



## BAĤĪRĪ FAMILY

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**BAĤĪRĪ**, a major Shafi'ite family of Nishapur in the eleventh century. The family's eponym is Baĥīr b. Nūḥ b. Ḥayyān b. Moġtār about whom nothing concrete is known. The names are recorded of several family members who lived in the early tenth century, but Abū 'Amr Moḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Moḥammad b. Ja'far b. Baĥīr is the first Baĥīrī to be more than just a name. He held the post of *mozakkī* in Nishapur which gave him the authority to place people on the official list of court witnesses. Witnesses functioned as bailiffs and notaries, and only men of unimpeachable honesty and social standing could be appointed. Abū 'Amr was also a prominent teacher of *ḥadīth* (tradition).

Abū Naṣr 'Abd-al-Raḥmān, the eldest of Abū 'Amr's four sons, inherited the post of *mozakkī*, which then passed to his brother Abū 'Abd-al-Raḥmān 'Amr when he died only three years after his father in 399/1009. 'Amr also taught *ḥadīth* in the Old Congregational Mosque in Nishapur, a stronghold of the city's Hanafite faction, during the period when the Hanafites supported the persecution of the Shafi'ite-Ash'arite faction launched by the vizier 'Amīd-al-Molk Kondorī. This may indicate that the Baĥīrīs were Shafi'ites but not Ash'arites. Another brother, Abū 'Oṭmān Sa'īd Mūlqābādī (named for the part of Nishapur the family lived in), served with distinction in the army of Maḥmūd of Ghazna during his invasions of India.

Several Baĥīrīs served as *mozakkīs* or other functionaries of the *qāẓī*'s court in the next generation. The most remarkable was Abū Sa'īd Esmā'īl who was born in 419/1028 and died in 501-02/1108. An Ash'arite, unlike earlier family



members, he was closely associated with the family of the noted Shafi'ite Sufi Abu'l-Qāsem Qoṣayrī. Unspecified financial misfortune forced him to sell the last of his family's estates, but subsequent success as a merchant enabled him to become a landowner again. In later life he was considered an important scholar and teacher of *ḥadīth*.

Little is known about later members of the family, including one Abū Sa'd Moḥammad who is described as being pure of heart but strange and savage of nature. The last known figure is Abū Bakr 'Abd-al-Raḥmān, who studied under Qoṣayrī in his youth and died at the age of 87 in 539-40/1145.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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See also Habib Jaouiche, *The Histories of Nishapur. Register der Personen- und Ortsnamen*, Wiesbaden, 1984.

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