

In the name of  
God



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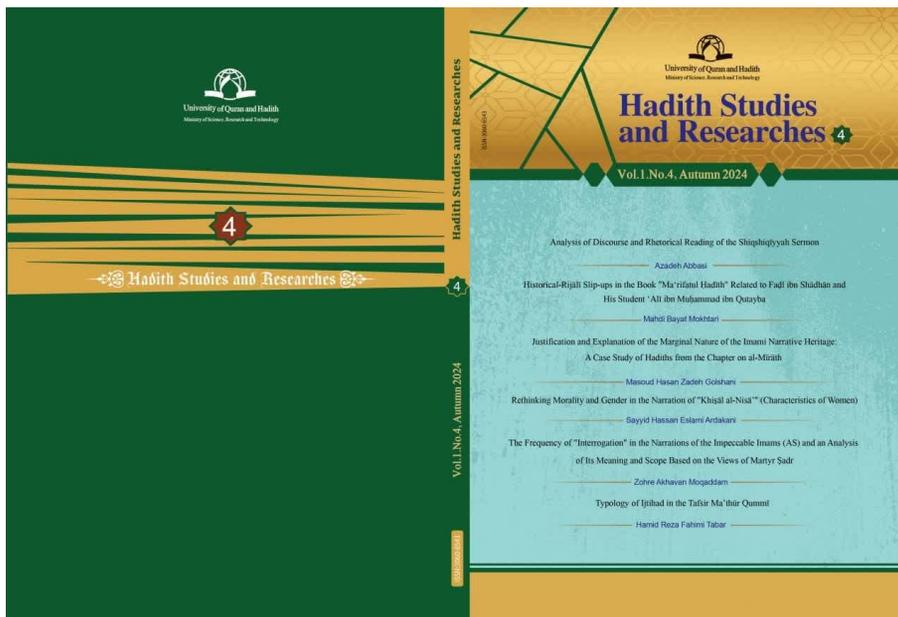
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## **Analysis of Discourse and Rhetorical Reading of the *Shiqshiqīyyah* Sermon**

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### **Abstract**

The Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* is one of the famous sermons of *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Throughout history, there have been numerous discussions and studies regarding this sermon, both in terms of its text and its *sanad* (chain of transmitters). The text of the sermon and the abundance of these studies indicate that from the very first moments of its issuance, these words of the Prophet were noticed by the people and had a significant impact on both present and absent listeners. On the other hand, "Rhetoric" as a form of eloquence and public speaking has been prevalent since the time of Plato and examines how speech influences and persuades the audience. The study of rhetoric investigates how a "Rhetor" or speaker engages the audience and

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convinces them of their viewpoint. The present study, with a descriptive-analytical method, aims to answer the question, 'From the perspective of the science of rhetoric, what persuasive techniques are employed in the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*?' Analyzing the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* from the perspective of rhetoric shows that all the main elements, including "Ethos," "Pathos," and "Logos," have been carefully observed in the Prophet's speech. This is indicative of the fact that delivering such words at this level of rhetorical and eloquent knowledge is only possible for an infallible being.

**Keywords:** Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*, Rhetoric, Persuasion, Discourse Analysis.

## Introduction

*Nahj al-Balāghah* is considered one of the most valuable written religious heritages after the Quran. The words of the Prophet and their mode of expression have long drawn the attention of scholars, litterateurs, and public speakers, reflecting his high mastery of speech and rhetoric. Historical evidence can also be added to highlight Imam Ali's (AS) expertise in eloquence and rhetoric.

The Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* is one of the most well-known sermons attributed to Imam Ali (AS), which has attracted the attention of scholars throughout history, regardless of any religious affiliations. There have been extensive discussions surrounding various sections of this valuable text. These discussions encompass both the text and its authenticity, including a wide range of opinions (cf. Shubbar, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 1, 94). One of the contentious points is the authenticity

of these words from Imam Ali (PBUH), with some arguing that *Sayyid Raḍī* fabricated these words, expressed them, and attributed them to the Prophet (Ibn Khallikān, 1977 AD/1397 AH: 3, 313; Dhahabī, 2009 AD/1430 AH: 3, 136). In contrast, a significant number of scholars and thinkers regard the words of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) as being above human speech (cf. Muṣṭafawī, 1975 AD/1355 SH: 9-12) and remind that the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* has been reported by the most reliable scholars long before the birth of *Sayyid Raḍī* (Baḥrānī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 91).

A brief review of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* reveals that its content pertains to the period of the caliphate of the three caliphs, with the Imam providing a concise account of the events during each of their reigns. Although there is no precise information regarding when this sermon was delivered, it can be inferred that since Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) speaks about the *Nākithīn* (those who broke their allegiance), *Māriqīn* (those who deviated), and *Qāsiṭīn* (the unjust), these words likely pertain to the later part of his noble life.

The dialogues mentioned at the end of this sermon and the famous phrase "*Tilka Shiqshiqatun Hadarat Thumma Qarrat*," which is also the reason for the sermon's title, indicate that from the moment the sermon was delivered, the content and tone were very strong and impactful, prompting the audience to request that the Imam continue his discourse.

On the other hand, rhetoric, as a science of oratory and speech, is an art that has been practiced since the time of Plato (Plato, 2010

AD/1389 SH: 332). It should be noted that despite the changes in definitions of this science over time, these changes have not fundamentally altered the essence of the discussion. Therefore, rhetoric is, in fact, a powerful, purposeful, and influential human behavior, whose ultimate goal is to persuade individuals and influence their thought processes and actions. In the study of rhetoric, one examines how a "Rhetor" or speaker engages the audience and convinces them of their viewpoint; the more successful the rhetor is in their delivery, the better the outcome in terms of audience persuasion.

