

THE SOCIAL NETWORK OF NİZĀMIYYAH  
SCHOOL SYSTEM UNDER NİZĀM AL-MULK  
ADMINISTRATION (456-485/1063-1092)  
NİZAMÜLMÜLK'ÜN VEZİRLİK DÖNEMİNDE  
NİZAMIYE OKULLARININ SOSYAL İLİŞKİLERİ

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## The Social Network of Nizāmiyyah School System Under Nizām Al-Mulk Administration (456-485/1063-1092)\*

**Abstract:** This study examines the social networks among Nizāmiyyah Schools built by the great vizier Nizām al-Mulk in the early period of the Seljuk dynasty. Nizāmiyyah institutions served as higher educational centres for religious studies in the middle ages and contributed significantly to the development of the madrasah administration system. There were strong social networks among individuals and organisations associated with the Madrasah Nizāmiyyah. The administrative system succeeded in creating a strong relationship between professors and students of one madrasah to another. Academic activities included debating among professors, visiting-professors, research activities and employment of graduate students in its administration system.

**Keywords:** Nizāmiyyah Madrasahs, Muslim educational history, Nizām al-Mulk, Madrasa system.

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### Nizamülmülk'ün Vezirlik Döneminde Nizamiye Okullarının Sosyal İlişkileri

**Öz:** Bu makalede Nizamiye medreseleri arasındaki iletişim ağı, birbirleriyle münasebetleri ve aralarındaki ilişkilerin boyutunu incelenmektedir. Selçuklu veziri Nizamülmülk tarafından kurulan bu eğitim müesseselerinde ortaçağda yükseköğretim düzeyinde dini ilimler tahsil edilmekteydi. Daha sonraki devirlerde kurulan medreselerin eğitim ve yönetim sistemlerinin gelişmesine de örnek olmuştur. Nizamiye medreselerinin aralarındaki gerek bireysel gerek kurumsal olarak güçlü bir sosyal ilişki bulunmaktaydı. İdari sistem başarılı bir şekilde hoca-talebe arasında sağlam bir bağ kurmuştu. Hocalar arasındaki münazaralar, misafir müderris uygulaması, araştırma faaliyetleri ve medrese talebelerinin bazı yerlerde görevlendirilmesi akademik tarzdaki etkinliklerden bazılarıydı.

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**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Nizamiye Medreseleri, İslam'da eğitim tarihi, Nizamülmülk, Medrese Sistemi.



## Introduction

Nizām al-Mulk (408-484/1018-1092) established nine Nizāmiyyah schools in the territory of Khurāsān (Nizāmiyyah of Nishāpur, Balkh, Harat, and Marw), Iraq (Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, Mausil, and Basra), Jibāl (Nizāmiyyah of Isfahan), and Tabaristān (Nizāmiyyah of Amul).<sup>1</sup> The Nizāmiyyah of Nishāpūr was the first Nizāmiyyah which was built around (454/1063) and later in (459/1067) the most famous and outstanding institution, the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad was established. Great scholars and Muslim thinkers such as Abū Ishāq Shirāzī (d. 476/1083), Imām al-Ḥaramain al-Juwaynī (d. 478/1085), and al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) worked in these institutions. Nizām al-Mulk provided boundless donations to assure generous incomes for the teachers as well as board, accommodation, clothing and furnishing for the students.<sup>2</sup>

The Nizāmiyyah institute was an archetype for the modern university. These schools were for the graduate students (*faqih*) who completed the intermediate level of religious sciences. Hence, the professor of law

<sup>1</sup> There is a bit discussion among contemporary historians regarding the number of Nizāmiyyah Madrasahs. Subkī in *Tabaqāt as-Shāfi'yyah* quoted nine madrasahs founded by Nizām al-Mulk. George Makdisi followed Subkī's opinion in this regard, but Nāji Ma'rūf recorded ten Nizāmiyyah Madrasahs according to Abu Shāma's writing, and Noorollāh Kasāei believes on one more Nizāmiyyah madrasah in Khārgard of Khāf in Khurāsān territory. Kasāei also quoted that Kanpuri Hindi believed in the existence of two more Nizāmiyyah beside the previous, the Nizāmiyyah of Tus and Khuzestan. See: As-Subkī, *Tabaqāt as-Shāfi'yyah al-Kubrā* Mustafa A. Ahmad Atta (ed), (Beirut: DKI, 2014), v.4, p.13. George Makdisi, "Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-Century Baghdad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriented and African Studies* 24 (1961), p.44. Abu Shama, ad-Damishqī, *Kitāb al-Rawdatain fi Akhbār as-Dawlatain: Al-Nūriyyah wa al-Salāhiyyah* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 2002), v.1pp.141-42. Nāji Ma'rūf, *Ulamā al-Nizāmiyyāt wa Madāris al-Mashriq al-Islāmī* (Baghdad: Al-Irshād Press, 1973), p.34. Kasāei, Noorollāh, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah wa Tathirāt 'Ilmī wa Ijtemā'ī ān* (Tehran: Sepehr Press, 1363sh), p.229.

<sup>2</sup> Bayard Dodge, *Muslim Education in Medieval Times* (Washington: The Middle East Institute, 1962), p.20.

