

Ash-Sharif Ar-Radi - The Compiler Of Nahj Al-Balaghah

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This text depicts the 47 years of life of Sayyid ash–Sharif ar–Radi and the events that led to the compilation of Nahj ul–Balaghah.

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Translator's Introduction

“In the Name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful”

In one of his elegiac poems praising Sayyid ush/Shuhada (the Lord of Martyrs) Imam al–Husayn (‘a) [1](#) Sayyid Radi, writes:

"By recitals of these praises and elegiac verses can I elevate your exaltedness and grandeur? Because your eminence and dignity is like the highest peaks of mountains, while I am like someone, sitting at the bottom in a plain desert."

For someone like me trying to write a few lines for the introduction, the above analogy also holds true. Because Sayyid Radi is the perfect manifestation of faith, knowledge, piety, efforts, and endeavors shining like a bright star upon the horizon, while I am like someone who possesses absolutely nothing; fallen under a deep dark well filled with intense darkness all around. Sayyid Radi was some one that Shaykh al–Mufid – born in 336 A.H in Baghdad during the coronation year of Moezod–dowleh, founder

of Ale-Buyeh dynasty – the most eminent scholar and great *marja at-taqlid* of Shi'i world sees Fatimah al-Zahra ('a)² in a dream in which she asked the Shaykh to teach her two children Hasan and al-Husayn.

The interpretation of this surprising dream came true the very next morning when Sayyid Radi's mother Fatimah holding the hands of her two children Radi and Murtada approached the Shaykh in the mosque requesting him to accept the tutorship of her two children. The Shaykh knew that these two are not the ordinary children rather are the especially recommended ones and beloved ones of the lady of light Fatimah al-Zahra' ('a) the daughter of the Noble Messenger (S).

Therefore, it is evident that Sayyid Radi possessed a pious and noble lineage and since his childhood was being trained for undertaking a great mission– the compilation of *Nahj al Balaghah*³ (the Path of Eloquence). Of course, someone who was destined for such a sacred mission, certainly possesses higher spiritual stations and close association with the Ahl al Bayt⁴, the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S)

I wish, maybe, this insignificant work of translating Sayyid Radi' s biography from Persian into English for the benefit of Islamic International Community, might create, however a weak link and distant association for me with Sayyid Radi's lofty spirit. And if God-Almighty – who records righteous endeavors⁵ accepts, it might become a little provision for my journey towards the eternal abode, insha Allah.

Apart from this personal factor, the Baqir al-Uloom Research Institute, Qum has sponsored a project for publication of biographies of great learned Islamic scholars, named: “*Meeting with Pious Series*”. At a time of intense cultural onslaught, these series indeed could be regarded as a valuable cultural souvenir for the Islamic International Community. The books of these series written in Persian are the outcome of painstaking efforts of a group of religious students and research scholars from the Religious Learning Center of Qum. I was persuaded by Mr. Ansariyan and Prof. Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini to undertake the responsibility of English translation of at least few of these books, considering the critical needs of the new generations of Muslims throughout the world, who should be made familiar with these perfect models of Islam. The Holy Qur'an says:

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ

"Among the slaves of God only the group of scholars are humble and obedient towards him." (Surah al-Fatir, 35:28).

The Holy Prophet (S) prayed:

"Oh God! Bless my successor". He repeated this sentence three times. When asked who was supposed to be his successor.

"Those who will come after me, will quote my Hadith (Narration) and (Sunnah) (traditions), and will teach

them to the people." Replied the Holy Prophet (S)

اللهم أرحم خلفائي - ثلاث مرات - قيل يا رسول الله و من خلفائك؟ قال : الذين يأتون من بعدى و يروون عنى
أحاديثى و سنتى فيعلمونها الناس من بعدى

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (‘a)⁶ said:

"Indeed, the scholars are the successors of the Prophets"

ان العلماء ورثة الأنبياء...

Imam Khomeini (ra) had said:

"History would witness that after the death of the Prophet of Islam (S) till now the only group who had guarded the people from unrestrained nonsense or idle talks were scholars."

The Prophet of Islam (S) had said:

"The ink of the scholars was weighted with the martyr's blood and was found heavier"⁷

وزن حبر العلماء بدم الشهداء فرجح

There is a narration quoted from Imam Ja' far al-Sadiq (‘a):

"On the Day of Resurrection God-Almighty will order all the people to be gathered at one place, and then their deeds will be appraised. The ink of the pens of scholars will be compared with the martyr's blood and will be found superior"⁸

القيمة جمع اذا كان يوم عز وجل الناس في صعيد واحد و وضعت الله مداد العلماء فيرجح مداد العلماء مع
الموازن، فتوزن دماء الشهداء على دماء الشهداء

Therefore, in the light of the above-mentioned traditions about the importance of scholars in Islam, "Meeting with Pious" Series deals with the publication of their histories, because these personalities are the perfect models of the life-giving, refreshing, dynamic, and human building school of Islam. It also shows the greatness of Islam, which has trained such towering unique personalities in his lap and had presented them to the humanity.

Identification of Islam directly depends upon knowing these bright faces, because these are the teachers of Islam. We must identify Islam through their words, writings, and practical deeds. These were the

pioneer researchers who with their painstaking lives full of efforts and endeavors, by tolerating all sort of sufferings and deprivations, abstracted the most delicate sublime spiritual realities from the original source – the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah (traditions) of the Holy Prophet (S) and Ahl al-Bayt ('a). And after supplementing their findings with their rational thinking and jurisprudential talents by using the strength of their powerful pen produced precious books and presented them as practical guidelines manuals to the Islamic Ummah.

The original Persian book "*Sayyid Radi Dar Sahili Nahj alBalaghah*" written by Muhammad Ibrahim Nejad – the basis of our English translation – covers the life of one of the most famous and distinguished Islamic scholar (Muhammad bin Husayn ibn Ahmad famous as Ash-Sharif ar-Radi). There will be hardly any one among Muslims and especially among Shi'is who have not heard his name. Of course, the most important factor behind his fame is his outstanding accomplishment of compilation of Nahj al-Balaghah (the Path of Eloquence), which after the Holy Qur'an is considered as one of the most glorious one among the Islamic books.

The most important special features of Sayyid Radi's personality which was nourished from the rich Islamic culture were his enlightenment, broad-mindedness, and free unrestrained thinking. Sayyid Radi from the beginning of his life – in accordance with the teachings of Imams ('a) of the Prophet's (S) Ahl al-Bayt, who said:

خذ الحكمة اني كانت

*"Acquire Wisdom – Wherever it might be"*⁹

and

الحكمة ضالة المؤمن فخذ الحكمة ولو من أهل النفاق

*"Wisdom is the lost property of a believe¹ therefore, acquire it even if it is found among non-believers."*¹⁰

did not limit himself only to Shi'i religious learning centers rather attended lectures of both Shi'i and Sunni learned scholars of his time and participated in debates and discussions in their meetings. It was due to these special characteristics that he had many of non-Shi'i friends and affectionate including among non-Muslims who remembered him with utmost respect.

This introduction will remain incomplete without mentioning a few words about the person who was the first perfect example of the teachings of the Noble Messenger (S) the Amir ul-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful) Imam Ali ('a)¹¹ –whose sermons, letters, orders, and maxims have been compiled in the Nahj al-Balaghah. Following is a brief glimpse of his life:

"While he was holding the Roman Empire in one hand and the kingdom of Persia into another; silver and gold was dispatched for him from the farthest parts of his reign from Egypt to Khorasan. [12](#) Let us look his life on the last night. What was his power? The last of his life before he was struck with a sword the next morning. A special father like Ali ('a) is the guest of a special daughter in her house for breaking the fast in the holy month of Ramadan [13](#) As the time for fast breaking nears, a piece of linen or tablecloth is spread on the ground. What was served for the dinner? By God! It will shake up the entire East and West. There was a single piece of barley bread, some milk, and salt. He looked at her daughter's face and said: 'when did you ever see your father sitting on a tablecloth containing two items for dinner?

The daughter got the point, realized her mistake, and suddenly wanted to remove the salt. But Ali ('a) asked her to remove the milk and put the salt back on the tablecloth. On that last night of his life, he breaks his fast by eating a barley bread with salt, so that in the vast kingdom ruled by him, even the most wretched one of his subjects could not claim that Ali consumes better food than available to them. Some other time he had only a piece of barley bread for dinner, circumstances arise whereby he distributes it among seven hungry ones so that nothing is left for dinner for his own household. He comes out and stands at the gate of mosque raising his sword and said:

"With this sword I participated in holy wars for the sake of God–Almighty, and therefore, have a liking for it. Is there someone who would purchase it from me, because tonight I have nothing in my home for the dinner?" When he expired, his son goes on the pulpit and said: 'Father is gone without leaving a single Dinar or Dirham, leaving a debt of 700,000 Dirhams."

This is Ali's life, his religion, and his constitution. It will shake up the heart of an atheist or renegade. This is the life which is the essence of truth. People must be told about Ali's deed and sayings. [14](#)

The above–mentioned abstract from the speech of Ayatullah Vahidi Khorasani is nothing more than a tiny drop from the infinite ocean as far as the introduction of Imam Ali's personality is concerned. Scholars and writers both Shi'a and Sunni both Muslim and non–Muslim – have written more than a thousand books about his character. Imam Khomeini (ra) in a declaration issued from Najaf on October 31, 1971, in condemnation of the Shah's plans to impose on the nation the celebration of two–and–a half millennial of monarchy speaks about Imam Ali ('a) as follows:

They should commemorate his justice, the fact that he was a part of his people, that his standard of living was lower than that of others while his spirit rose ever higher above the horizons. One should commemorate a ruler who, when he hears that an anklet has been stolen from a non–Muslim woman living under the protection of Islam, wishes to die of shame; who, when he thinks that someone may be going hungry in his realm, suffers hunger voluntarily himself.

One should commemorate a rule that uses the sword to protect its people and protect them from fear. But as for a regime founded on oppression and thievery whose only aim is to satisfy its own lustful desires – only when it is overthrown can the people celebrate and rejoice. [15](#)

Imam Ali's outstanding character is beyond description, and the virtues of gateway of the city of knowledge are innumerable, however as a least contribution to further introduce this most perfect exemplar of prophet's teaching, to the readers I have translated from Persian poetic verses or hymns (*Munajat*) of some most famous Iranian mystic poets in Chapter 51 of this translation.

Since, the completion of this translation coincides with the birth of the Holy Prophet (S) and Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('a), which is celebrated in the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as in other Islamic countries as the week of unity and solidarity of Muslim Ummah. Therefore, it will be fitting to dedicate this translation work to all those whose hearts bleed for the sufferings of Muslims and those who are sincerely striving with their best for achieving the difficult and complex task of Islamic Unity. At this critical historic juncture when the combined forces of polytheism and blasphemy have joined the world arrogance in order to prevent the Islamic renaissance, and as the supreme leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatullah Al-Uzma Khamenei, while addressing the guest from Islamic Countries said that Islamic Unity is a matter of life and death for the Islamic Ummah.

I express my grateful appreciation to Mr. Ansariyan, Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini, Hujjatul Islam Sayyid Murtada Saheh-Fasoul, for their valuable suggestions, guidance, and encouragement. Sincere thanks are due to some of my friends for taking the pains of editing the text, and who out of modesty prefer to remain discreetly in the background. I am sincerely indebted to my wife Fatimah Razavi for proof reading and Mr. Soulat Parviz for his diligence and quality work in typesetting.

I apologize to my readers for possible errors and omissions and welcome their suggestions and comments.

Sayyid Husayn Alamdar

August 15, 1995

Rabi-al-awwal 17, 1416

Tehran

1. Imam Husayn ('a): The younger son of Ali by Fatimah was born in Medina on Thursday 3rd Sha'ban 4 A.H; like his brother he lived most of his life quietly in Medina under the watchful eyes of the caliph's officials and spies. When Mu'awiyah's son Yazid became caliph, he demanded allegiance from al-Husayn, who refused to give it. Finally, alHusayn felt it necessary to go into battle against Yazid to protest against the injustices which were being carried out in the name of Islam. He and a small group of followers including most of his immediate family were cruelly massacred at Karbala. The day of his martyrdom 10th Muharram 61 A.H. (Ashura) has become the most solemn day of the Islamic calendar, marked by processions and universal mourning. He is buried in Karbala in Iraq.
2. Fatimah al-Zahra' ('a): The beloved daughter of the Prophet from Khadijah, Fatimah was born in Mecca on Friday, 20th Jumada aththani in the fifth year after the declaration of the prophethood (615 A.D.). She was so loved by the Prophet that he called her "a part of me." In 2/624 she married Ali ibn Abu Talib from whom she bore three sons, Hasan, Husayn and Muhsin (who died stillborn), and two daughters, Zaynab and Umm Kulthum. She was at the Prophet's bedside at the moment of his death and fought for her husband's succession to the caliphate. She died at the age of 18 in Medina on 14th

Jummaada al-ula ' 11 A.H. (623 AD); and is buried in the graveyard of Jannatu ul-Baqi in Medina. It is said that when she was born the whole sky became illuminated; therefore, she is called al-Zahra', the "Radiant." She is the mother of the Shi'i Imams and is considered the most holy of Muslim women.

3. Nahj ul-Balaghah: The Path of Eloquence is a book containing sermons, letters, orders and some of the sayings of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib ('a) as compiled by Sayyid Radi. These were so highly valued and venerated in the Islamic world that within a century of his death they were taught and read as the last word on the philosophy of Monotheism, as the best lectures of character building, as exalted sources of inspiration, as persuasive sermons towards piety and as guiding beacons towards truth and justice. These sermons are the most convincing discourses on the spiritual values of Islam and contain the most awe-inspiring discussions about the attributes of God.

4. Ahl-al Bayt ('a): It refers to the immediate descendants of a family or such a family of the same house or bayt. In this compound form, Ahl al-Bayt is used in the Holy Qur'an especially in reference to the immediate family of Muhammad (S). In Verse 33-33 we hear:

"And God only wishes to remove from you (all kind of uncleanness, O members of the family of Muhammad) and thoroughly purify you." (33:33).

All the commentators of the Holy Qur'an are unanimous in the opinion that the term Ahl al-Bayt in this verse refers to Muhammad's daughter Fatimah, his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali, and his two beloved grandsons, Hasan and Husayn.

5. In references of the following Verse:

Whoever works any act of righteousness and has faith, his endeavour will not be rejected. We shall record it in his favour. (The Holy Qur'an, 21:94).

6. Imam Ja 'far al-Sadiq ('a): The sixth Imam, Ja 'far, known as al Sadiq ('a) was born in Medina on Monday, 17th Rabi-ul-awwal 83 A.H. The son of the fifth Imam, he lived in an increasingly favorable climate and was able to teach openly in Medina. Large numbers of scholars gathered around him to learn, including such famous Sunni figures as Abu Hanifa, the founder of the one of the four Sunni schools of law. Towards the end of Imam Ja'far's life severe restrictions were placed upon his activities, as a result of growing Shi'i unrest. More traditions are recorded from him than from all the other Imams together. He is so important for Twelve-Imam Shi'i law that it is named the Jafri School after him. He is buried in the Baqi' cemetery in Medina.

Ja'far's fame for religious learning was great, greater than that of his father or any other Twelve Imam except for Ali Ibn Abi Talib ('a) himself. Perhaps the earliest historical presenting Ja'far as one of the most respected and highly esteemed personalities of his epoch, and as having profound knowledge and learning, is Ya'qubi's statement that it was customary for scholars who related anything from him to say "The Learned One informed us".

Even the famous jurist of Madina, the Imam Malik b. Anas, is reported to have said, when quoting Ja'far's traditions: "The Thiqa (truthful) Ja'far b. Muhammad himself told me that...." Similar compliments for Ja'far are attributed to the Imam Abu Hanifa, who is also reported to have been his pupil. Al-Sadiq's ('a) knowledge was great in religion and culture, he was fully informed in philosophy, he attained great in the world, and he abstained entirely from lusts. He lived in Medina long enough to greatly profit the sect that followed him, and to give his friends the advantage of the hidden sciences. He died at the age of 65 in Medina on Monday 25th Shawwal 148 A.H, poisoned by al-Mansur ad-Dawaniqi, the Abbasid Caliph.

7. Nahj al-Fasahah p. 641.

8. Safinat al-Bihar vol 2 p. 22.

9. Nahj al-Balaghah, Hikmat 79 p. 481.

10. Nahj al-Balaghah Hikmat 80, p. 481.

11. The Commander of the Faithful, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a): Was the first perfect exemplar of the teachings of the Most Noble Messenger (S). 'Ali was raised by him from early childhood and followed him like a shadow until the very end of the latter's life. He was like a moth before the prophetic flame; the final moment when he was separated from the Most Noble Messenger (S) was when he embraced his corpse and laid it to rest. 'Ali ('a) was he first person after the Most Noble Messenger (S) to approach spiritual rituals in the manner of philosophical reflection, that is, by free exercise of reason. He used many technical terms and laid out and organized the rules of Arabic grammar in order to protect the Holy Qur'an from copyists' errors. The exact scholarship, spiritual culture and consideration of ethical, social, political, and even mathematical problems shown in 'Ali's ('a) discourses, letters and other documents that have reached us are astonishing.

The wealth of these documents makes 'Ali ('a) the best-known individual among Muslims to have a full realization of the sublime goals of the Holy Qur'an and the critical and practical concepts of Islam as they should be realized. They testify to the soundness of the Prophetic saying, "I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate". Furthermore, he combined this knowledge with action. In short, 'Ali's outstanding character is beyond description, and his virtues are innumerable. Never in history has someone's character drawn the attention of the world's scholars and thinkers to such an extent. R Campbell, Allamah Sayyed Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i, *Islamic Teachings* pp. 123–127.

[12.](#) Khorasan. The Eastern province of Iran.

[13.](#) Ramadan: is a month in Arabic Lunar Calendar which is a time of obligatory fasting for Muslims, the word Ramadan is derived from the root ramdah which indicates 'heat' and 'restlessness' and it is said to signify the hardships of a fast like thirst for example. A hadith from the Prophet says Ramadan burn he sins and faults as fire burn woods. Holy Ramadan is God's banquet, spread out for all of His creatures without the difference of class, caste, ranks, race, language and geographical barriers. It is not just a month or mere rituals, as many may disbelieve, but on the contrary signifies the very peak of spiritual purification, which Islam has perfected.

[14.](#) Lecture of Ayatullah Al-Uzma Vahidi Khorasani at the Religious Learning Center at Qum on Jan 28, 1995.

[15.](#) Hamid Algar, *Islam and Revolution* p. 200.

Preface

We are not the pioneer wayfarers on the life's highway; before us many caravans had already passed through it. Therefore, the sweet and bitter experiences gained by others could be extremely useful for making arrangements of our current journey. They were able to identify their path and method for movement under the sun of Divine illumination and the able guidance of prophets. To repeat, the bitter experiences of others, in our own lives certainly is not a desirable thing rather we should search for those righteous travelers who were familiar with this path. We must learn lessons from the pains and endeavors of the pioneers to move forward wisely and conscientiously on this path.

The younger generations, who are just starting this journey, more than others require to learn about the great pious Islamic personalities. They must consider and analyze the benevolent careers of these pioneers and should learn how to receive blessing for succeeding in the life's struggle.

These saintly figures manifestations of faith, knowledge, and freedom – are like the traffic signs on the road. The position and resolution taken by these Divine scholars, exalted wise jurists, and decorated ascetics, act as bright illuminated object which breaks the darkness of night and clears the dust and other obstacles from our path. They warn the wayfarers from the dangers of thieves' bandits, narrowness of the road, falling of the rocks, and dangerous turns etc.

Therefore, it is not beyond wisdom, that the *Holy Qur'an* – God's lost revelation – continuously repeats the life stories of the most exalted Divine prophets, such as Abraham ('a), Ismail ('a), Noah ('a), Hud ('a), Salih ('a), Moses ('a), Job ('a), and Muhammad (S), as well as points out the characteristics of immigrant, helpers, and disciples; because it wants to teach the believers the do's and don'ts of the life

by introducing them as models of perfection. Thus, it trains the believers for performance of Divine righteous obligations by reciting for the sweet stories of the legend.

"Meeting with the Pious" Series – a precious souvenir for the Islamic Ummah at this time of intense rural onslaught by the enemies of Islam -- is the outcome the painstaking efforts of a group of students from the Theological Learning Center of Qum, who participated in the historical cultural research project, sponsored by the Baqir alUloom Research Institute at Qum.

The institute invited all the thinkers, writers, and intellectuals to participate in this project. Simultaneously all the writer-scholars from the Theological Learning Centers were approached for introducing these great Shi'i scholars to the new generations. There is a critical need that the children of Islam should be made familiar with these perfect models of faith, knowledge, struggle, piety, efforts, and endeavors.

Hujjat-ul-Islam Javad Mahmood Mohadasi an eminent scholar volunteered himself to lead this caravan, and a group of scholars and religious students joined him for this pilgrimage. The souvenir of the cultural pilgrimage consisted compilation of political social, and educational biographies of more than fifty great righteous personalities, some of them have already been published by the Islamic propagation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while the remaining are being readied for publication.

We hope, may God accept pilgrimage, and bless the younger generations with opportunities to become familiar with these righteous and saintly personalities, and may unite this caravan with the esteemed and righteous on Day of Resurrection. In the end, we look forward to receive valuable comments from respected on the following address:

Baqir al-Uloom Research Institute

P.O. Box 37185 – 135, QUM

Islamic Republic Of Iran.

Foreword

To undertake in-depth research regarding various parameters of the biographies of great and famous righteous personalities if Islamic history is tantamount to instantaneously receiving the reward (i.e., the provision of journey) from those who have discovered the absolute truth. For all of us, in order to succeed in life's struggle, it is a must to follow the footprints of those true perfect models who have already completed their journeys with distinction. We must try to identify those exalted models of perfection who received Divine blessings and prosperity, gained access to the highest stations of spirituality and knowledge, and defended the Islamic values and human dignity. OF course, such

awareness makes the journey easy for everybody and especially for the younger generations who are always anxiously looking for such ideals.

The Islamic world, Muslims and school of building perfect human beings – the school of *Holy Qur'an* and Prophet's *Ahl al-Bayt (progeny)* do not have any shortage in this field and may proudly present plenty of examples of most decorated models of perfection. It is our duty to undertake a thorough research regarding the theoretical and practical aspects of their live styles, as well as to try to hidden mysteries of their success. By following their footprints and traces we must learn the logic of how-to-live and what-to-be from their biographies.

Sayyid Radi was one of these most celebrated models of Qur'anic-School who introduced the most ideal model of perfect human being to the world community through his knowledge and pious deeds; thus, guided all seekers of the cherished sacred ideals toward their desired stations.

He was a rare Divine pious scholar who with courage and sincerity, revived the most sublime realities, knowledge, and rich learning hidden in the sermons of Imam Ali ('a). By undertaking the most blessed act of compilation of *Nahj al-Balaghah* – The Charter of Perfection and Prosperity – made his name and memory immortal in this history forever.

