revolves around religious and ethical issues.

Theoretical background

This analysis, based on Bourdieu's taxonomy of capital, examines the secondary socialisation of mothers in the stratified system of the Imamate era. The concept of social stratification is a fundamental concept in sociological studies according to which the status of the different strata and groups of a society are determined relative to one another. One of the prevailing approaches to the analysis of social stratification has been offered by Weber: "Class situation means the typical probability [chance²] of (1.) procuring goods, (2.) gaining a position in life and (3.) finding inner satisfaction. It is a probability that derives from the relative control over goods and skills and from their income-producing uses within a given economic order" (Weber, 2009).

The emphasis on wealth, power and dignity as scarce resources that are the source of conflict in human societies and, consequently, the formation of a stratified system in the works of other theorists (Ritzer and Goodman, 2004), can be interpreted under disparate concepts. Bourdieu stresses three interconnected components of field, capital, and habitus in order to explore the system of social stratification and to provide an analysis that disallows the reduction of this system to merely economic or cultural dimensions. According to him, actions are the result of these three dimensions. Bourdieu argues that field is the space or social zone that is governed by certain rules and regulations and social actors who occupy certain positions in these fields must learn and accept these rules as each field can operate provided that the social actors are dynamic and responsible within that field (Bourdieu, 1994).

Bourdieu defines habitus as the organised tendencies or dispositions that shape how an individual perceives and interacts with others and directs their lifestyle, interactions, and how they cope with different situations (Bourdieu, 1994). The field is directly related to capital, and capital can exist and function only in relation to a field (Kloot, 2009). The scope and type of social actors' access to diverse kinds of capital is different and even altering the field or the field of action may change the capital of the actors and their social class. For Bourdieu, capital

is a “source” of production that can be financial or non-financial or represented in tangible and intangible forms. Each person has different capital, the sum of which determines his position in the field (Anhair, Gerhadz, and Remo, 1995). Bourdieu propounds four types of capital: economic capital emanates from the economic sphere; cultural capital encompasses various forms of legitimate knowledge; social capital embraces valuable social relationships among people, and symbolic capital is derived from one's dignity and prestige (Ritzer and Goodman, 2004, p. 523). Depending on the capital that social actors possess, they acquire power and recognition in the field and are assigned certain positions accordingly. Thus, the distribution of various types of capital defines the position of social actors and the structure of the field (Bourdieu, 2001). Obviously, social actors are engaged in an inevitable conflict and competition for accessing diverse types of capital and maximum exploitation of the field. The result of this struggle is promotion of social status for some people in the field (class mobility) and the demotion of others. Depending on the total size of capital and the dominant capital, two types of mobility are conceivable: vertical mobility (ascending or descending) and horizontal mobility or displacement from one field to another (Bourdieu, 2001). Vertical mobility entails amplification of the capital that was previously dominant in the structure of assets, and therefore displacement occurs in the distribution structure of the total capital, which is manifested as mobility in a field (Bourdieu, 2001). In sum, Bourdieu, with an integrated view of inequality and the distribution of all sorts of capital and refrainment from any deterministic analysis, explores the class position of social actors in the light of a dynamic and constantly changing combination of capital and social field. Contrary to classical approaches, he adopts a developmental and shifting attitude to stratification and class structure.

Methods

This paper adopts a historical approach underpinned by a content analysis of the historical documents to examine different types of capital possessed by the mothers of the Imams and, consequently, their social status in the stratified system of the Imamate era. Content analysis is a research method for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their contexts, with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights,

a representation of facts and a practical guide to action (Krippendorff, 1980). The theoretical framework of this research is based on type of capital - social, cultural, economic, and symbolic - proposed by Bourdieu. The indicators used for these types of capital are described in the following tables:

Table 1. Research Indices and Sub-Indices

| Indices | Sub-Indices |
|-----------------------|--|
| Social capital | Progeny |
| | Family |
| | Children |
| | Contact groups |
| Economic | Economic resources |
| | Controlling economic resources |
| Cultural | Ability in Islamic teachings |
| Symbolic | Being free / bondwoman |
| | Reverence for the Imam and the Prophet |
| | Reputation |
| | Responsibilities |

In this study, the analysis is based on books of Ibn Bābüyeh (na); Mufid (2001); Kahāleh (1404); Kellini (2000) and Majlisi, which are among the oldest and most precise works on the history of Islam and Shi'ism. In this research, Lady Fāṭima has been excluded from the study samples, as a host of other studies have described her personality in detail. Since the wives of the Imams are mentioned under different names in diverse sources, in this article the most famous names have been chosen: Fāṭima bint al-Asad, Shahrbanū, Fāṭima bint al-Hassan, Umm Fārwah, Ḥamīda, Najma, Kheyzuran, Samāna, Ḥaditha and Nargis. The preferred unit of content in this research is sentence. Given the diversity of the texts under study, only a batch of sentences that are more representative of type of capital and related indices are studied, and sentences repeated in other works will not be included.

