

An introduction to manuscript of “Anwar al-Fasaha wa Asrar al-Bara’ah Fi Sharh Nahj al-Balagha” by Nizam al-Din Gilani (11th Century A.H. / 17th Century A.D.)

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Abstract: This precious manuscript comprises a translation and commentary of Nahj al-Balagh. Some have considered it to be an abridged version of Commentary by Ibn Haytham, but the commentator stated in the introduction to this book that his book was based on the results of his studies on commentaries of Ibn Meysam, Ibn Abi al-Hadid, and other commentaries, and especially the very text of Nahj al-Balagh, because like in the Qur’an, one section provided interpretation of another section in Nahj al-Balagh. The commentator prepared this manuscript in three volumes, and provided an introduction in four chapters to the entire book. Chapter one: On (rational) signification, and related topics. Chapter two: On figures of speech such as clarification and embellishment. Chapter three: On rhetoric. Chapter four: On imamate. This commentary includes the entire text of Nahj al-Balagh along with Persian translation with Arabic commentary following the text of each sermon or saying. This manuscript has yet to be edited and published, with few copies thereof being available from The University of Tehran Library, Malek National Library catalogue, Ayatollah Mar’ashi Najafi Library, and Arabic Heritage Revival Center at Qom, Sepahsalar School Library, Yemen Library, and Astan Quds Razawi Library.

Key words: *Nizam al-Din Gilani; Commentary on Nahj al-Balagha; Commentaries; Features of Anwar al-Fasaha*

1. Introduction

As Imam Khomeini said, “Nahj al-Balagha is the second most important book after the Qur’an, providing instructions about the material, and spiritual life, and the redemption of the human. Its instructions about spiritual life and administration of government show the best way towards human redemption” (Testament, 2012). This book has not only remained untouched by time, but also become increasingly more attractive and clarified over time, because Nahj al-Balagha is the brother of the Qur’an, and like the Qur’an, it is eternal. Nahj al-Balagha has always attracted attention of the scholars and researchers, and been admired by them.

All nations and scholars from every systems of thought, religions, and faiths, including Sunnis or Shiites or Christian or Jewish, admire this book humbly. The words of Nahj al-Balagha are so fresh that no reader comes to think that this book was written 1400 years ago.

Today in technological era, we need to properly transfer the precious heritage of the ancestors to the present and future generations. We should execute the instructions of take such sources of knowledge and insight as Nahj al-Balagha, rather than using them for merely theoretical studies. While most of human cultural heritage have either disappeared over time, or turned to museum objects as signs of extinct thoughts and lifestyles, Nahj al-Balagha has

remained untouched by the development of human thought over time, as it is beyond time and place.

In the period between 1st and 3rd centuries A.H. (7th-9th centuries A.D.), the pieces of words of Imam Ali (PBUH) should be found in different historical and hadith books. Seyyed Razi compiled Nahj al-Balagha in the late 3rd century A.H. (the early 10th century A.H.) from the speech and writing narrated from Imam Ali (PBUH) in different books. Although other people before him had also made efforts to collect the words of Imam Ali (PBUH) (Shahrestani, 1988), it was Seyyed Razi’s work become the prominent one because Seyyed Razi selected the eloquent pieces of the words of Imam Ali (PBUH). This book that was completed in 400 A.H. (1009 A.D.) included 421 sermons (236, 237, 239, 241, or 242 sermons), 79 letters, and 470 sayings. Nahj al-Balagha is so deep and eloquent that it has been called “the brother of the Qur’an”. And some have considered it to be “below the words of God but above all the human speeches” (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1958). This noble book not only has remained fresh and attractive centuries after it was written, but also has become even more attractive, which miracle is due to its thematic and formal qualities. Such qualities are not found in any other book but the Quran. Imam Ali (PBUH) said about the Qur’an, “The Qur’an is a book with beautiful appearance and a deep meaning, with its wonders never ending, and its meanings never become obsolete” (Nahj al-Balagha, 1993). According to a similar statement, neither its wonders are uncountable, nor does its meaning become obsolete, Nahj al-Balagha has

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modeled on the Qur'an in terms of content and form" (Ayashi, 1960).

