

## Geography in Nahj al-Balaghah

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### ABSTRACT

*Given the dispute between the religious sciences and the humanities, and the predominance of thinking, the Islamization of humanities in new decades in Iran, capabilities of Islamic spiritual and religious sources in enhancing the philosophical foundations of the humanities - including Geography, and owing to the deficiencies of research related to natural sciences in the past, and to remove vaguenesses and shortcomings in the scope of scientific-philosophical views and opinions in Islamic geographical sciences, and to discover and obtain the view of Islam, this research was prepared by the descriptive-analytical method to examine and follow the subjects of geographical knowledge in Nahj al-Balaghah, which is the brother of the Qur'an and one of the grand Islamic texts in terms of content and subjects. This research was conducted using the documentary and library method from Nahj al-Balaghah, analyses and translation books, geographical and philosophical books, specialized journals, dissertations, and related research theses. The overall conclusion of the review of the available findings was that Nahj al-Balaghah can be a source of nurture, and it can lead various subjects in the humanities and academic and scientific geography. Nahj al-Balaghah considers both the dispersion of geographical phenomena and the internal integration and coherence and external harmony of geographical factors - which eventually yield the argument of order in monotheism and the unity of existence and the creator.*

*Keywords: Nahj al-Balaghah, Geography, Islamic Humanities, Philosophy*

### Introduction

The production of humanities-Islamic sciences is one of the differences between Islamic researchers and academic thinkers of our country. In this regard, in the last two decades and after the declaration of the discourse of Islamization of the humanities by the Supreme Leader, this matter has been raised as a dire need among the seminary and university societies. This discrepancy of ideas is to such an extent that in the country, some people have practically opposed the "association of revelation and science" while some agree with this connection.

There have been and are numerous intellectual disputes between different Muslim thinkers about the obtaining of sciences from religious texts. By meticulously exploring the history of Muslims, people such as Seyyed Jamaluddin Asadabadi, Sir Syed Ahmed of India and Iqbal Lahori can be mentioned among these scholars. Of course, some of them, according to Master Motahhari, had eclectic and dangerous opinions; as they attempted to interpret Islamic teachings and values in a fashion that did not contrast with modern Western views. "Among Shiite scholars, for the first time, Martyr Mohammad Baqir Sadr, by writing the book "Eghtesadona" (meaning our economy), sought to show the model of Islamic economics in a deductive way in opposition to the dominant models such as liberalism and Marxism" (Hossein Sharifi, 20). Among the modern Islamic thinkers,

"Some, like Shahid Motahari, believe in the practical view of science; that is, any knowledge that is beneficial and essential to the Islamic community and effective in building Islamic civilization is religious; and others, namely Master Javadi Amoli, hold," Generalities, principles, and some details of natural and human sciences exist in religious texts, the sub-principles can be deduced from which by using the element of *ijtihad*; and the intellect, like religious narration, is held as a proof source of religion "(Rudgar, 2011, 166).

The generation of humanities-Islamic sciences is one of the demands of the Supreme Leader from the academic and seminary society in the latest two decades. In many records, he has represented Islam's look of science and has elaborated remarks about the deficiencies of the Western humanities and the evolution of these sciences (Rudgar, 2011, 26). Concerning the institutions of the humanities and their sources, he holds, "The foundation of the Western humanities, which is taught in translation in universities, is a secular perspective that contrasts with the Qur'anic and religious postulates; While the basis of the humanities must be sought in the Qur'an; If this is done, scholars can employ the Qur'an foundations, together with some of the advances in the humanities, to create a robust and solid basis of the humanities." According to the Supreme Leader, it is feasible to acquire the principles of humanities from the Holy Quran and Islamic sources, and the current humanities - because of the use of intellectual and philosophical grounds of Western schools of thought - are deficient and unreliable in overcoming the country's problems.

On the other hand, the science of geography entails two chief poles - nature and human - and its subject and realm is the research of the relationships between these two poles. In more detail, on the one hand, it is affected by the natural sciences, and on the other hand, it follows the principles and rules of the humanities. Hence, diverse, complex, and multifaceted issues in this science refute the single method of study and research. Geography analysis is an assortment of coordinated activities that happen on the relationships of phenomena, and it is a constant, tidy, and fact-finding process that has three main pillars: where (place, time, and space), how (scientific and logical explanation of interrelationships), and Why (causation and study of cause and effect).