Findings

As shown in Tables 2 to 11, the characteristics of the four types of capital possessed by the mothers of the Imams are displayed separately.

Table 2. Capital of Fāṭima bint Asad

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Sources |
|------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | From Bani Hāshem who were called Ḥānīfa i.e. the Abrahamic monotheistic followers. | Tabarsī, 1147, p.301 |
| | Family | Daughter of Asad ibn Hāshem ibn Abd Manāf Qoreyshī Hāshemī, and her mother was Fāṭima bint Horam bin Rawāḥa bin Hājar. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 1, P.5 |
| | Contact groups | She was the woman who was among the first of the believers of the Prophet. | Tabarsī, 1147, P.301 |
| | | At the time of sanctions incurred by idolaters of Makkah she was with her husband at the time, She' b Abī Ṭaleb. | Qahremāninejād 2010, P.72 |
| | | She was one of the first migrators. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.1, P.453 |
| Children | Her sons were Ṭaleb, Aqil, Ja'far, Ḥamīda Farwah and 'Alī, and her daughters Jumānā, Umm Hānī and Rebteh. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.1, P.453 | |
| Economic capital | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | Fāṭima bint Asad narrated 46 hadiths of the Prophet. | Kahāle,1983, P.33 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|
| Symbolic Capital | Being free/ bondwoman | Free | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.3 |
| | Reverence for Imam (A) and Prophet (S) | The Prophet regarded her as a mother | Fetal Neishāburī, 1987, P.172 |
| | | Imam Ṣādiq said that God revealed to the Prophet that: I have forbidden fire to four people: [...] and people who took care of you. It is certainly true about Abd al-Moṭṭalib, and Faṭīma bint Amr and Abū Ṭaleb and Faṭīma bint Asad. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.6, P.181 |
| | Reputation | The only mother whose son was born in the Ka'ba. | Fetal, 1987, P.95 |
| | | The first Hashemi woman who gave birth to a Hashemi child. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 1, P,5 |
| | | Spirit of altruism of Faṭīma bint Asad and her love for the poor and the weak, was evident from the start of life | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.2, p.3 |
| | | In a time of drought, implored God in the name of Muḥammad to send rain and shortly after her prayer was answered. | Qahremānīnejād 2010, P.66 |
| | | Everyone praised her assistance [in the events of Badr and Uḥud]. | Qahremānīnejād 2010, P.72 |
| | Responsibilities | Her other role after the death of Āmina was to adopt Muḥammad along with Abī Ṭalīb (uncle of the Prophet), she was a caring mother and was devoted to him. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.4 |
| | | She played a significant role along with other faithful women of the Ansār in helping the Prophet and other believers [after the emigration]. | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.71 |
| | | One of his most important concerns during these days was kindness and affection to Faṭīma Zahra, who at the age of 5 was friends with this gentle mother. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.4 |
| | | When Khadija died while Faṭīma was still young, she took care of her. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.4 |

Table 3. Capital of Shahrbanū

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Social Capital | Progeny | The daughter (granddaughter) of Yazdard ibn Shahryār ibn Shirūyī bin Kasrā Parviz. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.137 |
| | Family | Married to Ḥusayn bin 'Alī | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.11 |
| | Children | Mother of Imam 'Alī bin Al-Ḥusayn. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.137 |
| | Contact groups | Not mentioned | - |
| Economic Capital | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | Shahrbanū, mother of Imam Zayn al-'Ābedin, was a narrator of hadith. | Gharāvi Nāyini, 2007, P.33 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free/ bondwoman | They brought her to Madina as a bondwoman | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.12 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | "Imam 'Alī (A) respected her and gave her the right to choose her husband" | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.13 |
| | | Imam 'Alī (A), had a special interest in this great mother, and called her Sayyid al-Nisā | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.168 |
| | | Imam 'Alī said to Ḥusayn: "O Abā 'Abdullah, this girl will give you the best person on earth." | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.14 |
| | Reputation | 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn's mother was a good and charitable woman | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.14 |
| | Responsibilities | NA | - |