Seyyed Razi died at the age of 47 in 1015 at the height of scientific and political fame. Among his numerous works, Nahj al-Balagha has become famous around the world, so that this work has become an eternal work, and been translated into different languages.

2. Biography

Nizam al-Din Ahmad Ibn Sadr al-Din Ali Ibn Hassan Ibn Malek Lahiji Gilani, known as Hakim al-Mulk, was a prominent Shiite Iranian literary scholar, physician, theologian, Astronomer, hadith scholar, jurist, mystic and philosopher; and his works suggest that he was practiced in most fields of science, especially medicine. However, despite his high scientific and political rank in the court of Indian Qutb Shahi dynasty (Muhsin Amin; Agha Bozorg Tehrani), the details of his life and works are unknown. Details of his scientific life and date of death of the scientist is not known, the exact name of his is also disputed; in some sources like as Rayhanah al-adab (Mudarrisi), his name is said to be Nizam al-Din Ali ibn Hussein ibn Nizam al-Din Gilani Muridani, or Nizam al-Din Ahmad ibn Ali Gilani, with no explicit mention of whether these two names refer to the same person.

However, it is more likely that these two names refer to the same person, as some careful biographers such as late Thiqat al-Islam Tabrizi in Mir'at al- Kutub wrote that these two names refer to the same person. (n.d); also, given in his manuscript has been found in al-Anwar al-Fasaha wa Asrar al-Balagha, an image of which manuscript is kept at Ayatollah Mar'ashi Najafi Library, his exact name has been recorded as Hakim al-Mulk Nizam al-Din Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hasan Muridani Lahiji Gilani, it seems that this firm evidence can finally resolve the disputes about his name. Hakim al-Mulk Nizam Gilani was born in Lahijan in 993 A.H. (1585 A.D.) to a scholarly family. After having learned the basics in his homeland, he resided in Isfahan in 1616-1628 to continue with his studies, where he studied under such prominent scholars as Sheikh Baha'i and Mir Damad. Then, in 1628-1630, like many of his contemporary scholars and poets, he moved to India, where he lived in Delhi in the Gurkani court and in Daulatabad in the court of Mahabat Khan. Later, after conquest of castle of Daulatabad, he went to the court of Qutb Shahis in Hyderabad of Deccan Plateau upon insistence of Abdullah Qutb Shah, where he served as the specific physician of the court of Shiite Abdullah Qutb Shah. He later appointed to minister by Qutb Shah. During his term of ministry, he performed significant scientific activities, and many of his works has been written during the same period. In addition to his many assignments as a physician and minister, Gilani was teacher of the children of some of high profile officials (Arabani, 1995; Haqiqat, 1993; Safa, 1995).

3. Bibliography

Many scientific, philosophic, mystic, hadith, theological works, etc. of this scholar have been cited, but there is difference between scholars as to whether such works are really those of his.

Adab al-Sabiyan: This is philosophical book in a simple Persian language about subjects, boundaries, and procedures of sciences (Catalogue of Persian manuscripts).

Adab al-Muta'alimin: This is philosophical book in Arabic about subjects, objectives, education, knowledge, boundaries of sciences, and perfection of soul, including historical points, drawn up in a number of papers, for novice audience.

Horizons, souls and rationale behind the creation: This is a mystic book in Persian in elucidation of the thinking about the universe and human soul. It seems that the commentator wrote this to elaborate verses 54 of sura Fussilat (Malek National Library catalogue).

Refutation of reincarnation: This is a theologian and philosophical book in Persian in explanation and refutation of reincarnation from view of Shiism (Catalogue of Persian books).

Adwiyah Bahiyah: This is medical book in Persian about spices used to strengthen sexual potency (Senate Library catalogue).

Asrar al-Atibba': This is a short book in Persian about medical issues and properties of medicines. This book is prepared in four chapters, and is dedicated to Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah Hindi (1625-1672), the ruler of Golkonda, in Hyderabad of Deccan Plateau (Agha Bozorg Tehrani; Catalogue of Persian book).