(*mudarris*) addressed postgraduate students. Further, Nizāmiyyah schools were dedicated to Shāfi‘īte scholars and jurists, and school staff such as the trustee (*mutawallī*), librarian, *qārī*, and security personnel were Shāfi‘ītes. The Nizāmiyyah schools were not the first *madrasah* established by Muslims despite some historians suggesting that they were.<sup>3</sup> It is fair to say that the characteristic of *madrasahs* before the establishment of Nizāmiyyah differed. Mehdi Nakhosteen explains:

Muslim education went through two distinct periods. First was the period covering the ninth and tenth centuries, when schools developed spontaneously with private endowments interested in public enlightenment; and second the period beginning in the eleven century and developing through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when education became the function of the state, and schools were institutionalized for purposes of sectarian education and political indoctrination.<sup>4</sup>

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History recorded Nizām al-Mulk as the person who developed the learning organisation and applied the administrative system that made the *madrasah* active in the socio-political life of Muslims. George Makdisi writings are one of the best studies on the educational system of the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, and Nājī Ma‘ruf’s studies in Arabic and Noorollāh Kasāe‘ī’s writings in Persian covered the general life of all Nizāmiyyah schools. Besides, Nizāmiyyah schools succeeded in establishing a network of institutions. These institutions created effective social

<sup>3</sup> Al-Suyūti in his *Huṣṣn al-Muḥāḍarah*, as an introduction to the history of *madrasahs* in Egypt, explained this idea. In the beginning he quoted Ibn Khallikān’s and al-Dhahabī’s writing which confirmed that Nizām al-Mulk was the founder of the *madrasah* in Islam. Later, as-Suyūti quoted as-Subkī that before Nizāmiyyah schools there were four *madrasahs* in Nīshāpūr. As-Soyutī, *Huṣṣn al-Muḥāḍarah fi Tārīkh al-Mesr wa al-Qāhīrah*, M. Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (ed.), (Beirut: Dar al-Ihyā al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah, 1976), v.2, pp.255-6. And Nājī Ma‘ruf listed 25 *madrasahs* before the advent of Nizāmiyyah; most of them located in Khurāsān. See: Nājī Ma‘ruf, “Madaris Qabl al-Nizāmiyyah,” *Majallah al-Majma‘ al-Ilmī al-Irāqī* 22 (1973), p.110.

<sup>4</sup> Mehdi Nakhosteen, *History of Islamic Origin of Western Education* (Colorado: University of Colorado Press, 1964), p.38.

network among themselves.<sup>5</sup> This study will concentrate on the social networking system of Nizāmiyyah schools that can be highlighted among its individuals and administration system. Professors and students interactions, various academic activities, and unified administrative system created the substantial communication among Nizāmiyyah Madrasahs and between the Nizāmiyyah and society. Perhaps, this networking was the first of its kind that shows prosperous characteristic of Muslim educational system in the middle ages that contributed largely to the world civilization. There is a need to mention that only the madrasah of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad and Nīshāpūr were recorded by historians and there is extremely poor data on other Nizāmiyyahs. However, the extant primary sources lead us to believe that all of these institutions were governed within the same administrative system.

### 1. Organisation of Nizāmiyyah Schools

The structure of the Nizāmiyyah schools was unique in the age of Seljuk dominance. The general atmosphere of the madrasah in Islam owed to the Nizāmiyyah system. Not only does it have a unique structure, but introducing the new administrative system by Nizām al-Mulk contributed to the development of the *madrasah* organisation.

The building contained *Iwān* (salon for lesson), great mosque, and library, hospital, lodging for staff and students, store for keeping instrument, kitchen, and a security office. Each of these departments had their rules and regulation, and was directed under the supervision of the *mutawallī* (trustee). The capacity of these organisations depended on the

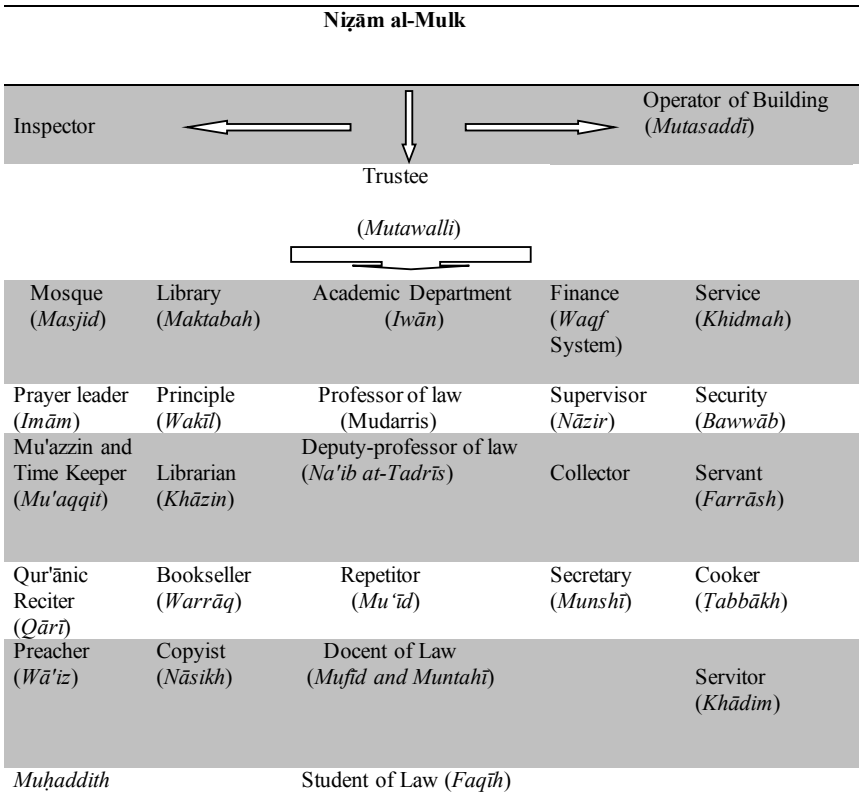
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<sup>5</sup> Makdisi introduced the term of “*Network*” for Nizāmiyyah but his writing deal not with the social relationship among the individuals and organization of the Nizāmiyyah. See: Makdisi, “Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-Century Baghdad,” p. 1. Recently the term “Social network” has applying for different field of studies. Scott, “in sociology, the idea of a social network has a far longer history and a much broader meaning. Social networks include digital and online networks but also include such networks as face to face relationships, political associations and connections, economic transactions among business enterprises, and geopolitical relations among nation states and international agencies... the social relationships that individuals and groups form with each other.” John Scott, *Social Network Analysis*, 4. Edition, SAGE: 2017, p. 2.

size and significance of the madrasah. The Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, the central Nizāmiyyah School, had a great number of staff and divisions in its administrative system. The various divisions within the Nizāmiyyah are illustrated (See: Table 1). The figures give a clear picture of the structure of the Nizāmiyyah schools. The variety of positions depends on the importance of the *madrasah*. In some madrasahs the professor of law had an administrative position as well.