The present book would enable the younger generations to become familiar with the benevolent life of a great learned scholar from the Prophet's family, and to see closely the sincere endeavors and pains undertaken by this Divine scholar. Efforts have been made to make the least use of the difficult topics and Arabic texts throughout the book, and in cases where their inclusion was essential, only bibliographic references have been mentioned; so that the dearest children of Islam together with Sayyid Radi, may advance themselves and become acquainted with *Nahj al-Balaghah's* culture.

A Star Upon The Baghdad's Horizon

It was not yet a century passed away from disappearance of sun, from the sky of Imam¹ and Wilayah² (i.e. Imam Mahdi A.S.)³, that a bright star appeared on the horizon of Baghdad, and with its illumination created a ray of hope in the hearts of those lovers, who were eagerly awaiting for the arrival of the hidden Imam. He was born in the year 359⁴ A.H. (939 AD) in the Shiite quarters of Karakh in Baghdad in a house full of fresh flowers, radiating the per fumes of faith, sincerity, knowledge, and action.

The newborn child was named Muhammad (the blessed one) and later on became famous as Sayyid Radi and Ash-Sharif ar-Radi He opened eyes in a religious family which had the honor of producing the rarest and most celebrated religious scholars, ascetics, pious, and saintly personalities of that period.

[1.](#) Imam: The position of leadership in religious and civil matters in the Islamic society is known as the Imamate, and its holder is known as the Imam. It is the belief of Shi'i Muslims that God Most High must have designated an Imam for the people after the death of the Most Noble Messenger (S) to uphold the culture and laws of the religion and to guide people on the way of truth.

The term imam as used in a technical sense in Shi'ism differs from the general usage of the term in Arabic, where it means "leader", or in Sunni political theory where it means the caliph himself. As used technically in Shi'ism the term refers to the person who contains himself the "Muhammadan Light" which was handed down through Fatimah, the daughter of the Blessed Prophet, and 'Ali, the first Imam, to the others, terminating with the Hidden Imam who is to appear again one day as the Mahdi. As a result of the presence of this light, the Imam is considered to be "sinless" and to possess perfect knowledge of the esoteric as well as the exoteric order.

The Imams are like a chain of light issuing forth from the "Sun of Prophecy" which is their origin, and yet they are never separated from that Sun. Whatever is said by them emanates from the same inviolable treasury of inspired wisdom. Since they are an extension of the inner reality of the Blessed Prophet, their words really go back to him. That is why their sayings are seen in the Shi'i perspective as an extension of the prophetic Hadith, just as the light of their being is seen as a continuation of the prophetic light. In Shi'i eyes, the temporal separation of the Imams from the Blessed Prophet does not at all affect their essential and inner bond with him or the continuity of the "Prophetic light" which is the source of his as well as their inspired knowledge. (Tr).

[2.](#) Wilayah: "the governance" (Wilayah) of the Imams is intrinsic to their persons, unlike that of the fuqaha; moreover, its scope is not limited to men but embraces the whole of creation. They therefore exercise "cosmic governance" (Wilayah-i takvini), in part through the performance of miracles. This form of Wilayah is common to the Imams and to the foremost of the prophets, who exercised a governmental function while also propagating a Divine message. The statement here that "no one can attain the spiritual status of the Imams, not even the cherubim or the prophets" thus carries the strict sense that the Imams are superior to those prophets whose mission lacked the dimension of governmental leadership. Concerning the different types of Wilayah, see Murtaza Mutahhari, *Vilaha va Wilyatha* (Qum 1355, sh./1975)." Hamid Algar, *Islam and Revolution* pp 156–156.

[3.](#) Imam al-Mahdi ('a): The son of Imam Hasan Askari was born in Samarra on Friday, 15th Sha'ban 255 A.H, the twelfth Imam lives in hiding under the protection and tutorship of his father until the latter's martyrdom, when by God's command he went into occultation, during period known as "lesser occultation" (al-Ghaybat as-Sughra). During this period, four special deputies in succession would answer the questions of the Shi'i and resolve their problems. After that in the year 329 A.H. the Imam went into the Greater occultation (al-Ghabat al-Kubra), until a day when by God's command he will reappear to fill the world with justice as it is now filled with oppression.

[4.](#) Al-Najoom al-Zahra', Vol. 4, p. 240.

From The Descendants Of Imam Al-Husayn ('A)

Both of his parents belonged to *Alvite-Sadat* and were the descendants of the Lord of Martyrs Imam al-Husayn ('a). From his father's side he was the fifth descendant of Seventh Imam Musa al-Kazim¹ and because of this reason Sayyid Radi was often called as Mousavi².

From his mother's side, he was the six descendants of Imam Zayn al-Abidin³ (the ornament of the pious), whose *Shajra* (family tree) has been described by Sayyid Radi's brother Sayyid Murtada (Ilm ul-Huda) as follows:

Fatimah (mother of Sayyid Murtada) daughter of Abu Muhammad, son of Husayn bin Ahmad, son of Hasan bin Ali, son of Husayn bin ‘Umar Ashraf, son of Ali bin al-Husayn. Therefore, Sayyid Radi has his lineage roots from the two blessed impeccable Imams from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S), and is a learned scholar from the descendants of the Lord of martyrs Imam al-Husayn (‘a)

1. Imam Musa al-Kazim (‘a): the son of the sixth Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq was born Abwa’ (between Mecca and Madina) on Sunday 7th Safar 128 AH. He was contemporary with four Abbasid caliphs as al-Mansur, Hadi, Mahdi, and Harun. Because of the severe oppression, the necessity of taqiyya grew more stringent, and since he was under close surveillance, he admitted only a few elect Shi’is. Finally, he was martyred – poisoned by owner of the second Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur on 25th Rajab 183 AH. He is buried in Kazimayn in Iraq.

Despite of most stringent need for caution and taqiyya, he enjoyed in promulgating the religious sciences and made many prophetic sayings available to the Shi’is, to the extent that he left more teaching on Jurisprudence than any other Imam with the exceptions of Imam al-Baqir (‘a) and al-Sadiq (‘a)

2. Ayan al-Shi’a, Vol. 9 p. 216.

3. Imam Zayn al-Abidin (‘a): The son of Imam al-Husayn by the daughter of Yazdigird the last Sassanid king of Iran was born in Medina on Saturday, 15th Jumada-ula 36 A.H. He participated in Imam al-Husayn's uprising and accompanied his father to Karbala being a tragic witness to the tragic event. After his father's martyrdom he was made captive and taken from Karbala to Kufa and from Kufa to Damascus. His speeches and protests on necessary occasions made manifest the worthiness and glory of Ahl-al-Bayt (‘a), the cruel injustice suffered by his father, and the enormities perpetuated by the Yazid's Ummayyad regime.

Imam al-Shafi considered Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn (‘a) as the most supreme jurist of all the people of Medina. His book “Al-Shaifah Al-Sajjadiyyah” represents and stands out as a profound social work of the time and a reflection of a supreme endeavour to meet the exigencies of spiritual ordeals facing the society at the time of Imam. He died at the age of 58 in Medina; poisoned by al-Walid ibn Abdi’ Malik ibn Marwan on 25th Muharram 95 A.H. and is buried in Jannat ul-Baqi Cemetery in Medina.

His Father – Abu Ahmad

Abu Ahmad Husayn bin Mousa the father of the two ever shining stars – Sayyid Murtada and Sayyid Radi – upon the sky of literature and knowledge, himself was one of the most honorable and distinguished personalities from the descendants of the Holy Prophet (S). He was a learned scholar, thinker and competent manager possessed with a unique sense of farsightedness. By practicing self-restraints and self-control in his actions and deeds, he was able to accumulate all the desired virtuous and righteous qualities within himself. During his period, he was famous for righteousness, truthfulness, faith, and sincerity and was respected by everybody.

His opinion was sought and welcomed by all sectors of public, kings and beggars’ scholars and illiterates, and elders and youngsters. For common people his opinion was tantamount to a *Fatwa* (religious decree) for all practical purposes. Because of his fame, Abu Nasr Firooz son of Ezzod-dowleh Delami famous as Bahaud-dowleh from the kings of Ale Buyeh dynasty bestowed upon him the titles of At-Tahir Al-Wahad (unique in righteous conduct) and *Dhu’ l-Manaqib* (possessor of all righteous

virtues).

Because of his ingenuity and insight, the king appointed him for important public offices such as “*Naqabati – Alviyan* (Chief of the Alvites–affairs), Chief Justice of the Supreme Court”, and “Chief of the Protocol for the Hajj Pilgrims”. Of course, discharging such higher responsibilities requires large organizations consisting of competent managers and skilled manpower in order to accomplish the tasks in an excellent manner. But because of his special talents and trust in God–Almighty, he was able to perform all these difficult tasks alone with perfection and complete satisfaction. About his performance it is quoted: He (Abu Ahmad) never accepted any difficult task unless and until he was absolutely sure and confident that he would accomplish it satisfactorily.

Apart from this, he was a man of integrity and was trusted by the great religious and worldly personalities, and the confidential letters and recommendations between Abbasids Caliphs, Ale–Buyeh kings and rulers of Damascus (ale–Hamdan) were exchanged through his good offices.

His Learned And Wise Mother – Fatimah

She was the most kind, sincere, religious, and pious lady, who had inherited the characteristics of greatness, nobility, modesty, and chastity from her exalted great grandmother – the most celebrated and exalted lady of both worlds, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (S) Fatimah al–Zahra’ (‘a). By following the path of the most exalted righteous personalities –the burning lovers who engaged themselves in humming, sensational, and confidential communication with their beloved God–Almighty in the middle of night – she was able to become enlightened in wisdom and learning.

The most prominent Shi’i scholar Shaykh al–Mufid (ra) has written a famous book *Ahkam ul–Nisa* (Religious Obligations for Women) especially at her request. The Shaykh has described her in the preface of the said book as a respected and learned lady of that time. He writes as follows:

“The honorable and learned Sayyid – Sayyid Radi’s mother – may God increase her honor, has requested me to prepare a book containing the details of all religious obligations and duties, especially related to Muslim women. I accepted her request, (may God bless her) and, had written the book.”¹

¹. Translation (Mahoo) *Nahj al–Balaghah* p. 19,20

The Victor Of Mazandaran

The family of Sayyid Radi's mother are famous as the great grandchildren of Nasir Kabir – Husayn bin abi Muhammad Atrash¹ in the books of history. He revolted against the powerful Abbasids Caliphs the Mazandaran province of Iran, and with the support of some dedicated Shi'i followers continuously fought with Samanians;² and formed an Alvite Government in the Mazandaran province by defeating the Samanian Army. It was because of his valor, dedication, and self-sacrifices that he was able to introduce the life-giving Divine School of Islam to the local Zoroastrian³ people; a majority of them finally accepted Islam. Apart from being a hero in the battlefield, he was also a distinguished learned scholar and Juristprudent who had written several literary works including his famous book *Sud-Masale* (One Hundred Problems), a commentary of which has been prepared by his great grandson Sayyid Murtada, who named it *Nasiryat*.⁴

Nasir Kabir was martyred in the year of 304 A.H. in the city of Amul, North of Iran at the age of 79 years, and was buried in a tomb with a famous dome in the same city. After his martyrdom Hasan bin Qasim famous as "Daai hii-Haq" become his successor.

¹. In one of the battle his head received a wound rendering him deaf i.e. Atrash. Because of this he is famous as Atrash

². Samanians: The Samaniyan dynasty (279–389 A.I-I.), founded by Amir Ismail ruled Khorasan province and coastal areas of Caspian Sea, their capital was Bokhara.

³. Zoroastrianism: A Persian religion founded in the 6th century B.C. by the Prophet Zoroaster, promulgated in the "Avesta", and characterized by the worship of a supreme god "Ahura Mazda" who requires men's good deeds for help in his cosmic struggle against the evil spirit Ahriman.

⁴. Shaheedani Rahe-Fazliyat. P.29

In The Life's Garden

The soothing and comfortable existence of his father Abu Ahmad and kind and warm bosom of his mother Fatimah has created an ideal and perfect family environment most suitable for rearing and developing Sayyid Radi in his most sensitive childhood years. As a duty conscientious father and possessing a unique sense of farsightedness, Abu Ahmad considered himself responsible for the future ups and downs in his children's lives.

He had rightly discovered the reality that outcome or the fruits of life (i.e. children) are like the beautiful, sweet-smelling, fragrant flowers possessed with special softness and delicacy, which could be easily faded away by a slight negligence or mistake. Therefore, Abu Ahmad never allowed himself to be negligent even for a second, in making arrangements for food, clothing, and other material requirements

as well as psychological and spiritual needs of his children.

On the other hand, his wife Fatimah possessed all the virtues and capacities of an ideal mother, capable of handling the smallest details of raising the children in an ideal manner. She played an active and important role of an ideal mother guiding the children; was always prepared to meet the bodily and spiritual requirements of the children at different sensitive stages in their lives.

Her existence was a total manifestation of comfort, love, pleasure, and sincerity. The combination of competent and strong managerial skills of his father supplemented by the pure sentiments and conscience of an ideal mother had turned the home environment into a beautiful blossoming garden, where they could witness the blooming of their life's flowers.

The True Dreams

The ancient historical city of Baghdad has witnessed plenty of sweet and bitter incidents since its birth, and each of these events has left a mark upon its facade. It would not be an exaggeration, to say that the walls of this ancient city have been raised by the bricks, each one of them representing a historical accident. Sometimes the tyranny and oppression of cruel kings covered the face of the Baghdad with the blood of innocent people. The darkness and hard-heartedness of their hearts covered the city with intense darkness, while at other occasions, the city witnessed the rising of bright sun of knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment turning the despair night of darkness into a bright sunny day; saturating the hearts of believers with joys and hopes.

Throughout these historical incidents the most important thing which attracts the attention of coming generations of researchers is the existence of refreshing, life giving, beautiful fountainheads of higher Islamic learning, which have glorified the pages of Islamic History of Fourth and Fifth Centuries. During this period, the city of Baghdad reached to its zenith in fame and greatness.

The existence of brightest stars upon the sky of knowledge and literature invited the thirsty seekers to quench their thirst for enlightenment. Because that a lot of people from the near and far off villages and cities of vast Islamic land, came to Baghdad for acquiring knowledge, and a huge number of institutions of higher learning were established during this period.

In that golden era, the sky of Baghdad full of these radiant brightest stars was indeed a thing of beauty worth to be seen; especially the period when the most eminent scholar and Jurisprudent of Shi'i – the world illuminating moon Shaykh al Mufid (R.A) [1](#) – had joined that assembly. The eminent scholar and learned Jurisprudent Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Nayman, famous as Shaykh al-Mufid (ra) established a small center of religious learning where he trained his students in Jurisprudence. With the

passage of time its fame and prestige increased day by day, and within a short period it became the largest and most prestigious religious learning center of Baghdad.

One day, the Grand Shaykh, the perfect manifestation of piety, as a daily routine was walking with quiet but firm steps towards the Bratha Mosque in Karkh locality. Throughout his walk the people stood up from their places and offered him regards and salutations. Walking with dignity, when his graceful personality reached at the entrance door of the mosque; the huge crowd of his pupils stood up from their places instantaneously, as though a piece of mountain has slid off from its position.

Walking with meaningful steps over the spread wings of angels inside the pleasant garden, the grand Shaykh made his way towards the seat of enlightenment. The path opened itself automatically as the exalted figure walked through the lines, finally ascending to the top of pulpit. The audience eagerly awaited in pin drop silence to be blessed by his lecture.

After a short pause, opening his lips with the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate and praising God–Almighty, delivered a short sermon, and then started his lecture. It was an exhilarating, beautiful, and exciting scene as all the pupils listened eagerly and attentively in complete silence to the spiritual sound of their beloved learned teacher.

Suddenly he stopped his lecture and stood up on the pulpit in respect of someone, offering salutations: *Salam un–Alykum* (peace be upon you)! The pupils also turned their heads backward and were astonished to see a respectful lady covered in a dress of modesty and dignity from head to toe, holding the hands of two innocent children, whose faces were showing the signs of greatness and honor. The honorable lady in a tone of coolness with due respect said: Oh your excellency Shaykh! Here are my two sons Sayyid Murtada and Sayyid Radi at your complete disposal. Please accept the responsibility of their tutorship for teaching the Jurisprudence. Hearing these words, the eminent scholar started crying with tears rolling over his cheeks.

The pupils were all astonished and curious to ponder about the reason of crying of their teacher. Suddenly the surprising words uttered by their learned teacher caught their attention; with tearful eyes the Shaykh said:

"Last night, after finishing my daily routine of lecturing, discussions, and studies I retired to bed for rest and sleep. In a strange dream, I found myself lecturing right here in this mosque, and suddenly it become illuminated with the celestial light of prophet Muhammad (S) the heavenly sweet smell covering the entire place. Then the exalted lady of the both worlds– Fatimah al–Zahra' ('a) holding the hands of her two sons al–Hasan and al–Husayn entered the mosque where I was engaged in teaching. After replying to my salutation, the noble visitor said:

'Oh Shaykh! I have brought these two sons of mine al–Hasan an al–Husayn before you, so that you may teach them Jurisprudence'.

Till this very moment I have not forgotten the sweetness of that strange special dream, and after awakening, I was submerged into thoughts pondering about the interpretation of this special and strange dream. I kept reminding myself: Oh God–Almighty! How for someone like me is it possible to teach the two Sinless Imams of the Prophet's progeny? Submerged into these deep thoughts, I came to mosque, till this chaste descendant of Fatimah al–Zahra' ('a) together with these two beautiful buds of the Muhammad's rose garden entered the mosque. Now I have understood the interpretation of last night's special dream."

Since the above incident Shaykh ai–Mufid (ra) accepted the responsibility of teaching and training of Sayyid Murtada and Sayyid Radi because he had discovered that these two children are not the ordinary ones rather are the dearest ones of Fatimah al–Zahra' ('a) and have especially been recommended by her. He did his best endeavors to educate them the best possible manner.²

^{1.} Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Nayman, famous as Shaykh al–Mufid and Ibn–Moalim born in 366 A.H. was the greatest Jurisprudent, Shi'i spokesman and pillar, and most eminent marja at–taqlid of Shi'i world. He established the famous Religious Learning Center at Baghdad and trained a lot of students. He is remembered everywhere as the most outstanding Shi'i scholar who revived this school. Shaykh al–Mufid after passing a life full of endeavors for reviving Shi'i thoughts left this world for eternal abode in the year 413 A.H.

^{2.} Abstract from al–Ghadir Vol 4, p. 184.

Lion In The Cage

Throughout the history of mankind, the real defenders of the faith and religious leaders of the community have been confronted with harsh unpleasant events and bitter tragedies. Because the greater will be the intensity of sunshine, the night–worshippers will be faced with more discomfort and torture in the same proportion. The father of Sayyid Radi was not an exception to this rule and exactly at a time, when he was in need of fatherly protection and care; the tyrant government of Baghdad deprived him from the loving care of a dedicated and devoted father.

In the year of 367 A.H., Ezzod–dowleh Delami the most powerful and most famous king of Ale – Buyeh dynasty attacked Baghdad with a huge army, and annexed it to his kingdom, after dismissing Bakhtiar, son of Moezod–dowleh. Ezzod–dowleh¹ was a carefree and self–centered king and treated the Abbasids caliphs as a play thing in his hand. He was eager to implement his policies and plans within the shortest span of time, and in this way, found the existence of

Abu–Ahmad and other elderly statemen as a major obstacle in materializing his dreams.

It was in this background, that after ruling for two years in the year 369 A.H, he arrested *Tahir Zoul–Manaqib* – Sayyid Radi's father – and Abu Abdullah bin Mousa – Sayyid Radi's uncle – and confined them into Shiraz Fort.²

Apart from the other important personalities of Kufa such as Muhammad bin 'Umar Alavi, and Abu Nasar Khuwan-Shaz were also arrested the same year by Ezzod-dowleh, and were confined into Shiraz Fort, with their personal belongings and properties being confiscated.³

¹. Translation (Mahoo) Nahj al-Balaghah p. 18

². Ayan al-Shi'a Vol 9 p. 216

³. Sayyid Radi compiler of Nahj al-Balaghah p. 17

The Defense Of Wilayah

With the sudden disappearance of loving, caring, bright, and warmth radiating personality of his father; the life of young Sayyid Radi became cold and dark. He, who was used to walk with his father in the life's garden every fresh morning, tasting the sweet honey of perseverance and valor from the flowers of faith and piety, thus, filling his lap with knowledge and virtue; suddenly was deprived from this continuous benevolence by the thorns of jealousy and enmity. There was no longer any pleasure and fun left in the life of young Sayyid. In spite of having a father the dust of orphanhood had settled over his innocent face, and the separation from his beloved father was indeed bitter and painful for him. He felt himself a stranger in his own hometown, where everything and everybody was radiating a strange smell of alienation.

The pain of separation was heavy, bitter, and heart rendering for the young Sayyid. When it became heavier and out of control, he thought to revolt against his rude and inferior enemies by using the power of speech. He was sure that with the sharp edge of sword of eloquence he might be able to cut off the rotten roots of his ambitious enemies, but unfortunately the dam patience within him stood up against the surge of his wrath. It was like the fire under the ashes waiting for an opportunity for igniting.

The time's train in spite of all the heaviness kept on rolling; and young Sayyid continued suffering from the pain of separation from his kind father, but still he was able to maintain his firmness by being patience against the calamities of time. But one day a deadly poisonous arrow pierced Sayyid's shield of patience inflicting a fresh wound to his already wounded heart. He was informed that the Minister Mathar bin Abdullah a person of low and base mentality – with his unclean mouth has uttered:

"The rotten dead bodies of the prophet's Ahl-al-Bayt under the dirt do not deserve any sacredness and pride."

No longer silence and tolerance was permissible because the most stable fortress of *Wilayah* was now under attack by the revengeful enemies, which was much more severe and painful than the earlier transgression of his father. The sacred defense for Islamic values caused Sayyid to break his patience, and to revolt against his enemies openly. The son of Ali ('a) with the sharp sword of eloquence came to the battle scene with such magnificence, bravery, and valor that the enemy was totally dumbfounded,

defeated, and humiliated. Following are some of the examples of verses composed by him:

“A Brave a generous person received his share of calamities in this world in proportion to his greatness.

Yes! In accordance with the greatness of their personalities the statesmen have to suffer from the harshness and calamities of time.

Oh father! A symbol of greatness, respect, and reverence, may my soul be sacrificed for your life.

Your arrest is the result of a cowardly person, who have been overpowered by his wrath of revenge and jealousy. They have removed you from the position and power, but you have never parted from the greatness and excellence, because your benevolence and generosity for the sake of truth, itself is the best witness of your magnificence. The indecent action taken by your enemy itself proves, the point that he is a supporter and a tool of an un-Godly system.

Don't worry! Because the God-Almighty, the Beneficent and Merciful Lord is your helper and supporter. The enemy compares the righteous pious personalities of higher exalted positions with rotten bones.