Elements and mood of the human and the animal and knowledge of countenance: This is a book in Persian about esotericism and how to know the truth, and some of the temperaments and behaviors of a person from his countenance (Catalogue of Persian manuscripts; Catalogue of Persian books).

Musicology: This a short book in Persian about the primary principles and secondary principles of musicology (Agha Bozorg Tehrani).

Usul al-anasir wa kayfiyatiha bi al-quwwah: This is short book in Persian about natural sciences, about the four elements and their quality in the nature and human body (Catalogue of Persian manuscripts; Catalogue of Persian books,).

Qaza', al-jannah, wa ...: This is short medical and ideological book in Arabic (Catalogue of Persian books).

And one of the most important works of Gilani is Anwar al-fasaha wa asrar al-bara'ah fi sharh Nahj al-Balagha, which will be discussed in detail in the following.

4. Commentaries on Nahj al-Balagha

Many Muslim scholars have written commentaries on Nahj al-Balagha, but only a few of them are currently available. Also, some researchers

have performed valuable researches in this field, which include:

Sheikh Agha Bozorg Tehrani (died 1969) mentioned 147 complete and incomplete such commentaries in *al-Zari'ah* (n.d).

Seyyed Abd al-Zahra Hosseini (died 1993) introduced commentary on *Nahj al-Balagh* in *Masadir al-Nahj al-Balagh* (1975)

Hossein Jum'ah Amili mentioned 206 commentaries about different topics discussed in *Nahj al-Balagh* in *Shuruh Nahj al-Balagh* (1942).

Although many scholars have written commentaries on *Nahj al-Balagh* in past centuries, not all of them have reached the present generation, because like other Islamic books, they have been destroyed during the wars and disasters, without their names being mentioned in any historical or cultural book.

Most such commentaries are in Arabic. The most famous of them are the commentary on *Nahj al-Balagh* by Shiite scholar Qutb al-Din Ravandi (died 1177) titled *Minhaj al-bara'ah fi sharh Nahj al-Balagh*; the commentary on *Nahj al-Balagh* by Shiite Kamal al-Din ibn Meysam Bahrani (died 1280); and, the commentary on *Nahj al-Balagh* by Mu'tazilite Ibn Abi al-Hadid (died 1257 or 1258).

The most compressive of these three commentaries is commentary by Ibn Abi al-Hadid, the writing of which took four years.

It was common practice among Arab lecturers and literary men to memorize the sermons of Imam in order to keep their mind active. For example, Abd al-Hamid Katib memorized 70 sermons (Seyyed Abd al-Zahra, 1975), Ibn Nabatah said, "I have memorized 100 sermons and those very 100 sermons were an endless treasure for me" (ibid).

Scholars are divided on the first commentators of *Nahj al-Balagh*. Some have said that Qutb Ravandi was the first commentator, as evidenced by the fact that Ibn Abi al-Hadid challenged discussions of Qutb Ravandi in his commentary, and contended that he was the first commentator. However, according to Muhaddith Nuri (1992), and Muhaddith Qummi (Seyyed Abd al-Zahra), Abu al-Hassan Bayhaqi was the first commentator, as evidenced by the fact that Bayhaqi wrote in the beginning of his commentary, "Nobody before me had written a commentary on *Nahj al-Balagh*" (Muhsin Amin). Yet, Bayhaqi mentioned a commentary written before him, and thus, the commentator of *al-Zari'ah* (n.d) said, "Bayhaqi was the first commentator after the time of Seyyed Razi, because the first commentator appeared during the period of Seyyed Razi, and was named Ali Ibn Nasir, with his commentary titled *A'lam Nahj al-Balagh*. And it also has been said that commentary by Bayhaqi is the first complete one, because Ahmad Ibn Muhammad al-Wabri had already written an incomprehensive commentaries about *Nahj al-Balagh* (Muhsin Amin; Agha Bozorg, n.d).

5. Anwar al-fasaha wa asrar al-bara'ah

This is a commentary on *Nahj al-Balagh*, prepared in three volumes. According to the date mentioned by the commentator at the end of the book, it was written in June, 1626.