Currently, there are various views on the Islamization of the humanities in the country, which can be examined in the form of two general perspectives. First, the belief that the humanities are purely scientific and reject its Islam. According to these theories, science should be used as it is in the world. Second, which is the viewpoint of many theological and academic scholars, holds that the existing trend in the humanities is imitative and translational, inefficient in solving the country's problems owing to non-Islamic principles, and in need of fundamental change.

This research is entirely subject-oriented and identifies the effects of geography knowledge from the perspective of *Nahj al-Balaghah*. In this research, using the descriptive-analytical method, information has been collected and organized from various library sources, articles, related religious and scientific books. The purpose of this research is to functionalize of religious and scientific study approaches, and it attempts to connect religion and science - as the two branches of epistemology in humans - and to know common or existing similarities and differences.

## **Theoretical Foundations of Research**

### **The philosophical approach in *Nahj al-Balaghah***

There are several philosophical foundations in *Nahj al-Balaghah*. But the most critical philosophy and general and effective concept in this invaluable book is "God-belief and God-centeredness" with a significant role in theology. In nearly all sermons, letters, and wisdom of *Nahj al-Balaghah*, we can track and witness various subjects and topics of theology. The issues proposed are sometimes extensive and specialized, and sometimes pretty concise and condensed. Usually at the onset of the lecture and the beginning of the speeches, after the praise of God and in the form of stating the holy attributes and names, the Imam (PBUH) states the critical and golden points of monotheism - which are often associated with rational and philosophical bases. About the monotheistic issues of God, Master Motahhari credits, "The discussions of *Nahj al-Balaghah* in this area are different and various; Some of them are of the type of study of creatures and works of divine craft and wisdom; This part sometimes discusses the general

system of the heavens and the earth, and sometimes examines certain beings, such as the "bat" or the "peacock" or the "ant", and gives the effects of creation, that is, the intervention of tact and attention to purpose in the creation of such beings "(Motahari, 2010, 53).

Professor Motahari points to the value of philosophical reasoning in supernatural matters and believes, "In Nahj al-Balaghah, divine issues are presented in two ways: In one way, the perceptible world has been examined and explored by the systems used in it as a mirror that exhibits the consciousness and perfection of the creator. In the other way, pure rational thought and philosophical calculations come into play. Most of the divine discussions of Nahj al-Balaghah are purely rational thoughts and philosophical calculations. Only the second method has been employed on the virtues and attributes of perfection and glory of the essence of truth."

To make a comparison and judgment between the logic of Nahj al-Balaghah with other schools of thought and humanity, Master Motahari believes, "The fashion and method of Nahj al-Balaghah are totally innovative and unique. The only context of Nahj al-Balaghah's thoughts is the Holy Quran, and it suffices; Apart from the Holy Quran, we will not find any other ground for the discussions of Nahj al-Balaghah "(Motahari, 2010, 88).

Overall, the religion of Islam, based on the teachings of the Holy Quran and the tradition of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Ahl al-Bayt, has been built on a school of thought and reasoning from the very start. Accordingly, in Nahj al-Balaghah, most of the monotheistic discussions are based on robust philosophical grounds. Moreover, the expression of natural sciences and geographical sciences is employed to give illustrations and evidence to prove monotheistic and theological matters. Accordingly, the connection between the science of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah and monotheism, theology, and philosophy is fundamental; And without having a divine belief and worldview, basically, the science of geography and other sciences can not be defined in the school of Islam.

### **Nahj al-Balaghah's view of nature and man**

The two chief pillars of the science of academic geography are "nature" and "humans". Hence, the subject of knowledge of geography is the research and study of the relationships between these two main elements. In Nahj al-Balaghah, the connection between nature and the supernatural is structural and transverse. Consequently, in many lectures, together with representing various natural phenomena, special attention has been paid to supernatural beings, namely angels, spirits, etc. In the first sermon, the Imam (PBUH) makes elegant and scientific references to the matter of the formation of early life and the origin of creation and existence. There are primary differences between different humanities thinkers regarding how life was formed and originated. Most Western scientists believe in the materiality of the universe, and therefore assume that the original matter is ancient and eternal. This view opposes the religious teachings of Islam and Nahj al-Balaghah and can be rejected. According to Nahj al-Balaghah, the only independent essence and ancient timeless is only God Almighty; other beings, including nature and man, are events permanently evolving owing to the Substantial Movement.