**Table 1**

**The Administration Chart of Nizāmiyyah Schools**



The organization of the mosque, library, finance, service, and academic department were directed under the supervision of trustee. Inspec-

tors were sent by the minister of education to investigate the *madrasah*. (This chart is my own plan according to the historical information that mostly quoted in the writing of Ibn Javzī: *Al-Muntaẓam*, As-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt*, and Kasāeī: *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*)

## 2. Administrative System

Nizām al-Mulk established the ministry of education in the Seljuk administration which was governed by him. He succeeded to dedicate a special budget to educational affairs. As is recorded, annually he spent 600,000 Dinars for educational matters. Most of this expenditure went for the Nizāmiyyah schools.<sup>6</sup> He appointed the most learned and pious men to the various divisions such as *mutawallī* (trustee), *mudarris* (professor of law), *nāzir* (supervisor), *ra'īs* (rector), *khāzin* (librarian), *imām* (prayer leader), *qārī* of Qur'ān, and registrars in the *madrasah*.

Because of Nizām al-Mulk the Nizāmiyyah institutions attracted a large number of Shāfi'ī jurists. He directly intervened in appointing and dismissing the professor of law. To Nizām al-Mulk, the position of professorship was the most important in his institutions. As it is mentioned, Nizāmiyyah schools were built for the great Shāfi'ī jurists of the time. The Nizāmiyyah of Nishāpūr, for instance, was established for Imām al-Haramain al-Juwaynī who was the pillar of Shāfi'ite code of law in Khurāsān. A good example of dismissing the professor was regarded the appointing of new *mudarris* in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad after the death of its great senior lecturer, Abū Ishāq Shirazī. Mu'yyid al-Mulk, Nizām al-Mulk's son, who was appointed by his father as trustee in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, had chosen Abū Sa'd Mutawallī (d. 478/1085) as professor of law in Nizāmiyyah, but Nizām al-Mulk ordered him to appoint Abū Naṣr Şabbāgh (d. 477/1084).<sup>7</sup> Additionally, Nizām al-Mulk engaged directly in some of the important positions like appointing the trustee or the supervisor of the financial division. Alongside the building of the

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<sup>6</sup> Tartūshī, *Sirāj al-Mulūk*, Jaafar al-Bayati (ed.), (London: Riad Fl-Rayyes Books, 1990), p.327. Kasāeī, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.114.

<sup>7</sup> Kasāeī, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.118.

*madrasah*, Nizām al-Mulk ordered the constructions of markets, inns, and public services around the *madrasah* in order to patronize his centres of learning. This investment system was called *waqf*. In such ways, Nizām al-Mulk was directly involved in the administrative system of the Nizāmiyyah schools.

The second position in the administrative chart of Nizāmiyyah was the *mutawallī* (trustee). The honorary head of the college was a high official, with a deputy or vice-chancellor to conduct the administration.<sup>8</sup> All the matters regarding the building and its organisations were directed under the supervision of the trustee. This person goes between government and the school. The *mutawallī's* job was to keep order in the life of staff and students in the *madrasah*. Nizām al-Mulk appointed his son, Mu'yid al-Mulk, as trustee of the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. In some cases, like in the Nizāmiyyah of İsfahān or Jazirah Ibn 'Umar, the professor of law also received this position.<sup>9</sup> Supervising over the mosque activities was one of the *mutawallī's* duties. Common people of the town could participate in the various activities of the mosque in Nizāmiyyah. Besides the function of *imām* and *mu'azzin* for prayer, and *qārī* for teaching different recitations, the *wa'z* (preaching) program played a role in connecting the *madrasah* to the society. *Wa'z* was held in 'the mosque of the Nizāmiyyah schools every Friday afternoon. Sometimes the *wā'iz* (preacher) created problem among the followers of different schools of theology. Abū Naṣr al-Qushairī (d. 516/1122) criticised some of Ḥanbalī ideas in his speech in the mosque of Nizāmiyyah in Baghdad. This created the grounds for conflict among Shāfi'iyyh and Ḥanbaliyyah in the *madrasah*. Thus, Mu'yid al-Mulk as *mutawallī* of Nizāmiyyah was engaged to solve such problems. On Friday, another the public program was the dictation of the Ḥadith. In this way, mosque was an important part of Nizāmiyyah institutions.

The organisation of library in the Nizāmiyyah schools was also supervised by the *mutawallī*. Each Nizāmiyyah contained a large library.

<sup>8</sup> Dodge, *Muslim Education in Medieval Times*, p.20.

<sup>9</sup> As-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, v.3, p.41. Kasāie, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.225.



The library in the *madrasah* was directed by one or two great *khāzins* (librarians). For example, a great scholar Khatīb Tabrizī (d. 502/1108) was appointed as librarian in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. Some worked in libraries as assistants under the supervisor of the director of libraries. Students could easily access books. The books were listed systematically. Many scholars donated their books to the Nizāmiyyah schools.<sup>10</sup> Nizām al-Mulk paid much attention to the library of the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. The first time he visited Baghdad; he sat in the library of the *madrasah* for study and dictated *Hādīth* there.<sup>11</sup>

There is insufficient information on other organisations within Nizāmiyyah. Historians recorded some evidence on the engaging of security offices of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad regarding the protest of *madrasah* lecturers and students.<sup>12</sup> There was the office for service. This office was responsible for cleaning, lighting, cooking, storing the material, and other issues regarding the welfare of students and professors. Some worked as secretaries in the library and financial divisions of the *madrasahs*. Some poets also lived in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. They received a service there.<sup>13</sup> It is interesting to note that Nizāmiyyah schools also contained a clinic for the medical care of staff and students.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Javzī wrote: in the year (462/1070) 3 years after the inauguration of Nizāmiyyah *madrasah*, ‘Amid Abū Naṣr as supervisor of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad invited the important figures of Baghdad for the announcement of endowment charter of *madrasah* that recognized by Nizām al-Mulk. In that meeting the donation books for library of Nizāmiyyah and its general rules announced for public inform inside the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. Ibn Javzī, *Al-Muntaẓam fī at-Tārīkh wa al-Mulūk*, in: Muḥammad A. ‘Atā & Mustafā A. ‘Atā (eds.), (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1992), v.16, p.117.