At the end of the first volume, which constitutes the first section of the manuscript, the commentator mentions that this section was completed on Monday, October 20, 1624. Also, he wrote that this book was completed in Isfahan. In the preface to the second volume, the commentator explicitly state the name of the book was *Asrar al-bara'ah wa anwar al-fasaha*. However, at the end of second and third volumes, the name of the book was said to be *Asrar al-bara'ah wa anwar al-fasaha*. The second volume was completed in February 1624. The third volume completed in July 1626. However, these three volumes only include commentary on a part of *Nahj al-Balagh*.

It follows from different bibliographic sources that there were differences between different reports on the name of this book, and even the exact name of the commentator and the exact date of completion of the book have not be reported. However, it follows from *al-Zari'ah* that a copy of this book dated 1626 is available from Sepahsalar Library, which according to Agha Bozorg is handwritten by the commentator. Accordingly, it can be said that the last volume (perhaps the fourth one) is held in Iran. The copy held in Sepahsalar was originally kept in Tarbiyat Library, and then it was transferred to its current place. In this manuscript, the name of commentator has been said to be Hakim al-Mulk.

In the preface to the book, the commentator describes the methodology, objective and sources of the book in detail. As seen from the book, this book was written in an attractive way. However, the commentator made an extensive use of the commentaries by Ibn Meysam and Ibn Abi al-Hadid, as the commentator said in the preface. However, further comparison between these three books is required to determine the extent to which he used these two commentaries. At the beginning of the book, the commentator provided discussions as the preface to his book. These discussions include detailed discussion of the literary sciences, clarification, embellishment, as well as a detailed discussion of rhetoric. Finally, the commentator provides a discussion of the subject of imamate from perspective of Shiism. It is seen from the text of the commentary that the commentator was interested in providing detailed interpretation of sermons. The commentator provided philosophical and mystic discussion, and following the style of Ibn Meysam, compared opinions of the scholars and theologians.

Persian translation *Nahj al-Balagh*

Nahj al-Balagh surprised both friends and enemies of Islam, and attracted attention of scholars from different sects. *Nahj al-Balagh* has been translated into world's major languages, including Persian, Turkish, Urdu, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Esperanto, Bosnian, etc. (Amili, 1942). Dozens of commentaries have been written

about Nahj al-Balagha, and Persian translation of this noble book is very important for Iranian people.

6. History of Persian translation of Nahj al-Balagha

Since 4th century A.H. (10th century A.D.) when the words of Imam Ali (PBUH) were compiled by Seyyed Razi, Persian scholars decided to translate this noble book into Persian so that Persian speakers could benefit from this precious book. The earliest Persian translation of Nahj al-Balagha available dates from 6th century A.H. (12th century A.D.), which was translated by Dr. Jovini, and prepared in two volumes, followed by the translation by Hossein Ardabili, a contemporary of Shah Isama'il Safavid, and commentary and translation by Mulla Fath Allah Kashani. In this century, many Persian translations of Nahj al-Balagha have been rendered.

Features of 11th century A.H. (17th century A.D.) Persian prose

The best place where the weaknesses of Persian language manifested themselves during this period was Persian prose, because poets usually follow the style of previous poets, while writers bind themselves to the rules established by previous writers less than poets do, and are more influenced by the colloquial language than poets. And as the 9th century and early 10th century A.H. (15th century and early 16th century A.D.) colloquial language was losing the features of old Persian language fast, the language of writers also got increasingly closer to the modified language of that time (Nafisi, 1965).

