

Translations, Lexicons and Commentaries of the Sahifa¹

Along with the religious scriptures — texts containing traditions or supplications — texts are often compiled with one of the following aims in mind:

1. Their translation into other languages.
2. Making the text easily searchable so researcher may conveniently locate words or topics.

These compilations are of two types.

- a) Index of words. b) Content index.

3. Commentary of the text. Books that are written for this sake can also be divided into two groups.

a) A lexical commentary. These compilations are usually classified under the category of lexicons (*Qāmus*) or exposition of unfamiliar words (*Tafsir gharīb al-lughāt*) or etymology of the words (*Fiqh al-Lughah*).

b) Commentary of the contents of the text which are commonly referred to as commentaries, marginal notes or annotations.

4. Completion and correction of textual shortcomings. These books are referred to as completions to the text or Mustadrak.

All the afore mentioned types of text have been compiled for the *Sahifa*. We will allude to their details in the subsequent sections God willing.

Translations

In the Safavid era, there began a movement among the Shi'a scholars to create scripture in Persian. Many scholars started writing books in Persian and translating religious texts into it. So, the oldest translations of Sahifah into Persian can be traced back to this period.

Marhūm Āghā Buzurg Tehranī cites five translations that belong to this period in his book *al-Dhari'ah*.² Two of these translations are anonymous. These are:

1. Translation of Sahifah by a group of scholars. This translation was completed in the year 1649 and a copy of it is present in the treasury of Āstān-i Quds-i Razavī in the handwriting of Khurram Ali Ansari. The author of *al-Dhari'ah* has seen another copy with Shaykh 'Abbās Qummī.
2. Translation of *Sahifah* from a group of scholars.
3. Translation by Āghā Husayn ibn Jamāl al-Dīn Muhammad Khānsārī (died in the year 1686). Translation of Sahifah is cited in list of books authored by Āghā Jamāl al-Dīn Khānsārī but a translation is not cited from his father.³ The author of *al-Dhari'ah* however, has attributed this translation to his father.
4. Translation of Muhammad Sālih ibn Muhammad Bāqir Rawghni Qazwini. He was a contemporary of Shaykh Hurr 'Āmilī. He first wrote a commentary in Arabic on Sahifah and then focused on a Persian commentary. When he observed that the Arabic terms used in the

¹ Muhammad Ali Majd Faqihī, *An Introductory Commentary to al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyyah*, Tr. Kazim Bhojani, pp. 55 - 69

² Āghā Buzurg Tehranī, *al-Dhari'ah*, 4: 111 & 112

³ *Fashnameh-i 'ulimit hadith*, Conference on the Khānsārī family. Fourth year, page 113.

supplications are of a difficult nature, he began to translate it into Persian. In addition to Sahīfah's translation he has translated the addenda to the Sahīfah.

5. Translation of Āghā Muhammad Hādī ibn Mawlā Muhammad Sālih Māzandarānī (died in 1708). He completed this translation in the year 1672.

Along with the afore mentioned, there are a vast number of other translations of Sahīfah.

Some of them are:

6. Translation of Muhammad Ali Chahārdahī Najafī Mudarris (died in 1915). He was a contemporary of Āghā Buzurg Tehranī.⁴

7. Translation by Sayyid Alinaqi Fayd al-Islam. This one of the most renowned translations of Sahīfah. He has also translated the Qur'dn and *Nahj al-Balāgha*. His translation is accompanied by a short commentary that is extremely precise. But its text is not very fluent and easy to read.

8. Translation by the great scholar Haj Mirzā Abū al-Hasan Sha'rānī. It is a very eloquent translation which also includes a translation of the addenda to the Sahīfah along with short explanations and annotations in the form of footnotes.

9. Rhetorical translation by the renowned orator Sayyid Sadr al-Dīn Balāghī Isfahānī.

10. Translation by Jawād Fādīl. He is a renowned writer and translator.

11. Translation by Ustād Husayni 'Amādzādih Isfahānī.

12. Translation by Husayn Ansariyan.

13. Translation by Muhsin Gharaviyān and 'Abd al-Jawād Ibrāhīmī.

14. Translation by 'Aqīqī Bakhshāyishī.

15. Translation by Ali Shīrwānī.

Translations into English

The most well-known translation of al-Sahīfah into English is the translation by William C. Chittick. There is a mention of another translations of Sahīfah in the book *al-Dharī'ah* of Āghā Buzurg Tehranī. He mentions the names of Sayyid Sarwar Husaynī and Mawlā Ahmad Ali Fūhanī⁵ as the supervisors of its publication in the year 1929. *Maktabah al-Thaqalain* Publications has printed a pocket size version of it.