It is noteworthy that in the rhetorical analysis of a speech, various indicators are considered to determine its value and significance in rhetoric and how effectively it has been able to persuade the audience (Yarbrough; 1999: 16).

Now, given the position that Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) holds in terms of oratory skills, and considering that the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* is particularly special regarding its audience and the discussions on audience persuasion, the question arises: from the perspective of the science of rhetoric, 'What persuasive techniques are employed in the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*?' 'What rhetorical devices does Imam Ali (AS) use to influence his audience?'

The present study will be conducted using qualitative content analysis, and for this purpose, the complete text of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* will be carefully examined, and the persuasive techniques and various focal points related to the field of rhetoric employed in it will be identified and analyzed. Historical studies,

particularly during the Age of Ignorance, indicate that oratory held a significant position, similar to poetry, and performed similar functions to those of poetry. Such functions include stirring emotions, inciting tribalism and nationalism, promoting peace, and providing social reforms, among other similar tasks (Sepehr Khorasani, 1979 AD/1358 SH: 118).

The rhetorical analysis of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* is significant in that it can contribute to a better understanding of this valuable work and help recognize the various dimensions of eloquence and rhetoric in the Arabic language. In other words, the findings of this research can significantly aid in better comprehending the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* and recognizing the different facets of eloquence and rhetoric in the Arabic language. Additionally, the rhetorical analysis of this sermon and its evaluation could indicate that such discourse could only originate from Amir al-Mu'minin (AS), as no one else possesses the ability to express thoughts at such a level of eloquence and rhetoric.

It is essential to mention that the term "Rhetoric" in the title and text of this research has been carefully chosen, avoiding the use of equivalent or translated terms, as the word "Rhetoric" in English encompasses a wide range of meanings. Therefore, it is not easy to fully distinguish the different applications of the term rhetoric, making its precise translation a challenging task.

## 1. Background

In referencing the background of this research, it is necessary to note that studies on the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* are extensive; thus, it has

been addressed from various perspectives, with numerous articles written on the subject. Some of these studies are mentioned below.

One research paper titled "An Analytical Comparison of the Views of Two Commentators on *Nahj al-Balāghah* (*Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd* and *Ibn Maytham*)" was written by Ali Akbar Abbasi and published in the Shi'ism Studies journal, issue 66, in 2018 AD/1398 SH. In this article, the descriptive-analytical method is employed to examine and analyze the opinions and perspectives of the two commentators regarding the most critical sermon of *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

Another article titled "Textual Analysis of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* Based on Speech Act Theory (Searle)" was written by Ali Najafi Ivaki, Amir Hossein Rasoolnia, and Alireza Kaveh Noushabadi and published in issue 19 of the Journal of *Nahj al-Balāghah* Studies in 2016 AD/1396 SH. In this research, the author examines the content and situational context of the text using a descriptive-analytical method and statistical approach.

In another study, there is an article titled "The Study of Synonymous Vocabulary in the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* of *Nahj al-Balāghah* Based on Substitution and Association of Words," written by Sayyid Abolfazl Sajjadi and Fariba Hadi Fard, published in the specialized quarterly of Tafsir, Quran Sciences, and Hadith in issue 18 of the year 2013 AD/1392 SH. As indicated by the title, the author investigates the semantics of synonymous words among those with semantic proximity, analyzing their meanings based on lexicons.

What is noteworthy in this context is that the investigations indicate that a rhetorical reading of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* has not yet

been conducted.

Before proceeding with the rhetorical analysis of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*, it is necessary to briefly discuss the foundations of this research.

## 2. Foundations

In the foundations section, the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* is briefly introduced, followed by a concise introduction to the field of rhetoric and its dimensions.

### 2.1. Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*

The Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* is one of the most important sermons in *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and since it openly discusses issues related to the caliphate after the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it has become controversial for some groups. There are points in this sermon that are not mentioned in any other sermon from *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Despite its brevity, this sermon summarizes a significant period of Islamic history pertaining to the time of the first caliphs and contains accurate and interesting analyses that are very worthy of study for experts (Makarem, 2007 AD/1386 SH: 1, 318). It is noteworthy that the discussion regarding the authenticity of this sermon is lengthy and extensive, with commentators on *Nahj al-Balāghah* providing detailed points on this matter, which are beyond the scope of this work (cf. Mahmoudi, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 2, 412; Jafari, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 1, 302). In summary, it can be said that this famous sermon has been narrated by many prominent figures of various sects through different means (Tustarī, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 5, 3).

## 2.2. Rhetoric

Rhetoric, as a concept, has undergone significant changes throughout history, from the time of Plato to the present. The term "Rhetoric" in English, and in general in languages with Latin roots, encompasses a wide range of meanings. Although the term sometimes refers to a specific meaning, distinguishing between its various applications is not an easy task; thus, it is not possible to provide a precise and clear definition of this word (cf. Black, 1965: 5-7). It is essential to note that in everyday conversations, "Rhetoric" often refers to empty speech or the use of meaningless words (Foos, 1985: 1). In contrast, scholars often use the term rhetoric when they intend to refer to a particular style or manner of speaking or writing (Kennedy, 1984: 3 and 13).

In ancient times, rhetoric was considered the art of persuasion, or more precisely, Aristotle referred to it as the art of discovering the available means of persuasion. Rhetoric can be seen as the precursor to what is today referred to as discourse studies. In recent academic writing, rhetoric is a key term used to emphasize the method of understanding a particular subject. Broadly speaking, awareness of modern persuasive techniques in relation to advertising, political spins, editorial biases, and op-eds are all indebted to the traditional insights of rhetoric (Chaharsuqi, 2017 AD/1397 SH: 10).