It can generally be said that in this period, Persian prose gradually set itself free from technical exaggerations of previous centuries, and simple writing became popular. However, there is an obvious inflow of Turkish words into some works written in this period, especially historical one, which can be explained by introduction of a series of Mongolian and Joghatai Turkish into formal and official Persian, and which constituted another weakness that affected the prose due to failure to observe rules of grammar (Safa, 1985). However, this problem is seen in the poems of a group of poets of Timurid era and early Safavid era. Surprisingly, some of such grammatical and lexical mistakes common among writers of Timurid and Safavid era have persisted to date. For example, use the compound "چنانچه" (this is a compound word, composed of two lexemes, چنان and چه) that is a forged and incorrect compound, in place of "چنانکه" (this is a compound word, composed of two lexemes, چنان and که meaning "if"); frequent use of adjectival verbs; non-elliptical ellipsis of the verbs in absence of verbal and circumstantial contexts; use of some of terms, infinitives and verbs in wrong place, and in forged senses, for example, use of "گرینین" in place of "شدن", and "باشین" in place of "بودن"; frequent use of short and long compounds in place of terms available in Persian language, for example use of "مشورت کردن" instead of "مشورته مشورت در میان انداختن" (to consult) and "دست در دامن متابعت و فرستاداری زدن"

instead of "طاعت کردن" (to obey); use of Arabic terms instead of commonly Persian terms; and use of Arabic grammar in Persian language, especially when matching adjective and noun, and the like, which mistakes have persisted in today's formal and even colloquial languages (ibid).

Prolivity is one of the characteristics of the prose of this period, especially formal and historical prose. Some writers used such prolivity only in the preface, writing the rest of the book in a simple writing style (ibid).

The technical prose was not as common in this period as it was in early centuries, which can be explained by inability of that period's writers to create such difficult figures of speech as the writers of the early centuries created. Influence of Arabic language on Persian language was so huge that it was impossible to keep the language simple even in simple works of that time, and even the secretaries of the courts of the kings tried to use a complex writing style (ibid).

Briefly, Persian writing style in this period wasn't as rich as it was in early period in terms of use figures of speech, rhymes, imageries, and creative compounds. In contrast to prose of the pre-Mongolian period, which was abundant and magnificent in terms of form, content, and rhyme, Safavid writing style was like a childish language, with its words bereft of their garb and ornaments. Due to omission of intensifier or native "ب" in past tense, and omission of prefixes such as *پرا پر*, *اندر پر*, *وا*, *باز*, *فرو* and *همی*, verbs became uniform and monotonous. Non-use of injunctive continuous verb in the way they were used before, especially consecutive use of present perfect and past perfect verbs with pronouns and auxiliary verbs excluded, frequent use of ill-fitting Mongolian words and excessive use of synonymous words, non-use of such concise sentences as were used before, and non-use of some of proverbs, etc., turned the language of this period into a monotonous language, so that the magnificent and prestigious prose and verse were replaced with intellectual humility, and weak writing style and weak word choice.

Knowledgebase also weakened during this period. Since Persian language had been in incorrectly used for a long time, it was required to hold Persian language courses, but no such courses were held; at the same time, the books on Persian language were rarely found, and textbooks were often or always were in Arabic (Shamisa, 2002).

7. Different versions of this commentary

a) Version 'eyn: Ayatollah Mar'ashi Najafi Library, Qom (1846); Arabic nasta'liq script, 792 pages containing 25 lines each. This is considered as the main version. The text of Nahj al-Balagha is written in Arabic naskh style (with diacritical marks). This version includes handwriting of the author (Nizam al-Din Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Hassan Ibn Nizam al-Din Jilani Lahiji Muridani); first volume completed on Monday, October 20, 1624; second volume

completed in February 1624; third volume completed on Sunday, July 1626. On title page, the name of the book and the author are recorded as follows: Sharh kitab nahj al-balagha al-musamma bi anwar al-fasaha wa asrar al-bara'ah lil musannif Nizam al-Din Ahmad al-Jilani". On the opening and closing pages this version, different names are mentioned as the proprietor of the book, for example, in the beginning of Mu'niqah Sermon (without alif) ascribed to Imam Ali (PBUH) handwriting by Nizam al-Din Ahmad Gilani (author of Anwar al-Fasaha) appears.

b) Version (dāl): Central Library of The University of Tehran (168); this version is composed of 245 sheets, 22 lines on each. This version has two volumes, and was in nasta'liq style. Arabic text is accompanied with Persian subscript and commentary. The verses of the Qur'an and most hadiths are marked by a line drawn above them, and poems are marked by red color. At the beginning of the page, the name of the book (Asrar al-bara'ah wa anwar al-fasaha) along with the name of author and verses from Divan of Imam Ali (PBUH) are inscribed.