Index of words

1. *Al-Mu'jam al-Mufabris li al-alfāz al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyah* (Indexed lexicon of the words of al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyah). Authored by Sayyid Ali Akbar Qarashī and printed in the year 1971.

2. *Mu'jam-i alfāz-i Sahīfah* (Sahīfah word index). Written by Ali Ansariyan which was printed along with the text of *Sahīfah* by the Cultural Department of the embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran in Syria.

Content Index

⁴ Āghā Buzurg Tehranī, *al-Dharī'ah*, vol. 4, page 112.

⁵ The correct name is Mūhānī as mentioned in the preface of the said translation.

Only one such index exists. It was written by Muhammad Husayn Muzaffar in Arabic under the title *Al-dalil ilā mamdu'āt al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* (A guide to the themes of the Sahīfah). This book has referenced nineteen major themes, under each of which, there are other subthemes. The nineteen themes are: Unity of God, Prophet-hood, Imāmat, Résurrection, Islam, Angels, Moral traits, Acts of devotional worship, Invocations and supplications, Politics, Economics, Man, Creation, Society, Knowledge, Time, History, Health and Military.

Lexicon

Since the Safavid era many books have been written to define and explain the words of al-Sahīfah. Some of them are:

1. *Al-'Azhār al-latīfah fī sharh mufradāt al-Sahīfah* by Sayyid Muhammad Rida ibn al-Hasan al-Husayni al-A'rajī al-Hillī written in the year 1723. He has also made note of the differences in the manuscripts and the narrations of al-Sahīfah in his book.
2. *Ta'liqāt alā al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah* by Mullā Muhsin Fayd Kāshānī (died in 1680). This has only a number of marginal footnotes pertaining to the vocabulary present in the book. Āl al-Bayt Institute published a new rectified edition in 1986.
3. *Sharh lughāt sahfah qarashī* by Sayyid Ali Akbar Qarashī Armawī the author of *Ahsān al-Hadīth* and *Qāmūs Qurān*. It was published in the year 1953.
4. *Qāmūs al-Sahīfah* by Sayyid Abi al-Fadl Husaynī completed in the year 1969. It is arranged in alphabetical order. The author has utilized 72 sources in his compilation. It is also a lexicon.
5. *Farhang-i Sahīfah Sajjādiyyah* by Mansūr Khaksār. It is a Persian translation, the second edition of which was published by *Nubūgh* Publications in the year 1918 in Qum. The words of the lexicon are categorized in alphabetical order [rather than their order in the Sahīfah].

Commentaries and Annotations

A vast number of commentaries have been written on the Sahīfah by learned men of all fields. The late Āghā Tehranī, in his book *al-Dhari'ah*, has listed fifty concise commentaries of the Sahīfah in Persian and Arabic.⁶ The oldest of them belongs to the 12th century. It should be noted that several commentaries have been written since, thus the number exceeds fifty. The following is a reference to some of them:

1. *Sharh-i Sahīfah Hillī* by Shaykh Abū Ja'far Muhammad ibn Mansūr ibn Ahmad ibn Idrīs 'Ajalī Hillī (died in 1201). It is an annotation and is the oldest known commentary.

⁶ Āghā Buzurg Tehranī, *al-Dhari'ah*, vol. 1, page 535.