Does not the verses of the Holy Qur'an¹ explicitly announce the cleanliness and infallibility of these saintly personalities?²

In this manner the unpleasant occurrences and heartrending bitter tragedies aroused his sentiments, thus, blossoming the hidden potential of a great genius within his personality."

¹. "And God only wishes to remove from you (all kind of) uncleanness, O members of the family (of Muhammad) and thoroughly purify you."- the Holy Qur'an (33:33)

². Translation (Mahoo) Nahj al-Balghah p. 18

Sweet And Sour Scenes

Till the downfall of the powerful reign of Ezzod dowleh Delami, Sayyid Radi's father together with other exiles remained confined inside the Shiraz Fort. Throughout these eight years long separation period, he spent his childhood years with heart-rending sadness and burning pains and the tire within him occasionally exploded in the form of verses full of sorrow and anguish.

During this period the blood thirsty Abbasids were losing their power and all the pomp and glory was almost gone except an empty credit less symbolic name upon the people's tongue, nothing was left of these tyrant Abbasids Caliphs. The state of affairs was completely controlled by the Delamies, and Ezzod-dowleh was still the holder of power. He after defeating Bakhtiar, son of Moezod-dowleh, declared himself the absolute ruler of Baghdad the ruling capital of the government, and being

possessed with a unique sense of political wisdom and intelligence managed the state of affairs successfully. His influence was such that he removed the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutiullah and place his son al-Tayeullah upon the seat of caliphate.

Ezzod-dowleh during his five years was able to undertake important public works projects, namely town planning and beautification of cities, dams and bridges construction, canal excavation, and reconstruction of war damaged areas. Also, he undertook important tasks which will keep his name alive forever as a believer of Shi'i Athna Alhari Islam – follower of the twelve infallible Imams from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (S) – such as: reconstruction and complete renovation of the holy tomb of Amir al-Mu'minin Imam Ali ('a) in Najaf and of the holy tomb of Sayyidush-Shubada' Imam al-Husayn ('a) in Karbala, repairs of real-estate belonging to trusts, and water streams construction of Najaf etc. During his rule the ceremonies of Eid-eGhadir,¹ and Day of Ashura,² in the capital city of Baghdad were celebrated with special pomp and glory.

Of course, social welfare services, public works development schemes, renaissance of education and knowledge, and establishment of cultural centers, were not limited to the period of Ezzod-dowleh, nevertheless such activities were always included in the planning of the majority of the Shi'i rulers of the Delami Dynasty. Apart from these valuable positive contributions, the Ale-Buyeh were also famous for their indecent and negative characteristics such as: breaking of their promises and oaths, trampling all their commitments when it conflicted with their interests, and occasionally becoming extremely hard hearted.³

Ezzod-dowleh himself is regarded as one of the three most cruel persons of the third and fourth century; the other two persons were Moatazid, and Caliph Qahir of Abbasids Dynasty.⁴

During his reign Ezzod-dowleh staunchly believed in the thesis that; “*The politics does not recognize any mother and father*”. His actions such as confinement of Sayyid Radi's father and others, as well as his enmity and cruelty while judging the accused ones, resulted from his belief in this theory. He sometimes ordered the sentences persons to be killed by trampling by the elephants (who were specially trained for this purpose). One such incident involved a person named Abdul Aziz Karai who somehow had managed to run away and opened his tongue against him, was brought in front of Ezzod-dowleh by treacherous tactics and false promises and was thrown under the feet of the elephants.

Sayyid Radi witnessed all these historical ups and downs. Eventually after ruling for five years, six months, and four days his reign with all its good and bad came to an end on the eight of Shawal, 372 A.H. (Solar) at the age of forty seven. He was infected with the disease of epilepsy and in his last moment recited the following verse of the Holy Qur'an.

مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيَهٗ

"My power had not availed me. (Surah al-Haaqqa 69:28).

هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَّةٌ

My power hath gone from me. (Surah al-Haaqqa 69:29).

According to his death-will, he was buried in the holy shrine of Najaf the tomb of the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali ('a). He was the first person from the AleBuyeh Dynasty who was buried at Najafi Ashraf.⁵

- ^{1.} Eid-e-Ghadir. The celebrations for the day when Imam Ali ('a) was appointed as the successor of the Holy Prophet, at Ghadir Khumm on 18 Dhul-Hijja (10 March 632). For detailed exploration refer to note I (Chapter 48).
- ^{2.} Ashura: The day, when Imam ai-Husayn ('a) and a small group of followers including most of his immediate family were cruelly massacred at Karbala, on 10th Muharram 61 A.H.
- ^{3.} Ale-Buyeh p. 129
- ^{4.} Ale-Buyeh, p.250.
- ^{5.} Ale-Buyeh, p. 248

The Desire Of Meeting

After Ezzod-dowleh's rule, Samsamod-dowleh assumed the power and ruled till Ramadan 376 A.H., when his brother Shrafud-dowleb after taking over Ahwaz entered Baghdad via Kirman and captured the capital after overpowering Samsamod-dowleh. He on his way to Baghdad released all the prisoners of Shiraz-fort and ordered them to accompany him in his march towards the capital; Abu Ahmad, Sayyid Radi's father was included in this group. After hearing this joyful news of their father's release both Sayyid Radi and Sayyid Murtada eagerly started counting for the moment of union with their beloved father.

After seven years of heart-rending exhausting bitter separation full of sorrows, pains, and tears, finally the moment of union arrived; when the bright sun joined the assembly of the stars and with its presence added a special magnificence and splendor upon their life's horizon. Sayyid Radi's total existence was filled with joy, excitement, and ecstasy arousing his delicate literary eloquence as follows:

"Today is the day when the hearts are submerged with joy and excitement and offers congratulations and greetings for you return.

Father! You were forced to live in the town of strangers. Of course, a lion, wherever he might go still remains stranger.

Although the pawns of death could not succeed in trapping you, but alas! for all of us your separation

was indeed bitter and heart-rending. You advised us at the time of departure to remain patient and steadfast. Alas! The patience departed immediately with fullest speed limn the heart's lodging for ever; never to be returned.

*Dear father! Your return resembles like a cloud upon a thirsty, burning, and dry land.*¹

For appreciation of his son's welcoming verses, and for encouraging him, his father wanted to give him a prize, hut Sayyid Radi declined and said:

"My dear father! Because this prize is (or the sake of composing welcome verses, therefore, I beg your pardon (for not accepting the prize)."

Also, in order to show his appreciation for Sharfud-dowleh for releasing his father, Sayyid composed a laudatory poem in his praise and sent it to his court. This worthy act of Sayyid resulted in establishment of cordial relations between him and Ale-Buyeh Government. He was assigned all the key responsibilities previously held by his father, as well as all the confiscated properties were released and returned to him.

In the above incident it would be worthwhile to ponder about his action in declining his father's prize for his welcome verses. It was not because of his self-centeredness and arrogance, rather it was an excuse for turning down the rewards and prizes from the governmental ruling authorities. Because having possessed a unique political insight he had rightly discovered the fact that kings and rulers by offering such rewards and prizes want to immune themselves from any possible criticism against them by him. By declining his father's prize, however on outwardly action, Sayyid disappointed these people in fulfillment of their filthy plans (i.e. to be able to influence him through rewards and prizes).

¹. Kakhi Dilaweez p. 10,11

Dedication For Social Service

Sayyid Radi was a conscientious committed scholar who loved to serve the people. He wanted education for uplifting thoughts, awareness, and intellectual sense of a society, and by utilizing his own political and social influence organized a dedicated, sincere, and committed group of individuals for serving and helping his community.

In a world ruled by usurp rulers, totally deprived of any traces of faith and knowledge, indulged in their sensual and carnal passions, naive from everything except persuasion of their selfish and ambitious goals, ignorant of religion and community; Sayyid Radi's Islamic and human obligations dedicated that under such dark environment he should associate with the deprived masses and should feel about their pains, sorrows, and other difficulties. Instead, of choosing comfortable and easy life and being remained

indifferent, Sayyid Radi courageously rolled his sleeves up for action in order to provide some relief for the people from their awful sufferings.

He never allowed himself to be confined into a corner of Mosque and School, and never closed his door for the sake of taking care of his private and personal affairs.

His generosity did not allow him to remain confined only in lectures, research, writings, and poetry; rather following the footprints of his great grandfather, the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ('a) he dedicated himself completely for helping the deprived and oppressed masses. Because helping God's religion was his ultimate and most cherished goal, and towards its accomplishment he struggled and strived with all his energy and all possible means at his disposal. While at the same time he never aspired to join the ranks of ignoble rulers and usurpers of the caliphate, because he was dedicated for serving the people and was not hungry for power.

Naqabat (Chieftainship)

The responsibility of managing the affairs of men and women who were descendants of Abu-Talib¹ – the father of the Commander of the Faithful Imam

Ali ('a) – was called as *Naqabati-Talibeen*. This office was established for the preservation of lineage, honor, prestige, and merits of *Talibyan*, as well as to protect them from the confrontation and onslaughts by the low and ignoble individuals.²

The Naqib was responsible for the five most important responsibilities as follows:

1. Judgment and issuance of final verdict in cases of internal disputes between *Sadat*.³
2. Management of possessions and properties belonging to orphans.
3. In case an individual from *Sadat* was involved in some criminal act, the Naqib was responsible for the execution of the sentence.
4. He was responsible for marriage arrangements for the daughters and women without guardian belonging to *Sadat*, and to look after their relevant affairs.

5. He was responsible for the guardianship of mad or insane persons as well those who were without any caretaker belonging to *Sadat*.⁴

In order to discharge the above duties properly, it was necessary that the holder of this office should be a competent Jurisprudent, so that he could issue the religious decrees correctly while issuing judicial verdicts. Since, Sayyid Radi was a competent manager, as well as a learned religious scholar and Jurisprudent familiar with the current social issues, he was appointed to this important and sensitive office.

¹ Abu Talib: Was the uncle of the Holy Prophet, his guardian during the days of his childhood, and his main defender after the commencement of his Prophet hood. The protection by this hero of his nephew and his defense against the threats of the Qureshites (the non-Hashimite Meccan clans) was a main factor in the continuity of life of the Messenger and his message. The Meccan clans were burning with hatred towards the Messenger and anxious to shed his blood. What prevented them from that was the presence of Abu Talib, the chief of Mecca, who led the Hashimites and made out of them and himself an unbreakable fortress around the Messenger.

The readers of the Islamic history know how the Qureshite clans delivered to Abu Talib an ultimatum to stop his nephew from defaming their fathers and belittling their gods and ridiculing their minds; otherwise, they would confront him and Muhammad on a battlefield until one of the two parties perished. Abu Talib did not have any doubt that his acceptance of the Qureshite challenge meant his death and the annihilation of his clan; yet he did not pressure his nephew to stop his campaign. He only informed him of the Qureshite ultimatum, and then he told him kindly:

"Save me and yourself, my nephew, and burden me not with what I cannot bear. When the Messenger rejected their ultimatum, declaring to his uncle that he would not exchange his message with the possession of the whole universe, Abu Talib immediately reversed his attitude and decided to go along with the Messenger to the end. He called him after he turned his back: "Come back, my nephew." When the Messenger came back, the great uncle said to him: "My nephew, go on. Say whatever you like, I shall never let you down at any time."

Abu Talib fulfilled this huge promise with distinction. When a Meccan threw some dirt on the Messenger while he was prostrating, Abu Talib went on brandishing his sword and holding the hand of his nephew until he came to the sacred Mosque. A group of the enemies were sitting there, and when some of them tried to stand for Abu Talib, he said to them: "By the One in Whom Muhammad believes, if anyone from you stands up, I will hit him with my word." Then he went on pulling dirt on their faces and beards.

The Qureshite clans formed a strong alliance against Abu Talib and his clan and resorted to the weapon of starvation instead of confrontation. They knew that the Hashimites would fight if fought; and that they could not be annihilated without costing their adversaries great losses. Thus, the Meccan clans imposed an economic and social embargo against the Hashimites. This continued for three years during which time the Hashimites were forced to live at a rugged mountain called "Shi-ab Abu Talib." The Hashimites during the period were forced sometimes to eat leaves of trees to alleviate the pains of hunger.

During that period, the main concern of the old hero was to protect the life of the Messenger. Abu Talib during those years often made some members of his own family (especially his son 'Ali) lie at the bed of the Holy Prophet, protecting him by his dearest son, from danger of assassination.

As far as the controversy regarding the acceptance of Islam by him, in accordance with document transmitted from the household of the Prophet and extant poems composed by Abu Talib, it becomes certain that he had also embraced Islam; however, because he was sole protector of the prophet, he hid his faith from the people in order to preserve the outward power he had with Quraysh.

² Ahkam al-Sultanayeh p. 90

³ Sadat. The plural of Sayyid, the descendants of the Holy Prophet (S).

⁴ Iranian Muslims in the beginning of Islam p. 269

Historical Development Of Naqabat

The office of the Naqabat was a social responsibility starting from the period of Imam al-Rida ('a)¹ which was later on officially established during the Caliph Moatazid Abbasi. During his reign, in each city and province an elderly distinguished personality from *sadat* who was recognized and accepted by them as a scholar and jurispudent was appointed by the caliph as Naqib for that region to administer the affairs of *Alavite-Sadat*.

All along the history there were only two distinguished personalities who hold the distinction of being appointed as Naqib for the entire vast Islamic country. This special title was called as *Naqibun-Naqaba*. The first person to hold this position was Imam al-Rida ('a), who during his period of vicegerency was appointed by Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mum and the other one was Sayyid Radi in the year of 403 A.H.². Here it is worth to mention that appointment of *Sadat* to such distinguished positions which was regarded as the highest office of the country after the caliph, was not because of the willingness or change of heart of cruel Abbasid caliphs, rather it was due to factors beyond their control forcing them to accept the leadership of *Sadat*.

The factors such as love and esteem shown by the people towards the prophets' family, unacceptance of government by Shi'i combatants, uprising against caliph by Shi'i revolutionary movements, and fear of Muslims getting united under the Alavite leadership, forced them to hand over the leadership to *Sadat* at least for managing their own affairs. It was under this background that required the establishment of the office of *Naqabat*, and the following ten responsibilities were assigned to the holder of this office:

1. Maintenance of records of *Sadat's* families.
2. Preventing them from accepting low and improper jobs.
3. Supervision of their social conduct.
4. Prohibition from disgracing the Shariah³ of the prophet.
5. Prevention from doing injustice to others.

6. Acquiring their just rights.
7. Demanding their due rights from the Baitul-Mal.⁴
8. Supervision of Marital affairs of daughters and women (without guardians)
9. Execution of justice.
10. Supervision of charitable endowments

In addition to the above-mentioned tasks the holder of the position of *Naqibun-Naqaba* was also responsible for discharging the five important tasks described earlier.

Since his early youth, Sayyid Radi actively participated in this important social and political stronghold. During his father's *Naqabat*, he was the most trusted adviser and assistant for him, and later on in his own capacity as *Naqibun-Naqaba* since the year 380 A.H.⁵ At this time while his father was still alive, and with the approval of the Caliph Attaye-Billah transferred all his responsibilities to his son Sayyid Radi, who had already distinguished himself as an intelligent scholar and competent manager.

It is interesting to note that at the time of holding the most supreme portfolios of the country namely; *Naqibun-Naqaba*, chief of the Haj Pilgrims, and the Chief Justice, he was only twenty-one years old. While there were many qualified people with relevant experience, but the outstanding excellence, maturity, knowledge, and wisdom of young Sayyid Radi resulted in his getting ahead over his contemporaries, which is also the criteria encouraged by Islam for the selection of the holder of authority i.e. nothing else except commitment and specialty.

The most significant outcome of the establishment of the office of *Naqabat* was the formation and organization of *Alavite-Sadat*. Because since the usurpation of Caliphate by Ummayyad, and later on its continuation by the cruel and tyrant Abbasids, the Shi'i were continuously engaged in warfare, martyred, forced to live in exile in far distant places, and kept their real identities concealed by practicing *Taqiya*⁶ (dissimulation). It was only after the official establishment of the office of *Naqabat* as independent organization without being associated with the organization of caliphate, that the *Naqib* officially was able to assume the guardianship of *Alavite-Sadat*, thus, relieving them from the state of being scattered.

^{1.} Imam Ali ibn Musa ai-Rida ('a): was born in Medina on Thursday, 11th Dhu'l-q'idah 148 AH. He lived in a period when the Abbasids were faced with increasing difficulties because of Shi'i revolts. After alMam'un the seventh Abbasid caliph and a contemporary of Imam al Rida ('a) murdered his brother Amin and assumed office, he thought he would solve the

problems by naming Imam as his own successor Hoping thus to insure him in worldly affairs and turn the devotions of his followers away from him. Imam on condition that he excused appointments, and other involvement in matters of state. Making the most of this circumstance, the Imam extended guidance to the people, imparting priceless education of Islamic culture and spiritual truths, which have survived in numbers roughly equal to those reaching us from the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ('a), and in greater number than those of any other Imam.

Finally, after al-Ma'mum realized his mistake, for Shi'ism began to spread even more rapidly he is said to have poisoned him; he died at the age of 55 in Mashad Khurasan on Tuesday, 17th Safar 203 A.H. He is buried in Mashhad Iran.

[2.](#) Al-Ghadir, vol.4 p.205

[3.](#) Shariah. Divine law, a science which embraces every dimension of human conduct, including the political.

[4.](#) Baitul-Mal. The treasury of the Islamic State

[5.](#) Al-Ghadir, Vol.4, p. 205.

[6.](#) Taqiya: "(Dissimulation), was first introduced by Imam al-Baqir ('a) and was further elaborated by Imam al-Sadiq ('a) according to the need of the time and the circumstances in which they were living and working out the tenets for their followers. In a letter to one of the extremists of Kufa Mu'alla b. Khunays, the Imam said:

"Keep our affairs secret, and do not divulge it publicly, for whoever keeps it secret and does not reveal it, God will exalt him in this world and put light between his eyes in the next, leading him to Paradise. O Mu'alla, whoever divulges our affair publicly, and does not keep it secret, God will disgrace him in this world and will take away light from between his eyes in the next and will decree for him darkness that will lead him to the Fire. O Mu'alla, verily the Taqiya is of my religion and of the religion of my father, and one who does not keep the Taqiya has no religion. O Mu'alla, the one who reveals our affairs is the one who denies them."

According to al-Sadiq, both Joseph and Abraham practiced Taqiya when they resorted to concealment of the truth: the first when he accused his brother of theft, and the second when he asserted that he was ill. Muhammad himself accordingly is reported to have practiced Taqiya until the verse in which he was order to preach publicly was revealed. It reads:

"O you Apostle, reveal the whole that has been revealed to you from your Lord; if you do it not, you have not preached His message and God will defend you from wicked men" (5:67).

Another verse which was used to support the doctrine of Taqiya reads:

"And who disbelieves in God after believing in Him, except under compulsion, and whose heart is confident in faith" (16: 106).

We may conclude from all these traditions that the real meaning of Taqiya is not telling a lie or falsehood, as it is often understood, but the protection of the true religion and its followers from enemies through concealment in circumstances where there is fear of being killed or captured or insulted."

In his lectures "Program for the Establishment of an Islamic Government" Imam Khomeini (ra) speaks about Taqiya as follows:

"The obligations that are incumbent on the fuqaha do not apply to others; on account of their position and function, the fuqaha must avoid and relinquish even things that are otherwise licit. In cases where others are permitted to resort to taqiya, the fuqaha may not. The purpose of taqiya is the preservation of Islam and the Shi'i school; if people had not resorted to it, our school of thought would have been destroyed. Taqiya relates to the branches (furu) of religion -- for example, performing ablution in different ways. But when the chief principles of Islam and its welfare are endangered, there can be no question of silence or taqiya.

If they try to force a faqih to mount the minbar and speak in a way contrary to God's command, can he obey them, telling himself, "Taqiya is my religion and the religion of my forefathers"? The question of taqiya does not even arise here. If a faqih anticipates that by his entering the service of an oppressive government, oppression will be furthered and the reputation of Islam soiled, he must not enter its service, even if he is killed as a result. There is no acceptable excuse he can offer, unless his entry into the service of the state has some rational basis, as was the case with 'Ali ibn Yaqtin, whose motives in joining state service arc well known, and with Khwaja Nasir Tusi (may God be pleased with him), whose action resulted in benefits also well-known." Hamid Algar, Islam and Revolution p. 144.

The Supreme Judicial Position

Sayyid Radi while holding the office of *NaqibunNaqaba* was simultaneously heading the highest office of the judiciary known as *Diwani-Mazalim*, which is equivalent to the Supreme Court of Justice, was responsible for the issuance of the final judicial sentence and as its execution.

The historical reason for the creation of *Diwani-Mazalim* was that under the rule of Abbasids Caliphate, the judicial system consisted of judges appointed for each city, who were responsible for looking into judicial matters and for the issuance of final judicial verdicts. In addition to these local judges for large cities or for a few smaller cities, there were chief judges *Qazi-ul-Quzzat*, who were responsible for looking into important cases.

But occasionally there were some complicated files which were considered beyond the jurisdiction of chief judges and were forwarded to the center of the caliphate to be finally resolved by the ruling caliph.

The caliph either themselves issued the final judicial verdicts in these cases or appointed a great learned Jurisprudent as the head of *Diwani-Mazalim*, who resolved these complicated cases by issuing the final judicial verdict on behalf of the ruling caliph. Due to these considerations the head of *Diwani-Mazalim*, in addition to his being a learned *Mujtahid*¹ (Jurisprudent), was also supposed to be a total manifestation of piety, dignity, and contentment possessing an influential and distinguished social personality.

Since the unique and exalted personality of Sayyid Radi possessed all these distinctions and merits, he was appointed by the caliphs for this position during his youth, and he discharged all these assigned duties in an excellent manner.

¹. Mujtahid "An authority on Divine law who practices ijthad, that is, "the search for a correct opinion ... in deducing of the specific provisions of the law from its principles and ordinances (Muhammad Sanglaji, Qaza dar Islam (Tehran, 1338 Sh./1959), p. 14."—Hamid Algar, Islam and Revolution, p. 150.

Amir Al-Hajj (Chief Of The Pilgrims)

Grand Allameh Sayyid Radi spent the prime years of his youth for serving the people, and in discharging of these obligations become a perfect symbol of sacrifice and dedication. It was for the sake of these meritorious services that the title of Radi was bestowed upon him. His name was Muhammad, and because of his excellent performance of assigned responsibilities, the kings of Ale-Buyeh Dynasty who were pleased with Sayyid's guardianship bestowed upon him the title of *Ash-Shrif al-Radi* (the honorable one, who pleased everyone).

Sayyid Radi's responsibilities also included supervision of Hajj-Pilgrims and managing of great

international Hajj ceremonies. In our times, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, such important responsibility requires the presence of not only few persons but an entire organization such as *Sazamani-Hajj wa-Ziyarat*¹ and the two important groups namely: *Baithi-Maqami-Moazzam Rehabarr*² and the *Setadi-Hajj*³ participates to make the necessary arrangements for the mentioned ceremonies.