c) Version (kāf): Malek National Library, Tehran, microfilm (5309), 648 sheets, Arabic text with Persian subscript. This version is in nasta'liq style. On the first page appear a hadith from Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w.), and the title of the book. On the second page, there is a note about author, his masters, and his books. On the third page, the detailed of the following proprietors are inscribed: Muhammad Karim Ibn Hajj Mahdi Qalilani Tabrizi, Hamadan, June 1840; Hajj Muhammad Mu'min Ibn Hajj Muhammad Sadiq Farahabadi Rudsari, 1797, accompanied with an illegible seal; a note by Suhaili Khansari dated 1904 indicating he bought the book from the heirs of Tarbiat for transfer it to the library; the name of the book, the author, and sign of National Library and a number of other illegible seals are on the page; on the first page appears a note indicating the name of the book and the author, and the fact that it was purchased in Tabriz by Ali Ibn Isama'il Amakashi Gilani (or Liyani) in February 1931. Appearing on some pages is the elliptical seal of Muhammad Hussein. On the last page of book appears the elliptical seal indicating the name of Muhammad Shafi' Ibn Muhammadreza. Titles are in vermillion. This version has three volumes.

The hope is that editing, revival and presentation of this precious manuscript will be fruitful.

8. Methodology of edition

In editing, since version (ʿeyn) was handwritten by the author was taken as principal, and versions (dāl) and (kāf) were taken as substitute – however, it was a very hard task to identify the handwriting of the author, because the materials on the opening or closing pages of every versions somehow indicated that that version was handwritten by the author, but the probability that version (ʿeyn) was handwritten by the author was higher, compared with other version, because it is impossible for one person to

write several books at the same time, and commentators certainly had scribes, who recorded their handwriting in the name of the master commentator. In editing, it was tried to compare the versions, at the same time as comparing the text of Nahj al-Balagha included in the commentary with Nahj al-Balagha edited by Subhi Salih (2006), and comparing the text of commentary with commentaries by Ibn Abi al-Hadid (1958), and Ibn Meysam (1983), with authentic version being used as the main text, and the differences being indicated on the margin using acronyms.

Mistakes of commentator or scribes are usually referred to, except when they were so gross, in which case the correction was included in the edited version without referring to the correction made. Examples of such mistakes include match between adjective and noun in terms of indefiniteness and definiteness. However, in case of gross mistakes, if the mistake existed in all the versions, the corrected text was included in the text, and the mistake was referred to on the margin.

Features of commentary

a) It frequently invokes the verses of the Qur'an as evidence; for instance, the verse 156 of sura al-A'rafis invoked in commentary on sermon [45], and verses 38 and 39 of sura al-Haqqah are invoked in commentary on sermon [1].

And sometimes, the verses of the Qur'an are cited without mentioning the reason for citation; for example, in commentary on sermon [38], the verse 40 of sura Nur is cited. And also, the commentator adopts the words of the Qur'an; for example, in a part of the commentary on sermon [1], he adopts some words of the verse 95 of sura An-Nisa'.

b) Reference to hadiths and verses, which are sometimes cited with the source mentioned; for example, he wrote in commentary on sermon [35], Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) said, "Consult the wise men in order not to regret your actions", and in commentary on sermon [1], Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) said, "Acceptable Hajj is awarded by resting in the Heaven"; and which are sometimes cited without the source mentioned; for example, "And that is the farm of the afterlife".

c) Inclusion Arabic poems, with the name of poets sometimes mentioned; for example, in commentary on sermon [3], a verse of poem by Abu Tamam (n.d.) is mentioned; or, in commentary on sermon [43], a verse of a poem by Ka'b Ibn Ja'il (Muzahim, 2002; 57) is invoked.

