

# ALI 335: Theological Aspects of *Nahj Al- Balāghah* & Social Implications - 1

Imam Dr. Usama Al-Atar  
Rabi' Al-Thani 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1437 A.H.  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

# Overview

- Introduction
  - Al-Sharīf al-Radī
  - Reasons
- Authenticity
  - Textual analysis
  - References
- Praise
  - Enemies & writers
  - Ibn Abi al-Hadid (d. 656/1258)
  - Muhammad ‘Abduh (d. 1323/1905)
- Content
  - Theology
  - Political – Leadership
  - Social – Poverty

# Al-Sharīf Al-Radī

- Al-Sharīf al-Radī (359-404/969-1013)
  - Muhammad ibn al-Husain ibn Mūsā ibn Muhammad ibn Mūsā ibn Ibrahīm ibn Mūsā al-Kadhīm (as).
  - Famous poet
  - Brother of al-Sharīf al-Murtadā ('Alī) (d. 436/1045)
  - Students of al-Sheikh al-Mufīd

# Reasons

Al-Radī – *Nahjul Balāghah*:

“Imam Alī's sayings comprise wonders and surprises of eloquence and rhetoric and brilliant jewels of Arabic language.”

“Imam Alī's sayings carry the reflection of the divine knowledge and savour of the Prophet's utterances.”

“His (Imam Alī's) sayings are such an on-rushing stream that its flow cannot be encountered and such treasure of delicacies cannot be matched.”

“And I saw afterwards to best name this book: *Nahjul Balāghah* (The Path to Eloquence) for it opens the door for its seekers.”

# Reasons - Historical

- Asha'irites:
  - Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'arī (d. 324/936) – *Maqalāt al-Islamiyyīn*
- Mu'tazilites:
  - Basran Mu'tazilī – Abu 'Ali al-Jubbaī (d. 303/916); Abu Hashim al-Jubbaī (d. 321/933); Al-Qadhī 'Abd al-Jabbar (d. 415/1025)
  - Baghdadī Mu'tazilī – Abu al-Husain al-Khayyāt (d. 311/923); Abu al-Qasim al-Balkhī al-Ka'bī (d. 317/929); al-Rummanī (d. 384/994).
- Būyid dynasty - Baghdād (344-447/956-1055)
- Sharīf al-Radī (359-404/969-1013)

# Authenticity

- References

- Zavieh in *Authenticity of Nahjul Balāghah*:

- “... in all probability Radī is the compiler while there is hardly any evidence to credit Murtadā.”

- “... since a large portion of the book is present in the earlier sources, the generalization of some Sunnī scholars in doubting the entire book cannot be sustained.”

- Textual

- Ibn abī al-Hadīd, after sermon 184:

- “Either all is not that of Imam ‘Alī’s (as) or part.”

- “If you examine NB, you’ll find it all one kind of purity, one soul, and one style.”

- *Tamam Nahjul Balāghah* by Sayed Sadiq al-Mūsawi

# Textual Analysis

## The Shakespeare Code: English Professor Confirms the Bard's Hand in 'The Spanish Tragedy'

Aug. 13, 2013

AUSTIN, Texas — For centuries, scholars have been searching for answers to a literary mystery: Who wrote the five additional passages in Thomas Kyd's "The Spanish Tragedy"?

Mounting arguments point to William Shakespeare, but English professor **Douglas Bruster** has recently found evidence confirming that the 325 additional lines are indeed the work of the Bard.

According to Bruster's textual analysis, published in the July online issue of *Notes and Queries*, the proof lies in Shakespeare's trademark misspellings and the bad handwriting behind them.



Douglas Bruster, professor of English (photography by Marsha Miller)

[www.utexas.edu](http://www.utexas.edu)

"This is the clinching evidence we need to admit the additional passages into the Shakespeare canon," says Bruster. "It's not every day we get to identify new writing by Shakespeare, so this is an exciting moment."

Bruster examined Shakespeare's spelling habits in the manuscript pages of the 16th-century play "Sir Thomas More." Using Shakespeare's contributions as a guide, he identified 24 points of similarity between "Sir Thomas More" and "The Spanish Tragedy," a play republished, with new material, at about the time of "Hamlet."

The findings reveal that Shakespeare's spelling was both old-fashioned and idiosyncratic. For example, with words like "spotless" and "darkness" Shakespeare would use a single "s." Past-tense words like "wrapped" and "blessed" he ended with a "t" (i.e., "wrapt," "blest"). Also telling is his habit of spelling the same word in two different ways (i.e., "alley" spelled "allie" and

# Praise for Imam Alī's (as) Eloquence

- Enemies: Mu'āwiyah, “No one taught the method of eloquence to the Quraysh but ‘Alī” – Zavieh (p. 9)
- Writers: ‘Abd al-Hamīd ibn Yahyā al-Kātib (d. 132n49) and Ibn Nubātah (d. 374/984) – Zavieh (p. 9)
- Ibn Abī al-Hadīd – sermon 216 (al-Takathur)
  - “... Either because of my genuine belief in the one saying it, or because the one who said it had sincere intentions, steadfast certainty, and his sincerity was pure so the effects of his words was greater and quicker to enter the hearts.”
- Muhammad ‘Abduh – *Sharh Nahjul Balāghah*
  - “No one of the people of this language (Arabic) but says the words of Imam ‘Alī ibn Abī Talib are the most honoured & eloquent after the words of Allah Almighty and the words of his Prophet (s).”



# Imam 'Alī (as) & Arabic Grammar

- Surah al-Tawbah (9:3)

وَأَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ  
اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ

- Imam Alī (as) to Abū al-Aswad al-Du'ālī, “The Arabic language is composed of noun, verb and proposition. Noun tells about the things which bears the name, verb tells about the motion and action of that thing, and preposition conveys a meaning which neither noun nor verb” – Jordac in *Voice of Human Justice* (under Knowledge & Sagacity of 'Alī).

# Content: Sermons, Letters & Short Words of Wisdom

- Sermons: about 238
- Letters: about 79
- Selections of Sayings or Short Words of Wisdom: about 480

# Objectives to Creation (**WARM**)

1. **W**orship: “And I have not created the jinn and people but to worship me,” (51:56).
2. **A**cquire knowledge: “Allah is He Who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like of them; the decree continues to descend among them, that you may know that Allah has power over all things and that Allah indeed encompasses all things in (His) knowledge,” (65:12).
3. **R**ecognition: Imam Husain (as), “O people, Indeed, Allah the Exalted did not create the servants but to recognize Him; when they recognize Him they will worship Him; when they worship Him they become enriched with His worship over the worship of anything other than Him.” A man then asked him to define “Allah’s recognition.” He replied, “The recognition of every group in time of the Imam (Master) of their time they have to obey,” (‘Ilal Al-Shara’i – Saduq).
4. **M**ercy: “Except those on Whom your Lord has mercy; and for this did He create them,” (11:119).

# Worship

1. “O believers! Be careful (اتَّقُوا) of your duty to Allah with the care which due to Him” (حق تقاته) 3:102.
2. “Therefore, be careful of your duty to Allah as much as you can,” (64:16).