In general, it can be said that rhetoric, as the effective use of language, is a method applied to persuade or study the elements of style and structure in writing or speech. For example, the Oxford Dictionary (2008) defines rhetoric as a speech or writing intended to have an effect on people, although this definition may not be entirely

accurate or truthful. In addition to the text, rhetoric also refers to the skill of using language effectively or entertainingly (Ilie, 2008: 4264). Rhetoric is the art of public speaking, the science of measuring speech, and the craft of processing discourse; the many equivalents considered for this concept over time indicate its importance and the shifts in the meaning of this science. Rhetoric is one of the few topics whose historical background, from its formation to its ups and downs, is significantly noteworthy; because the foundational concepts that shape it are themselves a basis that can still be relevant in some contexts. In this regard, it is important to mention that rhetoric can be examined from various perspectives, such as the views of the Sophists, rhetoricians, Aristotle's central viewpoint, and so on, which require further discussion in another context.

In summary, rhetoric is the art of speaking and delivering speeches in an effective and persuasive manner (Ahmadi, 2017 AD/1396 SH: 74-76). Today, the term rhetoric or eloquence refers to the narrative of an author's or speakers rhetorical skills in the introduction, conclusion, timing and place, tone of speech, and the overall atmosphere of the discussion (Shafiei Kadkani, 2013 AD/1392 SH: 323).

Accordingly, what has been expressed so far is that in this study, rhetoric is understood as the art of persuading the audience (Vahdanifar, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 134). Traditional studies of rhetoric are generally classified into three categories: deliberative, judicial, and ceremonial, covering the main contexts of speech production in the classical world. In the middle ages, rhetorical teachings and eloquence

were focused on emerging needs in letter writing<sup>1</sup>, poetry writing<sup>2</sup>, and religious sermons<sup>3</sup> (Chaharsuqi, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 15).

When the successful process of rhetoric occurs in speech production, based on ancient teachings, three main focal points emerge. The first focal point, "Invention," refers to the discovery of topics and arguments used. The second focal point, "Disposition," means the order and structure of the speech. The third focal point is "Elocution" which pertains to the selection of an appropriate manner for expressing the content. It is noteworthy that later additional sections such as "Pronunciation" and "Memoria" were added to this framework. Each of these focal points will be briefly explained below.

### **2.2.1. The First Focal Point: Invention**

It is important to note that the functions of speech in the works of logicians and Muslim theologians include discussions on the structure of words and adherence to their rules, clarity, order and arrangement of meanings, and rhetorical devices (Mohammadi Khorasani, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 447-458). This section essentially corresponds to the main focal point of the presented material.

The first focal point, "Invention," essentially refers to the creation or selection of meanings, ideas, and topics that the speaker wishes to express, and this section is mainly concerned with the content of the speech (Kennedy, 1994: 4). The aim of arrangement is to organize the ideas and meanings so that this process facilitates understanding and

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1. ars dictaminis
  2. ars versificatoria
  3. ars praedicandi

prepares the ground for persuading and encouraging the audience. The arrangement of meanings includes elements such as the introduction of the narrative, the argument, and the conclusion, which the speaker must organize in such a way that they are fully coherent and achieve the speaker's goal (ibid, 1994: 5).

The focal point of "Invention" itself encompasses three important stages, which shape the primary orientation of the speaker.

#### **2.2.1.1. Ethos**

The first stage is "Ethos," which refers to the credibility, confidence, and authority of the speaker (Chaharsuqi Amin, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 64). In other words, the persuasion that potentially arises from the speaker's character or personal credibility is referred to as "Ethos." Aristotle considers ethos to be the most important evidence for persuading the audience because when the audience knows that the speaker is intelligent, insightful, knowledgeable, sincere, kind-hearted, and well-intentioned, they will be much more receptive to the speaker's opinions (Herrick, 2005: 82-84). The speaker's own credibility and confidence in their speech and the authority they convey is very important for the impact of the speech; that is, how confidently they express themselves on a specific topic and to what extent they consider themselves an expert in that field (Chaharsuqi Amin, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 64).

#### **2.2.1.2. Pathos**

The second stage is "Pathos," which essentially refers to presenting content accompanied by emotional appeal for the audience. Aristotle

critically viewed those speakers who neglect the emotions of the audience; he referred to considering the emotions of the audience as "Pathos," defining it as placing the audience within the correct mental framework (Chaharsuqi Amin, 2018 AD/1397 SH: 65). The term pathos is often used to denote emotional appeals or influences that lead the audience to take action based on a persuasive message; the emotion in question is one that affects the final judgment. It is noteworthy that "Pathos" is not solely about emotion but rather encompasses the psychology of feelings and distinguishing the subtle differences between them. Responses arising from emotional motivation are considered one of the tools for attracting attention and persuading the audience (ibid.).

### 2.2.1.3. Logos

The third stage is "Logos," which refers to the use of evidence, examples, authority, and reasoning in the speech. Logos consists of argumentation or rhetorical reasoning that, compared to logical reasoning, has a higher degree of acceptance and is commonly shared between the speaker and the audience as a presumption. This section is related to providing reasons, examples, and appropriate evidence through regulatory and legal references, utilizing laws, clauses, paragraphs, and provisions to support and rationalize the speaker's speech; generally, the more practical evidence provided, the stronger and more substantiated the speech becomes, thereby further persuading the audience.