On some occasions, the commentator cites the poem without mentioning the name of the poet; for example, in commentary on sermons [56] and [49], some verses of a poem by unknown poets are invoked.

d) Invocation of Persian poems with the name of the poet sometimes included; for example, commentary on sermon [3] reads, al-Arif al-Shirazi said, "The leaves of the green trees are seen by the wise man [...]"; and often without mentioning the

name of the poet; for example, the commentary on sermon [64] reads,

“O God, you exist and you are one

Your essence is pure as are your attributes

You exist before any other thing exists and nobody guided you

You are the last and yet you have no end”

And in commentary on sermon [18] reads,

“Whatever you seek in the nature of the commandment

You should find it in the Qur’an

Obtain knowledge of the apparent and hidden meaning of the Qur’an

Disclose the content of the treasure of wisdom

By the Qur’an, you can keep yourself harmless from harms

And you can be free from mistake when encountered by differences”

e) Inclusion of historical discussions such as manner in which Adam was created in commentary on sermon [1]; discussion of Laylat al-Harrir (the night of clamor) in commentary on sermon [35]; or discussion of history as well as rationally justified imamate of Imam Ali (PBUH) in commentary on sermon [3], known as sermon of shaqshaqiya.

f) Inclusion of philosophical and theologian discussions such as philosophy of the divine will and decree in commentary on sermon [1]; for example, the discussion of selection of prophets and their authority over humans and philosophy of Hajj and rules governing it, as well as rules of jurisprudence and shari’a, which are discussed in detail as part of the commentary on this sermon.

g) Discussion of the figures of speech; for example commentary on sermon [1] reads, “and the diving of understanding cannot reach” is likening of infinity of the perfection and greatness of the God, and the thinking about it, to a deep and wavy sea through which no skilled swimmer can swim up to the calm beach, that is, no one can comprehend His depth and perfection; and the commentary on sermon [16] reads, “Beware that sins are like unruly horses on whom their riders have been placed and their reins have been let loose so that they would jump with them in Hell” is likening of the sin to the unruly horses being ridden by sinners, whose horses, that have run out of control, are taking them to the hell.

9. Mistakes in the version

a) Sometimes, the words of the text of Nahj al-Balagha are spelled incorrectly, but their correct meaning is considered in the commentary, and sometimes the words are incorrectly spelled in the text of Nahj al-Balagha, and are considered in an incorrect meaning in the commentary, which indicate that either the commentator didn’t find the source, or recklessly spelled the words. For example, the word “تلتقون” appears in the text of sermon [4], instead of the original word “يلتفتون”, and it was considered to mean “يلتقون” in the commentary; and the word “لا يمتنون” was used instead of the original

word “لا تميون”, and it was considered to mean “لا تميون” in the commentary.

b) There are many mistakes in terms diacritic and punctuation; for example, “العذر” is wrongly used instead of “العذر”, “اليوم” instead of “اليوم”, “جنان” instead of “جنان”, or “مقدم” instead of “مقدم”; also, some words bear extra dot, or dots of some words are omitted; for example, “مضع” instead of “مضع”, and “تفضيل” instead of “تفضيل”.

c) Sometimes, the meaning of word is not provided; for example, in sermon [4], the words “طماء” and “اليمان” are not provided.

d) Sometimes, the correct word is used in translation, but the spelling and diacritic are wrong; for example, in sermon [16], “من” is correctly used in translation, while in the text of sermon, the incorrect word “مين” is used. There are many such mistakes, which cause the reader who only reads the text of sermon to mistake the meaning.

e) Obvious syntactic mistakes in match between adjective and noun are frequently found in the text of commentary; for example, “لسنة النبوية” and “آداب النبوية”, in this case non-munsarif in used in place of munsarif. Or “ارجوا” is incorrectly used with an alif at the end of the word.

f) Mistakes due to similarity of the words; for example, use of “مين” instead of “عن”.

g) Quotation with providing complete details about the source; sometimes a brief reference to the name of the book or the name of author is made. For example, in commentary on sermon [1], he quoted a passage from Isharat by Avicenna (Avicenna, 1960, 3/241), while the studies carried out during editing showed that the source mentioned was incorrect.

h) Translation has a literal nature, and a simple and fluent language, mostly composed of Arabic terms, as was common in that period. For example, “غالى” (exaggerator), “مع نللك” (notwithstanding), “بطنه” (stomach); “كل ولد سئيلحق بابيه” (every child will soon cling to his father”.