The supervision of Hajj-Pilgrims like the responsibilities of *Naqabat* and guardianship of *Diwani-Mazalim*, was a difficult and heavy task; there were not more than a handful of competent individuals who could have been appointed for these key positions. Because they required discharging of difficult obligations, which cannot easily be accomplished by everybody.

In order to discharge these obligations in an excellent manner the holder of these offices should be possessed with: strong politics, ingenuity, competence, correct management, knowledge about regional geography, familiar with culture and traditions of communities, and most important of all he was supposed to be a learned Jurisprudent and religious scholar. He must be an eminent authority in Jurisprudence and must be equipped with necessary boldness and correct managerial skills in order to discharge these obligations satisfactorily.

In that period Sayyid Radi was the suitable and most deserving candidate for appointment to these most important positions for the country.

Therefore, this was one of the most outstanding Shi'i achievements that in the year 1379 A.H. among all the Sunni great scholars and jurists, a young Shi'i scholar was selected for the position of the Chief of Pilgrims (Ameer al-Hajj) during the reign of a Sunni caliph. Sayyid Radi ingenuity and policy was able to achieve this great distinction for the friends of Prophet's *Ahl-al-Bayt*. What a beautiful and heart-appealing scene it was, when perhaps for the first time a student of a Ja'fari School of thought, taking Ali-like firm steps with dignity, among the huge crowd of learned scholars and great personalities, moved towards Holy Kabah for offering his prayers near the Prophet Abraham's place of Prayer.

¹. Sazamani Hajj wa Ziyarat: is the organization responsible for making the official arrangements for the Hajj pilgrims in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

². Baithi-Maqami-Moazzam Rehabarr. is the cultural group headed by the chief representative of the Vali-Faqih.

³. Setadi-Hajj the team which is assigned at Mecca, Medina, and Jeddah by the Sazmani Hajj wa Ziyarat for making the necessary arrangements for the pilgrims.

Political Motivation

Sayyid Radi considered all Abbasids caliphs as usurpers and was disgusted with them, and specially hated Caliph Alqadir-hillah Abbasi. Like most of the caliphs and kings he was a selfish, ambitious, obsessive, and prejudiced person always looking for excuses to destroy the social status and spiritual eminence of Sayyid Radi's charming personality. On the other hand Sayyid Radi released his disgust

and hatred through poetic verses, which like the powerful blast of canon fire covered every place catching the attention of everybody.

In one of his verses he says:

"Is not it ironic that while Egypt is being ruled by an Alavite Caliph – I have to put on a dress of insult in the land of enemies?"

When this fireball hit the caliph's ears, he was outraged. The caliph immediately invited Sayyid Radi's father, his brother Sayyid Murtada, Shaykh al-Mufid, and other learned Shi'i scholars for a meeting and discussions. Also, Sayyid Radi was summoned to explain the reasons of his disgust and frustrations with his Abbasid Caliphate. What are the reasons that he feels dejected in living in the Center of Caliphate (i.e. Baghdad), and instead desires to be living in Egypt – the land of Alavites.

But Sayyid Radi with his characteristic greatness and bravery rejected caliph's invitation and did not attend the meeting. In spite of his father's opinion that by composing those verses he has outraged the caliph and better apologize or deny the allegation, he did not yield to pressure and continued his resistance.

He was fully aware of the dire consequences resulting from disobedience of caliph's orders, but still his free spirit and boldness acted as a barrier in his acceptance of caliph's invitation. His action angered the caliph and consequently he was removed from all important social portfolios.¹

In the said meeting the caliph also ordered the preparation of minutes of the meeting for his political advantage against Sayyid Radi, which was sent for his signature, but he boldly refused to sign.

¹. Encyclopaedia of twentieth century vol 4 p. 253

The Spirit Of Valor

Sayyid Radi was a fearless and bold speaker whose fathomless powerful free spirit generated strong waves bestowing valor, resistance, and greatness upon the morals of the deprived. He was never scared of any person no matter how higher his rank and position might be. He regarded all the Abbasids Caliphs as usurpers of Caliphate, *Wilayah*, and Islamic Government, however, due to unfavorable circumstances he was forced to continue negative resistance against them. But at the same time, he was never negligent for even a moment for overthrowing the tyrant regime and for the revival of *Karbala* and *Ashura*. Throughout his life he kept looking for the right moment and right opportunity for rising against the *taghut*¹ and tyrant Abbasids regime, striking the roots of oppression, corruption and destruction, taking the leadership of Islamic Ummah, and once again implementing the justice of Imam Ali ('a).

The combatant Sayyid spoke about his revolutionary thoughts in private meetings with his confident, loyal, and sincere friends; where he recited his epic poems. In this regard, he was especially encouraged and supported by one of his close friends named Abu Ishaq Sabi, who in one of his fiery sensational poems addressed to Sayyid says as follows:

"O Abul Hasan! I am naturally gifted to recognize great personalities. I am sure that you are destined for an exalted position. In advance I congratulate you for achieving that exalted position. Long live our beloved leader! I will keep this matter hidden in my heart till the right opportunity arises for its announcement to others.

"If I am still alive at that time or may be dead. Do remember this glad tiding given by me and discharge your obligations towards me by taking care of my family and children."

Sayyid Radi in response to the above verse compiled a long satirical poem addressed to his friend Sabi in which he confirmed that when he will eventually accomplish his cherished goal, the preliminaries of which are already being readied, he will definitely fulfill his promise.

He further added:

"Oh Sabi! You will see that your heart's desire will be materialized, but the time has not yet and nothing could be done to accelerate the outcome. "

The epic revolutionary poem of Abu Ishaq Sabi was circulated among the people till everybody became aware of it. Naturally the courtiers were too not unlucky enough to miss the circulated news. Finally, because of this leakage Abu Ishaq was summoned to the palace and was arrested for encouraging the masses for revolting against the government.

In order to save his life, he denied that he has compiled these verses for Sayyid Radi, and said that he had compiled these verses for Abul Hasan Abdul Aziz the writer of the Abbasid Caliph Attaye-billah, but actually the reality was not so and he had simply uttered these words² for the fear of his life.

Yes! The great Sayyid in the field of valor and bravery was unique and matchless, and at a time when everybody in front of pomp, glory, and power of tyrant caliphs themselves smaller and worthless; he was single-handedly striving for implementation of justice against the ruling Abbasid regime.

¹. Taghut. "One who surpasses all bounds in his despotism and tyranny and claims the prerogatives of divinity for himself, whether explicitly or implicitly."

–Hamid Algar, Islam and Revolution, p. 154.

Also, Imam Khomeini (ra) in his lectures on "Islamic Government" defines in detail the illegitimate power (taghut) as follows: In the next verse, God says: "Have you not looked at those who claim to believe in what was revealed to you and what was revealed before you? They wish to seek justice from taghut [illegitimate powers}, even though they have been commanded to disbelieve therein" (4:60)

Even if we do not interpret taghut as oppressive governments and all illicit forms of power that have revolted against Divine government in order to establish monarchy or some other form of rule, we must still interpret it as including both judges and

rulers. For customarily, one has recourse to the judicial authorities to initiate legal proceedings and obtain redress and the punishment of the offender, but then, the judicial verdict that they reach must be implemented by the executive power, which usually forms a separate branch of the government.

Tyrannical governments --- including the judiciary, the executive, and all other components of the state – comprise what is meant by taghut, for they have rebelled against Divine command by instituting evil laws, implementing them, and then making them the basis of judicial practice. God has commanded us to disbelieve in them; that is, to revolt against them and their commands and ordinances. All who wish to disbelieve, in this sense, in the taghut – that is, to rise up in disobedience against illegitimate ruling powers – have a formidable duty that they must strive to fulfill as far as they are able.

Now let us examine the tradition known as the maqbula of 'Umar ibn Hanzala to establish its meaning and intent. 'Umar ibn Hanzala says: "I asked Imam Sadiq (upon whom be peace) whether it is permissible for two of the Shi 'is who had a disagreement concerning a debt or a legacy to seek the verdict of the ruler or judge. He replied: 'Anyone, who has recourse to the ruler or judge, whether his case be just or unjust has in reality had recourse to taghut [i.e. illegitimate ruling power]. Whatever he obtains as a result of their verdict, he will have obtained by forbidden means, even if he has a proven right to it, for he will have obtained it through the verdict and judgment of the taghut, that power which God Almighty has commanded him to disbelieve in.

"They wish to seek justice from illegitimate powers, even though they have been commanded to disbelieve therein." [4:60]

'Umar ibn Hanzala then asked: "What should two Shi'is do then, under such circumstances?" Imam Sadiq answered: "They must seek out one of you who narrates our traditions, who is versed in what is permissible and what is forbidden, who is well acquainted with our laws and ordinances, and accept him as judge and arbiter, for I appoint him as judge over you."

–Hamid Algar, Islam and Revolution, pp. 92–93.

[2. Al-Daryat al-Rafiyeh p.471](#)

Superior Than Caliph

Since Sayyid Radi was aware about the authenticity of his origin; he considered himself superior to caliph and because of this belief always created circumstances for disgracing and degrading the caliph. Once he compiled a satirical poem addressed to Abbasside Caliph Alqadir-billah – a perfect manifestation of arrogance and conceit –in which he stated:

"Let it be known, Oh! Commander of the Faithful that since we both have noble descent, there is no difference between us from that point of view.

"Of course! There is no difference between you and me as far as our roots in nobility are concerned except the caliphate which has given you a distinction over me since I have been deprived of it, while you have grabbed it, pulling on your neck like a necklace. "

When this fiery satirical poem which contained a hint of usurpation of caliphate was recited before the caliph, he exploded with anger, and the flames of enmity and vengeance exploded from his volcanic heart. But considering the charismatic personality of Sayyid Radi and his exalted social status from the point of view of the descent as well as the influence of Ale-Buyeh kings were of Delami Dynasty, who were supporters of Shi'is, the caliph was not in a position to take revenge from him the way his heart desired. Therefore, to extinguish the burning fire of wrath within his inner self, and outraged with feelings

of vengeance and anger he was able to utter only the following sentence:

*"In spite of Sayyid's wishes, yes! I had grasped the caliphate."*²

Sayyid not only by recital of his revolutionary poems caused the waves of anger and hatred against the government, but also in the presence of kings never refrained from announcing his superiority over them and declaring them as usurpers of caliphate. One day he was sitting in the company of Caliph Attayebillah, and without being least influenced by the false pomp and glory of the caliph, was busy playing with his beard—bending it upwards towards his nose by his hand.

The caliph with his foxy characteristics, tempted to taunt Sayyid and to impress him with his glittering power and glory. He looked at Sayyid and sarcastically taunted:

"Do you wish to smell the scent of caliphate?"

The Sayyid promptly replied back:

"No, instead of caliphate I wanted to smell the scent of Nabuwwat (prophethood)."³

¹. It must be noted that because of special considerations and prevailing political conditions of the society, Sayyid Radi was forced to address the caliph as Amir al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful) otherwise he was bitterly disgusted with the Abbasids caliphs.

². Tarikhe Adab al-Ghateh al-Arabia Vol 2, p. 567

³. To know about the Shi'i scholars and their school of thought.

A Precious Diamond

Sayyid has inherited the valuable treasures of noble etiquette, friendliness, and cheerfulness from his exalted sinless ancestors (i.e. *Ahl al-Bayt*) and used to welcome everyone with open arms, warm heartedly, and with a smiling face in a friendly manner.

Because of his charismatic personality and Islamic and human conduct everybody liked and loved him including those who were not even Muslims. Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim bin Hallal-Harrari famous as Sabi (Star-Worshipper) -- a celebrated writer-scholar, Chief of the Royal Association of Writers in Baghdad, as well as the Head of the Court of Abbasid Caliph Alqadir-hillah was one of the intimate longtime friends of Sayyid Radi.

He was the follower of the religion of *Sabaism* (StarWorshipping), and was also the Chief Priest of Baghdad's Star Worshippers, but for the special esteem he had for Sayyid Radi, took fasting in the Holy Month of Ramadan, offered prayers, memorized the entire Holy Qur'an, and in his writings quoted from its contents very frequently while at the same time remained strictly committed to his own religion.

In Sabatism eating of bean, fish, pork, and camel meat forbidden. One day, while sitting on the dinner table of Mahalbi (the minister of Moezod-dowleh) beans were served for the dinner; in spite of Mohalbi's insistence for eating beans, Abu-Ishaq did not accept and instead replied firmly:

"For the sake of tasting one eatable thing, I don't want to sin against God-Almighty."¹

Because of Sabi's knowledge, wisdom, and literary talents, Sayyid Radi had a special regard and respect for him and at the time of his demise in 384 A.H., compiled a detailed eulogistic poem, discharging his due obligations towards his deceased loyal and faithful friend. Some of the narrow-minded and malicious-minded people started criticizing that someone like Sayyid Radi- a descendant of the Prophet (S) compiles eulogistic poem, and laminates for an infidel like Abu-Ishaq. Sayyid Radi in his reply to these prejudiced group said:

"I have compiled this eulogistic poem for his knowledge, wisdom, literary talents and other numerous virtues and not for his body."

Also, it was interesting to note that every time Sayyid Radi passed through the Shunizeh graveyard located west of Baghdad near Kazimayn,² where Abn Ishaq is buried, while nearing his grave always stepped down from his horseback and never traveled as a rider in that vicinity.

Perhaps it was because of this exalted human conduct of Sayyid Radi that grandson of Star-Worshipper Abu Ishaq named Halal Sabi accepted Islam and was able to achieve exalted positions in his life. Allahmeh Shaykh Agha Buzurg Tehran in his bool *Elam al-Shi'a* has mentioned his name as one of the great Shi'i scholar.

¹. Ale-Buyeh, p. 282

². Kazimayn: Is the holy shrine in Iraq where Imam Musa al-Kaizim ('a) and Imam Muhammad al-Taqi are buried

His Mother's Demise

The evergreen, cheerful, and unique genius personality of his time had not yet quite passed the 26th spring of life, when he has to hear the demise of his kind and devoted mother. This tragedy shattered him completely overtaken his total existence with pain and burning agony.

Sayyid Radi who was keenly aware about the most important position of mother in the Islamic culture, by remembering her mother's pains and self-sacrifices in his upbringing, was bitter and heartbroken; the separation with his beloved mother had ignited a fire within his inner self burning his total existence.

But still, while confronting this heartrending tragedy he acted like a mountain standing firmly against the destructive storms of taunts and sarcastic wounds inflicted by his jealous enemies and was able to preserve his dignity and composure. Occasionally this fire of pain and agony within his inner self would

be suddenly released like the molten rock thrown out of the volcano, in the form of burning eulogistic poems for his deceased mother compiled by Sayyid Radi as follows:

“Oh Mother! I cry and shed tears for your separation hoping that perhaps the burning drops of tears coming out of my sorrowful eyes may melt and remove the mountain of sadness from my heart.

Oh Mother! I try to compile and recite these verses in order to lighten the heavy burden of sorrow over my heart through this medium.

Your mournful son confused and wandered runs here and there searching for a shelter; but Alas! How he can get consolation because there is no shelter which could offer comfort and consolation to me, except the strong castle of patience, if it could be effective in this horrible catastrophic event. Yes! Except patience and tolerance there is no other shelter but since the tragedy is so bitter, even this firm shelter is not of much help and collapses because the force of tears shed from a stormy heart washes away the robust walls of this castle.

Mother! Because of the agony of your separation, I have given up the patience and steadfastness and have forgotten my social status and position. I try my best not to show my inner sadness, but involuntarily my throats gets choked up with pains, while other times my inner sorrow gets released in the form of a deep cold sigh shattering my complete existence.

Oh mother! This heart-rending pain which had rested upon my heart as a heavy burden, and makes me painful is equivalent to the pains of pregnancy and during the time of delivery, which were inflicted upon your heart because of my birth.

Oh mother! You were such a precious jewel and valuable pearl that for getting you released from the plundering enemy's hand I would have sacrificed everything in my possession as your ransom, but alas! The death has snatched you away from my hand and nothing could ever be taken back its deadly claws.

His Views About Women

The eulogistic poem compiled by Sayyid Radi a thousand years ago for the demise of his mother itself indicates the genuineness of the life-giving regulations of Islam, as well as brings to our attention the profundities and progressive thinking of Islamic scholars trained in the school of the Holy Qur'an.

Outwardly this is a eulogistic poem for the sad demise of a mother, saturate with pure delicate poetic sentiments and beautiful smiles. Utilizing his natural talents and beautiful words, Sayyid Radi, ignited by the separation of his mother, has pictured his orphanage in a manner which touches the hearts of every sensitive person.

When we analyze the contents and similes of these verses, we will discover that Sayyid Radi in his peculiar manner had introduced the original identity and real personality of Muslim Women, thus, distinguishing her exalted position in the human society. At a time when the thinkers, scholars, and philosophers of Non-Islamic Schools had completely ignored the existence of women's personality, looked at her with degradation, and regarded her existence as weak, miserable and despicable; the great Muslim intellectual of Fourth Century Sayyid Radi, influenced by progressive code of Islam, and by utilizing the arsenal of eloquence, stood up and raised his voice against the oppression of women.

Sayyid Radi introduced Islamic Women as a precious jewel, sacrificing, devoted, strong castle, and a great teacher for the mankind. By describing these characteristics defended their exalted position and was able to get her true identity recognized. Here it would be appropriate to quote some other delicacies from his eloquent eulogistic poems as follows:

"Oh mother! If all mothers of the world would have been righteous like you, indeed, the children would not have required the presence of their fathers.

"Oh mother! You are not dead, you are alive among the righteous ones of the humanity because you had an unforgettable sound; in this tragedy I have suffered the maximum loss because after you there is no hand to solve my problems, and there is no mean left at my disposal for removing the obstacle from my path.

Oh mother! In my life your existence was always a reliable support for me, whenever I was in need, you provided for my financial needs, at the time of my sickness you took care of me like a kind nurse with devotion, and whenever the difficulties and hardships of life confronted me, you acted like a strong shield protecting me against their onslaught. Therefore, these are two tragedies which are continuously haunting me: your departure and demise, and my being left alone to live.

Oh mother! All are witness that you were a honorable and noble lady because you have handed over the decent and noble children to the society.

You were among these righteous and committed ladies whose luminous hand was always conspicuous in all social charitable undertakings. You left for me the memories of righteous and accumulated virtues and while others inherit wealth, any reliable things of this world, I inherited from you righteousness and goodness."

Indeed Fatimah, mother of Sayyid Radi was such a complete manifestation of an ideal perfect woman as desired by Islam. Islam requires women to be architect and builder of life, shelter for family, fosterer of righteousness, nobility, piety, responsible for prosperity of society, and not confined to the harams of the kings of yesterday or being a puppet doll in the hands of capitalists of today.

Islam considers women as a sympathetic companion for men at various stages of life, a dedicated teacher and fosterer for the child, and a source of purity, modesty, faith, and esteem. It does not approve

her being turned into a helpless tool to be exploited for the commercial product's publicity of multinational giants and becoming a source of amusement and entertainment for their meetings.

Devotion For Education And Learning

Since his early childhood years Sayyid Radi was extremely dedicated towards acquiring education and knowledge. He was such a sacrificing lover for education and learning that all sort of tragedies, problems, and life's unpleasant happenings were not able to make a slight dent in his iron will as for as his determination for achieving higher learning and excellence was concerned. Apart from being serious and committed, he was possessed with unique God-given natural talents and intelligence, which were responsible for his speedy educational and literary progress.

The favorable circumstances of the fourth century had provided such possibilities for the thirsty spirit of Sayyid Radi as well as other students that they could attend the classes of great learned professors (Jurisprudents); irrespective of limitations of school of thoughts, they were able to satisfy their thirsts by drinking the pure and sweet water of the Islamic learning. In the fourth and fifth century the differences and splits created by sectarian elements to a large extent had been vanished and these two great and powerful sects of Shi and Sunni were able to live in a harmonious peaceful environment.

Because of this spirit of sincerity and coexistence the scholars of both sects were able to present their point of views and opinions freely. Some of Sayyid Radi's teachers were – exalted learned scholars belonging to the Sunni schools of thought.

From this point of view the fourth century might be regarded as the spring season for the blooming of the voluminous book of Islamic History. Sayyid Radi intelligently utilized this golden historical opportunity by approaching the learned competent scholars and researchers and acquired knowledge of various fields namely: recital of the Holy Qur'an, Qarat Arabic Grammar (*Sarfe and Nahve*) Narration (*Hadith*), Discourse (*Kalam*) Eloquence (*Blaghat*) Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), Principles (*Usool*), Commentary (*Tafseer*), and Arts of Poetry.

So that at the young age of 20 years, he was able to complete his higher studies curriculum successfully, establishing himself as a famous learned professor and researcher of his time actively involved in teaching and training disciples, who became famous scholarly personalities of the Islamic history.

Following are the names of some famous celebrated scholars who had the honor of being Sayyid Radi's disciples.

1. Abu-Ishaq Ibrahim bin Ahmad Tabri: (deceased in the year 393 A.H.), Jurisprudent and

famous literary personality, who also taught recital of the Holy Qur'an to Sayyid Radi in his early childhood years.

2. Abo Ali Farsi: (deceased in the year 377 A.H.) famous scholar and literary personality and Grammarian of his period.
3. Abu-Saeed Sirafi: (deceased in the year 368 A/ H.) famous scholar and Grammarian who was appointed to the Highest Judicial Office of Baghdad.
4. Qazi Abdul-Jabbar: learned scholar in the fields of Narration and Literature.
5. Abdul Rahim bin Nabateh: (deceased in the year 374 A.H.) most celebrated Shi'i eloquent orator famous as Khateebi-Misry, who also taught Sayyid Radi some poetic arts
6. Abu Muhammad Abdullah bin Muhammad Asadi Akfani: (deceased in the year 405 A.H.), celebrated scholar and pious personality who presided over the Judicial Chair of Greater-Baghdad.
7. Abdul Fatteh Uthman bin Jinni: (deceased in the year 392 A.H.), a literary personality and famous Grammarian. Sayyid Radi in his book *Al-Mujazaatun-Nabuwweh* quotes from him on various topics.
8. Abul Hasan Ali bin Issa: (deceased in the year 420 A.H.), a famous poet, literary personality, and an authority Linguistics.
9. Abu Hifs 'Umar bin Abraham bin Ahmad al Kanani: celebrated authority of Narration; Sayyid Radi in his books had quoted frequently many narrations from him.
10. Abul Qasim Issa bin Ali bin Dawood bin Jarrah: (deceased in the year 350 A.H.), a famous authority of Narration, and a learned scholar of Linguistics.