**14** Logos is a Greek word with subtle differences in its initial

meanings. Logos can simply refer to a "Word" or a collection of words from a specific document or speech. It can also encompass specific concepts derived from a set of terms, discourses, or arguments. Logos can represent a logical hypothesis, and its application is the distinguishing feature of humans compared to animals. As John Randall has written, a logo is an "Act of logic." (Randall, 1960: 253)

### **2.2.2. The Second Focus Point: Disposition**

This point refers to order and organization in speech. Disposition means that the more organized and clearer the arrangement and sequence of various parts of the text are, the easier it is for the listener's mind to grasp the intended subject and not get caught up in identifying the starting and ending points of the speech or where they are in the speaker's narrative at any moment. In traditional views, the order and sequence typically begin with an introduction that states the main point and conclude with a result that addresses the elements of ethos, pathos, and logos. In this regard, Labov's division, which he believes flows unconsciously in the speaker's discourse, remains a reliable, though simple, sequence; it is very similar in many ways to the classifications from ancient Greece. In a speech, there are typically six primary sequences: Introduction<sup>1</sup>, narration (the general statement of the subject), division, summary of the main points, confirmation of credible sources on the subject, and rejection, which is essentially the denial of opposing statements. Finally, it concludes with the

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1. Prooemium

conclusion<sup>1</sup> (Cockcroft, 2005: 137). It is noteworthy that discussions on this topic are extensive and require broad consideration (cf. Sepher Khorasani, 1979 AD/1358 SH: 10-30).

### 2.2.3. The Third Focus Point: Elocution

The choice of words, or specifically a selective use of formal language in terms of grammar, style, and tone, comes into play. Different forms of thought affecting speech lead to applications of language that go beyond ordinary language, making it tilt towards literary language. Eloquence in traditional rhetoric involves deciding what style is appropriate for the subject and the audience—high style intending to inspire, medium style intending to express a wish, or low style intending to issue commands. This also indicates what form will be used with what intensity. Various forms of thought or metaphorical applications of language<sup>2</sup>, which include all indirect or non-verbal meanings and are prevalent in literary perspectives, include:

Metaphor, metonymy, personification, pun, simile, and synecdoche, various forms of speech, alliteration (repetition of initial consonant sounds of words or syllables), repetition of one or more consecutive phrases,<sup>3</sup> contradictory phrases,<sup>4</sup> parallelism and phrases that reflect each other like a mirror;<sup>5</sup> stair-step phrases,<sup>6</sup> meaning when a word is repeated at the end of one phrase at the beginning of

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1. Peroration

2. Tropes

3. Anaphora

4. Antithesis

5. Chiasmus

6. Gradatio

the next one. Tripartite phrases<sup>1</sup> refer to phrases that have a similar pattern and are repeated consecutively three times (Cockcroft, 2005: 138).

### 3. Analysis of the *Shiqshiqīyyah* Sermon

The following attempt is made to re-read and analyzes the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon based on each of the three aforementioned focal points.

#### 3.1. First Focus

As mentioned, the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon is part of the words of Imam Ali (AS) expressed without any prior context; when he is asked to continue his discourse, he states, "*Shiqshiqatun Hadarat*," indicating a kind of "Innovation and Creativity" in this sermon that sets it apart from other sermons.

This sermon will be examined, in light of the constraints of writing, from an "Innovative" perspective and divided into three sections: Ethos, pathos, and logos, and then will be analyzed in the other focal points.

##### 3.1.1. Examining the Evidence of Ethos in the *Shiqshiqīyyah* Sermon

As stated, ethos is a persuasive method that is potentially derived from the speaker's character or personal credibility. The aim is to demonstrate how in the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon, the Imam utilizes evidence stemming from his personality to persuade his audience.

In the initial part of his speech, he says: "Ammā wa Allāhi laqad Taqammaṣahā ibnu Abī Quḥāfata wa Innahū la Ya‘lamu anna Maḥallī li minhā Maḥallu al-Quṭbi minal Raḥā" meaning "Beware! By God,

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1. Tricolor

Abū Bakr has donned the cloak of the caliphate while he knows that my position in the Islamic government is like the center of a millstone around which the millstones turn." It can be observed that in this statement, the Imam makes his audience aware of his position at the beginning of his speech and conveys to his audience, through a tangible metaphor (Hāshimī Khu'ī, 2020 AD/1400 SH: 3, 38), his rank and status (cf. Nawwāb Lāhijī, n.d.: 1, 25), thereby establishing the confidence and authority of the speaker.

The Imam continues with an emphatic statement: "*Yanḥadiru 'annī al-Saylu wa lā Yarqā ilayya al-Ṭayru*," which means "The flood of knowledge flows from the slopes of my mountain, and the high-flying birds of thought cannot reach the height of my value." In this statement, the Imam uses a subtle metaphor (Dunbulī Khu'ī, n.d.: 1, 63) to express several important points that reflect his exalted position and high rank. In other words, just as a flood flows from high places, the Imam's status is such that knowledge flows from him (Ibn Maytham, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 255; Hāshimī Khu'ī, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 1, 38). Furthermore, with the phrase "*Wa lā Yarqā ilayya al-Ṭayru*," he conveys that his existential status is so elevated that even the highest-flying birds cannot reach it. As *Muḥammad 'Abduh* states in his commentary, this phrase clearly illustrates the high status and elevation of the Imam as explained in the previous statement of this sermon ('Abduh, n.d.: 1, 25). The Imam, in this statement which is a pure metaphor and not bound by the rules of metaphor, indicates that just as a millstone rotates around its center, any governance without

him is futile; he presents himself as the center and axis of the caliphate, its very foundation (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, n.d.: 1, 152).