In recent years, the renowned English physicist Stephen Hawking has argued, "God did not create the universe, and the Big Bang and the origin of creation are the results of the physical laws that rule the universe ... and that means we do not really have to accept that God took part in the Big Bang." (Hassanzadeh Amoli, 1981; 307). But in Nahj al-Balaghah, the Imam (PBUH), with complete dominance and without causing any ambiguity, attributes the origin of creation to God Almighty; He even represents the precedence and delay of the creation and evolution of phenomena. As can be seen in the first sermon, in addition to nature, the human element is also given special attention in Nahj al-Balaghah, and all the lectures of Nahj al-Balaghah in any discussion and knowledge are related to human growth and development.

According to Master Dashti's view specified in the footnotes of Nahj al-Balaghah, the philosophical views of Nahj al-Balaghah in some of the Imam (PBUH)'s remarks oppose the so-called modern philosophies. Here are some instances.

**Table 1: Examinable Philosophical thoughts in Nahj al-Balaghah**

| Address    | Type of thinking / philosophy                           | Address    | Type of thinking / philosophy |
|------------|---|------------|-------------------------------|
| Sermon 3   | Denial of secularism                                    | Sermon 16  | Denial of reformism-pluralism |
| Sermon 39  | Denial of thinking originality of thought (rationalism) | Sermon 40  | Denial of anarchism           |
| Sermon 80  | The negation of feminism                                | Sermon 91  | Denial of materialism         |
| Sermon 126 | Denial of Machiavellianism                              | Sermon 127 | Denial of sectarianism        |
| Sermon 160 | Denial of pragmatism - positivism                       | Sermon 165 | Denial of Nihilism            |
| Sermon 213 | Denial of dogmatism (authoritarianism)                  | Sermon 223 | Denial of Existentialism      |
| Letter 53  | Denial of racism-militarism                             | Letter 69  | Denial of humanism            |

Accordingly, it can be said that the nature and matter of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah are related to monotheism and theology; and the reasons for the existence and need for this science are theology and enhancement of the living conditions. Geographical knowledge in Nahj al-Balaghah uses all scientific and intellectual methods, and revelatory teachings confirm these actions. The study and analysis of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is achievable through observation, nature, thought, and reason, and scientific and experimental investigations resulting from the five senses and the instructions of the outer intellect (prophets) and the inner intellect. In this regard, Surah Fussilat verse 53 states, "We will soon show them Our signs in the Universe and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the truth" and Imam (PBUH) Ali said: "I see God in all things." (Feyz Kashani, 99). The final purpose of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is to know God and ontology.

#### **Notions and topics of natural geography in Nahj al-Balaghah**

To consider the issues of natural geography in Nahj al-Balaghah, there is a need for special research. Sometimes these notions are shown in the form of a specific word or phrase; this expression is used to better explain monotheism and theology.

#### **Types of wind in Nahj al-Balaghah**

One of the essential points in the first sermon is the reference to the spread of the winds (The spread the winds by his grace); which is a token of divine bounty. We can better grasp the significance of Imam (PBUH)'s words in modern times when suffering from the phenomenon of air inversion in all metropolises of the country. Geographically, due to their role in natural geography and the creation of roughness shapes and activity in the transportation of materials, Harvesting, and sedimentation, creating various shapes in the desert, impact on the human environment such as architecture (Tia Beklo, Wikipedia), location of cities, industries, agriculture, and economy and many more, winds are of essential importance.

Alizé or commercial winds, for instance, have caused a growth in North America and some other regions. Winds perform a key role in powering some parts of the world - such as Germany, Spain, and Denmark. The wind is the factor of progression and continuity of life and its movement in the earth. Winds are also involved in the production or elimination of some diseases and have also been considered in Islamic and Iranian medicine.