11. Abu Abdullah Marzbani: (deceased in the year 384), on authority and famous author of few important books of Narration and a confident of Shaykh Saddouq.
12. Abu Bakar Muhammad bin Mousa Khowarzami: (deceased in the year 403) a learned Jurisprudent and professor of Narration who taught Jurisprudence to Sayyid Radi and some other great Jurisprudents of his period.
13. Abu Muhammad Harron Tileykpabri: (deceased in the year 385 A.H.), a famous Jurisprudent and author of many comprehensive religious books.
14. Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Nayman: famous as Shaykh al-Mufid (ra), (deceased in the year 413 A.H.).

Crown Star Upon Baghdad's Horizon

Muhammad bin Nayman famous as Shaykh al Mufid (ra), and Ibni al-Moalim is a famous name among the professors of Sayyid Radi and other great Shi'i luminaries, who would remain luminous forever in history. He was like a sun upon the Baghdad's horizon which was surrounded by countless numbers of stars; an exalted keen-sighted Jurisprudent whose thoughts, inferences, and interpretations regarding social and political matters have continuously been investigated by scholars and researchers of Islamic World throughout the past one thousand years.

His literary works relevant to Jurisprudence, Principles, Narration, Discourses, and Interpretations proves his comprehensive knowledge and mastery over the state of art of various disciplines.

Shaykh al-Mufid occupied the seat of Shi'i Marja at-taqlid [1](#) (source of religious guidance for forty years in his time and administered the religious learning centers. The movement of training the disciples, publications of religious books, and holding of educational seminar and conferences initiated by him was a renaissance and turning point in the Islamic History.

Shaykh al-Mufid was not only a celebrated unmatched personality in educational and cultural involvement but also, in his practical deeds was a perfect model. He was a devout scholar, a pious vigilant ascetic, and a learned Jurisprudent; and was famous for his humility in offering prayers and fasting, as well as his courtesy in acquiring knowledge. Because of his mastery over Jurisprudence and

other religious sciences and his practical deeds, he succeeded in breathing a fresh spirit not only into the Shi'a but into the entire Islamic body.

The elderly personalities like Sayyid Radi, Sayyid Murtada, Shaykh Tusi, Hajjashi, Sallar, Kerajaki, and other pillars of religion – each one of them radiated like a moon upon the horizon of knowledge and wisdom – were the result of painstaking efforts and training of Shaykh al-Mufid (ra) After living a fruitful and blessed life for 76 years he expired in the year 413 A.H. His funeral ceremony was an unmatched historical event, which was attended by a crowd of more than eighty thousand people. He was buried inside the holy tomb of ninth Imam Muhammad al-Taqi² (‘a)³

¹. Marja at-taqlid, a scholar of proven learning and piety whose authoritative rulings one follows in matters of religious practice.

². Imam Muhammad al-Taqi (A.S): was born in Medina on Friday 10th Rajab 195 A.H.

The son of eighth Imam he was given the daughter of the Caliph al-Ma'mun in marriage and for a time was kept by the caliph of Baghdad. But he was able to return to Medina until the end of Al-Ma'mun's reign. The new Caliph. Al-Mutasim, summoned him back to Baghdad where he died at the age of 25 in Kazimayn on Wednesday, 20th Dhi'l-qi'dah 220 A.H. poisoned by Mustasim. He is buried in Baghdad.

³. Marateh al-Janan vol. 3, p. 28, quoted from Iranian Muslims in the beginning of Islam p. 271

Respect Of Teachers

The special characteristics of Sayyid Radi which have received special attention of biographers and historians were his freedom loving nature and contentment; to the extent that there was no room for the phrase of greed in the dictionary of his existence. He was totally contented and offered thanks for whatever he was blessed with; never expecting anything from others. He never allowed himself to be indebted by favors shown to him by others, so that while discharging his obligations for important social responsibilities or in political confrontations with the rulers he might be forced to yield or to make a compromise.

In his entire life there was only one exception for one of his teachers for the sake of extreme regard for the exalted position of a teacher. That was the only position for which Sayyid Radi exceptionally allowed to let his never bowing head to bow in humility and respect before his teacher. The master of eloquence Imam Ali (‘a) about the rights of a teacher said:

“Anyone who had taught me even a single word had already made me his servant and slave”.

Sayyid Radi in his young age learned the *Holy Qur'an* from Abu Ishaq Ibrahim bin Ahmad Tabri.

One day the teacher asked." Where do you live." "In my father's home located in Bab-e-Mohawwal locality." Replied Sayyid Radi.

The teacher said: "Someone like you – professor of so much prestige and position –should not have to live in his father's home. I hereby bestow my own home located in Karakh locality famous as Al-Barkeh, to you as a gift."

Sayyid declined the offer from his great teacher and replied: "So for I have never accepted any favor from any one including my father."

The teacher replied: "The right which you owe to me is important and greater than the right of your father upon you, because I have taught you the book of God–Almighty."

After bearing these words, Sayyid accepted and said:

"For the sake of my special esteem and regards towards you (i.e. respect for teacher) I will accept it from you.

Garden Of Enlightenment

Sayyid Radi started going to school before he was nine years old, and continued acquiring education and knowledge till he was twenty–one years old, with his unique methods, at the most famous and unmatched religious learning centers. During this period, while he himself was a student, and had not yet finished his curriculum for higher religious learning, was able to start teaching and training his own disciples.

Although he had occupied this prestigious chair of professorship at a very young age, but still succeeded in initiating a special feeling of warmth and attraction among his disciples. His personal etiquette and manners together with his commend over various educational matters created a special atmosphere in which the thirsty – seekers of enlightenment and knowledge circumambulated around his radiant existence for acquiring knowledge and wisdom from his splendid lectures.

In this manner, in his garden of enlightenment, Sayyid Radi was able to produce bright distinguished disciples for whom he himself, was proud, and each of them was like a radiant moon upon the sky of knowledge and culture; or like a bright shining star upon the horizon of understanding and endeavor. Following are the names of some of his distinguished disciples:

1. Sayyid Abdullah Jarjani famous as Abu–Zaid, Kiyabaki
2. Shaykh Muhammad Halwani.

3. Shaykh Jaffar Dooresti.
4. Shaykh Tousi.
5. Ahmad bin Ali bin Qadameh famous as Ibn Qadameh.
6. Abul Hasan Hashmi.
7. Mufid Nishabouri.
8. Abu Bakr Nishabouri Khazai.
9. Qazi Abu-Bakr Akbari.
10. Mebyar Delami. [1](#)

[1](#). Ash-Sharif ar-Radi, p.112-122

The First Alma-Mater

Sayyid Radi was a generous and brave man who was thoroughly familiar with the pains and problems of his society. In life's struggle he always welcomed strings of jealousy and taunting over the retired and monastic existence. He always accepted the important heavy and difficult social responsibilities and single handedly discharged them excellently with valor and dignity; never put his hand upon any task until and unless he was absolutely sure that he will accomplish it successfully by adding a distinction and pride for the Shi'i.

At the same time, he was a true son of the theological learning center (*Howzeh*), and a pious descendant of those who were trained in the Ja'firi-School of thought. Because of this relationship he never disconnected his association with the discussions and religious lectures, and education and

training of theological disciples. However, his higher responsibilities such as *Naqabat*, *Diwani-Mazalim*, and *Amir al-Hajj* did not allow him sufficient time for intensive cultural involvement.

In his capacity as a noble descendant having profound roots in Ja'fri-School of thought, he was destined for a grant mission for the advancement of religious learning centers, therefore, was always thinking and acting continuously for improving the educational affairs of theological students. Eventually for further advancing the level of their education to higher standards, he established a residential school with a boarding house which was an unprecedented unique concept for his period.

In spite of the fact that his financial earnings were rather moderate, when realized that a group of religious-education seekers are associated with him; he decided to purchase a house for the education of his disciples and named it: The House of Knowledge (*Darul-Ilm*). The school was equipped with a library, as well as all sort of facilities and means of living were provided each resident,¹ in order to protect the prestige and dignity of students, each one was provided with a separate key for the store and other facilities so that they may fulfill their needs instantaneously without waiting for physical presence of the store keeper.

"Here it is important to note that the House of Knowledge (*Darul-Ilm*) was established by Sayyid Radi several decades before the establishment of Nizamyeh School at Baghdad by Nizamul-Mulk Tousi, which was established only through the large budget provided by the government. The majority of historians had considered the establishment of Nizamul-Mulk as a pioneer religious school in the Islamic history. But it could be seen that Nizamul-Mulk (deceased in the year 485 A.H.), had started the Nizamyeh School of Baghdad in 457 A.H. finishing it in 459 A.H. had actually undertaken this task after 80 years of Sayyid's *Darul-Ilm*.² Therefore it is quite logical to think that Nizamul-Mulk might have acquired the idea of school building from Sayyid Radi.

¹. Sayyid Radi – the compiler of Nahj al-Balaghah Sayyid Radi's brother – Sayyid Murtada had also established a residential school named Dar al-Eim in a portion of his home were studied and resided. History does not clarify whether the Dar ai-Eim established by Sayyid Radi in his house was the pioneer school or vice versa. In any case the distinction for the establishment of pioneer residential schools (equivalent to modern Alma-maters) belongs to Sayyid Rad's family

². Sayyid Radi – the compiler of Nahj al-Balaghah p. 162

Self-Possession And Temperament

Sayyid Radi being a self-made and decorated personality always believed that true greatness and honor of a person depends upon his being possessed with high moral character and spiritual virtues.

Accordingly in his entire life he practiced a moderate economics with the spirit of contentment without ever stretching his hands before others. It was due to these reasons that his characteristics such as the loftiness of the spirit, dignity, good honor, eminence, and enterprising talents were the topic of discussion among the common as well special classes of the people.

Because he never attached any importance to wealth and property and never showed any inclination towards the material splendor and glittering, by limiting the consumption of material things only to the extent they were essential for fulfilling his genuine needs. Also, he raised and trained his disciples with the same philosophy and moral characteristics.

Sharif Radi in his beautiful instructing poetic verses introduces the world as deceitful, tempting, and unfaithful, as follows:

"I do not have the last attachment and liking for the world.

Oh deceitful-world! I do not need you, let your magic and temptation be exposed and insulted

Heart's attachment to this (deceitful-world) is dangerous, because it's unfaithful to its promises and commitments.

*In order to be relieved from its pain I have divorced it for one thousand times, while the real divorce consists of three times only."*¹

The Ale-Buyeh kings always were very keen and insisted that their gifts and awards should be accepted by Sayyid Radi, but his freedom loving nature and his being detached to the world's riches were always acted as obstacles of the path in fulfillment of their desires. Abi Muhammad Mohallabi, Bahaud.-dowleh's minister narrates as follows:

"One day, I was informed that God-Almighty had blessed Sayyid Radi with the birth of a son. I wanted to utilize this golden opportunity for sending a gift for the new-born, thus finding a way for obliging Sayyid Radi. Accordingly, I ordered the servants to prepare a tray and placed two thousand golden Dinars upon it, and dispatched them to carry it for Sayyid Radi, as a traditional gift for such associations.

Sayyid Radi declined to accept the gift and send the following message:

'At least you must be aware that I don't accept any gift from anybody, and in case you were not already aware of this fact, I want you to know now that I accept gift from no one.'

Hoping that pursuance might be fruitful, I ordered the servants to take it back to Sayyid Radi with the following message:

'Please accept this insignificance gift and donate it to the midwife and other maids as a reward for their services.'

Sayyid again returned the tray with the following message:

'Midwife and other maids are not strangers since according to our customs we do not allow strangers to enter into privacy of our homes. They are my own relatives and are not ready to accept any reward for their services.'

For the third time I ordered the servants to take it back to Sayyid Radi with the following message:

‘Since you are not ready to accept this gift for your own use, please distribute it among the tullab (religious students) studying in your school.’

When the tray was brought for the third time with the above message the teacher in the presence of his disciples said:

‘The disciples are present here,’ and then looking at them said:

‘Anyone who requires this money is free to take it.’

Then one of the disciples came forward, and picked up a single dinar, and after cutting it picked up a small portion leaving the remaining portion inside the tray. Sharif Radi asked him:

‘Why did you pick up only a small portion of that Dinar?’ He replied:

‘Last night, while studying the lamp's oil was finished, and at that time the school storekeeper was not available for filling the lamp. Therefore, I purchased oil on credit from the nearby shop. I took this small portion of Dinar to pay for the oil purchased last night.’

After hearing disciple's story, Sayyid Radi ordered that each disciple should be provided his own separate key for the storeroom and other facilities, so that they may fulfill their needs freely without any inconvenience. "[2](#)

[1](#). The memoirs of Allamah Ash-Sharif ar-Radi p. 328.

[2](#). Ayan al-Shia, vol. 9, p. 217.

Benevolence And Generosity

One of the famous poets of Sayyid Radi's time named Khaley had said:

"I compiled a beautiful laudatory poem praising Sayyid Radi and describing his human virtues and perfection in a charming style. When Sayyid Radi learned about it, he arranged to send forty-nine Dirhams for me as a token of appreciation for my verses. Having been paid such an insignificant reward I said to myself:

Certainly, a literary scholar and appreciator of good poetry like Sayyid Radi had betrayed me because the value of my laudatory verses was indeed more than the forty-nine Dirhams."

The time passed slowly and Khaley has yet not quite forgotten the story of his being betrayed by Sayyid

Radi; when one day passing through the bazaar of Aroos he encountered a man saying:

“I am selling a piece of land, which includes a portion of Sayyid Radi's house for a cost of only forty–nine Dirhams equivalent to 5 Dinars.” His entire existence was shaken because he had discovered the reality now.

He now understood that Sayyid at was financially hard pressed, and therefore, in order to arrange the reward as a token of appreciation for his laudatory verses, had been forced to sell a portion of his house. It was here that Khaley felt terribly sorry and ashamed for thinking that Sayyid Radi had betrayed him for paying an insignificant reward for his verses. He felt a terrible fire of pertinence ignited within his inner self burning his entire existence.

Presence Of Heart

Sayyid Radi was not only a model of perfection in educational and cultural activities, but at the same time in his practical acts and deeds was a pious scholar and vigilant night–worshipper. At night, he was busy in humming sensational communications with his beloved (God–Almighty), while during the day, he was actively engaged in teaching and training of *tullab* (religious–students) as well as in discharging other important social obligations assigned to him.

Sayyid Radi attended the congregational prayers lead by his brother Sayyid Murtada and offered the prayers with concentration and humility. One day, while offering congregational prayer under the (leadership) of his brother Sayyid Murtada, during the stage of Rukoo (Genuflection), his inner sight visioned the Imam of the congregational prayer swimming inside the river of blood. He immediately switched his Niyat (intention) from congregational prayer to individual prayer and thus, finished the prayer in this manner.

He was asked to explain the reason of his switching his intention to individual prayer in the midst of congregational prayer (According to some narration Sayyid Murtada himself asked Sayyid Radi had said that he will never again offer congregational prayer under his Imam, or may be the other believers present in the congregational asked). Sayyid Radi replied:

“When I entered into the stage of genuflection, I found my brother swimming in the river of blood.” Sharif Murtada confirmed Sayyid Radi's reply by admitting that at that time his mind was preoccupied with menstruation–problems, because before his coming to congregational prayer, some women had approached him to ask questions about menstruation. [1](#)

[1](#). Rozat al–Jannat Vol 6 p. 203

A Great Jurisprudent

The knowledge of Jurisprudence and the recognition of Divine commandments is regarded as the most useful and valuable branch of learning. After the position of *Risalat* (Prophetic mission or message), and *Imamat* (the Divine successorship of Prophet Muhammad (S) by the twelve sinless Imams, the knowledge of religious Jurisprudence holds the highest human spiritual rank and position in the Ja'fari-Islamic School. Sayyid Radi succeeded in utilizing these provisions of rich Islamic culture by distinguishing himself as a learned scholar and eminent Jurisprudent.

The God-Almighty had so willed that he and his brother Sayyid Murtada- revivers of Shi'i political Jurisprudence and flag bearers of knowledge and Jurisprudence - should utilize the golden opportunity, that is, the presence of the most eminent exalted Jurisprudent of that time -Shaykh al Mufid (ra) and should be taught and trained by him, ultimately acquiring the highest position of Jurisprudence for themselves.

Although his fame in the vast fields of poetry and literature has overshadowed his other educational dimensions, and historians and biographers have written extensively about Sayyid Radi's poetry citing him as the most eminent poet and literary figure of his period, but any how his personality is too great to be confined only into the domain of poetry and literature. In spite of the fact that he was the most unique eloquent orator, at the same time he was a profound authority for the knowledge of *Hadith* (narration), of *tafsir* (Commentary of the Holy Qur'an) and an eminent *Faqih* (Jurisprudent) of his period.

Regarding the eminence of these two brothers the researchers have stated that if Sayyid Radi did not exist, Sayyid Murtada would have become the most eminent poet of that period, and if Sayyid Murtada was not there, it would have been impossible to find another Jurisprudent to match with Sayyid Radi. Sayyid Radi has written a book in the field of Jurisprudence named *Taliq Ali Khalaful-Faqhah*.¹ Also his debates regarding Jurisprudence with his contemporary scholars and jurisprudents which have been recorded in his biography proves his mastery in this field. Apart from these he also occupied the highest judicial position for a long period which required an in-depth knowledge and mastery of Jurisprudence.

¹. Rajal Najashi, p. 283

A Drop From The Infinite Ocean

Sayyid Radi in his youth started the interpretation and explanation of the Qur'anic verses. His love and liking began in his childhood years when he heard the heart-appealing sweet recital of the Holy Qur'an by his mother and father every morning at his home. After finishing his learning of the Holy Scripture, he established a profound esteem and permanent link with the Divine scripture. By reciting the Holy Qur'an

eloquently with concentration, he used to polish and clean the mirror of his heart. Sayyid Radi, like other humble believers and Divine scholars, every time wants to communicate with his Creator used to offer prayer; and whenever his heart was thirsty for listening God's words, recited the Holy Qur'an.

With the passing of each day, his infatuation for the Divine revelations increased more and more to the extent that he started studying various Qur'anic –disciplines and within a short period acquired profound knowledge of them, becoming an eminent Qur'anic scholar specially in the field of *Tafsir (commentary)*. Also he memorized complete holy scripture at the age of thirty years.¹ Now, apart from that sweetness and excitement of childhood years – when he enjoyed listening recital of the Holy Qur'an by his parents – in his own capacity, had discovered a fantastic world of spiritual ecstasy with infinite dimensions and riches.

Sayyid Radi become fascinated with the luminous beauty of the heavenly verses and decided writing so that at least equivalent to a drop from the infinite ocean of Qur'anic knowledge could be presented on paper. The fruits of his sincere efforts resulted his compilation of three precious books regarding the Holy Qur'an, left by Sayyid Radi as a souvenir for the future generations, which are considered as the most valuable Shi'i treasurers.

1. *Talkhis al-Bayan un Mojazat al-Qur'an*: The pioneer book ever written about the metaphorical interpretation of the Holy Qur'an in a new style and special technique, which consists of explaining the interpretation of only those verses, whose understanding requires further explanation and utilization of other Qur'anic sciences instead, of explaining the commentary of all the verses.² The topic of this interpretation is named "Metaphorical Interpretation of the *Holy Qur'an*" (*Mojazat al-Qur'an*), i.e. the verses whose actual meanings are opposite to their figurative or apparent wordings. (A group of learned scholars have also written books regarding the above topic, but Sayyid Radi's book *Mojazat al-Qur'an* happens to be the best book in this field.³
2. *Haqayaq al-Tavil fi Mutasbabeḥ al-Tanzeel* is the second commentary of Sayyid Radi which has been referred by him in another book *al-Mojlizat al-Nabuwyeh* by different names. Unfortunately, this great masterpiece work has been lost except only a portion of it (i.e. vol. 5th remains available). Regarding this book Khateeb Baghdadi quotes from his teacher Ahmed-bin-'Umar-bin-Rooh, who said:

“Sayyid Radi has written a book about the meanings of Qur'an which is a masterpiece work and is matchless”⁴

3. *Ma'ni al-Qur'an*: Regarding this commentary of Sayyid Radi the famous lineage expert Omani has written in his book *al-Majd* as follows:

"I have seen a volume of Sayyid Radi's commentary which was excellent and as compared to Abu Jaffer's (Shaykh Tousi commentary (*Tabyan*) could be ranked equivalent or may be a little bit superior to that."

Also Ibn Khalqan had said:

"The book *Ma'ni al-Qur'an* is a masterpiece unique literary work which indicates Sayyid Radi's profound authority over grammar and linguistic.

Some other famous books written by Sayyid Radi may be listed as follows:

- *Khasayas al-Iymmeh*
- *Nahj al-Balaghah*
- *al-Ziyadat -fi-Sherabi-Tamam*
- *Taliq Khilaf al-Fuqaha.*
- *Kitabi-Mojazat Athar al-Nubuwyeh.*
- *Taliqeh bar Ezah abi-Ali*
- *Al- Jayid min Sher ibn-al-Hajjaj.*
- *Ziyadat fi Sher ibn-al-Hojjaj:*
- *Mukhtar Sherabi Ishaq al-Sabi.*

- *Kitabi-Madar binel wa-ben abi Ishaq min al-Risail*[5](#)

- [1.](#) Al-Muntazim Vol. 7, p. 279
- [2.](#) Abstracts from Yad-Nameh (memoirs) p. 141
- [3.](#) Shia and Establishment of Islamic Sciences p. 34
- [4.](#) Tarikhi Baghdad (History of Baghdad) Vol. 2 p. 246
- [5.](#) Rajal Najashi, p.283.

Sunni Scholar's Point Of Views About Sayyid Radi

The followers of each religion and school of thought naturally lowers their wings in humility towards their great learned scholars, open their tongues for their praises, and keep their memories alive through arranging memorial celebrations at special occasions so that they could take a pride in the superiority of that particular religion or school of thought. From these considerations, the orator eloquently speaks about their righteous characteristics and spiritual perfection, while the writers use the power of their pen to write about their superior qualities and virtues by publishing their biographies.

But sometimes there are exceptions to this general rule like the charming personality of Sayyid Radi -- the luminous unique Shi'i personality of fourth century -- who distinguished himself by achieving the highest positions of knowledge and ascending to the highest --spiritual stations; to the extent that rulers and subjects, enemies and friends, and scholars and commoners lowered their head in humanity before his exalted and opened their tongues in his praises. Sunni elderly personalities have always made interesting statements in his praise.

Abdul Malik Thalibi, a famous poet of Sayyid Radi's period in his research and literary book titled "*Yatimateh alDahl*" praises Sayyid Radi as follows:

"He was barely 10 years old when he started composing poetry. Today he is the most celebrated poet of our time, a great statesman of Iraq, possessor of superior lineage and dignity, an exalted scholar and Jurisprudent, and a manifestation of all goodness."[1](#)

Khatib Baghdadi in his book titled "*History of Baghdad*" writes.