Based on the above, in the first section of the first rhetorical focus, i.e., ethos, the speaker makes the audience aware of his original position, thus leading the discourse towards persuasion. In this way, the Imam expresses and reminds the audience of his high rank and status (Rāwandī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 122; Shūshtarī, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 5, 33). Therefore, analyzing certain passages of the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon reveals that Imam Ali (AS) adeptly utilized this focus to persuade his audience.

### 3.1.2. Examining the Evidence of Pathos in the *Shiqshiqīyyah* Sermon

As mentioned, the term "Pathos" often refers to emotional appeals or impactful effects that lead the audience to take action based on a persuasive message. In other words, the desired emotion is one that influences the final judgment.

As mentioned in the section on "Ethos," Imam Ali (AS) first articulates his position and status in this sermon, then addresses the conditions of the first caliph, and subsequently discusses the second and third caliphs. In each of these statements, there is a manifestation of emotional expression. The sequence in his speech pertains to the second focus, which will also be discussed; however, this section aims to illustrate how the Imam effectively employed emotionally charged arguments to persuade his audience within the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon.

In one part of this sermon, he states, "Ṭafīqtu, Arta'ī bayna an Aṣūla bi Yadin Jadhahā'a aw Aṣbira 'alā Ṭakhyatin 'Amyā'a Yahramu fihā al-Kabīru wa Yashību fihā al-Ṣaghīru wa Yakdahū fihā

Mu'minun Ḥatta Yalqā Rabbahū," which means "I was in thought, whether to rise with a strong hand to claim my right, or endure this suffocating and dark environment that they have created, which wears down the old, turns the young gray, and keeps the faithful laboring until they meet their Lord."

He further expresses a heavy emotional sentiment, stating: "... *Fara'aytu anna al-Ṣabra 'alā Hātā Ahjā fa Ṣabartu wa fī al-'Ayni Qadhdhan wa fī al-Ḥalqi Shajjan,*" meaning: "... After careful consideration, I deemed that patience was wiser; so I endured, as if there were a thorn in my eye and a bone lodged in my throat."

As can be observed, the phrase "*Wa fī al-'Ayni Qadhdhan wa fī al-Ḥalqi Shajjan*" is a metaphor for the intense suffering and distress experienced by the Imam during the years following the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the trials he endured (Hāshimī Khu'ī, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 3, 45; Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, n.d.: 1, 153). The word "*Qadhy*" refers to anything that causes irritation in the eye, while "*al-Shajy*" denotes any object that is too large and gets stuck in the throat (Shubbar, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 1, 98).

The Imam then states, "*Arā Turāthī Nahban,*" means "And I watched with my own eyes as my inheritance was being plundered!" This sentence, as *Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd* points out, is metaphorical and the Imam uses it in reference to the caliphate (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, n.d.: 10, 153). Thus, this expression, like the previous one, is laden with emotional significance. The word "*Nahban*" means to be looted. This issue arises because the Imam regarded the caliphate as his rightful inheritance, an inheritance designated for him by the Prophet (PBUH),

which others seized unlawfully (Muntaẓirī, 2010 AD/1431 AH: 36).

It is quite evident that the Imam was merely a spectator to this plunder. It is worth mentioning that various interpretations of the term "*Turāth*" have been presented in different commentaries on *Nahj al-Balāghah*, considering it to refer to the caliphate or *Fadak* (Javadi Amoli, 2019 AD/1398 SH: 1, 369). Clearly, delving into the details of this subject is beyond the scope of this research (cf. Ibn Maytham, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 256; Dunbulī Khu'ī, n.d.: 1, 64).

After discussing the events that occurred during the time of the first and second caliphs, Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) expresses the hardships of that period in a highly emotional statement: "*Fa Ṣabartu 'alā Ṭūli al-Muddati wa Shiddati al-Miḥna*," meaning: "And during this long period of hardship and torment, I had no choice but to be patient until the era of Umar came to an end." As observed, the Imam addresses the past turbulent times in an entirely emotional expression, indicating that he had no recourse other than patience (Shūshtarī, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 5, 632; Makarem Shirazi, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 1, 349).

It is important to note that the grievances and laments expressed by the Imam do not stem from raw emotions of "Natural self;" rather, as discussed, they arose from the irrational outcomes stemming from the deviation from the caliphate of Ali (AS) (Jafari, 2006 AD/1385 SH: 2, 322).

### 3.1.3. Examination of "Logos" Evidence in the *Shiqshiqīyyah* Sermon

As outlined, the term "Logos" refers to the use of evidence and reasoning in the course of rhetoric and persuasion, involving a type of argumentation and rhetorical comparisons. Below are some examples

of this nature from the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon.

At the end of his speech, after providing an account of the events and occurrences during the reign of each of the three caliphs, he expresses his reasons for accepting the caliphate: "*Amā wa Alladhī Falaqa al-Ḥabbata wa Bara'a al-Nasamata, lawlā Ḥuḍūru al-Ḥāḍir wa Qīyāmu al-Ḥujjati bi Wujūdi al-Nāṣir, wa mā Akhādha Allāhu 'alā al-'Ulamā'i allā Yuqārrū 'alā Kizzati Zālimin wa lā Saghabi Mazlūmin, La'alqaytu Ḥablahā 'alā Ghāribihā wa Lasaqaytu Ākhirahā bi Ka'si Awwalihā wa la'alfaytum Dunyākum Hādhihī Azhada 'Indī min 'Aḡtati 'Anz,*" which means "I swear by the One who split the seed and created the soul, if it were not for the numerous attendees who pledged allegiance and if the supporters had not established the argument against me, and if Allah had not taken a covenant from the scholars to not remain silent in the face of the overabundance of the oppressors and the hunger of the oppressed, I would have thrown the reins of the caliphate onto its back and watered its end with the cup of its beginning; then, you would have seen that your world is, for me, less valuable than the mucus of a goat."