Table 4. Capital of Fāṭima bint Ḥasan

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | She was one of the Alawis. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.15 |
| | Family | Daughter of Imam Ḥasan, son of Umm Wālid [bondwomen] and the wife of Imam Sajjād. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.154 |
| | Children | ‘Abdullah, Imam Muḥammad. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.16 |
| | Contact groups | In the mourning congregations and circles (which were held for the martyrs of Karbala by Imam Zayn al-‘Ābedin), she accompanied other Ahl al-bayt. | Gharāvī Nā’nī, 2007, P.192 |
| | | Along with her great uncle, she went to Karbala and then al-Sham as a captive and endured all the afflictions meted out to the Prophet’s household. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.15 |
| Economic capital | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | There were narratives from her which are not available. | Qahremāninejād, 2010, P.191 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free / bondwoman | Free. Bondwoman on behalf of mother | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.15 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | Found such a spiritual greatness that she was honoured with the title of Ṣiddīqa by Imam Ṣādiq | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.15 |
| | | Imam Ṣādiq: She was a truthful and honest lady. There was not a woman identical to her level in the family of Imam Ḥasan | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.15 |
| | Reputation | She whose father, uncle, husband and son were all Imams. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.15 |
| | Responsibilities | During her lifetime and the Imamate of Imam Sajjād (A), she was in charge of social responsibilities, in accordance with her spiritual capacities and moral values. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.16 |

Table 5 Umm Farwah

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit (sentences) | Resources |
|--|------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | Qasim's father, Muḥammad bin Abī Bakr who lost his life in support of Imam 'Alī | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.4, P.294 |
| | | Muḥammad bin Abī Bakr, due to the connection of his mother to the house of Amir al-Mūminīn and Ahl al-bayt, was entrusted with ethics and behaviour under the guidance of Imam 'Alī, as well as his mother, Asmā bint Amīs. | Fetal Neishābūrī, 1987, P.254 |
| | Family | Her father, Qasim, was one of the close companions of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 3, P.174 |
| | | Her mother, Asma, is said to be the daughter of 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn Abī Bakr | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.202 |
| | | Qasim and Asma were obedient to Imams in their children's education due to the special dedication they had to the Imamate. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.17 |
| | Children | In addition to Ja'far bin Muḥammad , he gave birth to another child named 'Abdullah | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.210 |
| | Contact groups | Sometimes, along with her mother, she went to Imam Zayn al-'Abidin's house of relatives and took advantage the virtuous Banī Hāshem women. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.17 |
| She made a lot of use of Imam Ṣādiq, who founded the great Islamic university to publish the truths of the book and the tradition in Medina featuring the participation of people like Abū Ḥanīfa. | | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.213 | |
| Capital Economy | Economic sources | She was given the task of paying the rights of the poor and needy in Madina. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.3, P.217 |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | She was considered among the narrators of Imam Ṣādiq. | Gharavī Na'nī, 2007, P.36 |
| | | She was scientifically qualified in jurisprudence. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.6, P.232 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free / bondwoman | She was free. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.16 |
| | Reverence for Imam | The mother of Imam Ṣādiq (A) was a respectable person whose son said to her: "Indeed, my mother Umm Farwah is a loyal woman of certainty. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.16 |
| | | In human morality and spirituality, she was superior to her fellow human beings. | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.207 |
| | | She gradually acquired a dignified position among Banī Hashim | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.17 |
| | Responsibilities | On behalf of her husband, Imam Ṣādiq, she was entitled to pay the rights of the poor, and needy in Madina. | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.212 |
| | | She relieved Fātima bint Hasan regarding the martyrdom of Imam Zayn al-'Abidin. | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.211 |
| Sometimes the Imam at the mourning parties of his grandfather, Abi 'Abdullah, took the responsibility of administering the women's congregation. | | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.212 | |