i) Incorrect translation of the words. In the edition, the correct translation was provided using dictionary. For example, “اشغاف قلبه” was used instead of “اشغاف قلبه”.

j) Difference between the tense of the verb and the tense intended to be conveyed; for example, in sermon [29]. This, however, indicates the ability of the translator who used irony and figures of speech, or is due to the writing style of that period; for example, “تقولون” (they say), or “ابدانهم” (your bodies).

k) In commentary, he sometimes made too much explanation, for example, in commentary on sermon [31], and sometimes made too little explanation, for example, in commentary on sermon [19].

l) He used the expression “Peace be upon him” instead of “May the God bless Him and His progeny” following the name of Prophet Muhammad.

n) He used Persian words like “غريب” in the Arabic commentary.

10. Acronyms used in the commentary

“المط” = Problem

“ح ش” = (ح) for solution and (ش) for remark.

“ح” = Then

“تع” = Almighty

“صلعم” = May the God bless Him and His progeny

“ض” = Remark

11. Orthography of translated version

The preposition “ب” is attached to the next word, in the edition with current orthography, *بدرستیکه*, *بباید*, *بباید*, *بباید*, *بباید* are used.

The letter “ا” (alif madde) appears in absence of madde in versions ‘eyn and dal, while in version kaf, it is accompanied with madde, and in the edited version it is accompanied with madde, for example, *آنچه آنکه*.

“ها”, the plural maker in Persian, is attached to the word and in some cases where the word end in “ه”, “ه” is omitted. In the edition with the current orthography, the following form is used:

خانه‌های = نشانه‌های، نشانه‌های = اندیشه‌های، اندیشه‌های

The verb “است” (is) is attached to the previous word as shown below:

مروست - دروست - عملیست

In current edition, it was used according to the current orthography where such use didn't adversely affect the beauty of the text.

The genitive “ی” has been omitted in most instances.

“تر”, the comparative marker, that was used in attached form, is used in detached form in the edited version: *شجاعتر = شجاعتر*.

“را”, the oblique case marker, is often attached to the previous word. In the edited version, it is used in detached form: *تورا = ترا*.

12. Arabic orthography of the commentary

- Among characteristic of the orthography of this commentary is that hamza has never a seat except in case yā' follows alif in which case it is placed on the seat of yā'.
- Empty of any editorial sign.
- Most materials are quoted without citation of their source, and in case the source is cited, it is incomplete or wrong.

13. Conclusion

As the commentator says in the preface to his book, he made much use of commentary by Ibn Meysam. He even used that commentary in translation of the terms of Nahj al-Balagha. However, in addition to commentaries by Ibn Meysam and Ibn Abi al-Hadid, he used commentaries by Bayhaqi, Ravandi, and Wabri, and discussed the issues that were rarely or never discussed in the said commentaries. However, in the said commentaries, the materials were quoted without citing the source, or in case the source was cited, such citation was

incomplete or wrong; so, it was tried to identify the source of the studied materials as much as possible, and where the material used by the commentator was said to be from a source other than one identified, such difference was annotation were provided on margin of the text, thus, corrective annotations suggest that the source material in question was either not cited or wrongly cited. Providing Persian and Arabic verses, the commentator composed his commentary as a combination of early and late centuries Arabic and Persian language, so that both lovers of Persian language and lovers of Arabic language could use the commentary. In addition to being rich in grammar and rhetoric, this work is plentiful source of historical, theologian, philosophical and hadith materials. Accordingly, the author tried to provide the reader with the source of the materials, thus, founding his research work on firm bases as much as possible. Another point to note about this commentary is that the author used sources from different branches of Islam including Shiite and Sunni sources, which indicates that the author was unbiased and had good knowledge of different sciences and issues of his time and previous periods. Researchers pay more attention to study of old religious and literary texts, and revival of the manuscripts. Also, making Persian and Arabic speaker readers acquainted with the interactions between Persian and Arabic literature in previous centuries is very important given the importance of translation and promotion of the principles of Alawid thinking and Nahj al-Balagha.

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