As can be observed, before stating his reasons, the Imam first emphasizes his words with two significant oaths to engage the audience more effectively and to lay the groundwork for delivering his reasoning and persuasive argument. He swears by two attributes of the Almighty God that are unique to His exalted nature, with no one sharing in them: "*Amā wa Alladhī Falaqa al-Ḥabbata wa Bara'a al-Nasamata.*" (Ibn Maytham, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 267; Mūsawī, 1997 AD/1418 AH: 1, 118) Following these important oaths, the Imam

presents the reasons that led him to accept the critical issue of caliphate (Dunbulī Khu'ī, n.d.: 1, 66).

In his statements, Imam (AS) names three reasons for accepting the caliphate. The first reason he provides is the presence of a large crowd to pledge their allegiance to him: "*Lawlā Huḍūru al-Ḥāḍir.*" The second reason he mentions is that he did not see a justification for abstaining from rising up, as it seemed that the argument against him was complete, and supporters for claiming rights were available: "*Qiyāmu al-Ḥujjati bi Wujūdi al-Nāṣiri.*" The third reason the Imam refers to as a primary justification for accepting the caliphate is his belief that God has taken a pledge from scholars to eliminate denial and oppressors, uproot tyranny where they have power, and the Imam strives to fulfill that promise: "*Mā Akhadha Allāhu 'alā al-'Ulamā' allā Yuqārrū 'alā Kizzati Zālimin wa lā Saghabi Mazlūmin.*"

In this context, it is important to note that the fulfillment of the first two reasons is a prerequisite for the realization of the third reason, as without the people's pledging allegiance to the Imam and the absence of supporters, the denials would not be eliminated, and tyranny and tyrants would not be suppressed (cf. Ibn Maytham, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 266).

After outlining these three reasons, the Imam explains what his decision would have been if these conditions had not been met. He continues, stating: "*La'alqaytu Ḥablahā 'alā Ghāribihā wa Lasaqaytu Ākhirahā bi Kā'si Awwalihā.*" He further emphasizes that "*Wa La'alfaytum Dunyākum Hādhihī Azhada 'indī min 'Aḥḍati 'Anz.*" Overall, there is a precise and logical order in these expressions,

indicating Ali's (AS) attentiveness to the sequence in his speech (cf. Shubbar, 2004 AD/1425 AH: 1, 121).

From what has been stated, it can be concluded that Imam Ali (AS) effectively used evidence and reasoning in the course of his oratory and persuasion, employing a form of reasoning and rhetorical analogies with great care.

### 3.2. Second Focus

As mentioned in the theoretical foundations, in the second center, a rhetorical reading of a text has a specific arrangement and order; what is meant by this is that the order and organization of the content presented by the speaker have a direct impact on the audience's mind and are of great importance in the path of persuading the audience.

The study of the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon indicates that Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) maintained the order of speech and logical arrangement in his words. He begins his speech from the beginning of the rule of the first caliph and states: "...*Laqad Taqammaṣahā Ibnu Abī Quḥāfata...*" and continues with the conditions during *Abū Bakr's* caliphate until he reaches the time of his passing, saying: "*Ḥattā Yalqā Rabbahū. Faṣabartu wa fil 'Ayni Qadhan wa fil Ḥalqi Shajan.*"

It should be noted that discussing the details of this section of his speech is beyond the scope of this context (c. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, n.d.: 1, 152; Ibn Maytham, n.d.: 1, 259).

Continuing along the same logical order, which is a characteristic of a speech, he explains how the caliphate and governance transferred from the first caliph to the second caliph, stating: "...*Ḥattā Maḍā al-*

*Awwalu li Sabīlihī fa Adlā bihā ilā Ibnīl Khaṭṭābi Ba‘dahū...*" The term "*Idlā*" means to lower a bucket into a well to draw out water; later, this word has been used in the sense of delivering something unjustly to others (Muntaẓirī, 2010 AD/1431 AH: 37). Thus, he indicates that after *Abū Bakr*, it was time for ‘*Umar*’s caliphate. He continues his discussion on the circumstances during ‘*Umar*’s rule until he reaches the time of his passing, saying: "*Ḥattā Idhā Maḍā li Sabīlih*," meaning until his period also passed. Just as with the first caliph, Imam also provides explanations regarding the conditions during the second caliph’s time. It should be noted that discussing the details of this section of his words is beyond the scope of this context (cf. Qazwini, 1992 AD/1371 SH: 1, 172; Sarakhsī Nīshābūrī, 1994 AD/1415 AH: 48).

Related to this is the phrase "*Faṣabatru ‘alā Ṭūlil Muddati wa Shiddatil Miḥnati*," which will not be elaborated upon here to avoid prolonging the discussion.