2. *Al-Fawā'id al-Sharīfah*⁷ by Shaykh Taqī al-Dīn Ibrahim ibn Ali Kaf'ami author of the books *al-Misbah* and *Balad al-Amin*. (Died in 1499)
3. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i Kirkī* by Shaykh Muhaqqiq Nūr al-Dīn Abū al-Hasan Ali ibn 'Abd al-Ali Kirkī. (Died in 1533)
4. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i Zawārih'i* by Abū al-Hasan Ali ibn Hasan Zawārih'i. He is a Quranic exegete and the teacher of the renowned commentator Mulla Fathullāh Kāshānī. It was written in Persian in the year 1540.
5. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i 'Āmilī* by Shaykh 'Izz al- Dīn Husayn ibn 'Abd al-Samad Hārithi 'Āmilī (father of Shaykh Bahā'ī). It is in the form of marginal notes. (Died in 1576)
6. *Sharh-i Sabīfah* by Abū Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Mansūr Hasan ibn Shahīd Thānī author of the book *Istibsār*. (died in 1620)
7. *Hada'iq al-Sālibīn* by Muhammad ibn Husayn ibn 'Abd al-Samad Hārithi 'Āmilī famously known as Shaykh Bahā'ī (died in 1621). Other than this commentary he has annotated the *Sabīfah*. But this commentary is incomplete. The only portion available to us is *al-Hadiqah al-Hilaliyah* which is a commentary of the supplication upon sighting the new crescent of the moon.
8. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i Mir Dāmād* by Muhammad Bāqir Husaynī Astarabādī known as Muhaqqiq Dāmād. He is a renowned philosopher, and teacher of Mullā Sadrā Shīrāzī. This commentary has taken a philosophical approach. It also deals with its chain of narrations, and a lexical and syntactical explanation. It also contains a helpful discussion on astronomy. It was previously only available in a lithographical form that contained annotations by Sayyid Ni'matull al Jazā'irī. However, it was published in the year 1985 in Isfahan [in book form] through the efforts of Sayyid Mahdi Rajā'ī.
9. *Al-Nukat al-Latīfah* by Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn ibn Muhammad Ali Tārīhī Najafī (died in 1674) the author of the book *Majma' al-Bahrayn*.
10. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i Mashhadī* by Mirza Muhammad ibn Muhammad Ridā Mashhadī. He also authored a Quranic commentary named *Kanẓ al-Daqā'iq* and he was a contemporary of Shaykh Hurr al-'Āmilī. He started writing it in the year 1680.
11. *Sharh-i Sabīfah* by Shaykh Ali ibn Shaykh Zayn al-'Ābidīn ibn Shaykh Muhammad ibn Shaykh Hasan ibn Shahīd al-Thānī, known as Shaykh Ali Saghīr. It is a detailed commentary of *Sabīfah*. Its layout is similar to that of *Majma' al-Bayan*. Each section begins with the

⁷ The late Āghā Buzurg Tehranī in volume 13 of his *al-Dhari'ah* has mentioned the name of this book as *Al-Fawā'id al-Tarīfah*. However, Kaf'ami in his book *Balad al-amin* has mentioned the name of this book to be *Al-fawā'id al-sharīfah* and the book *Al-Fawa'id al-Tarīfah* is commentary by Mulla Muhammad Taqī Majlisī.

supplication itself and then continues with an explanation of the terms present in it, followed by a commentary. The author completed it in the year 1685.

12. *Sharh-i Sahīfah-i Mirza Rafi‘a* by Sayyid Amīr Rafi‘ al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Haydar Husaynī Tabātabā‘ī Nā‘īnī known as Mirza Rafi‘a He belonged to Shāh Safi’s era and was a student of Shayk Bahā‘ī and teacher of ‘Allāmah Majlisī (died in 1687).

13. *Sharh-t Sahīfah-i Abd al Bāqī* by ‘Abd al-Bāqī thattat Tabrīzi. Citing a quote from *Kitāb al-Riyād* the author of *al-Dhari‘ah* says it is a comprehensive Sufi commentary.

14. *Al-Fawā'id al-Tarīfah* is commentary by Mullā Muhammad Taqī Majlisī father of ‘Allāmah Majlisī (died in 1659).

15. *Al-Farā'id al-Tarīfah* is an incomplete Arabic commentary by ‘Allāmah Majlisī (died in 1699).

16. *Sharh-i farsī-i Allāmah Majlisī*. This commentary only expands on the difficult areas in the Sahīfah.

17. *Riyad al-Sālikīn* by Sadr al-Dīn al-Sayyid Ali Khan ibn Nizām al-Dīn Madanī Shīrāzī (died in 1708). This the most renowned and the most comprehensive commentary of the Sahīfah. It is divided into 54 sections. Most of the later commentaries have been influenced by it.