"He (the brother of Abul-Qasim famous as Murtada) was a learned scholar and a great literary personality. Ahmad bin Rooh narrated that Sayyid Radi at a very early age started studying the Holy Qur'an and was able to memorize it thoroughly within a short span of time. Also he said that Sayyid Radi has written several books about the meanings of the Holy Qur'an which are unique and matchless"[2](#)

In his preface written for the "Comments on Nahj al-Balaghah" vol-1, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Motazalli Madayani writes:

“He never accepted any gift or rewards from anyone even from his father, which in itself indicates the dignity of his self. The kings of Ale-Buyeh dynasty were always very keen and eager, and applied pressures for acceptance of their gifts and rewards, but Sayyid Radi never yielded. Sayyid Radi possessed a lofty spirit and exalted thoughts which he had reflected in his poetry, but unfortunately his period did not provide him the opportunity for the implementation of those cherished ideals. He lived till the very last moment of his life with a burning ambition looking and striving for the appropriate opportunity for revolting against the existing corrupt system.”³

Abu al-Farj bin Jodi in his book “*al Muntazim*” writes about Sayyid Radi:

“He has profound knowledge of Jurisprudence; was a learned scholar, eminent poet, writer, and righteous religious person possessed with valor and courage.”⁴

The great Sunni historian Hafiz Dhaibi in his book “*Alabr fi-Khabar min-Ghabar*” writes:

“Sayyid Radi is the kind of poet who introduced freshness and renewal in poetry and therefore they titled him: the eminent poet of *Quraish*. He started composing poetry at an early age of nine years. He was naturally gifted with unique foresight, wisdom, common sense, and a lot of benevolence. The precious poetical works left by him consist of four volumes.”⁵

Jamal al-Din abi al-Mahasin Yusuf bin Taghri Bardi Atabaki in his book “*al-Najoom al-Zahareh fi Malook Mithr wa al-Qayreh*” writes:

“Sayyid Radi was an outstanding Grammarian, learned scholar, eminent eloquent poet, great Jurisprudent, and possessor of utmost courage, valor and dignity. Sayyid Radi, Sayyid Murtada and their father all were favorite leaders of their Shi'i community in their period.”⁶

¹. Yatimateh al-Dehar vol. 3, p. 131.

². Tarikhi Baghdad (History of Baghdad) Vol. 2, p. 246.

³. Shahre Nahj al-Balagha Ibn al-Hadid, vol. 1 p.31.

⁴. Al-Muntazim Vol. 7, p. 279.

⁵. Al-Abr fi-Khabar min-Ghabar Vol. 2, p. 213.

⁶. al-Najoom al-Zahera, Vol. 4, P. 240.

The Great Mission

With the passing of each day a new golden page prepared by the powerful and competent hand of Sayyid Radi was being added to the luminous Islamic History. With this fluent pen and profound

knowledge, he offered outstanding and valuable services such as: wrote Commentary of the Holy Qur'an, prepared a Jurisprudence book regarding Divine commands by quoting many authentic narrations, introduced hidden treasures of Islamic learning through his poetic verses and lofty elegiac poems, and accepted heavy religious, political, and social responsibilities.

But in spite of doing all the above he still felt a sort of incompleteness within his existence as though he has been created by the Creator for undertaking a great mission. He must utilize the existing opportunities with best of his abilities for introducing the authenticity of Shi'i School of thought or in other words the real Islam to the mankind.

Sayyid Radi knew it very well that *Resalat* (Prophetic mission or message) without *Imamat* (the Divine successorship of Prophet Muhammad S. by the twelve sinless Imams) is not complete; the city of knowledge of Prophet (S) without the existence of Imam Ali ('a), remains a city without a gate, and without the existence of an impeccable personality (assigned by God) the Heavenly Book remains without an interpreter.

Therefore, he must move forward by taking the giant steps for completing the task, which earlier could not be accomplished by his predecessors because of lack of proper opportunities.

With the above Divinely motivation Sharif Radi started the great historical task, by utilizing his unique natural talents and acquired knowledge of various religious disciplines; took his enlightened pen for completing the famous book "Commentary of the Sun" *Tafseer Aftab*.[1](#)

He himself writes:

"Since my youth when the life was at the peak freshness and valor, I started writing the book titled: "the Special Characteristics of sinless Imams ('a)" (*Khasayas vizqehai Imeh A.S.*) which contained interesting and important narrations from them. After collecting the special characteristics of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ('a) the prevailing conditions and difficulties of life prevented me **from its** completion. That book was divided into various chapters and sections and also, the short sayings of Imam Ali ('a), especially regarding admonition, wisdom, ethics, and analogies were included in the end of the book.

Some of my friend found it interesting and exciting from various dimensions and requested me to complete a book containing important sermons of Imam Ali ('a) delivered at different occasions as well as his letters written about various matters. Since they knew that such a book, if compiled would be containing the richest examples of eloquence of literary Arabic lectures as well as the most luminous points of religious and worldly sermons, which so far had not been compiled in any other book. Because Imam Ali ('a) is the source and fountainhead of eloquence, a perfect manifestation of its mysteries, and the creator of its principles and Grammar.

All the announcers and speakers follow him, and all the orators narrate from his sermons, because his words are accompanied with Divine and prophetic knowledge and wisdom.

I accepted their request and started the collection of this great book, while remaining confident that very soon, everything will be overshadowed by its brilliance; it would become a thing of spiritual advantage and gains for others, and its reward (from God) will become the next world's treasure for me."[2](#)

[1](#). Commentary by Professor Muhammad Rida Hakim.

[2](#). Sayyid Radi's preface of Nahj al-Balaghah.

The Infinite Path

The motive for writing the book "Special Characteristics of the Sinless Imams." (*Khasayas al-Immeh*), by Sayyid Radi become a preliminary for undertaking a higher task by him i.e. the compilation of *Nahj al Balagha* (Path of Eloquence) which consists of sermons, supplications, testaments, letters, and short sayings of Imam Ali ('a)

"It is undeniable fact that since Imam Ali ('a) possessed special talents in eloquence, he has delivered many important sermons, and also on various suitable occasions had spoken short sayings which are full of wisdom and knowledge. Especially during his caliphate, he has written many important letters for his government officials and contemporaries. The Muslim people had always shown a keen interest and liking for the collection and preservation of abovementioned treasures of knowledge kept by Imam Ali ('a)."[1](#)

Whatever Sayyid Radi has been able to collect and compile in his book Nahj al-Balaghah consists only a small portion of the sermons and letters of Imam Ali ('a).

"The learned scholar like Masoodi had testified that the number of Sermons of Imam Ali ('a) is far greater than those compiled by Sayyid Radi in *Nahj al-Balaghah* which contains only two hundred and thirty-nine sermons, while Masoodi himself had admitted the existence of more than four hundred and eighty-two sermons."

Sayyid Radi himself has admitted that he has undertaken walking on a road which has infinite length, and therefore finds himself helpless in completing his journey. He writes: "I do not claim that I have covered all the parameters of Imam Ali's ('a) speeches, without losing any of his words. Whatever have been collected by me is much less as compared to the portion left uncollected. But as far as my endeavors regarding the search for the missing literature are concerned, I have left no stone unturned in this mission."[2](#)

Also, Sayyid Radi has compiled only four hundred and ninety short sayings from Imam Ali ('a), while

Allameh Ahmadi has compiled fifteen thousand short saying of Imam Ali ('a) in his speech book "*Gharar wa Darar*" (Excellent Pearls). The collection and compilation efforts of literary material related to Imam Ali ('a) were not limited to Sayyid Radi and his compiled book *Nahj al-Balaghah*, rather these efforts were zealously pursued by all the great Shi'i personalities of before Sayyid Radi, his contemporaries, and those who came after him.

The special value which may be attached to Sayyid Radi's precious contribution is, that the future learned research scholars, by diving into this ocean of infinite depth succeeded in discovering many precious jewels, and used them for the enrichment of the Islamic culture. The scope of these later works is so vast that it would require separate research of its own.

"The overall research work conducted over *Nahj al-Balaghah* has resulted in the creation of plenty of special literature, which may be titled as *Adabyati Nahj al-Balaghah* (Path of Eloquence's Literature), and could be listed as follows:

1. Identification of various definitions of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
2. Stipulation on *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
3. Documentation and reference of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
4. Biographies of the Narrators of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
5. Bibliography of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
6. Content of Topics of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
7. Content of specialties of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
8. Identification of *Nahj al-Balaghah* (Aphorism).
9. Translations of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.

10. Extraction of concise statement of a principle (Aphorism) from *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
11. Translation of Aphorism into prose and poetry in Persian and other languages.
12. Selected topics of *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
13. Effects of *Nahj al-Balaghah* in the Field of Islamic Divinities.
14. Effects of *Nahj al-Balaghah* upon Islamic politics.
15. 15. Effects of *Nahj al-Balaghah* upon Islamic Training and Ethics.
16. Effects of *Nahj al-Balaghah* upon Islamic Orators.
17. Effect of *Nahj al-Balaghah* upon Islamic Writers.
18. Nature and Creation in *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
19. Books and Research Papers written about *Nahj al-Balaghah*.
20. Biographies of *Nahj al-Balaghah* 's Collectors.[3](#)

[1.](#) Seeri dar Nahj al-Balaghah p. 3.

[2.](#) Sayyid Radi's preface of Nahj al-Balaghah.

[3.](#) Danish-e-Muslimeen (Knowledge of Muslims) p. 4, 183.

Perimeters Of Nahj Al-Balaghah

Immediately after the compilation of the *Nahj al Balaghah* by Sayyid Radi in the year 400 A. H., lot of valuable and useful research efforts, regarding the perimeters of Imam All's ('a) words, were undertaken by the great learned Islamic scholars. Such comprehensive and systemic research work was never undertaken for any other book except the Holy Qur'an in the Islamic history. With due complements to the authors for their valuable and precious efforts, the relevant research work regarding the Path of Eloquence could be listed as follows:

1. Handwritten Manuscripts

So far approximately one hundred and thirty-one¹ hand written manuscripts of the *Nahj al-Balaghah* have been identified which belonged between fifth to tenth centuries A.H .. Of course, the handwritten manuscripts of the *Nahj alBalaghah* are not limited to this number and are greater than that. However, it must be admitted that the existence of even these many manuscripts in spite of all those tragic calamities and political upheavals of painful past centuries in itself is something like a miracle.

2. Commentary and Interpretation of Nahj al-Balaghah

Allameh Tehrani in his book "*al-Zuriyeh*" Vol. 14, has mentioned the existence of one hundred commentaries, Allameh Amini in his book "*Al-Ghadir*" has stated the number of commentaries to eighty-one, and great researcher al Shaykh Hasan Jume'h has registered two hundred and ten commentaries with complete specifications in his famous book "*Sharoo'h Nahj al-Balaghah*".

3. List of Books About Nahj al-Balaghah

Since, lots of books about commentary and interpretation of Nahj al-Balaghah were written, some of the scholars decided to compile a book containing the list of all such books. One of the famous books is written by Rida Ostadi, which contains a list of three hundred and seventy books so far published.

¹. The names and complete characteristics of these handwritten notes have been registered by Professor Sayyid Ahdulaziz Tabatabai, Yad-Nameh (Memoirs) Sayyid Radi p. 367-399.

The Charter Of Justice

To speak about this magnificent charter of justice, that is, *Nahj al-Balaghah* which has rightly been titled

as “Brother of the Holy Qur'an”, and “*Superior than the men's work, and inferior only to Almighty God's words*” is indeed difficult. Therefore, its greatness, exaltedness, and reviving role could only be defined by the writings and speeches of great intellectuals and learned schools. Imam Khomeini (ra) in introducing the bright face of this grand charter of justice writes as follows:

"The book *Nahj al-Balaghah* whose spirit is an electuary for curing, and an ointment for individual as well as social pains, is a huge magnificent grand complex of infinite parameters. A person or a great human society, from the date of its issuance till as much as the history moves forward, the new societies being come into existence, by forming new nations and their governments; all the intellectuals, philosophers, and researchers should ponder and submerged into it..."¹

Intellectual, Islamologist, and celebrated writer of our times Professor Muhammad Rida Hakimi regarding the Immortal Charter and the human building messages hidden therein writes as follows:

"*Nahj al-Balaghah* is an inspired blessing and desired illumination; looking into it from every angle is like looking into the sun or into the great horizons of life. Introduction of pure Monotheism and most sublime realities have been manifested by utilization of words at their highest forms – also it throws considerable light upon the following:

Identification of most profound parameters of the Holy Qur'an.

The noble character of the Holy Prophet (S.A. W}, and higher ethics.

The higher sublime stations, Divine knowledge, training and educational status, political and social positions of sinless Imams ('a)

The life histories of great prophets and parameters of Divine messages.

The intense anti-natural darkness– the hell of pagans.

The vast fields of great struggles for the sake of Divine Missions.

The disappearance of the tyrants of history and their annihilated in the annihilating garden of the world

The greatness of nucleus and existence.

The creation of universe and matter

The magnificent scenes of creation.

The mysteries of lightning and phenomenon.

The continuous warning (or crying for truth) of the conscience.

The humming of angels around the Great Temple of Heavenly-Kingdom

The heavenly music and singing of stars

The wonderfulness of the oceanic waves.

The heart–appealing writings (or the paintings) scribed upon the walls of time (of this world).

The mysteries of wonderful lives of ants.

The speaking silence of caves.

The coordinated whispering of plains and valleys.

The cheerfulness of morning breeze upon the branches and nests.

Prayers recitals of sunrises and sunsets.

The greatness of fasting and other obligations.

The morals and ways of perfect human beings.

Introduction of real face of revolution by explaining in detail the revolutionary guidelines for the establishment of truth justice.

Pure humanities and fervent human consciences.

The humming communications of the lovers of God with their beloved in the spiritual atmosphere of night.

The contentment of God's lovers during recital of Heavenly Verses, in prayer, and union with their beloved during night.

Arousing of roaring spirits before sunrising.

Singing of verses of sanctification in front of the Glorified Existence of God–Almighty.

Insistence for offering the prayers – a heavenly journey of a believer and the infinite ocean connecting the earthly creature to the everlasting source of light.

Firmness in defending justice

Powerful fist falling upon the head of tyrants – creators of deprivation.

To support and cry for the pains of hungry and indignant, and to be on their side

The destructive face of poverty in the life of an individual or society.

To ridicule and threaten the affluent and luxurious lifestyles at the expense of sucking the blood of deprived

Sincere disclosure of corrupt officials.

Overall condemnation of weak and Worldly scholars.

Absolute rejection and contempt of those employees and officials who misbehave with public and inflict damage to their honor and dignity.

Respect for opinion and counsel offered by others and encouraging them for giving their opinions.

Pure counseling which polishes hearts and spirits.

A lot of silence over the words about graves and graveyards.

Unidentified realities of unstable world

Frightening passages of death and Day of Resurrection.

Greatness of immortal blessings of the next world.

Reflections of a responsible and committed human being and – his idea/life.

Manifestations of the spirit of valor of its confrontation with the stormy struggles of life.

Holy war and commitment.

Utilization of opportunities.

Men and history, forecasts about the perfection of humanity, and the role of Islam.

Obviously, the above list content matters are nothing but a quick passage through the Nahj al-Balaghah which is very incomplete....”[2](#)

[1](#). The message of Imam Khomeini for the participants of Nahj al-Balaghah Millennium Congress on May 17, 1981. Sahifae-Noor vol. 41 p. 223.

[2](#). Kalamī-Javedaneh (Immortal Speech) p. 161–165.

The Words Of Two Christians

Regarding the immortal words of *Nahj al-Balaghah* its miracles, and being supernatural a lot has been said, and an explanation of all that is beyond the scope of this book. For the sake of brevity, we would

limit ourselves to refer only quotations from the most celebrated scholar and writer Professor Muhammad Rida Hakimi, who has mentioned about the two Christian scholars.

Firstly, the words of George Jorda:q:

“In *Nahj al-Balaghah* as much as the existence of Imam Ali (‘a) is a blessing and benevolence for Arabs; to the same extent it applies to all other human beings as well as for society where masses of the people live in an environment of understanding, cooperation, and sincerity, with a single aim, objective, and program. Because the truth and uprightness cannot be separated from each other, and similar is the case with the program for truth and uprightness.

Therefore, on this basis if someone in a society, did not prefer an Arab over a non-Arab – unless he morally excels with a non-Arab – also would not prefer an important personality over an ordinary person, not bestow to this brother¹ unless given to everybody else, will not allow exploitation of human beings by others, will endeavor for freedom and equal opportunities within the boundaries of possibilities of place and location, and will try to eradicate poverty and wretchedness so that all could live a comfortable and prosperous life. Such a person would not like war, massacres, and oppression, would invite people to live in a harmonious peaceful environment with a spirit of brotherhood under the shadow of justice, so that the groups do not swallow the others.

He will demand that human beings treat each other with justice including the animals. Such a person would not readily even to snatch away a tiny piece of bread from an ant's mouth and will not tolerate oppression for birds. Such a person will ultimately endow his own life in the last for the materialization of his cherished ideals.”²

The other examples are the verses from another Christian named “Fawwad Jordac” as follows:

“For the tyrants Ali is like a thunder bolt which breaks their backs, while for the oppressed ones he is like a stable shelter.

For justice Ali is like a durable diamond with unmatched moral, and sword and pen consistently guard that precious jewel

Who else is there to respond to the cries of the poor and wretched people in the oppressed lands?

Except Ali (‘a) with his Nahj al-Balaghah– which is the constitution of the Government of Justice– is a program for destruction of establishment of tyranny and oppression, wherever it may be.”³

Here it would be appropriate to quote some precious short sayings from Imam Ali (‘a) as follows:

1. *“Be Careful not to monopolize and allocate exclusively for your own self -- things which equally belong to others as well”*

إِيَّاكَ وَالْأَسْتَثْنَاءَ بِمَا النَّاسُ فِيهِ أَسْوَةٌ

2. *“The relatives, friends and bondsman of rulers generally abuse their status -- by being close to the center of power – and get used to special treatment for themselves depriving people from their just rights. They show stubbornness, bullying and oppressive tendencies towards the general public.”⁴*

إِنَّ لِلْوَالِيَّ خَاصَّةً وَبَطَانَةً فِيهِمْ أَسْتَثْنَاءٌ وَتَطَاوُلٌ، وَقَلَّةٌ إِنْصَافٍ فِي مَعَامَلَةٍ

3. *“There are two types of hungry people who never get satisfied namely: The one who is thirsty of knowledge, and the one who is thirsty of this world ”*

مَنْهُومان لا يشبعان: طالب علم وطالب دنيا

4. *“The value of every one is in direct proportion to the things desired or admired by him”.*

قيمة كل امرء ما يحسنه

¹. Aqil ibn Abu Talib: brother of Imam Ali ('a). During the caliphate of Imam Ali ('a), Aqil is related to have asked him to withdraw 40,000 Dirhams from the public treasury to enable him to settle a debt. In response to his request Ali ('a) heated an iron till it became red hot, and then offered it to Aqil, who became scared and said that it will burn his hands. Imam Ali ('a) made his point that if you cannot tolerate the fire of this world; by accepting your request for giving you money from the Baitul-Mal, tomorrow, how he will face the fire of hell. When Aqil's request was denied, he abandoned his brother and joined the Mu'awiya in Damascus. Imam Khomeini in his lectures on "Islam Government" said:

"The ruler in Islamic society is a person who treats his brother "Aqil" in such a way that he would never request extra support from the public treasury (lest there be economic discrimination among the Muslims), and who requires his daughter to account for the guaranteed loan she has obtained from the public treasury, telling her 'If you do not pay back the loan you will be the first woman of the Banu Hashim (the Meccan clan to which the Prophet and his descendants belonged) to have her hand cut off.' That is the kind of ruler and leader we want, a leader who will put the law into practice instead of his personal desires and inclinations; who will treat all members of community as equal before law; who will refuse to countenance privilege or discrimination in any form; who will put his family on an equal footing with the rest of the people; who will cut the hands of his son if he commits a theft." (Hamid Algar. Islam and Revolution pp. 129–130).

². Al-Imam Ali, Saut al-Adalah al-Insanyyah (Imam Ali, the Voice of Justice for Humanity). vol 5, p. 1091 quoted from Kalamī-Javedaneh (Immortal Speech), p. 250. The English translation is online at:

<https://www.al-islam.org/voice-human-justice-saut-ul-adalat-al-insaniyah...> [8]

3. Kalami-Javedaneh (Immortal Speech), p. 251

4. An abstract from the letter to Malik-al-Ashtar

The Declaration Of Human Rights -His Letter To Malik Al-Ashtar

George Jordaq is a Christian scholar and researcher who became fascinated with the inspirational and educational guidelines of Imam Ali ('a) for building the individual as well as societies. Because of his extreme liking and admiration, he was motivated for undertaking a thorough research; the fruits of these pains taking efforts was the outcome of a precious and novel book titled: "Imam Ali – the Voice of Justice for Humanity" (*allmam Ali Soot-al-Adalateh al-Insaneyeh*).

George Jordac's innovation consists of comparison of "International Declaration for Human Rights" with the famous historical letter written to Malik Al-Ashtar¹ (his governor designate to Egypt); after carefully reviewing the "International Declarations of Human Rights" item by item, compares them with the words of Imam Ali ('a), and then with logical reasoning proves the superiority of basics principles of human and social rights presented by Imam Ali ('a) 1,400 years ago. After analyzing, comparing, and appraising, George Jordac explains the four basic differences, and through the undeniable realities lifts the curtain from the false and demagogic faces of world arrogance.

"The matter explained in the earlier paragraph beyond any doubt, would make the readers thoroughly aware about the human rights as proclaimed by Imam Ali ('a), and which were clearly, explicitly without any doubt, and complexities explained by him. By bringing these matters here, our aim was to make our readers acquainted, and thus relieving them for looking into these matters in some other texts.

But in order to explain the importance and greatness of Imam Ali's ('a) views regarding human rights as well as to introduce his exaltedness about the principles and laws in a complete, explicit, and comprehensive manner; it was found necessary to quote the most important points regarding "International Declarations for Human Rights" so that the readers themselves could appreciate the differences between them.

But if we have to speak some short words in this field, it must be pointed out that in principle it would be very difficult to find any difference between the school of Imam Ali ('a) and the "International Declaration of Human Rights". Of course, considering the differences of time, slight differences in the contents and details are inevitable, but overall, from the point of view of base and criteria, there exist no single clause in the "International Declaration for Human Rights" issued by the United Nations, for which an exact and similar clause does not exist in the charter issued by Imam Ali ('a). Apart from this in the charter and

principles issued by Imam Ali ('a), one may discover things superior and higher than then matters incorporated into the International Charter of Human Rights.”