<sup>11</sup> Kasāei, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p. 76.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn al-Javzī mentioned in the year 547 A.H. that Yusuf al-Khaṭṭāṭ died and his room was blocked. As a result some of the jurists of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad stroked. Doorkeepers of the *madrasah* arrested two jurists. *Al-Muntaẓam*, v.18, p.83.

<sup>13</sup> See, Kasāei, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, pp.124-5, 204.

<sup>14</sup> Noṣratollāh Bakhtūr Tāsh, “Naqsh Khāja dar Tavse'ai Madāris Iran,” *Maktab-ı Mād*, 22 (1350sh), p.14.

### 3. Academic Department

In addition to the administrative staff, the academic department of Nizāmiyyah contained various employees. The terminology of *mudarris* (professor), *na'ib at-tadrīs* (deputy-professor), *mu'īd* (assistant), *mufīd* (docent of law), *muntahī* (terminal student) or *faqīh* (student of law) are among the staff in the Nizāmiyyah institution besides the educational activities of its mosque and library.

The term *Mudarris* and *Shaikh* were used to allocate the holders of the topmost levels of instruction. *Mudarris*, when used without a complement, nominated the professor of law, while *Shaikh* was generally used for professor of all other fields such as Qur'ānic sciences, *hadith*, grammar, including the literary arts, and all foreign sciences.<sup>15</sup> Professor of law, *mudarris*, was the centre of academic administration. Curriculum and the time of lecturing depended on the *mudarris*. Nizām al-Mulk respected the scholars and chose the best among them for the position of teaching Shāfi'ī jurisprudence. Muslim historians and biographers highlighted and wrote more about this position compared to others. Perhaps the high position of teacher in Islam led Muslims to concentrate on the study of the life of great scholars who taught various Islamic studies. However, the professors of law in the Nizāmiyyah schools were distinguished in their academic and social life from other scholars.

Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī in his book "*Mu'īd al-Ni'am va Mubīd al-Niqam*" described the various academic positions in the madrasah. For him, the function of *mudarris* is to teach in a way that students could understand, and he must consider the level of the student.<sup>16</sup> According to as-Subkī, in an endowment madrasah it is necessary for the *mudarris* to meet the objects of the *wāqif* (founder). If the madrasah was built for learning *fiqh*, the concentration of professor should be on teaching that subject to stu-

<sup>15</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), p.153.

<sup>16</sup> Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī. *Mu'īd al-Ni'am va Mubīd al-Niqam* (Cairo: Maktaba al-Khanji, 1993), p.105.

dents.<sup>17</sup> Further, in the Nizāmiyyah system the deputy-professor (*Na'ib at-Tadrīs*) was a significant position. For example, Abū al-Faḥ Myḥanī (d. 520/1126) was deputy professor of Abū bakr Sam'ānī (d. 510/1116) in the Nizāmiyyah of Marw when he travelled to Mecca and then visited the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad and stayed there for a period. The appointment of deputy-professor was the function of the professor of the madrasah. Al-Ghazālī appointed his brother, Aḥmad al-Ghazālī (d. 520/1126), as deputy-professor (*nā'ib*) in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad in his first spiritual journey for almost one year.<sup>18</sup>

Students were categorised according to their scholarship and effort. Nizāmiyyah aimed to attract a number of students to the campus. Hence, there was a need for assistantship (*mu'īd*) for the professor of law due to the growing number of students. The function of *mu'īd* was to repeat the words of the *mudarris* in a loud voice so that students in the lecture hall could record them in writing. The important function of *mu'īd*, as mentioned by as-Subkī, was to explain the lessons, answer students' questions, and helps them correct their notes.<sup>19</sup> This function was performed when the professor left the lecture hall. This duty distinguished *mu'īds* from other students because it was difficult for students to achieve this position. For example, in the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr, al-Ghazālī and al-Kayāharāsī were among the assistances of al-Juwaynī. The selected *mu'īds* were proud of their position. The professor of law was proud of his intelligent assistances.<sup>20</sup> Before the advent of the *madrasah*, the position of *mu'īd* existed in the great mosques. There the function of *mu'īd* was to help students to understand the lesson or to sometimes act as deputy professor. However, by founding the Nizāmiyyah schools, the function of *mu'īd* was systematic in the *madrasah*. Some students were called *mufīd*. They were supposed to benefit others by imparting useful knowledge in

<sup>17</sup> Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī. *Mu'īd al-Ni'am*, pp.106-7.

<sup>18</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.189.

<sup>19</sup> As-Subkī, *Mu'īd al-Ni'am*, p.108. See also Dodge, *Muslim Education in Medieval Times*, p.21.

<sup>20</sup> Kasāei, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.112.

the class. As-Subkī believed the salary of the *mufīd* becomes unlawful if he did not succeed to benefit students from his understanding.<sup>21</sup> Some students achieved the position of *al-Muntaḥūn* (terminal class) who were finishing their studies and belong to *at-Taḥāqāt al-‘Ulyā*, the highest class.<sup>22</sup> These students were supposed to argue and discussed the issues arising in class in a more sophisticate way compared to others. According to Makdisi, *mu‘īd* belongs to a high position in class; *mufīd* was below the *mu‘īd* and above the position of *muntahū*.<sup>23</sup>

Students of Niẓāmiyyah were called *faqīh* (pl. *fuqahā*). The term *faqīh* was applied to the graduate students as well as to the accomplished jurisconsult, while undergraduate students were called *mutafaqqih*.<sup>24</sup> The University of Niẓāmiyyah was for postgraduate students ready to perform duties for the Seljuk government either in educational activities, religious matters, or political functions.