Table 6. Capital of Ḥamida

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | Historians disagree about the progeny of this noble lady. Some believe that she is from Andalusia and her nickname was Loy Loy and others say that she is a Barbarian from Barbarestan and some say she is from Rome and is from non-Arab progeny. | Fetal Neishābūrī, 1987, P.264 |
| | | Ḥamida came from a large non-Arab family. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.28 |
| | Family | Ḥamida was the wife of Imam Ṣādiq. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.18 |
| | Children | The fruits of the marriage of Ḥamida with Imam Ṣādiq were Muhammad, Ishaq, Imam Kazim and a girl named Faṭīma who was one of the faithful and pious women. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.200 |
| | Contact groups | Not mentioned | - |
| Economic | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | She reached a high degree of expertise in jurisprudence and Imam Ṣādiq sometimes referred women to her for jurisprudential issues. | Fetal Neishābūrī, 1987, P.547 |
| | | She was named among female narrators. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.4, P.301 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free / bondwoman | Ibn Akāsh bought her upon the command of Imam Bāqir from the slave market from a Barbarian family. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.18 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | Imam Ṣādiq: Ḥamida was pure from any evil, like Shams of pure gold, and the angels of God always protected her until she came to me. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.1, P.477 |
| | Responsibilities | Whenever Imam Ṣādiq wanted to pay the rights of the Medinan people, he sent his mother, Umm Farwah and his wife, Ḥamida Mosafā, for this work. | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.18 |
| | | In some historical passages, the name of Ḥamida, the wife of Imam Ṣādiq and the mother of Imam Mūsā Al-Kāzem, is written in the will of Imam Ṣādiq. | Amin, 1982, Vol.6, P.110 |

Table 7. Capital of Najma

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|------------------|------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | A noble woman among non-Arabs | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, P.24 |
| | | Born and raised among Arabs | Mahallāti,1990, Vol.3, p.20 |
| | Family | Imam Mūsā Al-Kāzem 's wife | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.240 |
| | Children | The mother of 'Alī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā and mother of Fatemeh M'ašūmeh, to whom she was born after her father's martyrdom. | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.244 |
| | Contact groups | Among the wives of the Imams, Najma in particular had important duties, relations with the Shi'a family, and assistance and participation in social affairs, especially among women associated with the Ahl al-bayt family. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.1, P.381 |
| | | Several times during Imam's custody, she was in charge of communicating with the Shi'a family. | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.1, P.381 |
| Economic capital | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | Alongside Ḥamida, she used the knowledge that Ḥamida had learned from Imam Ṣādiq. | Mahallāti,1990, Vol.3, p.20 |
| | | One of the narrators of his son Imam al-Riḍā | Gharāvi Nā'nī, 2007, P.41 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free / bondwoman | A bondwoman from the western lands of Islamic sovereignty who had arrived in Madina. | Mahallāti,1990, Vol.3, p.20 |
| | Reverence for Imam and | Not mentioned | - |
| | Reputation | Ḥamida said "I have not seen a bondwoman better than her." | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, P.24 |
| | Responsibilities | Not mentioned | - |

Table 8. Capital of Kheyzurān

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | She was from the Marie Qebtieh family and from Nubia. | Fetal Neishābūrī, 1987, P.289 |
| | | From the Nubian Christians | Mufīd, 2001, Vol. 2, P.264 |
| | Family | The wife of Imam al- Riḍā | Kulaynī, 2000, Vol.1, P.492 |
| | Children | Jawād was her son | Mahallātī, 1990, Vol.3, p.22 |
| | Contact groups | Not mentioned | - |
| Economic capital | Economic resources | | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | She was raised under the light of Imam al- Riḍā | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.258 |
| | | Kheyzurān is introduced among female hadith narrators but the narrations are unavailable. | Qahepayee,1983, Vol.7, P.173 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free / bondwoman | Following the defeat of her family by Muslims, Kheyzurān was sold as a slave among the captives | Qahepayee,1983, Vol.7, P.174 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | Imam al- Riḍā, quoting his great father, said: "My soul may be sacrificed to the best of bondwomen who are from the Nubia land, which will have a pure womb," - narrated by the Prophet and Kheyzurān. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| | | Imam al- Riḍā, in praising Kheyzurān, said: "My son is like 'Isā ibn Maryam whose mother, who is a pure woman brought him into the arena" | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.260 |
| | Reputation | In some sources, she is called Merise, Rayhāna, Dorra, Ṭahira, Muṭaḥḥara, which are the feminine attributes of paradise. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| | | Kheyzurān was one of the most prudent and righteous women of her age. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| Responsibilities | Not mentioned | | |

