The data was provided us by Majeid Robinson. At the first glance it seems like meaningless database of marriages with information about names, tribes, generation, children and etc. But after some analysis we found that this data is pretty interesting if we put it in some definite context, like politics. For example, if we connect this data with some historical information about that period, we will find a lot of correlations such as, how marriage between two particular tribes affected some other aspects of their lives.

Context:

Our story is about marriages behavior of Quraysh tribe in early Islamic period. We have been trying to find some evidences of how marriage traditions could affect politics system at that time or political and social factors are probably able to have an impact on marriages.

In our database, information of marriages in pre-Islamic and early Islamic period are classified by tribes or clans(subtribes). Aside from basic information such as name of husband and wife, tribes(subtribes) of husband and wife and how many children they had, generation of husband and wife is also indicated. The data holder told us that 5th generation is the generation of Muhammad, which means generations before 5th belong to pre-Islamic period while those after 5th belong to early Islamic period.

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

Umayyads and Hashimites.

Umayyads were a clan of the Quraysh tribe descended from Umayya ibn Abd Shams. The clan staunchly opposed the Islamic prophet Muhammad, but eventually embraced Islam before the latter's death in 632.

Hashimites - descendants of Hashim ibn Abd Manaf. Common ancestor of Muhammad, Ali and Abbas. The term is also applied to the Prophet's family. Abbasids used the term to rally support for revolution. Established the Abbasid Caliphate after the fall of Umayyad Caliphate. The dynasty descended from Muhammad's uncle, Al-Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib, from whom the dynasty takes its name.

Findings:

According to the dataset and derived graphs, we found that in Muhammad’s tribe, the total number of marriages remains relatively low and stable from -16th generation to -5th generation. Then since -6th generation, the number of marriages starts to increase in an unapparent way.

The significant growth begins in 1st generation and the total number of marriages peaks in 6th generation, which was the generation following Muhammad’s generation. Then the number starts to decrease rapidly in the following four generations and drops to a low level in generation 10 and 11. Apparently, the turning point appears in 5th generation, when Muhammad was born and founded Islam. It can be inferred that during this period social forms and traditions could be shifted and marriage behavior would reflect these notable changes.

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

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

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

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

Then we particularly focus on the marriages of Ummayad and Hashimites from 4th to 9th generations. In terms of Ummayad, one point that remained the same during the entire period was that men in this tribe could marry wives from different tribes while women there were only married to Quraysh men. In detail, from 4th generation to 8th generation, men of Ummayad married wives from all kinds of tribes but in 9th generation, which was the very end of their dominance, they only or perhaps could only marry Quraysh women. It is understandable if we accept the fact that marriages of that age were often deemed as bonds of power and a reflection of politics.

It was practically the same case with the trends in marriages of Hashimites.

Afterwards, we tried to discover if it is true that, as some references told, Umayyads and Hashimites were mortal enemies and thus had no kin relations whatsoever. Actually, we found that there was at least on case of marriage between these two tribes in each generation from 4th to 9th. Based on data analysis, we still cannot infer that they were or not blood enemies. But we could come to conclusion that relationships between them were complicated and more than pure enemies.