In the Niẓāmiyyah of Baghdad and Nīshāpūr, the number of students was between 300 and 400. Students received daily food and they had free access to the library, medical care, accommodation, clothing, and could benefit from the mosque activities inside the madrasah. It seems that *mu‘īds* and *mufīds* received monthly incomes. Later, all students received a sum of money besides other services in most *madrasahs*. However, in the early period of Niẓāmiyyah it seems that common students did not receive salaries except in the case of poor students who received a sum of money but this was not a regular practice.<sup>25</sup> It was a great opportunity for someone to achieve the position of *tadrīs* (lecturing) in the Niẓāmiyyah schools. They received great sum of money besides the ser-

<sup>21</sup> As-Subkī, *Mu‘īd al-Ni‘am*, p.108.

<sup>22</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.174; He further mentioned: “in the mediaeval period, students became a *ṣāhib*, fellow, of the professor of law when they determine their studies, later this phase reflected to as the class of *iftā’*, *ṭabaqat al-iftā’*,” p.175.

<sup>23</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.176.

<sup>24</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.172.

<sup>25</sup> Ṭarṭuṣhī, *Sirāj al-Mulūk*, 328. Ibn Jubair, *al-Riḥlah*, (Germany: Ma‘had Tārīkh al-‘Ulum al-‘Arabiyah wa al-Islamiyyah, 1994), p.229.

vices that students received in Nizāmiyyah. This was due to the development in the financial system of the new institution.

#### 4. Financial Division

It seems that in the beginning, Islamic sciences were taught freely by scholars. Teachers did not expect any financial support from the students and authorities. Later we can see that teachers received salaries collected from students and in some cases the rulers supported the great scholars. Gradually, by the welfare of Muslim societies, students did not pay for their instruction and teachers received salaries from rulers or endowments. It was common practice in the 4./10. century and after the advent of *madrasah* that the orthodox educational institutions were supported by *waqf*.<sup>26</sup>

The founder (*wāqif*) was given wide scope in the erection of his foundation. "The provisions of the founder are as binding as those enacted by the lawgiver –meaning, God", quoted by George Makdisi according to the general works on *waqf* by Muslim scholars.<sup>27</sup> He dedicated one chapter of his book "*The Rise of Colleges institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*" to the role of *waqf* in the financial division of Muslim educational institutions. Therefore, Islamic law is strictly individualistic in its technical function as concluded by Makdisi due to the freedom of the founder in possessing the property and obligation in compliance of his desire. It is assumed illegal for the state to intervene in *waqf* property without the consideration of the founder's objectives regarding his or her motivation in establishing the foundation.<sup>28</sup> In this way, during the 11<sup>th</sup> Century and the following period, high government officials gave generous grants as *waqf* to support colleges and other educational institutions, in addition to supporting public welfare like hospitals and orphanages.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Shalabī, "Al-Tarbiyah wa at-Ta'lim fī Fikr al-Islamiyyah," in: *Mawsū'ah al-Nazm wa al-Ḥiḍārah al-Islāmiyyah*, (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nihḍat al-Misriyyah, 1978), p.364.

<sup>27</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.35.

<sup>28</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.36.

<sup>29</sup> Dodge, *Muslim Education in Medieval Times*, p.19.

Nizām al-Mulk ordered Abū Sa‘id Şufī Nīshāpūri (d. 479/1086), operator (*mutasaddī*) of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, to construct or buy shops, caravansaries, bathhouses, and real estate around the Nizāmiyyah as investment for patronising the madrasah. Nizām al-Mulk ordered these properties to be as *waqf* and the income should be spent for Shāfi‘ī scholars and students of the madrasah. In the text of the *waqf* has been mentioned that other staff of the institutions such as *Imām*, librarian, and even servant and security must belong to the Shāfi‘īte school of law.<sup>30</sup> Nizām al-mulk as the founder of the institution and as the *wāqif* defined the salary of each staff of the *madrasah*. This was the case of other Nizāmiyyah as well. Nizām al-Mulk ordered the documentation of Nizāmiyyah property which was made public to avoid abuse by the authorities and others.<sup>31</sup> Hence, it was his right to determine the income of *waqf* for the benefit of particular people, while the property no longer belonged to him.

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Nizām al-Mulk spent 600,000 Dinars annually for educational matters. In addition of the financial aid of endowment properties of the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, which received 15,000 Dinar annually,<sup>32</sup> Nizām al-Mulk spent extra 18,000 Dinar annually in supporting of this institute.<sup>33</sup> Al-Qazvīnī mentioned that Nizām al-Mulk dedicated one-tenth of the Sultan’s budget that belonged to the vizier to educational matters.<sup>34</sup> After the death of Nizām al-Mulk, Nizāmiyyah madrasahs were supported by the *waqf* system. Ibn Jubair, when visiting the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad in (d. 580/1184) mentioned that the professors received high salaries. After

<sup>30</sup> Ibn Javzī, *Al-Muntaẓam*, v.16, p.102.

<sup>31</sup> Taṛṭuṣhī, *Sirāj al-Mulūk*, p.128; Kasāie, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, pp.114-115; Ibn Javzī recorded that Abū Nasr invited authoritarians in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad and read the text of Nizām al-Mulk on endowment property to the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad which illustrated that its madrasah and all properties are belong to the Shāfi‘ī code of law, and the trustee of madrasah belong to Nizām al-Mulk and his children in condition. *Muntaẓam*, v.16, p.117.

<sup>32</sup> Shalabī, “*At-Tarbiyah wa At-Ta‘līm fī fikr al-Islamī*”, p.375.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn al-Javzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, v.9, p.66.