18. *Sharh-i Sahīfah* by Ali ibn Shaykh Abū Ja‘far Muhammad ibn Jamāl al-Dīn Abū Mansūr Hasan ibn Zayn al-Dīn al-Shahīd al-Thānī, writer of the book *al-Durr al-Manthūr* (died in 1692).

19. *Sharh-i Sahīfah-i Balāghī* by Shaykh Hasan ibn ‘Abbas ibn Muhammad Ali Balāghī Najafī, author of the book *Tanqīh al-Miqāl*. It is a two-volume commentary which he started writing in the year 1693.

20. *Sharh-i Sahīfah-i Fatūnī* by Abu al-Hasan ibn Muhammad Tahir ibn ‘Abd al-Hamīd Fatūnī Banātī ‘Āmilī Isfahānī (died in 1727). He has also authored another commentary named *Mirāt a-Anwār*.

21. *Riyād al-Ābidīn* written by Badī’ Harandi in Persian.

22. *Sharh-i Sahīfah-i Kāshānī* written by Mullā Habīb Allah ibn Ali Madad Kashānī.

23. *Sharh-i Sahīfah-i Lahījī* by Mirza Hasan ibn ‘Abd al-Razzāk Lahījī, author of the books *Sham‘ al-Yaqīn* and *Ayīnīh-i Hikmat*. It consists of three volumes but is incomplete.

24. *Riyād al-‘Ārifīn* or *Rawdah al-‘Ārifīn* by Mawla Muhammad Istahabānātī Shīrāzī.

25. *Nūr al-Anwār* by Sayyid Ni‘mat Allah Jazā‘irī Tastarī (died in 1700) which was published in the year 1898. It is one of the well-known commentaries of the Sahīfah and it is a summarized version of a more detailed commentary of his.

26. *Sharh-i kabīr Jazā‘irī*. This is different from the commentary *Nūr al-Anwār*.

27. *Sharh-i Sahifah-i Sabewārī* by Mīrzā Ibrahim ibn Muhammd Ali Sabzwārī, renowned as Wuthūq al-Hukamā (died in 1938). It is a mystical commentary in Persian accompanied by a lexicon style commentary.

28. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i Shirāzī* by Sayyid Muhammad Shirāzī, from the contemporary scholar. It is a single volume commentary that was written in Karbala.

29. *Sharh-i Sabīfah-i Mughniyah* authored by Muhammad Jawād Mughniyah. It is a concise, fluent, and contemporary commentary.

Completions to the Text or Mustadrak

Only a portion of Imam’s supplications are compiled in the current Sahīfah. Innumerable supplications are in books of traditions and supplications. Therefore, in the recent centuries many traditionalists developed compilations containing the remaining supplications.

Shaykh Āghā Buzurg Tehranī in his book *al-Dharī‘ah* writes: ‘Other Sahīfahs have also been compiled that contain supplications that are not in *al-Sahīfah al-Kamilah* (also known as the first Sahīfah). There are eight such compilations. They are named the second Sahīfah respectively till the eighth⁸. He has only made note of six of these compilations in the fifteenth volume of his book.⁹

1. *al-Sahīfah al-Sajadiyyah al-Thāniyah*, the Second Sahīfah. This was compiled by the renowned traditionalist Shaykh Hurr ‘Āmilī (Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, author of the *Wasā’il al-Shī‘ah*). It contains 60 supplications from the Imam. Unfortunately, he failed to cite their sources. These sources are however cited in a latter compilation *al-Sahīfah al-Jāmi‘ah*. Āghā Buzurg Tehranī says, ‘Shaykh. Hurr ‘Āmilī collected these supplications from the primary source books¹⁰ that were in his possession-and he deemed reliable. He has made note of this in the footnotes of the book.’¹¹

He completed its compilation in the month of Ramadan, in the year 1643. Its original manuscript with the marginal notes is available in Mir Hamid Husayn’s library in India. It

⁸ Āghā Buzurg Tehranī, *al-Dharī‘ah*, vol. 13, page 340.

⁹ Ibid, vol. 15, pages 20, 21.

¹⁰ Editor: These were compilations of traditions from the Infallible that were compiled by their companions during their lifetime. They were later collected and compiled into major compilations such as the four primary books.