Table 9. Capital of Samāna Maghribiyyah

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | Samāna was a great granddaughter of her own land but she was captured as a war prisoner. | Mahallāti, 1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| | Family | Imam Jawād 's wife | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.285 |
| | Children | In addition to Imam Hādi, three sons were named Abū Aḥmad, Mūsā Mubarqā, Ḥusayn and Abū Mūsā, 'Imran and four daughters named Faṭīma, Khadija, and Umm Kulthūm and Hakīma. | Mufid, 2001, Vol. 2, P.285 |
| | Contact groups | Due to the pressure and oppression of the time and after the martyrdom of Imam Jawād's wife and the political atmosphere of that time, she was forced to leave home and went to Qum, which had a long history of affection for Ahl al-bayt. | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.285 |
| Economic capital | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | Samāna was mentioned among the female hadith narrators. | Qahepayee, 1983, Vol.7, P.176 |
| Symbolic capital | Being free / bondwoman | She was a bondwoman girl who came from the Maghreb. She was bought by Imam Jawād | Mahallāti, 1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | In the description of his mother, Imam Hādi said: "My mother is a mystic person I swear, and she will be in paradise, and evil does not get close to her and Allah is her protector and guardian." | Mahallāti, 1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| | Reputation | She became a woman of grace in her own times and became known as Sayyida (Great Lady) | Mahallāti, 1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| | | She fasted on most days | Mahallāti, 1990, Vol.3, p.23 |
| Responsibilities | Not mentioned | - | |

Table 10. Capital of Ḥadīthā

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit | Resources |
|---|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Social capital | Progeny | During the martyrdom of Imam Ḥasan ‘Askari and during the period of Shi‘a anxiety and wandering, she was introduced as the refuge of the Imam. | (Ṣadūq, 2016 AH, Vol. 2, p. 501; Ṭusī, 1411, p. 230) |
| | Family | She was Imam Ḥādī’s wife. | Mufid, 2001, Vol.2, P.301 |
| | Children | She gave birth to Muḥammad and Ḥasan ‘Askari, Husayn and Ja‘far, and a daughter named ‘Āliyah. | Ṭabarsi, 1147, Vol.2, p.133 |
| | Contact groups | Not mentioned | - |
| Economic capital | (Controlling) economic resources | Imam Ḥasan ‘Askari shared his legacy with his mother, Ja‘far and his brother, besides making a will. | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, Vol.1, P.43 |
| | | The portion left to Ḥadīthā in the will was proven by the judge and, therefore, a portion of his property was given to her | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.25 |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | She was a pious and chaste lady and was one of the leading women of her time in the altar of worship. | (Hussein ibn Abd al-Wahab, 1362 AH, p. 448; Kulaynī, 1407, Vol. 1, p. 416, Mufid, 1411, p. 327; Amel ī, 1421, Vol. 2, p. 36) |
| Symbolic capital | Being free/ bondwoman | A bondwoman who was brought to Madina from other regions | Qahremānīnejād, 2010, P.289 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | Imam ‘Askari made Ḥadīthā his successor while Ja‘far and his brother were alive. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.25 |
| | | Imam ‘Askari: She is clean from evil, ugliness, and impurities and pollution. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.24 |
| | Reputation | She was perfect in term of wisdom, piety, and chastity. | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.25 |
| | Responsibilities | The Imam’s property, in addition to his house, included the Shi‘a endowments, which should be spent on the Shi‘a, and he believed that Ḥadīthā deserved to discharge that responsibility | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.25 |
| After Imam Hasan ‘Askari, the Shi‘a were wandering and asking where they should take refuge. Ḥakima directed them to the grandmother of the mother of Abi Muḥammad. | | Mahallātī,1990, Vol.3, p.25 | |

Table 11. Capital of Nargis

| Indices | Sub-indices | Analysis Unit (sentences) | Resources |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Social capital | Progeny | Her name was Melikā and she was the daughter of Yoshūā's, the son of a Roman Kaiser. Her mother's origin can be traced back to Shamoon bin Hamoon al-Sakha, the successor of Isa ibn Maryam. | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, Vol.2, P.423 |
| | Family | Nargis, the wife of Imam Ḥassan Askari | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, Vol.2, P.423 |
| | Children | Mother of Imam Ḥujjat ibn al-Ḥasan | |
| | Contact groups | Not mentioned | - |
| Economic capital | Economic resources | Not mentioned | - |
| Cultural capital | Cultural knowledge | Not mentioned | - |
| Symbolic | Being free / bondwoman | She entered Baghdad from Roman lands as a captive and was bought from the slave market | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, Vol.1, P.307 |
| | Reverence for Imam and Prophet | Not mentioned | - |
| | Reputation | Nargis was very chaste and virtuous. | Ibn Babiwayh, 1984, Vol.2, P.423 |
| | Responsibilities | She is the mother of the twelfth Shi'a Imam and her most important responsibility was to protect her son's life against the enemies of the imāmah | Jafarian (2009) |