<sup>34</sup> Al-Qazvīnī, *Athār al-‘Abad wa Akhbār al-‘Abad* (Beirut: Dār Beirut, 1984), p.317.

paying the salaries of staff and repairing the building, the remaining income from the madrasah *waqf* was divided between the poor students of Nizāmiyyah.<sup>35</sup> It is recorded that the Nizāmiyyah of Isfahān annually received 10,000 Dinar from its *waqf* property.<sup>36</sup>

Nizām al-Mulk ordered that librarians of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad should receive 10 Dinars monthly besides other daily services. We do not have evidence to show the exact salaries of staff in Nizāmiyyah, but as investigated by George Makdisi in searching the budget of some Shāfi‘ite colleges of (6-7/12-13) centuries, we can estimate the monthly income of the various staff of Nizāmiyyah. The trustee received nearly 100 Dinar, professor of law received 60 Dinar, librarian 10-20 Dinars, *wa‘iz* 10 Dinar, and the leader of prayers 15 Dinar monthly.<sup>37</sup> This indicates the significance of jobs related to the madrasah.

## 5.Social Networking System of Nizāmiyyah

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The above explanation on the various organisations within Nizāmiyyah institutions gave a clear understanding of the *madrasah* system in its prosperous times. The study on Nizāmiyyah schools, as vast networks of educational system in the middle ages under the supervision of great Seljuk dynasty, seeks to show the glory of its system by introducing the social networks within an institute and among its different schools.

This section is divided to two parts. First, the study of social networks among academicians entitled here as ‘scholastic community’. Second, the investigation of the social networking among the administrative

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<sup>35</sup> Ibn Jubair, *Rihlah*, p.229.

<sup>36</sup> Shalabī, “*At-Tarbiyah wa At-Ta‘līm fi fikr al-Islamī*”, p.375. According to the letter from Sultan Sanjar (ruled from 1118-1153 C.E.) to Muhammad b. Yahya Nishāpūrī that invite him to be a professor of law and trustee over the *waqf* property of the Nizāmiyyah of Nishāpūr shows that every madrasahs had its endowment property. Moreover, Sultan Sinjir had mentioned in that letter that I am appointing you in the Nizāmiyyah of Nishapur one of the greatest madrasah that great scholars taught there and great students graduated from it. See the text of the letter in Kasāei, *Madāris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.219.

<sup>37</sup> Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges Institutions*, p.125-7.

system of Nizāmiyyah institutions which linked those schools to each other and the elements that connected the *madrasah* to society.

## 6. Networking in Scholastic Community

**Professors:** Some aspects of the scholastic community of the Nizāmiyyah madrasahs can be highlighted as social networks. The debates among professors, exchanging of professors, and research activities are among the elements of social network among professors in the scholastic community.

In the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr, the grounds were prepared for debates between two distinguished scholars: Imām al-Ḥaramain al-Juwaynī, the professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr, and Abū Ishāq Shirāzī, the professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. As-Subkī cited this disputation (*munāzarah*) in "*Tābaqāt as-Shāfi'iyyah*" in the biography of Imām al-Ḥaramain. The debate started by the question raised by a member of the audience. He asked: if someone tried to find the direction toward Mecca for his prayer, then after he finished his prayer, he is aware that he made a mistake in the direction, is his prayer correct or does he needs to repeat it? Al-Juwaynī answered that there is need to repeat the prayer and he argued his opinion. Abū Ishāq disagreed with al-Juwaynī's view and believed that the performed prayer is correct. They criticised each other's arguments within the standards of decorum expected in *munāzarah*. This simple question took almost one hour of debate. The interesting point here is the way of argumentation that shows the scientific foundation of jurisprudence established by Muslim scholars within centuries.

The next part of the debate started with a question regarding marriage. A man asked, is it correct that a father can force his adolescent daughter to marry? According to the tradition, the Prophet (PBUH) of Islam said that the widow has the right to select her spouse, while in the case of a virgin, the father has the right to decide her marriage. In this issue, understanding the objective is very importance. Abū Ishāq an-



swered: father can select spouse for his adolescent daughter while she is not interested in marriage. Al-Juwaynī's argument regarding this issue was different.<sup>38</sup> The second debate took almost the same duration as first debate. The logical argumentations appeared in words of these two great scholars in supporting their legal opinions. Nevertheless, this debate linked the madrasah Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr to the madrasah Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. It is interesting to note that some outstanding students of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad accompanied Abū Ishāq in this journey.<sup>39</sup>

The dispute sometimes occurred between professor of the madrasah and outside scholars. Abū Qāsim Dabūsī (d. 482/1089), who later became the professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, debated al-Juwaynī in Nizāmiyyah. It is recorded that he was so angry with al-Juwaynī's students in Nizāmiyyah after this discussion.<sup>40</sup> There was also debate among professors and students. Al-Juwaynī gave freedom to his student during debates in the lecture hall.<sup>41</sup> Such debates gave students the opportunity to demonstrate their talents. In our opinion, the debate system was one of the best examples of strong social networks among Nizāmiyyah madrasahs.

There is evidence of communication between professors of one Nizāmiyyah and other branches. For example, Abū Bakr Sam'ānī (d. 510/1116), the professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Marw, visited the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad and he delivered a speech in the mosque as a Friday *wa'z*.<sup>42</sup> The exchange of professors is highlighted in the Nizāmiyyah system. Muḥammad b. Yahyā b. Abī Mansūr Nīshāpūrī (d. 548/1153), for instance, appointed as professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr while he taught in the Nizāmiyyah of Harāt, or in the case of

<sup>38</sup> As-Subkī, *Tabaqāt*, v.3, pp.191-98.

<sup>39</sup> Hosain Alyārī, "Nizāmiyya dar 'Ahd Nizām al-Mulk," *Pazhoheshhaye Falsafy*, 151-152 (1373sh), p.9.

<sup>40</sup> Zarrinkub, "Ghazālī dar Nizāmiyye-i Baghdad," *Iran Name* 16 (1365sh), p.599.

<sup>41</sup> Sayyid Hosain Hur. "Naqsh Musalmānan dar Pidāyish Madāres tā Pāyān Qarn Panjom Hejrī," *Ayine-i Pazhohish* 87 (1383sh), p.14.