¹¹ Ibid, v. 15, p. 20.

was printed for the first time in Bombay without the marginal notes in the year 1311. Thereafter Sayyid Muhsin Āmilī — author of *A'yan al-Shī'ah* and *al-Sahīfah al-Sajjadiyyah al-Khāmisah* — rectified its mistakes by adding footnotes exposing the complex terms and phrases in it. A pocket size annotated version was published in Egypt in the year 1904.

In the year 1977 an offset copy of the Egyptian print was published in Iran by Maktab al-Thaqalayn. The fifteen whispered prayers (*Munājāt khamsatah 'ashar*) attributed to Imam Sajjād are also collected in it.

It is necessary to note that the author of *al-Dharī'ah* says, 'Some contemporary scholars have related to me that they have come across the Sahīfah compiled by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ali Harfūshī, a contemporary of Hurr Āmilī. He died forty years before Shaykh Hurr Āmilī. Based on this, the Sahīfah compiled by Shaykh Hurr Āmilī would be the Third Sahīfah.'¹²

Shaykh Hurr named his book the second Sahīfah because he was unaware of such a compilation by Shaykh Harfūshī.

2. *al-Sahīfah al-Sajjadiyyah al-Thalīthah*, the Third Sahīfah compiled by Mirza 'Abd Allah Afandī Isfahānī, author of *Riyād al-'Ulamā'*. He was a student of 'Allāmah Majlisī and a contemporary of Hurr Āmilī. The book is classified into two sections and contains an exceptional introduction.

The first section comprises of 21 supplications which belonged to the original *al-Sahīfah al-Kāmilah* but were omitted. This was his main purpose in compiling this book.

The second part comprises supplications that are not in the first or second Sahīfah. The section contains 32 supplications, giving the entire book a total of 53 supplications. Unlike the second Sahīfah, he has cited the source for each supplication.

The longest whispered prayer attributed to Imam Sajjād (a) named *al-Munājāt al-Injiliyyah al-Tawilah* is narrated in it.

3. *al-Sahīfah al-Sajjadiyyah al-Rābi'ah*, the Fourth Sahīfah compiled by Mirzā Husayn Nūrī author of *Mustadrak al-Wasā'il* (died in 1902). It contains several supplications not in the previous Sahīfahs. It contains 77 supplications. Approximately half of these are related to the days of the Holy month of Ramadan.

It is fully referenced with the sources of the supplications. A pocket size version of 152 pages was published in Iran.

¹² Ibid, v.15, pp. 19 & 20.

4. *al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah al-Khāmisah*, the Fifth Sahīfah compiled by Sayyid Muhsin Amīn Āmilī, author of the renowned book *A'yān al-Shī'ah* (died in 1950). It contains all the supplications from the third and the fourth Sahīfah along with 52 other supplications that are not in the other Sahīfahs. There is a total of 182 supplications in it.

He has cited the sources of all the supplications. He has also made note of the variations in the manuscripts in brackets. A pocket size version was published in Damascus in the year 1911 and later an offset version was printed by *Maktab al-Imām Amīr al-mu'minīn* in Isfahan.

5. *al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah al-Sādisah*, the sixth Sahīfah compiled by 'Allāmah Muhammad Sālih Mazandarānī Hā'irī. Neither its manuscript is available, nor has it been published. The only evidence of its existence is a note made by the author of *al-Dharī'ah*.¹³

6. *al-Sahīfah al-Sajjādiyyah al-Jamī'ah*, the Comprehensive Sahīfah. It is a compilation that contains the original *al-Sahīfah al-Kāmilah* up until the fifth Sahīfah. It was compiled by Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Bāqir Abtāhī Isfahānī. It was published in one volume in the year 1990.

There are several distinct features in these compilations. Some of them are as follows:

- a) Its text is carefully corrected and compared with different manuscripts, books from which the supplications were quoted and other reliable books of supplications. Differences in the manuscripts are also pointed out.
- b) It contains an exposition of difficult words and phrases in the footnotes and endnotes.
- c) The authenticity of *al-Sahīfah al-kāmilah* is demonstrated in detail. It also contains a detailed discussion pertaining to its narrators.
- d) Different indexes have been added at the end of the book which include an index of Quranic verses, an index of the supplications, subject index, and sources of the supplications.

But the order of supplications in it is different from *al-Sahīfah al-Kāmilah*. The order in it is based on the subject index at the end of the book.

¹³ Ibid, v. 15, p. 21.