The findings suggest that the mothers of the Imams were divided into two groups: free or slave and Arab or non-Arab in terms of social status and family affiliation. Thus, among 11 mothers of Imam, four were free

and seven were maids. In the table above, being a maiden or free is placed under the symbolic capital category, but according to Bourdieu's theory, in the interaction of different types of capital, this capital has seriously affected the social and economic capital of these women. According to historical records, three free women came from the Hashemite family and the free woman (Umm Farwah) was from a family that was committed and loyal to the Imam. The progenies of these women, including daughters and sons, were among the early Shi'a religious authorities and some played a crucial role in shaping Shi'a history. Hence, the free and Arab mothers also enjoyed great social capital among the Shi'a, and played a part in reproducing and sustaining this capital for the Shi'a. A prime example is Fāṭima bint al-Asad who was a key contributor to the creation and revamping of the Shi'a social network in all spheres of society. By subscribing to this recently formed minority group, she attempted to foster its internal solidarity and interconnectedness such as at the time of settlement in Shi'b Abī Ṭālib and the emigration to Madina, and by helping the early soldiers of Islam or taking care of the Prophet and his daughter Fāṭima. Thus, it is clear that among Arabs and free mothers, the political and social roles of Fāṭima Zahra and Fāṭima bint al-Asad are of paramount importance (Tayebī, 2006, p. 29). However, the diminished role of other mothers due to suffocating and restricted political and social atmosphere of that era is also noteworthy. In addition, despite the existence of constraints during the life of Fāṭima Zahrā and Fāṭima bint al-Asad, the social and symbolic capital of these two women were more prominent than that of Fāṭima bint al-Hassan or Umm Farwah, and they had a broader social and political impact. It is noteworthy that most women connected to Imams have a high social status in their country of birth and hence enjoyed considerable social capital in their birthplace and family and could exert a huge effect on their own lives and the lives of the Imams. The role of this social capital is evident in the case of Shahrbanū, who on account of being a princess, was given the chance to choose her spouse by Imam 'Alī (A), and she picked out Imam Ḥusayn. As far as symbolic capital is concerned, as shown in the table above, the mothers of the Imams enjoyed a high social status among the Shi'a. In fact, all of these women are remembered with admiration in Shi'i sources.

Regardless of this, it is clear that being the wife or mother of an Imam was sufficient to bring invaluable symbolic capital for a woman in the Shi'a community. The symbolic and cultural capital of the free and

Arab mothers, compared to the maids and non-Arabs, were significantly higher. They were all narrators of hadiths and the Prophet and the Imams honoured them on several occasions. However, little is known about some non-Arab and maid mothers, except that they were reputed women in their societies, which may be attributed to their status as a wife of an Imam or their particular responsibilities (social actions and Ḥamīda and Ḥadīthā) or special actions (such as constant fasting of Samāna). As for the economic capital of mothers, no separate accounts are available. If we consider economic life as a set of actions and reactions, earning income and profits (Karāmī, 2014, 31), the Imams' wives were not engaged in any such economic activities. Family-related expenses including, costs of living and dowry were provided by the Imams unless certain conditions called for women to take charge of financial management (Akhlaqī, 2014, 157-159), as Umm Farwah, Ḥamīda Moṣafā and Ḥadīthā were entrusted with the financial management of the Imams' affairs. In religious texts, the concept of will is used in two senses. One is when someone delegates the duty of dividing properties or undertaking certain affairs to another person by making a will. The other is concerned with the succession of the prophets (Rahīmī, 2014, p. 84). Based on traditions about Umm Farwah, and Ḥamīda Moṣafā, it appears that they used to leave the house to settle the debts or pay wages of workers, and perhaps on the grounds of the regimes' oppression, it was more expedient if these duties were carried out by women (Tayebī, 2013, p. 211). Further, Imam 'Askarī elected Ḥadīthā as his only executor while his children and his brother Ja'far were still alive. Based on the statements of Shaykh Mufīd, it can be gathered that in the 3rd and 4th centuries, one Imam's will in religious and economic affairs (endowments and alms) was made to Ḥadīthā. Undoubtedly, the person who is in charge of such an important position on the behalf of the Imam must be recognised as a reliable person by Imams and the Shi'a (Rahīmī, 2014, p. 88). In this regard, it is worth noting that management and access to financial and economic resources constitutes a dimension of economic capital that qualified Ḥadīthā, as the executor of the Imam, for this capital. Therefore, it can be concluded that access to financial resources or its controls, which is an index of economic capital, was not commonly enjoyed by the mothers of the Imams. The major capital shared by the mothers of the Imams was symbolic capital, which is a subset of cultural capital, followed by social capital and economic capital.