<sup>42</sup> Kasāei, *Madaris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.241.

al-Ghazālī when he left the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad and returned to his hometown, after nearly ten years, he taught in the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr for almost one year.<sup>43</sup> Additionally, sometimes two professors worked on one subject. The chair of professorship of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad was divided every other day between Ḥussain ibn ‘Alī Ṭabarī (d. 495/1102) and ‘Abdul Wahhāb Fāmī Shirāzī (d. 500/1106) before the entrance of al-Ghazālī to this centre.<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, Nizāmiyyah institutions succeeded in attracting Shāfi‘ite scholars to its centres. Abū Qāsim Jurjānī Ismā‘īlī (d.477/1084) visited Nīshāpūr several times and sat in the Nizāmiyyah of this city and taught *Ḥadīth* and delivered speeches. The Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad hosted numerous visiting scholars. They delivered speeches (*wa‘z*) and dictated *Ḥadīth* on Friday afternoon in the mosque of madrasah. Additionally, within one Nizāmiyyah institute, there existed the ground for the communication of Shāfi‘ī scholars whom preferred to stay in Nizāmiyyah as researchers or just for learning<sup>45</sup>. Bakharzī, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ḥasan (d. 467/1074) stayed in the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr as visitor-professor and benefited from its professors and valuable library. Among its social networking was the ceremony held to introduce the new professor of law to colleagues. This was the case for al-Ghazālī when he entered the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad.<sup>46</sup> In such ways, the professors in Nizāmiyyah created social networks among themselves.

**Students:** Social networks among the students of the Nizāmiyyah can be highlighted in three aspects: (1) communication between professor and

<sup>43</sup> Kasāei, *Madaris-i Nizāmiyyah*, pp.98-99, 171.

<sup>44</sup> Al ?-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, v.4, p.349; Ahmet Ocak, “Medrese Geleneği içinde Nizamiye Medreselerinin Önemi ve İlim Dünyasına Kazandırdığı Yenilikler,” In *İslami İlimler 1. vol.*, (Konya, 2011), p.449.

<sup>45</sup> Ocak, “Medrese Geleneği içinde Nizamiye Medreselerinin Önemi ve İlim Dünyasına Kazandırdığı Yenilikler,” p.451. Ocak believes that the system of visitor-professor was the first of his kind that practiced in Nizāmiyyah.

<sup>46</sup> Abdul Rahim Qunaimah, *Tārīkh al-Jāmi‘āt l-Kubrā*, Translated to Persia by Kasāei N., (Tehran: Yazdān Press, 1985), p.353.

student, (2) communication among students themselves, and (3) the case of graduated students.

Some students succeeded to attract the view of the professor of law by demonstrating their scholarship in the madrasah. They were often chosen as *mu'ids*. This duty strengthened the relationship between students and their lectures. For scholarship matters, there was a need for discussion between professor and *mu'id* in purpose that *mu'id* could help students better understanding the lessons. This communication can also be highlighted in the ethical values that students observed, especially toward their teachers. Abū Bakr as-Shāshī (d. 507/1113), one of the best students and assistance of Abū Ishāq Shīrāzī in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad, started crying on the chair of professorship in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad for the remembrance of past great teachers of Nizāmiyyah.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, students received advantages in the communication with their professors.

Communication among students can be highlighted in the case of assistantship in establishing the relationship by those students who belong to higher ranks in the class. If students faced problems regarding educational matters such as difficulties in understanding the subjects, or in the case of correcting the notes, they immediately went back to some knowledgeable students in the class, especially *mu'ids* for help. This integration strengthened the students' communications. Our modern educational atmosphere usually lacks this kind of assistance for students and as a result, the communication power among them is poor. A kind of assistance in the modern time aims at helping professors to find data for presentation or publishing purposes.

The graduate students also played an important role in creating social networks. Nizām al-Mulk aimed to produce graduates who can hold important positions. In the Seljuk dynasty, due to religious and political circumstances, there was a need to fulfil important posts like judges, elo-

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<sup>47</sup> Kasāei, *Madaris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.235.

cution, professors, and statesmen. Some graduate students employed by Nizāmiyyah institutions for their various activities. For example, al-Kayāharāsī and al-Ghazālī graduated from the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr and were appointed as professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. Abū Bakr Shāshī (d. 507/1113) graduated from the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad and was appointed as professor of law and Sadr ad-Din Abū Bakr Khujandī (d. 552/1157) received a similar position in Baghdad after he graduated from Nizāmiyyah of Isfahān.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, some chose to be orators or scholar of their town. Abdul Ghaffār Fārsī became *Khatīb* and *Muḥadith* in the city of Nīshāpūr. Abū al-Qāsim Sam‘ānī (d. 534/1139), who graduated from Nizāmiyyah of Marw, became professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah and was appointed orator in the city of Marw. Abū ‘Alī Iṣfahānī (d. 525/1131) the student of al-Khujandī in the Nizāmiyyah of Isfahān, was appointed judge in the city of Khūzistān and later appointed as professor of law in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad.<sup>49</sup> Abū al-Muzaffar Abivardī (d. 507/1113) became the librarian of Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad after graduating from the Nizāmiyyah of Nīshāpūr.<sup>50</sup> These examples represent the significance of the Nizāmiyyah administrative system while also highlighting the social networks among its institutions.

In the case of the engagement of the graduates in political activities, in (514/1120) Muḥammad ibn Tūmert (472-524/1080-1130), al-Ghazālī’s student, established his kingdom in the western part of the Islamic territory. Kamāl ad-Dīn Shahrzūrī (d. 572/1176) and ‘Amād ad-Dīn Kātib Iṣfahānī (d. 597/1201) worked in the court of Nūr ad-Dīn Zangī (d. 569/1174) and Saladin (d. 588/1193) in the crucial post of government.<sup>51</sup> Further, Aḥmad ibn Salāmah (d. 527/1133) received a high position in the Abbāsīd court and was appointed as *mu’addib* (teacher) for the

<sup>48</sup> Kasāei, *Madaris-i Nizāmiyyah*, pp.235-6.

<sup>49</sup> Kasāei, *Madaris-i Nizāmiyyah*, pp.130-132.

<sup>50</sup> Zarrinkub, “Ghazali dar Nizāmiyya-i Baghdad,” p.596.