About the important differences between these two George Jordac writes as follows:

"If there exists any genuine difference between these two international laws, in my opinion it consists in their implementation, which could be defined into four items as follows:

1. The first difference is that the International Declaration for Human Rights has been prepared by the joint efforts of thousands of learned intellectuals selected by a majority or representatives of all the governments, while the text and legal principles of *A/vite* constitution have been the outcome of a single exalted personality named Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib ('a).
2. The second difference is that Imam Ali ('a) has issued his declaration of human right at least ten centuries ahead of the “Interactional Declaration for Human Rights” issued by the United Nations.
3. The third difference is that the authors of the International Declaration for Human Rights or more correctly the collectors of relevant material and principles from various resources, regarding the task accomplished by them, or the task which they wanted to accomplish, filled the whole world by overemphasizing the greatness of their task and exaggerating their self-praise to the extent that human conscience and intellectual taste became disgusted with all that vain boasting. Because of their egotism and arrogance, they exhausted the people and forced them to praise for thousands and more heavy obligations which they have placed upon the shoulders of the people and nations.
4. The fourth most important difference is that most of these governments who played key role in the preparation of this declaration or were the pioneers in its official recognition; are the same who deprive human beings from their rights defined in that charter, dispatch soldiers and armaments to distant comers of the world for the complete annihilation of this charter. On the contrary as far as Imam Ali ('a) was concerned, every step he took forward, every place he delivered a sermon, and everywhere he raised his lightning sword, he sheared off the curtains of despotism, annihilated various colors and manifestations of egotism and exploitation, uprooted the evils of tyranny and oppression,

leveled the ground so that one could walk comfortably without being encountered with obstacles, and ultimately defending the rights and freedom of human beings left this world as a martyr. While a thousand times or more during his life he had risked his life in the battlefields and almost got martyred for defending his cherished ideals.”[2](#)

Regarding his research efforts about the all-round and Divine like personality of the *Amir al-Mu'minin* (Commander of the Faithful) Imam Ali ('a), George Jordac comments:

“Since I am a Christian by faith no one could accuse me of being sentimental or prejudiced in my admiration of Imam Ali ('a).”

The book “Imam Ali the Voice of Justice for Humanity” initially consisted of one volume which was presented by George Jundaq to Ayatullah Brujirdi³ which later on after completion had been published into five volumes.

[1.](#) Malik Al-Ashtar: “The governor appointed to Egypt by Imam Ali ('a). For the text of Imam's instructions to him, see *Nahj al-Balaghah* pp 425–445. A complete translation is contained in William C. Chittick, *A Shi'i Anthology* (Albany, N.Y. 1980) pp 68–82.”

–Hamid Algar, *Islam and Revolution* p – 156.

[2.](#) Ali and International Declaration of Human Rights.

[3.](#) Ramadan dar Tarikh p. 279.

The Demise Of His Father

Sayyid Radi and his elder brother both were fortunate enough to have the blessed existence of their father till the year 403 A.H. – a father who was a celebrated scholar, unmatched in knowledge and piety. Within the home environment he was a kind father, compassionate teacher, and sincere friend for his children; at the same time, he was a perfect model of charming manners, upright conduct, and pleasant and constructive encounters. Abu Ahmad dedicated himself tota 11y for the service of religion and people and by assuming important responsibilities defended the rights of deprived and destitute masses. Ibn Abi'lHadid Moatazali in his preface written for the book: "Commentary of *Nahj al-Balaghah* in chapter dealing with the biography of Sayyid Radi writes as follows:

“The father of Sayyid Radi Naqib Abu Ahmad was an eminent personality, was assigned important key positions during the Abbassids and Ale-Buyeh governments. Bahod-dowleh used to call him with the title of “The unique chaste person”. (*Tahir-Ohad*). He was appointed five times as *Naqibi-Talibyan*; while still holding that office, and having lost his eyesight, he left this world for his next abode.”[1](#)

Here it would be appropriate to clarify the above quotation that Abu Ahmad was holding the above-mentioned responsibility till his last moment, rather in the year 380 A.H., while still in good health, he himself willingly had transferred all these social responsibilities to his able, talented and intellectual son Sayyid Radi. Abu Ahmad, after living a distinguished and fruitful life full of continuous struggle for betterment of society's deprived died at the age of 97 years in the city of Baghdad, and with his hands full of decent services joined the blessed Kingdom of God.

As soon as the tragic news of sad demise of this dedicated self-sacrificing scholar, an ornament of public assemblies, and friend and supporter of the deprived was announced, it flooded the hearts of Muslims and Shi'i with pains and bitter tragedy. A huge crowd was gathered outside for paying last tributes to their beloved leader. In this magnificent and spiritual gathering the presence of eminent scholars and pious personalities had converted the whole scene into a heavenly manifestation.

With their hearts full of sorrow and sadness the lovers of Ahl al-Bayt (the Prophet's Holy Progeny) washed and shrouded the soulless body of Abu Ahmad for his journey to eternal abode. It was after completion of these rituals, that Sayyid Murtada joined the congregation to lead the funeral prayer for his father. His body was temporarily buried in his house and later on it was transferred to Karbala and was buried inside the Holy shrine of the Lord of Martyrs Husayn bin Ali ('a).

Many celebrated poets including Sayyid Radi, Sayyid Murtada, Abu Ishaq Sabi, Abul Alai Moari, composed heart-rending sorrowful eulogies,² and by recital of these lamentations paid tributes and kept his memory alive forever. Abul Aala, the most famous Arab poet in his eulogy addresses Abu Ahmad as follows:

"Two stars of your memory, left among us are still illuminating the horizon during each morning and evening.

Two exalted personalities, who were trained with righteous virtues, are indeed perfect models of modesty, grandeur, and adornment.

In virtues both are equivalent, in benevolence are like the rainfall -full of blessing, or like the two moons shining in intense darkness.

Both of them are possessors of special dignity, that every time the people of "Najd"³ speak with eloquence, in comparison to theirs, it means nothing.

Radi and Murtada are co-equivalent and have honestly divided (between them) the overall lines of magnificence and dignity.⁴

¹. Preface, Share Nahj al-Balaghah ibn Abi il-Hadid Vol. 1 p. 31-32

². Wafyat al-ayyan Vol. 4, p. 44-48

³. "Najd" is a mountains flat located in Saudi Arabia.

⁴. Sayyid Radi Compiler of Nahj al-Balaghah, p.22-23.

Poetry And Verses

“A verse may be defined as a knot between sentiments and imaginations manifested in a musical rhythm.”¹ Therefore, poetry is an important tool of presenting thoughts, because when the speech is delivered in the format of beautiful words with appealing musical rhythm in an effective manner, it naturally has special influence upon the listeners.

Those who are possessed with delicate intellectual poetic talents are capable of presenting thoughts and imaginations regarding various important aspects of life namely: praise and benediction, epic poems for wars, love and being in love, spirit, desert, mountains, valleys, sun, moon, morning, and nights ... etc. But the important thing is the aim pursued by the poet; if the aim is lofty sacred, carrier of a message, a direction, and commitment, its recital would be valuable and praiseworthy. In case it lacks the real values, its recital accordingly would not produce any positive impact rather would create destructive and derivative tendencies.

Because of these considerations many of our great pious scholars for speaking and explaining about the most delicate sublime realities have utilized this most effective dynamic tool of poetry; and thus, were able to explain about their lofty Divine aims, objectives, and platforms in the format of heart–appealing beautiful phrases.

Sayyid Radi was one among them who was gifted with a delicate intellectual poetic taste, who compiled his pioneer laudatory poems praising his ancestors and noble family. He was barely nine years old at that time, but his composure reflected such mastery and perfection that everyone who listened to his recital became astonished. All along his life he was familiar with the language of poetry and verse and paid serious attention for improvement of his poetic talents. It was the result of his consistent endeavors that in a short period of time the delicacy and sweetness of his verses and the charmness of his eloquent voice filled the horizons.

Gifted with natural talents for poetry Sayyid Radi, with his literary perfection completely dominated the literary circles by surpassing all his contemporary famous Arabic poets, was awarded with the title of “*The Poet of the Quresh*”, “*The Poet of Arabs*”, and “*The Eminent Poet of Quresh and Arabs*”, and all literary critics and linguistics were forced to open their tongues in his praise.

Sayyid Radi's poetic and literary works may be listed as follows:

1. *Mukhtari–Sher abi Ishaq al–Sabr*: is a collection of poetry of Abu Ishaq Sabi, the famous writer and an intimate friend of Sayyid Radi.

2. *Al-Jaiyyed min Sher Ibn al-Hujaj*: the other name of this book is *al-Hasan min Sher al-Husayn*, and Husayn is the name of famous poet Ibn al-Hujaj, whose beautiful verses have been collected by Sayyid Radi in this book.
3. *Al-Ziyarati fi Sherabi Tamam*.
4. The journals and letters exchanged between Sayyid Radi and Abu Ishaq Sabi consisted of three volumes which unfortunately have been lost; and if could have been preserved, would have been the most precious Arabic literature.

[1](#). Language and Writings of Persian p. 145.

Poetry Of Commitment

The golden period of Islamic history between century fourth (A.H.) and the early period fifth

(A.H.), was the period of blossoming of various Islamic sciences and disciplines. During this unprecedented period of Islamic history various disciplines and lofty Islamic learning namely: *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence), *Kalam* (Discourse), *Hadith* (Narration), *Adab* (Literature), and other sciences like Mathematics, Philosophy, Geometry, Astronomy, and Medicine reached to their highest state of arts levels. Many famous and top ranking learned scientists and scholars were involved in teaching and research activities during this golden era.

Naturally in such an enlightened educational environment poetry and literature were assigned a special prestige and distinction in the society. Because of these favorable circumstances and support and encouragement received from literature and poetry loving kings of Ale-Buyeh dynasty; many famous poets and writers were motivated for advancement of their literary and poetic talents towards perfection. Large cultural literary gatherings and magnificent scene of *mushaira* (poetic contests) were the order of the day, and many precious great poetic and literary works were published during this period.

The famous genius of that time – the great Sayyid Radi – was the most eminent poet and literary personality who always presided over such poetical and literary gatherings and with his charismatic presence always illuminated these cultural functions. It is also important to note that Sayyid Radi's poetry consisted of some special characteristics which made his poetic collection distinguished as compared to other poets. Following are some of these special features regarding his poetic talents:

1. Sayyid Radi never utilized his artistic talents for achieving position, wealth, and power; did not use his poetry for becoming a celebrity rather bestowed lofty aims and objectives upon it. Sahib ibn Abad the intellectual minister and famous poetry critic repeatedly criticized the poetry of most eloquent Arab poet "Muttashi" of world fame, but was so much fascinated by Sayyid Radi's verses that he had especially assigned a person to go to Baghdad for copying and sending him poetic verses recited by Sayyid Radi.

When Sayyid Radi learned about the above incident he composed an elucidatory poem for Sahib, praising his literary and poetic talents, with the intention of sending it to him. But because of fear of the possibility that Sahib might regard this token of appreciation by Sayyid as anticipation for some sort of favor or reward from him, Sayyid changed his mind.¹

2. He always preserved the modesty of language in his poetry and never used indecent phrases.

“Sayyid Radi like the verses of other poets did not compose satire poetry containing vulgar and insulting words; wherever something close to satire appears in his poetry, it is free from indecent language.”²

3. The internal nature and loftiness of spirit within restrained him from recital of poetry containing debauchery or abusive language which was liked by the rules of that period. This type of good for nothing or nonsense poetry never had any compatibility with his virtuous and dignified personality;³ in spite of the fact that in his period, clownery and impudence for the pleasure and amusements of the kings and caliph were encouraged by them.
4. The verses of Sayyid Radi are total manifestations of supreme truth and sublime realities, and in his reflections, he has not been least influenced by anybody or any position. Therefore, it was due to these considerations that till the last moments of his life his recitals were free from undesirable qualities such as flattering and buttering. These higher and valuable considerations bestowed commitment and direction upon his poetry.

“His poetic work has been published into four volumes”⁴, containing more verses as compared to others, which are at the peak of eloquence and at the utmost in dignity. “There were poets who compared verses of superior quality, but their quantity was smaller, and on the other hand those who composed a

lot of poetry sacrificed their quality. The only exception to the above rule was Sayyid Radi, who composed a lot in quantity while still maintaining the quality.”⁵

- ¹. Shazrat al-Zahb Vol 3, p. 113.
- ². Yad-Namaeh (Memoirs) of Allameh Sharif Radi p. 388, 389.
- ³. Yad-Nameh (Memoirs) Sayyid Radi p. 388-389.
- ⁴. Al-Abr fi Khabar min Ghabar Vol. 2 p. 213.
- ⁵. Tarikhi Baghdad (History of Baghdad) Vol 2 p. 246

The Culture Of Ashura

Sayyid Radi was a lover of the Lord of the Martyrs and was fascinated with the lofty aspirations Imam Husayn (‘a). He had traveled repeatedly for the pilgrimage of the holy land of love and valor – Karbala in order to take the oath of allegiance and extend his commitment with the Holy Martyrs of Karbala. Every year on the Day of Ashura he recited elegies with a lot of grief and anguish, elaborating the heroism, valor, and martyrdom of the son of prophet's daughter– Fatimah al-Zahra' (‘a) causing the congregation to burst in tears and lamentation. The burning eulogies which have been collected in Sayyid Radi's poetic works indicate his intense love for the institution of *Imamat* and his sincere commitment for the defense of the fortress of *Vi1ayat*.

Some Examples Of His Elegies

“What hesitance is there for the giant of death for taking away another dear one, after it has already snatched away the son of Fatimah.

Which is the day when the eyes are full of fears, because of the horrible catastrophe and painful tragedy?

On that tragic Day of Ashura–e–Husayn neither friend acted as faithful nor host offered shelter for their guest.

Oh Son of Fatimah! They look the oath of allegiance and then broken their commitment. How few are the faithful?

Some other place be said:

Oh! Sons of Ummayad! The swords of valiant' s whose dear ones have been most brutally killed (by you) will never go to sleep.

The swords are twisting inside their sheaths and the swift horse with a lightning strike is restless for encounter.

I am waiting for the day which would arrive without any prior warning when bodies of the misguided ones would tremble like a willow.

At another occasion on the day of Ashura he recites:

Oh! Ashura–e–Husayn, these burning flames (within) has engulfed my entire existence.

Every year this internal fire in my soul always gets ignited (on this day) no matter how much I try to extinguish it.

Oh my noble grandfather! The forces of sorrow, pain, and anguish attacks my heart.

The flood of tears flows continuously from the eyes, and if subsides at sunset again starts at the sunrise.

By recitals of these praises and elegiac verses, can I elevate your exaltedness and grandeur? Your eminence and dignity is like the peaks of mountains, while I am like someone sitting

at the bottom in a plain desert.

What language could be used for praising the bright stars which are shining in the sky at the highest levels upon milky ways.

The sun shining with brightness and magnificence does not require any praise.

Some other examples of outcry of Sayyid Radi on another Day of Ashura:

Now that the Islamic caliphate has deviated from its assigned natural course, how can one expect flourishing and well-being of Islamic Ummah.

The pulpit of caliphate has been snatched away by the wicked ones and the Ummayad–wolves are now jumping over it.

Caliphate belongs to Divinely appointed persons who received Divine inspiration and were assigned to be the guardian of religion and its commandments. [1](#)

This portion of Sayyid Radi's poetry may be called the culture of Ashura, in which the sacred phrases of self-sacrifice, valor, bravery and love (for God) have been pictured with utmost perfection.

[1.](#) Translation al-Ghadir vol. 7.

The Declaration Of Wilayah Of Imam Ali ('A) At Ghadir Khumm

For undertaking research regarding the important dimensions of the historical declaration of Imam Ali ('a) as the Imam and successor of the Prophet – by the Prophet (S) at Ghadir Khumm¹ requires access to various books; and in order to investigate its importance requires lot of patience and endeavor. Because without doubt, after the manifestation of the sacred commandments of the Divine religion of Islam, and the beginning of prophetic mission (*Be'that*) of the Prophet Muhammad (S), the most sensitive incident of the human history is the same incident of Ghadir Khumm.

On that day by appointing Amir al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful) Ali ('a) to *Imamat* and *Wilayah* in accordance with the Divine inspiration, the prophetic-mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) reached to its perfection insuring the life-giving Divine School of Islam forever. Therefore, the Ghadir incident possesses as much value and importance as assigned to Islam itself.

It is because of these considerations that the intellectuals, writers, and great historians have investigated and argued continuously, various parameters of this important historical incident dealing with *Imamat* and *Wilayah*, and by their words and writings confirmed and certified the authenticity of this incident. Thus, keeping its memories immortal and alive forever in the history.

In this way, the great poets by discharging their share of obligations and commitments, composed and recited excellent laudatory poems, thus, keeping the Ghadir incident alive, and registering on the chest of history under the beautiful name – *Ghadiryeh*.

Sayyid Radi the genius, intellectual, and an eminent innovated poet of his period too, by utilizing both his prose and poetic outstanding talents has left his immortal impressions of *Ghadiryeh*.

Following are some examples of *Ghadiryeh* of Sayyid Radi:

“Joy and cheerlillness have left us– only the Day of Ghadir is left for reconciliation.

The Day of honor and glory – when the prophet’s vicegerent becomes the Amir ai-Mu ’min (Commander of the Faithful).

Because of this, make your heart composed and contended; returning the false love to the beloved.

Uproot the anguish and sorrow and replace them by planting a sapling of joy and hope.

The tongue is busy in praise and thanks while the heart is full of sadness because of your love and separation.

Here is my tribute –intact and new –like a garden tree heart–appealing and full of joy.

From a singer, joyful with cheerful heart like the joy coming from the water of al–Ghadir’s pond. ”

1. Ghadir Khumm. In the tenth year of the Hijra, the Most Noble Messenger (S) set out for Mecca to perform his final, farewell Hajj. After carrying out the rituals of the pilgrimage and imparting necessary teachings to the people, he set out for Medina. When he was returning on 18th Dhu'l-Hijja (10 March 632), on the road, at a locale known as Ghadir Khumm (Ghadir Pond), he ordered the caravan to halt. In the midst of one hundred twenty thousand pilgrims from all over the Arabian Peninsula, he took 'Ali's ('a) hand, raised it aloft, and declared:

“He of whom I am the mawla (the patron, master, leader) of him Ali is also the mawla (man kuntu mawlahu ta Ali-un-mawlahu).

Oh God! Be friend of him who is his friend and be the enemy of him who is his enemy (Allahuma wali man walalhu wa adi man adahu.”)

With this act, the question of the successor, who was to govern the affairs of the Muslims, guard the sunna (the body of customary behavior based on the Prophet's precedent), and uphold religious customs and laws, was settled for the Islamic society. The intent of the noble verse.

'Messenger! Promulgate what has been revealed to you by your Lord, for if you do not, you will not have conveyed His message' (5:67),

was carried out. The Most Noble Messenger (S) died shortly after returning to Medina. The above traditions of al–Gbadir are so abundantly reported and so commonly attested by hundreds of different transmitters belonging to all school of thoughts that it be futile to doubt their authenticity. Ibn Kathir, a most staunch supporter of Sunni viewpoint has devoted seven pages to this subject and has collected a great number of different isnads from which the tradition is narrated. Also, Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal has recorded this event in his Musnad.

The Unexpected Demise

On that tragic day the city of Baghdad was engulfed completely with pain, anguish, and sadness. The people were sad, worried and surprised because a terrible tragedy had struck their entire existence making them restless. It was such a terrible and bitter blow which no one expected to occur so soon and therefore, was unbelievable. No one ever imagined to be struck with such a heart rendering tragedy. But whatever it was it had already occurred. There was no escape except for its acceptance.

While encountering with each other in a sad and unbelievable manner, people said: Sayyid Radi is expired!

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“Lo! We are God's and Lo! Unto Him we are returning” (Sura al–Baqara, 2: 156).

Sayyid Radi expired in the month of Muharram 406 A.H. at an early age of forty–seven years leaving the world of knowledge and Shi'i in sadness and lamenting.

Sayyid Murtada the pillar of knowledge and piety, in facing this unexpected tragic demise of his brother was so much affected with this heart-rending blow that he could not dare even to take a look upon his brother's dead body, and in order to escape from this intense sorrow took shelter into the holy shrine of *Kazimayn*. The huge crowd of mourners attended the funeral ceremonies,¹ and the Minister Fakhrul-Mulk lead the congregation funeral prayer.

His body was temporarily buried inside his own home located near the “*Ambar Mosque*” in the Karkhey locality of Baghdad and was later on transferred and buried in the Holy Shrine of Imam Husayn (‘a) at Karbala.² After that Fakhrul-Mulk went to Kazimayn and brought Sayyid Murtada back to home.³

¹. Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh vol 9, p. 261.

². Ayyan al-Shi’a Vol. 9 p. 217.

³. Al-Muntazim Vol. 7, p. 283.

The Elegies Of Separation

Without doubt the pain of separation of brother Sayyid Radi upon Sayyid Murtada was indeed heavy and bitter. Alone, bereaved, head lowered upon his knees, taking heart-rending sigh from his burning heart, he recited the elegies of separation:

"Oh friends! This unpleasant catastrophe which had broken my arm, I wish would have also taken my soul

All the lime I was scared and frightened- till at last it arrived at the doorsteps, and poured the bitter poison into my throat.

I begged and requested for some grace period, but it attacked me without paying least attention towards my sad condition.

By God! What a short span of life – yet so much glorious.

While there were lives who lived too long, but an unpius existence. ¹

¹. Translation al-Ghadir Vol. 7 p. 331

Some Examples Of Hymns (Munajat) About

Imam 'Ali ('A)

This chapter has been added by Translator

Since this translation work is related to the biography of Sayyid Radi who was the most prominent poet of his period and utilized his poetic talents for the advancement of Islam, the translator thought it appropriate to introduce our readers poetic works of some of the famous Iranian mystical poets.

Therefore, in this chapter some examples of hymns about Imam Ali ('a) as composed by Sa'di, Molavi, and Sharyar have been translated from Persians into English.

After the conversion of Iran to Islam the Iranian mystical poets and artists played a significant role in enriching and enhancing the Islamic civilization and culture. In the 18th and 19th centuries many of the great Persian masterpieces like the *Diwan of Hafiz*, *Gulistan of Sa 'di*, and *Rubaiyyat of Khayyam* were translated into English in various European countries.

In the present situation when the surge of Islamic renaissance has engulfed the entire globe, and Islamic ideology is being sought seriously as an alternative to the present crises of the faith, these treasurers of Gnosticism should be introduced to the young Muslim generations being raised in the strictly materialistic societies.

Hymns of Sa'di

“Those who were pious and Godly were always inflicted with severe catastrophes. Their share was more in receiving Divine blessings but in the same proportion received too much pains and sorrows.

Who had the courage and power to eulogize Ali's ¹character, who was bestowed the verse of Hal-Ata² in his praise by God Almighty.

Who broke the mighty gate of Khaybar³ fort instantaneously, with his invincible powerful arms.

Who wore the shield only on the front side with a bare back – because he never tum his back towards the enemies in battlefield

The Lion of God, the valiant of the battlefield, and generous; who forget himself totally in prayer but in battlefield no one could escape from his destructive assault.

The preface of compassion; the book of enlightenment.

A perfect manifestation of generosity and the leader of the pious (Imam-ul-Muttaqeen).