Conclusion and discussion

It is clear that the Shi'a Imams, though deprived of sources of power, had prominent social capital and respect on account of being members of the Prophet's family. In other words, they were a reputable minority with symbolic capital among people. Given that in the highly socially stratified system of that time maids had a lower social status compared to free people, the decision of Imams to take wives from among classes that were exceedingly marginalised is also significant. It seems that this strategy was intended to accomplish several goals, including the promotion of justice in society and termination of the slavery system. This strategy, in addition to building up the social mobility of spouses, advancing social, economic, cultural and symbolic capital, and contributing to ending slavery, accelerated the expansion and propagation of Shi'i culture. It could be argued that this was also one of the defensive strategies employed by Imams because as Shi'a leaders they were constantly threatened by opposition groups. Hence, a major concern of the Imams was to protect the existence and security of Shi'ism and to train loyal followers. In other words, the tradition of liberating slaves and marrying maids was an effective strategy to recruit loyal disciples, which, besides increasing security, helped sustain the Shi'a movement. In many ways, the Imams offered much credibility and capital to their wives. After being freed, these maids provided Shi'a education and teaching and turned into jurisprudential figures with tremendous cultural capital. Meanwhile their marriages with the Imams provided them with symbolic and social capital, because as the wives of the Imams, they managed to attain a higher social standing in the Shi'a community. Those who also carried the progenies of Imams saw their credibility and prestige increase, especially if this child became the successor of an Imam and was promoted to the Imamate. On the other hand, glorifying statements and traditions from Imams about these women, which describe them as erudite and virtuous people with outstanding piety and devotion, also contributed to their symbolic capital. Coming from diverse social backgrounds, e.g. from Muslim-dominated areas as poor foreign women, many found themselves promoted from maids to the position of the wives and mothers of the Imams. The combination of all these factors elevated the symbolic capital of a maid from the lowest social stratum of society to a woman of high stature. Few women of that time were able to secure such symbolic

capital. Marriage to an Imam also facilitated their access to the Shi'a social network. In fact, as the wives of the Imams, these maids benefited from the power of the Shi'a social network and Hashemite household, and hence accrued greater social capital. This improved capital gave them access to more resources, making them more powerful and capable, something which was essential for the advancement of Shi'a causes.

In conclusion, although maids initially had little resources at their disposal to advance the Shi'a cause, marriage with the Imams initiated a process of secondary socialisation which was accompanied by the improvement of social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital and social mobility for them. In this way, their interests were intertwined with the interests of protecting the Shi'a, making them loyal followers of the Imams and the Shi'a movement. They were key figures ready to expend all their assets to protect the lives of the Imams and to advance Shi'a causes. This style of marriage, which is observed in the life of 11 Imams, can be considered an important strategy in preserving, sustaining and expanding the Shi'a school.

In wars, many women were taken prisoner or, with the loss of their husbands, became homeless and saw their personalities and social status diminish. After marrying slaves, the Imams taught them and then set them free. Marriage also had the effect of combating slavery which remained a major problem in society. The marriage of slaves with imams increased the cultural and social capital of these slaves and led to their increased social mobility.

Works cited

Akhlaqī, S.M. (2014). *The economic life of Imams. Mashhad*. The Islamic Research Foundation of Astan Quds Razavi

Amīn al-ʿĀmilī, al-Sayyid Muḥsin(1982) al-. *A'yān al-Shi'a*. Beirut: Dār al-Tʿāruf.

Anheier, Helmut K; Gerhards, J. & Romo, F. (1995). Forms of capital and social structure in cultural fields: examining Bourdieu's social topography. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 100, 859-903.

Ansārī, M.M.A. (199). *Al-Taḥīyeh*. Qum: Fars Ḥassoun.

Bourdieu, P. (1994). *Texts of sociology*. Athens: Delfini.