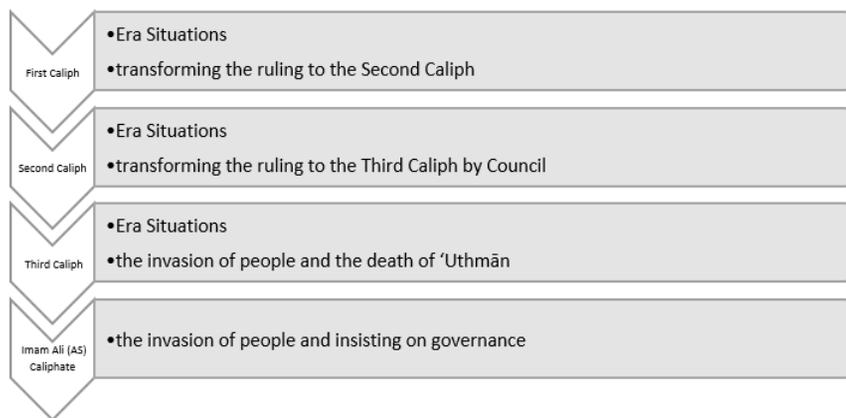
Imam Ali (AS), continuing based on the logical order of the speech, discusses the transfer of power from the second caliph to the third caliph and the issue of the council, stating: "*Ja‘alahā fi Jamā‘atin Za‘ama Annī Aḥaduhum fayā lillāh wa lil Shawrā...*" He then explains the events that occurred within the council, along with his interactions and engagements with the council members. It is noteworthy that since the current discussion pertains to the second reading center of the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon and focuses on the order and structure of the Imam’s words, delving into the details of the third caliph’s period and what the Imam mentioned regarding the loss of

public funds—topics also addressed by the commentators on *Nahj al-Balāghah*—falls outside the scope of this discussion (cf. Bayhaqi Nishaburi, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 1, 163; Naqavi Qaini, n.d.: 3, 167). As the commentators of *Nahj al-Balāghah* have noted, the phrase "*Fayā lillāh wa lil Shawrā...*" is the most eloquent expression for seeking divine assistance regarding the formation of the council (cf. Sufi Tabrizi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 2, 979).

The Imam's words continue regarding the period of the third caliph until he addresses the death of 'Uthmān, stating: "*Ilā an Intakatha Fatluhū wa Ajhaza 'alayhi 'Amaluhū wa Kabat bihī Biṭnatuhū.*" This means that 'Uthmān's approach continued to the point where his actions incited the people, culminating in his demise.

Following this, according to the order and structure of the Imam's speech, he discusses the people's response to him: "*Wannāsu Ka 'urfi al-Ḍabu 'i ilayya Yanthālūna 'allaya min Kulli Jānibin*" and states that if not for the insistence of the people, he would never have accepted the caliphate: "*Ammā wa Alladhī Falaqal Ḥabbata wa Bara'a al-Nasamata...La Alqaytu Ḥablahā 'alā Ghāribihā wa Lasaqaytu Ākhirihā bi Ka 'si Awwalihā...*"

Thus, it is evident that Imam Ali (AS) in the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon proceeded according to a logical order and articulated his points effectively. In summary, in this sermon, the Imam systematically addresses each of the three caliphs, examines the events and conditions of their times, and explains how the governance was transferred to the next person.



It is worth mentioning that a rhetorical reading and attention to the order and structure of words in this sermon can yield an important insight. In some versions of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, such as the copies by *Ṣubḥī Ṣālīḥ* and *Muḥammad ‘Abduh*, and some other editions; in the phrase "*Laqad Taqammaṣahā Ibnu Abī Quḥāfata,*" instead of "*Ibnu Abī Quḥāfata,*" the word "*Fulānun*" is mentioned (Rāwandī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 118).

In other words, some of the commentators, considering the ambiguity surrounding the reference of the pronoun in the word "*Fulānun,*" have suggested the possibility that the Imam did not mean the first caliph and have elaborated extensively on this issue. This group of commentators has taken their argument to the point of denying that the sermon was delivered by Imam Ali (AS) (cf. Ibn Maytham, 1987 AD/1366 SH: 91; Shūshtarī, 1997 AD/1376 SH: 5, 6-9). A rhetorical reading and attention to the order in which the Imam structures his speech, along with the fact that he sequentially discusses

each of the three caliphs and then moves on to the next caliph, indicates that, despite the discrepancies among existing versions, the Imam's intention at the beginning of the sermon refers to the first caliph and his period of governance. The following diagram attempts to illustrate the order and structure of the Imam's words.

First Caliph: Era Situations/transforming the ruling to the Second Caliph

Second Caliph: Era Situations/ transforming the ruling to the Third Caliph by Council

Third Caliph: Era Situations/the invasion of people and the death of 'Uthmān

Imam Ali (AS) Caliphate: the invasion of people and insisting on governance

### 3.3. Third Focus: Expression and Eloquence in Speech

It was previously mentioned that the term eloquence, which is discussed in the third focus of rhetorical reading, pertains to the style of expression and the use of figurative language. This matter encompasses all the literary devices commonly found in the language. The issue of eloquence in speech is abundant in the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon, and some of these instances will be discussed below.

In a section of the *Shiqshiqīyyah* sermon, after discussing the first and second caliphs and how they successively transferred the caliphate to one another, to express their strong attachment to the caliphate, he states: "Indeed, how intensely they clung to one of the two teats of power!" This phrase is a kind of rhetorical analogy presented

metaphorically (Ibn Maytham, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 258; Rāwandī, 1985 AD/1406 AH: 1, 125). The word "Ḍar" in this phrase means teat (Ibn Fāris, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 2, 400; Zamakhsharī, 1979: 375). This statement is an interesting metaphor for those who alternate usage of something, since a she-camel has four teats arranged in pairs, and they are usually milked in pairs. Hence, in the Imam's expression, it is referred to as two teats. The word "*Lashadd*" is used for emphasis in the speech (Bahrānī, 1987 AD/1408 AH: 93). The term "*Tashaṭṭaran*" comes from the root "*Shaṭr*," meaning a part of something (Farāhīdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 6, 235; Ibn Durayd, 1988: 2, 726), and the expression "*Tashaṭṭaran*" indicates that each of the two caliphs utilized a part of it while leaving part of it for the other. In any case, this expression demonstrates that there was a predetermined plan and that it was not a coincidence (Makarem Shirazi, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 1, 342).