Tomorrow, the Day of Resurrection, when every one would be looking for intercession. We will hold the

hand of sinless Murtada Imam Ali ('a).

The Prophet (S) is like a bright sun in the world.

His Ahl al-Bayt⁴(progeny) are like the luminous stars' leaders (to be followed).

Oh God! By the sinless off spring of Fatimah ('a)⁵

Oh God! By the pure blood of the Martyrs of Karbala⁶

Oh God! By the truthful chests of your righteous elderly persons.

Oh God! By the tears of those who are your familiar ones.

Oh God! We admit that we had committed a lot of shameful deeds against your commands.

But, still we hope and look forward for your benevolence pardon.

Please bestow upon our tiring and rending hearts peace and tranquility with your generosity.

Oh Whose Name is the Most-High; source of all the healing and cure.

If the others are counting upon the strength of their deeds.

Your blessing, mercy, and generosity is sufficient for us.

If the eyes of sinners are pinned down upon their sins.

Our eyes are pinned up towards Your blessings and mercy.

Oh God! Please cover up our shameful deeds and omissions

On the day when the curtain will be rolled up and shameful deeds will be exposed.

Always we hoped for Your generosity and pardon.

Otherwise, as far as our own deed Me concerned, we came empty-handed accompanied only with shameful deeds.

If You punish us for our sins it will be Your justice.

But if You pardon us, it will be Your blessing and mercy.

Men surpass the angels, if you support and encourage (through Your guidance).

With Your training an earthly creature could acquire the highest spiritual stations– the zenith of excellence perfection.”

Hymns of Sharyar

Hymns of Sharyar⁸

“Oh Ali! The bird of blessing and good omen. What sort of God's sign are you?

That you have covered the entire existence under the shadow of blessing.

Oh, my heart! If you are searching for the God--- then look at Ali's face.

By God! Through Ali I was able to discover the God

By God! Destruction shall be wiped out forever from face of both worlds; only if--- Ali could take hold of the source eternity.

Oh, cloud of blessing (Ali)- rain to extinguish this hell's fire.

Otherwise, it will annihilate and burn our souls.

Oh, you poor destitute beggar! Go and knock the door of Ali 's home.

He is the generous one – who bestows his kingly precious ring upon the beggar.⁹

There is no body, except Ali who will plead mercy for his own murder.

Instructing his son to be kind towards his captive (i.e. Ibn Muljam).¹⁰

There is no one, except Ali who will present the humanity a brave son (like ai-Husayn).¹¹

Who will arise together with other martyrs of Karbala (to insure God's religion forever).

There are some righteous ones who are committed to their promises.

But no one could match with Ali in fulfillment of promises towards his friends.

Neither we may call your universal existence as God – nor the word human being is quite sufficient to cover your supernatural personality. We are confused--- what to name the Shah of invincible domain?

Oh the cool breeze of blessing, Ali! Please look at my heart – rending condition – eyes shedding tears of blood

I wish, may be the blowing wind will bring some of your alley's dirt (collyrium of the eyes) – for their cure.

Hoping, that it might carry them for you.

What sort of burning intimate messages I entrusted to the morning breeze.

Since your intercession (with God Almighty) may change the Divine decree.

Therefore, listen to the prayers of afflicted ones, and rescue their souls from the destined calamities of fate.

With the desire of catching your attention I play compose these hymns).

But the composer by the “mystical tongue” (Hafiz¹²) is sweeter and pleasing (as compared to me.)

In the hope that the morning breeze will bring an intimate message from the familiar one.

Somehow, I was able to pass the intense dark night.

In the midst of intense darkness of night –the beautiful sound of ringdove singing– Ya doostu! Yn doostu!.,. Oh God! Oh God!

Reminds Sharyar, how sweet and comforting it is; to be to share the heart's pains, sorrows and anguish one's beloved"

–Sharyar's Poetic Words, vol. 1, p. 98

Hymns of Molavi

Hymns of Molavi¹³

The King who was, with the wisdom and Religion – was Ali.

The one who was prostrated by angels, who prostrated God Almighty – was Ali.

The one who was the brightening sun and was the king of both worlds – was Ali.

The one who was the shining moon upon the sky of benevolence – was Ali.

The one who was the king of destiny, possessor of dignity and magnificence; surpassed the other creatures in excellence was Ali.

That point of climax (of research) for searching the most sublime realities; certainly, the perfect manifestation of truth and knowledge¹⁴ – was Ali.

That point of climax of pure Monotheism, whose breath never proclaimed other than unity – of God – was Ali.

The one whose existence was the reason and meanings for the creation of both worlds; but for him the

existing worlds would have not been created – was Ali.

The one who was the holder of riches and possessor of keys of prosperity and salvation, resolver of difficulties and comforter – was Ali.

The king whose sword¹⁵ cleansed the religion's mirror from the trust of tyranny and religious innovation – was Ali.

That heavenly light which accompanied prophets Moses, Jesus, and Hud in all the situations –was Ali.

That purified spirit; praised by God Almighty in the Holy Qur'an through revelations of several glorious¹⁶verses – was Ali.

The one who was truthful as well as patient; the contended as well as benevolent; the guide; the witness as well witnessed – was Ali.

The one who was the first as well as the last, the apparent as well as the hidden; the promise as well as promised – was Ali.

The one who was with Solaman's Kingdom and with John's purity; with the honor of Adam and David – was Ali.

The one who was the image and link of the (created) world; and whose existence covered all the traces of time and place – was Ali.

The King who was the successor and guardian– of the Prophet (S.A. W); the King of generosity and benevolence was Ali.

The one who was Adam as well Seth; Joab as well as Enoch (Idris); the one who was Joseph , Jonah and Hud – was Ali.

The one who was Moses as well as Jesus; Khizr as well as Elias; the Saleh as well as David – was Ali.

The ascetic¹⁷prostrator whose door's dust in merit surpassed with the celestial beings upon the thrown – was Ali.

When the Prophet Jesus defended her mother in the cradle; that speech and eloquence – was Ali.

The Moses, his stick, white miraculous hand, and prophethood; the one who confronted with Pharaoh of Egypt– was Ali.

When I pondered and discovered the sublime realities. It became certain that the manifestation which exists over all the created beings – was Ali.

That magnificent King who on the night-of-ascension¹⁸(to heaven) was with the Prophet Muhammad

(S.A. W) – was Ali.

The mystery of both the worlds, reflection of Divine light, who descended from the heaven to become apparent upon the earth – was Ali.

The meanings of Holy Qur'an whose virtues and purity have been praised throughout the holy book by God Almighty – was Ali.

That valiant warrior who was able to lift the mighty gate Khaybar¹⁹ Fort, with a lightning fierce attack (bringing a victory for Islam) – was Ali.

That honored hero, who for the sake of Islam never took a shy of relief till the task was accomplished perfectly – was Ali.

That valiant lion of God²⁰ who for the greed of his self; did not get his paws involved into the world's allurements – was Ali.

The one whose relationship was exactly similar to the relationship of Aaron²¹ with Moses. By God! The one inherited the Wilayah (Governance) from the Prophet (S) – was Ali.

1. Ali. Refer to footnote 11, (Translator's Introduction).

2. Hal-Ata. Refer to footnote 4 iii below under the section of Hymns of Molavi

3. Khaybar. Refer to footnote 7, below under the sections of

4. Ahl al-Bayt. Refer to footnote 4 (Translator's Introduction)

5. Fatimah. Refer to footnote 2, (Translator's Introduction)

6. Karbala. Is a plain located about seventy kilometres from Kufa (Iraq), where the prophet's grandson al-Husayn bin Ali was martyred with his seventy-two companions by Ommayad Caliph Yazid bin Mu'awiya on 10th Moharram 61 A.H., October 12, 680. At Karbala' clouds of blood rained and generations of martyrs and revolutionaries took root and sprouted. The sound of the fearless voice of Imam Husayn still echoes in the valley of al-Tufoof, ringing in the ears of time. It is a hurricane that chafes and shakes the tyrants. It is a volcano of blood, violently jolting the despot's thrones. It awakens free consciences and stirs within man the spirit of revolution and jihad. His voice is still echoing in the ears of mankind.

7. Sa'di. Mushraf-ud-din Masleh bin Abdullah famous as Shaykh Sa'di was a great learned scholar and poet of Iran in the seventh century. He was born in a religious family in Shiraz Southwestern Iran in 606 A.H. He received his earlier education in Shiraz and then went to Baghdad for higher education. He traveled a lot and visited Syria, Hijaz, and North Africa, and used to mix socially with the people in those journeys. His famous works are Gulistan and Bustan, after studying the Bustan of Sa'di, Earnest Renon wrote:

"Sa'di is no stranger among us, he is in fact one of us."

Barbier de Minaro, translator of Sa 'di 's Bustan, wrote in his preface of translation:

"Sa'di is a combination of the delicacy of Horace, the smile of Rabe-liais, and simplicity of La Fontaine."

French poetess Contesse de Noaille writes in her book, "The Enchanting Garden": I Read this point in a fragrant, pleasant and sad book the reading of which imparted an enchanting intoxication to me and I now know that an enchanting garden really exists and can be seen by the eyes.

O my soul would it be possible for my body to accompany you and fly to this paradise, where the nightingale frenzied with love sings from spring to summer, the tulips blossom, the air becomes fragrant, the evening breeze entrusts the roses to the winds and from atop the aspens, during the fiery summer, the winds twist while panting with burning breath. The town which is all metal, porcelain and plaster, shines as bright as silver and gold. Every vaulted dome is like a blue fruit and the intertwining arcs are high points that cast their shadows with their enameled tiles and flowery turquoise design on waters

below.”

Sa'di's tomb is located in Shiraz which attracts large number of tourists throughout the year.

8. Sharyar: Sayyid Muhammad Hussein Behjat Tabrizi, the famous Iranian mystic poet, son of Haji Mir Agha Khoosganabi, was born in the year 1285 A.H. (lunar) in the city of Tabriz in Azerbaijan province of Iran. His father, an attorney in Tabriz, and a learned person was famous for his excellent handwriting and generosity.

In his early verses, he used his Takhalus (pen-name) as Behjat, but after an Estekhara (consultation) with Diwani-Hafiz, as revealed by Hafiz, changed it to Sharyar. He received his early education in Tabriz and later on continued his higher studies of medicine in Tehran, but unfortunately due to some personal circumstances left the medical school unfinished in the final year.

Sharyar was a mystic poet and has composed his poetry in the fields of monotheism and Gnosticism. Quoting a verse from Hafiz, Sharyar himself describes his beliefs as follows:

“Whatever I have accomplished –it was due to the blessing of the Holy Qur’an.”

Some of his famous verses are the Voice of God, the Arising of Muhammad, Ali and Qazi Shureh, the Caravan of Karbala, Gift of Eid-e Ghadir, Islam and Social Service, and Jihad & Commitment.

His poetic works Diwan of Sharyar has been published in four volumes. Shaaryar died in the year 1967 A.H. and was buried in Tabriz.

Following is an interesting quotation from Sharyar.

“I do not consider myself as a salik (seeker of God). Of course, why I became attached to gnosticism requires some more explanation. Everyone who develops some Spiritual inclination, naturally feels some mystical connection with God. True dreams are bestowed upon him, and he might see the future events in his dreams, but he is not obliged to tell it to others. The only path of receiving real prosperity is – gnosticism, and it is not in conflict with any civilization and advance pace of life. I think a human being in each situation, and belief in any ideology, may find a path to reach God.”

9. Following is the story of Imam Ali's giving his ring in (Rukoo) and revelation of the following verse:

“Your friend [wali] can be only Allah; and His messenger and those who believe, who establish worship and pay the poor-due, and bow down (in prayer) [or, and this reading is accepted by ‘Allamah Tabataba’i: ...’pay the poor-due while bowing down (in prayer)]” (Qur’an, 5: 55).

Shi’ite and Sunni commentators alike agree that this verse was revealed concerning Ali ibn Abi Talib, and many Shi’i and Sunni traditions exist supporting this view. Abu Dharr Ghaffari has said: “One day we prayed the noontime prayers with the Prophet. A person in need asked people to help but no one gave him anything. The person raised his hands to the sky saying, ‘Oh God! Be witness that in the mosque of the Prophet no one gave me anything.’ Ali ibn Abi Talib was in the position of genuflection in the prayer. He pointed with his finger to the person, who took his ring and left. The Prophet, who was observing the scene raised his head toward heaven and said: ‘Oh God! My brother Moses said to Thee, “Expand my breast and make easy my tasks and make my tongue eloquent so that they will comprehend my words, and make my brother, Harun, my help and vizier.” [cv, Qur’an, 28:35] Oh God! I am also Thy prophet; expand my breast and make easy my tasks and make Ali my vizier and helper.”: “Abu Dharr says, “The words of the Prophet had not as yet finished when the verse [cited above] was revealed.”

–Shi’a, Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai pp. 177–176.

10. Ibn Muljam. In the morning of the 19th of Ramadan in the year 40 A.H., while praying in the Mosque of Kufa, he was wounded by one of the Khawarij ibn Muljam, and finally died as a martyr during the night of the 21st. During these three days Imam Ali’s condition was serious; when milk was brought for him, he instructed his sons to carry the milk also, for his assassin.

11. Al-Husayn. Refer to note 1 (Translator’s Introduction).

12. Hafiz. Khuwaja Shamsuddin Hafizi-Shirazi the most eminent mystic poet of Iran was born in the year 726 A.H. in Shiraz. All the Gnostics of the world humbles themselves before the exaltedness and sacredness of Hafiz who is considered as their Qibleh-Gah (patron). His contentment, surrender, absolute freedom from wants, and truthfulness had bestowed a unique sacredness upon his poetry.

After passage of more than six hundred years his poetic work Diwan of Hafiz is widely used for Estekhara (consultation), but only those who have purified their souls thoroughly may receive guidance from his poetry. Following are some

examples of his poetry:

“Thanks God whatever I requested from God, eventually my wishes were granted”

"Each treasurer of prosperity which was bestowed upon Hafiz by God was due to the blessings of night prayer and dawn supplications."

Upon knowing Hafiz Goethe wished to be one of his disciples. He said:

Oh Hafiz, your word is as great as eternity for it has no beginning and no end. Your word as the canopy of heaven solely depends upon itself. It is all signs, beauty and excellence."

After studying the lyric poems of Hafiz Hitche wrote:

“O Hafiz, you have created a tavern of philosophy greater than any worldly palace. In it you provided a wine of grace and world beyond the capacity of the world to drink. The highest pinnacle of any amount is but a sign of your greatness and the unfathomable depth of any vortex is just a mark of your perfection, and the excellence of your world.”

Hafiz, after blessing the humanity with precious gift of his poetic works died at the age of 65 years in the year 791 A.B. His tomb is located in Shiraz. His verses like immortal sign still show light to the world's deviated ones whose hearts are full of intense darkness. Following is an example:

“Inside of this tired and broken hearts of mine, I don't know, who is there.

I am silent but he is still groaning and full of uproar.

The sound of yor love, which wa heard by me last night is still echoing within me.

The space within Hafiz's chest is still full of cry for the beloved

[13.](#) Molavi. Molana Jalaluddin Muhammad (604–672 Al-I.), son of Muhammad bin Khatibi famous as Bahauddin was the most eminent scholar and mystic poet of Iran. Also, his father was a great scholar and mystic of his time. He received his early education under the tutorship of his learned father, and later on after his demise continued his studies under the most learned scholar Burhaduddin Mohaqeq Tirmizi, who encouraged Molana to pursue his higher studies at the prestigious Literary Learning Center in Damascus.

Molana was the complete manifestation of a perfect human being of his period, who after journeying through various intermediate spiritual stations reached to the highest peaks of enlightenment, discovering the absolute realities. He describes his gnostic journeys are follows:

“The accomplishment of my life could be defined into three short words. I was like a row stuff, become ripe, and then eventually was burnt (in love).”

He was an intellectual, learned scholar, lecturer issued religious decrees, and solved the most complicated jurisprudential issues. He was a man of God and a pure Monotheist and believed that the education of science and technology is all limited to worldly affairs and is not of much help in realization of God and the next world. In order to be enlightened regarding the most higher sublime realities something higher than this education is required. According to Molana the real education is the heavenly light through which God illuminates the heart of believers.

Molana met with Shams Tabrizi in 642 A.H. This meeting has a tremendous impact upon him and brought a great spiritual revolution within his personality. Following are few examples of his poetry:

“Oh, my beloved! Oh, my soul! Oh, my faith and infidelity, I wish that may you change this raw stone within me into a precious jewel Convert my infidelity into faith by changing my animal instincts into higher human characteristics; thus, curing my pain – oh my pain and remedy.

With your looks, this earthly creature will be transformed into an illuminous subject, crying all over that – I am from you and you are from me.

Change this copper within me into pure gold, and habitat my ruins.

Oh, the one who fills the river with precious jewels – oh, my ocean of infinite depth.”

His most famous mystical poetry works are:

Mathnavi, consists of six volumes, containing 26,000 verses of poetry, describing the religious and gnostic sublime realities in a simple language.

Divani-Kabir, consisting of 50,000 mystical verses is another literary mystical master pieces left by Molana.

[14.](#) The Holy Prophet had said: “I am the city of knowledge, and All is the gate; so whoever wants to enter the city should come through the gate.” – al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak p. 3, p. 26.

15. Ali's sword:

At the battle of Ohod, a heavenly voice was heard saying:

“There is no youth full of manhood but Ali, and no sword comparable to Zulfiqar (Ali's sword).”

‘Umar said: “A man like Ali is entitled to be proud. By God, without his sword the pillar of Islam could not have been erected.”

–Ibn Abu al-Hadeed, his commentaries on Nahj al-Balaghah vol. 3, p. 179.

In the battle of trench when Ali killed Amr the Holy Prophet (S) said:

The duel of Ali ibn Abu Talib against Amr ibn Wadd at battle of the Moat outweighs the good deeds of my whole nation until Day of Judgment.

–Al-Mustadrak part 3 p. 32

16. Some of the verses of Holy Qur'an revealed in praise of Imam Ali ('a) or Ahl al-Bayt ('a) may be listed as follows:

(i) When Imam Ali ('a) gave his ring to the beggar in the state of genuflection, the following verse was revealed:

“Your friend can be only Allah; and his messenger· and those who believe who establish worship and pay the poor due and bow down (in prayer).” (The Holy Qur'an 5:55).

For complete narration refer to note 2, 51–2

(ii) At the time of fasting by the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) for three consecutive days, and when each evening they gave their food to the needy, orphan, and a captive, the Almighty God revealed the following verses:

“Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the admixture of which is camphor” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:5).

“A fountain from which the servants of Allah shall drink; they make it to flow a (goodly) flowing forth.” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:6).

“They fulfill vows and fear a day the evil of which shall be spreading far and wide.” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:7).

“And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the captive” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:8).

“We only feed you for Allah's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:9).

“Surely, we fear from our Lord a stern, distressful day” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:10).

“Therefore, Allah will guard them from the evil of that day and cause them to meet with ease and happiness” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:11).

“And reward them, because they were patient, with garden and silk” (The Holy Qur'an, 76:12).

(iii) Al-Tirmidhi, Ibn Manthoor, al-Hakim, ibn Mardawaih and al-Bayhaqi in his Sunan, all recorded the report of Om-Salemah, wife of the Prophet (S) in which she said:

“In my own house the (Qur'anic) verse (from chapter 33): ‘Certainly God wants to keep away all abomination from you, members of the House (of Muhammad) to make you pure and spotless.’ Ali, Fatimah, al-Hassan and al-Husayn were at my house. The Messenger of God covered them with a garment, then said: “These are the members of my House. God, keep away abomination from them and make them pure and spotless.”

–al-Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Tirmidhi, part 5 p. 238 hadith no. 3875

(iv) At the time of a debate between the Holy Prophet (S) and Christians from Najran the following verse was revealed:

“If anyone disputes in this matter with thee now after full knowledge has come to thee, say: Let us summon our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves; then let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of God on those who lie.” (The Holy Qur'an 3:61).

According to Muslim in his Sahih, “the Messenger of God called Ali, Fatimah, al-Hassan and al-Husayn and said: God, these are the members of my family.” –Muslim, Sahih Muslim Part 15, p.176

(v) The following verses were revealed at Ghadir Khumm and concern the spiritual investiture (Wilayah) of Ali ibn Abu Talib. which have been confirmed by many Shi'i and Sunni commentators:

“Oh Messenger! Make known that which had been revealed unto thee from thy Lord, for if not, thou will not have conveyed His message. God will protect thee from mankind.” (The Holy Qur'an 5:67).

Abu Sa'id Khudari says: “The Prophet in Ghadir Khumm invited people toward Ali and took his hand and lifted it so high that the white spot in the armpit of the Prophet of God could be seen. Then this verse was revealed: ‘This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion AL-ISLAM.’ Then the Prophet said, 'God is great (Allahu Akbar) that religion has become perfected and that God's bounty has been completed, His

satisfaction attained and the wilayat of Ali achieved. ‘Then he added, ‘For whomsoever I am the authority and guide Ali is also his guide and authority. Oh God! Be friendly with the friends of Ali and the enemy of his enemies. Whoever helps him, and whoever leaves him, leave him.’”

–Shia, Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai p. 179.

[17.](#) Ascetic: Following are some examples of Imam Ali (‘a) about his state of asceticism:

In answer to some who had complained of Ali’s anger toward them, the Prophet (S) said, ‘Do not reproach Ali for he is in a state of Divine ecstasy and bewilderment.’ Abu Darda, one of the companions, one day saw the body of Ali in one of the palm plantations of Medina lying on the ground as stiff as wood. He went to Ali’s house to inform his noble wife, the daughter of the Prophet, and to express his condolences. The daughter of the Prophet said, ‘My cousin (Ali) has not died. Rather, in fear of God he has fainted. This condition overcomes him often.’

–Sh’a, Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabatabai p. 194.

[18.](#) The of Ascension (Shabi–Meraj) is the night when the Holy Prophet made his Heavenly journey.

[19.](#) Khaybar: Abu Rafi, a companion of the Prophet said:

“We went with Ali Ibn Abu Talib when the Messenger of God sent him with his banner. When he came near the fortress, the dwellers of the fortress came out and be fought them. A man from them hit Ali and made him lose his shield Ali took a door at the fortress and shielded himself with it. He kept in his hand until the battle ended, I found myself with seven men trying to move that door, but we could not.”

–Ibn Husham, Biography of the Prophet, p. 2, p. 335.

[20.](#) Lion of God: Abu Talib’s wife, Fatimah, the daughter of Asad (the lady whom the Messenger used to consider his second mother), gave birth to Ali at the Holy Kaba. Thus, he was the first human to be born inside the Ancient and Sacred House of God. His birth was thirty years after the birth of the Prophet, and twenty–three years before the Hijrah. His mother named him Haidrah (lion) or Asad. His father named him Ali (high). The two names were appropriate, for he was destined to be the lion of God and His Messenger, as he was the highest person after the Messenger who “brothered” him among all Muslims.

[21.](#) Refer to Footnote 123.

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