Bourdieu, P. (2001) 'Forms of Capital', in M. Granovetter and R. Swedberg (eds) *The Sociology of Economic. Life*, pp. 96-111. Boulder, CO: Westview

- Fakouei, N. (2002). *History of thought and theories of anthropology*. Tehran: Ney.
- Fatal Neyshabouri, Muḥammad Ibn Ḥassan (2009) *Rawḍah Al-Waizīn*, Razi, Qum.
- Ghahpaāi, Ali (2006) *Majma' al al-Rijal* , Correction and suspension by *Ilameh isfabani, Isfaban*.
- Ghoravī Nāyenī, N. (2007). Mothers of the Imams. *Shi'a Women Quarterly*, 4 (12) 7-54.
- Ibn Bābūyah (NA). Kamāl al-din and Tamām al-Ne'mat. Corrected by Ali Akbar Ghaffārī (vol. 2) Qum: Nashr al-Islami Institute.
- Karami, M.M. (2001). *Islamic jurisprudential principles*. Tehran. SAMT
- Kloot, B. (2009). Exploring the value of Bourdieu's framework in the context of institutional change. *Studies in Higher Education*, 34(4), 469-481.
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content analysis an introduction to its methodology*. London: Sage.
- Kulaynī (2000). *Usūl al-Kāfi*. Translated by Muḥammad Bāqir Kāmre'i. kolinio
- Mahallātī , Zābiḥ-Allāh (1990) *Rayabeen al-Shariab* . Tehran: Islāmīyah
- Majlesi, M.B. (1989). *Bahār al-anwār*. Translated by a team of researchers. Beirut: Dar Aliaat Al-Arabi.
- Mufid, M.M. (1993). *Tashih al-E'teqādāt al-Imāmiyah*. Qum: Shaykh Mufid Millennium Congress.
- Mufid, M.M. (2001). *Al-Ersbād*. Translated by Khorasani Tehran: Elmiyeh Islāmīyeh
- Qahremānīnejād Shaegh, B. (2010). Heavenly Mothers. Qum: Fiqh. Kahala, O.R. (1984). *Elam al-Nisa fi al-Alami al-Arab and al-Islam* (vol. 5). Beirut: Al-Resaleh Institute.
- Qummī, 'Abbās. (2010) *Maḥātib al-jinān*. Translated to Farsi by Ḥusayn Anṣārīyān. Qum: Dār al-'Irfān,
- Rafīpūr, F. (2003). *Techniques for research in the social sciences*. Tehran: Sherkat-e Sahāmi Enteshār
- Rahīmī, S. (2014). The political role of Shi'a women in advancing Shi'ism in the second half of the age of Imamate. *Farhang-e Pazbūhesh*. 19, 73-96
- Ritzer, G. & Goodman, D. 2004. *Sociological theory*. (6th edition). New York: Mc Graw Hill.
- Rohānī, H. (2009). *Introduction to the theory of cultural capital*. Rahbord 18 (53) 7-35.
- Rohānī, T. & Semak Amani, H.R. (2003). Religion-spreading women in Islamic history. Proceedings of the sixth research festival of Shaykh Tūsi, exclusive to non-Iranian seminary students. Qum: World Center of Islamic Sciences Publications.

- Sārokhānī, B. (2003). *Research methods in social sciences: principles and foundations*. (vol. 1). Tehran: Institute of Humanities and Culture.
- Tabarsī, F.H. (1375). *Majma al-bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*. Translated by Moḥammad Mofattah (vol. 2). Tehran: Farahani Publication.
- Tāherī Khorramābādī, S.H. (2011). *Welayat and leadership in Islam*. Qum: Islamic Center of Science and Culture.
- Tayebī, N. (2005). The mothers of the Shi'a Imams and their sociopolitical role. *Shi'a Women's Journal*, 6&7, 7-32.
- Tayebī, N. (2013). *New research on the mother of Imam Zaman*. Qum: Boostane Ketab.
- Tehrānī, H. & Seyyed Mohammad Hussein (2005). *Studies of Imams* (vol. 2). Mashhad: Allāme Ṭabāṭabā'i.
- Weber, Max. (2009). *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Gemeinschaften*. Edited by Wolfgang Mommsen and Michael Meyer. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck
- Wikishia encyclopedia accessible at <http://fa.wikishia.net/view/>
- Zahīrī, A.A. (1999). *Virtuous Wives*. Qum: Asr-e Zohūr.