Given what was previously stated in the section on "Eloquence," where it was mentioned that the speaker focuses on using examples to persuade the audience, it is evident here that the Imam beautifully illustrates the nature of attachment to the caliphate through comparisons.

In addition to the example mentioned, the Imam states in another phrase: "... *Karākibil Ṣa'batī in Ashnaqa lahā Kharama wa in Aslasi lahā Taqaḥḥama*" means: "Governor is like riders on a stubborn camel: If they pull the reins too hard, the animal will tear its nostrils; and if they let it go loose, it will fall into a pit." As can be observed, in this part of his sermon, the Imam also expresses the relationship between the caliphate and the caliph or ruler through a proverb. The

mentioned sentence is one of the Arabic proverbs used in contexts where someone engages in an action that is hazardous for them (Bayhaqī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 83). It should be noted that the authors of the glosses on *Nahj al-Balāghah* have detailed remarks concerning the referent of the pronoun in this phrase and the interpretation of the words of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS), which would be too extensive for this discussion (cf. Hāshimī Khu'ī, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 1, 68).

As previously stated, the more evidence presented in a sermon, the stronger the speech becomes, and it has a greater impact on persuading the audience. In another phrase regarding the third caliph and his rule, the Imam states: "*Wa Qāma ma'ahū Banū Abīhi Yakhḍimūna Mālallāhi Khaḍmal Ibili Nibtata al-Rabī'a*" means: And his paternal relatives from the *Banū Umayyah* arose with him, devouring the wealth of God like a hungry camel who falls upon the spring grass..."

The evidence discussed in this section is the phrase "*Yakhḍimūna Mālallāhi Khaḍmal Ibili Nibtata al-Rabī'a*." This phrase is an idiomatic expression meaning that during the time of 'Uthmān, the exploitation of the public treasury was rampant, with no regard or consideration whatsoever (Hāshimī Khu'ī, 1979 AD/1400 AH: 3, 97; Ibn Maytham, 1983 AD/1404 AH: 1, 262). In this phrase, "*Khaḍma*" means to eat with an open mouth, and its opposite "*Qaḍma*" means to nibble with the front teeth (Farāhīdī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 4, 179). Some have also said that "*Khaḍma*" refers to eating fresh grass, while "*Qaḍma*" pertains to eating dry grass (Azharī, 2000 AD/1421 AH: 8, 273).

**30** Considering the literal meaning of the word "*Khaḍma*," it clearly

indicates that the *Banū Umayyah* engaged fully in plundering the public treasury, consuming and taking as much as they could (Makarem Shirazi, 1996 AD/1375 SH: 1, 363).

In another part of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*, the Imam quotes a verse from the great Arab poet "A'shā":

"*Shattāna mā Yawmī 'alā Kūrihā wa Yawmu Ḥayyāna Akhī Jābiri!*" How different is my day from the reign of my brother Jabir!

Based on the points mentioned regarding "Eloquence" in the theoretical foundations section, simply noting that the Imam has cited Arabic poetry in his speech is sufficient as a witness in the discussion of the third center of rhetoric. It is worth mentioning that the commentators of *Nahj al-Balāghah* have provided detailed remarks regarding the interpretation of this verse and its reference by Imam Ali (AS) (cf. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, n.d.: 1, 166; Bayhaqī, 1988 AD/1409 AH: 82).

In another part of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*, the Imam references a verse from the Quran, saying: "*Ka'annahum lam Yasma'ū Kalāmallāhi Ḥaythu Yaqūlu Tilkaddāru Ḍalālātun Naj'aluhā lilladhīna lā Yurīdūna 'Uluwwan fil Arḍi wa lā Fasādan wal 'Āqibatu lil Muttaqīn:* As if they had not heard the words of Allah when He says: That is the home of the Hereafter which We will assign to those who do not desire exaltation upon the earth or corruption, and the end is for the righteous." (Surah al-Qaṣaṣ/83) Again, it is noteworthy that in this section, the Imam has mentioned a verse from the Quran as evidence in describing the situation of the "*Nākithīn*," "*Māriqīn*," and "*Qāsiṭīn*," which is precisely the method referred to in the third focus of rhetoric.

There are other instances similar to the examples mentioned regarding "Eloquence" in the third focus of rhetoric in the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*. For instance, phrases like: "You would find your world less significant to me than the sneeze of a goat" and "Gathered around me like the gathering of sheep" can be pointed out. It is noteworthy that these examples are not limited to these sentences, and this paper refrains from repetition (cf. Sufi Tabrizi, 1999 AD/1378 SH: 2, 983).

In any case, what emerges from the mention of multiple examples is that there are evidences regarding the discussion of eloquence, which is the third center of rhetoric, in the words of Amir al-Mu'minin (AS).

### Conclusion

The analysis of the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah* based on the science of rhetoric, step by step in its three main centers, indicates that in the section of ethos...; in the section of pathos...; and in the section of logos... This means that the manner of the Imam's discourse and statements precisely aligns with the science of rhetoric. The result of this point is that such eloquent speech—especially in an extemporaneous manner—can only occur from an impeccable Imam (AS); thus, those who doubt the authenticity of *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and particularly the Sermon of *Shiqshiqīyyah*, have gone astray.

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