<sup>51</sup> Kasāei, *Madaris-i Nizāmiyyah*, p.185. Zarrinkub in “Ghazālī dar Nizāmiyya-i Baghdad,” believed that Ibn Tumert did not participate in al-Ghazālī’s lecture in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad. He mentions that Ibn Tumert wrote a letter to al-Ghazālī in Nizāmiyyah and asked his legal opinion on political issues. p.600.

children of Caliph (Al-Mustarshid, 484-529/1092-1135).<sup>52</sup> The religious and political engagements were among the wishes of the Nizāmiyyah founder. As mentioned before in the biography of Abū Ishāq Shirāzī: “in my journey from Iraq to Khurāsān, I was sent by the Caliph as ambassador to Malik Shah and Nizām al-Mulk, I did not enter any village and city along my way except I found the *qādīs* (judge), *muftīs* (legal counsellor), or *khatīb* (preacher) in those areas are one of my students or companions.<sup>53</sup> Nizāmiyyah graduates played a role in creating social networks among Nizāmiyyah institutions and were successful missionaries for state and received high positions in the government.”

## 7. Networking in Administrative System

It seems that the application of a single administrative system unified all Nizāmiyyah schools. Applying the same rules and regulations strengthened the Nizāmiyyah system. In this way, scholars and students of Shāfi‘ite School of law were linked to each other. The Nizāmiyyah centres received aid from the government that gave more credit to the institution. This unification paved the way for the exchange of professors, students and other staff of Nizāmiyyah.

The system of library, mosque, and finance has almost similar function in Nizāmiyyah. Therefore, professors and students could easily change from one institution to another. The administrative rules unified all madrasahs and created a uniform educational system throughout the Seljuk dynasty. Some programs held by Nizāmiyyah institutions can be highlighted as social networks between the *madrasah* and society. Mosque activities aimed at educating the common people of the town. The *wa‘z* program succeeded to attract the public. The madrasah created social networks to the society by introducing some interesting programs. Ibn al-Jawzī recorded the glory of *wa‘z* in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad during the speech of Ardashīr ‘Abādī (d. 547/1152) that nearby 30,000 people

<sup>52</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah*. Ḥamīd Aḥmad Tāhir (eds.), (Cairo: Dar al-Fajr lit-Turath, 1997), v.12, p.229.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt*, v.3, p.241.

gathered for his speech. It is, however, of interest to note that the majority of the audience were female.<sup>54</sup> Other mosque programs included dictating of *hadith*, and benefiting from the teacher of Qur'ān who was knowledgeable in different recitations. These activities strengthened the relationship between the *madrasah* and society.

The opening ceremony was one of the exciting programs of Nizāmiyyah. When the *madrasah* was inaugurated, there was an opening ceremony attended by a large number of town folk. A huge number of people even the Caliph and his statesmen participated in the opening ceremony of the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad.<sup>55</sup> Sometimes when a new professor was appointed for professorship in Nizāmiyyah, a ceremony was held to introduce the professor to the institution. For instance, the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad organised such a ceremony for its new professor, Abū Qāsim Dabūsī (d. 482/1089), which was attended by great number of people of Baghdad.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, Nizāmiyyah institutions succeeded to attract the views of Muslim rulers. Statesmen sometimes participated in the lectures. In (498/1105) A.H., Sa'd al-Dawla, the vizier, sat in the lesson of al-Kayāharasī in the Nizāmiyyah of Baghdad to encourage people to learn.<sup>57</sup> In this way, the Nizāmiyyah administrative system succeeded to integrate social and political matters.

“The network of madrasah founded by Nizām al-Mulk was, in my opinion, such that it constituted an innovation in itself”, said George Makdisi.<sup>58</sup> However, the essential credit goes to Nizāmiyyah educational system for creating great social network among its different madrasahs in vast land of Seljuk territory. In this way, Muslim educational system

<sup>54</sup> Ibn al-Javzī, *Al-Muntazam*, v.17, p.3. The participation of women in *wa'z* programs was usual. Ibn Batutah said that between 1000 and 2000 females gathered in the city of Shiraz to listen to the *maw'izah* in the mosque. Ibn Batutah, *Al-Rihlah: Tuhfat al-Anzār fi Qarāyib al-Amsār wa 'Ajāyib al-Aṣfār*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1992), p.214.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn al-Javzī, *al-Muntazam*, v.16, p.102.

<sup>56</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi at-Tārikh*, Khalīl Ma'mūn (ed.) (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, 2002), v.9, p.145.

<sup>57</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah*, v.12, p.185.

<sup>58</sup> George Makdisi, “Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-Century Baghdad,” p.44.

paved the way for the new administrative system in educational organizations. It was the role of Shafi'ite scholars that contributed largely to the evolution in the Muslim educational system by establishing various schools in Nishāpūr before the advent of Nizāmiyyah, and played significant role in the administration system of Nizāmiyyah Madrasahs.

### **Summary**

With the establishment of the new category of schools, Muslim educational history entered a new era that saw the flourishing of various educational centres. This was the age of the university in Islam for which the statesmen dedicated a special budget to the new systematic institution that often belonged to the one school of law. This development in the Muslim educational system demonstrates the economic prosperity during the early Seljuk dynasty. Further, the socio-political changes within the Muslim community led the authorities to alter their policy toward religious studies. The *waqf* system was the most successful system in patronizing the new type of educational organization. The Nizāmiyyah administrative system succeeded in applying different organisations within the *madrasah*. The library and mosque organisations remained active. The academic centre was the heart of the madrasah. All Nizāmiyyah schools applied the same administrative system and acted as networks of institutions in the vast lands of the Seljuk Empire. In this way, strong social networks were established among Nizāmiyyah schools. There were influential communications among professors of different Nizāmiyyah. The relationship between students and professors was dynamic. Social networks among Nizāmiyyah schools also appeared in the case of graduate students. Nizāmiyyah also succeeded in creating various activities that linked the *madrasah* to the society, strengthened the communication of jurists, and established the grounds for connecting its various centres to each other.

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