In Nahj al-Balaghah, particularly in the first sermon, the word al-Riyah (meaning wind) is repeated around 14 times. Of course, further other words have been used for "wind", such as: in the first sermon and sermon 211, Al-Rih Al-Asifa (strong wind), Al-Rih Al-Qasifa (loud winds), Al-Qawasif (fragile winds), Aasif Al-Kawa (jumping winds), Al-Rih Al-saif (summer wind); In Sermon 91, Tamriya Al-Janoob (south wind), Al-Khasib (strong winds that moved the pebbles), and so on.

#### **Types of clouds, lightning**

In Nahj al-Balaghah, various kinds of clouds are named. For instance, in Wisdom 21, Al-Sahab (cloud moving and thin); In Sermon 115, Al-Sahab Al-Monbaeq (Rain cloud); In Wisdom 472, Zelal Al-saha'eb

(Tame and obedient clouds); In Ghara'eb 1 and Sermon 162, Ghoza'e (thin autumn clouds, an allusion to Cyrus, scattered, drop-like clouds); In Sermon 166, Rakam al-Saha'eb (stacked, compact, dense clouds, an allusion to Columbus clouds); In Sermon 182, Al-Ra'd, Brouq al-Ghamam (thunders jumping from clouds); In sermon 115, Jahaam (congestion of the sky), etc.

### **Ground and all kinds of roughness**

The word al-Ard, which is repeated about 115 times in Nahj al-Balaghah, means earth, land, planet, and country; In some cases, the expansion of the Earth (Dahu al-Ard) has been mentioned. In sermon 163, the word al-Ard al-Sufli (earthly world) is repeated around three times. In Sermon 201, the words al-Ard al-Khawara (flat ground); In Sermons 199 and 91, Al-Arzin Al-Madhwoh (vast lands), in Sermon 192, the Aqtar Al-Ardhin (around and the margins of densely populated lands), in Sermons 192 and 138, Atraaf Al-Arzin (an allusion to the suburbs) in Sermons 165 and 91, Akhadid Al-Ard (Cracks, faults); In sermon 166, Hadab al-Ard (heights and hills); (High and flat lands; plateaus); In Sermon 182, Baqa Al-Ardain Al-Mutta'at (around the low lands), in letter 31, Al-Ard Al-Khalia (uninhabited lands); in Sermons 163 and 198, Al-mahaad (high, flat lands; plateaus); In Sermon 163, Al-Wahaad (lowlands), in Sermon 36, Ahzam (lands between flat and low) Qabl Al-Ashraf (terrace-like lands); in Sermon 170, Masaqet Al-Ghaith (lands with heavy rainfall, full of water and grass), and so on.

Types of mountains: Siyasi al-Jabal (highlands), in sermon 171; Al-Jabal Al-Rawasi (soaring mountains) in Sermon 165; Rawasi A'lam (mountain peaks), Al-Jabal Al-Khashenah (rough mountains), Safah Al-Jabal (mountain range), Asad, in Sermon 91; Shenakhib (Mountains), in Sermon 199; Al-Jabal, the essence of the planned length (hillsides), Asdaad, in Sermon 91; Shanakhib (Mountains), in Sermon 199; Al-jabal dhat Al-tawl Al-mansubah (Mountain Ranges), Al-Muhawi (Abysses) in Sermon 91; Al-Jabal Al-Shamkh (High mountains), etc.

### **The aspects of biogeography**

"Biogeography studies and analyses the distribution of living organisms and especially the dispersion of their communities on Earth (location) over time" (Asakereh, 2005). Currently, this branch of geography is split into two parts: plant geography and animal geography. Imam (PBUH) accurately and scientifically outlines the properties of plants and animals. For instance, he speaks on the types of trees or the physiological structure of ants or bats and also analyzes them. In letter 25, the Imam (PBUH) ordered the zakat collectors to mind the rights of the animals.

In Sermon 155, while glorifying and expressing the divine power in the creation of the universe and the inadequacy of the human intellect to grasp monotheistic matters, the Imam (PBUH) describes one of the marvelous beings of the universe, the bat, and with a certain delicacy of a specialist scientist, he points out the marvels of its creation. In Sermon 165, he states the wonders of the creation of all sorts of moving and inanimate living, stasis and restless moving animals, and all kinds of birds. In the same sermon, he later speaks of the creation and awe of the peacock, which is the most amazing bird, and the balance of its creation. The Imam (PBUH) continues to give all the physiological and structural properties of the appearance and the imposing behaviors and the sexual and psychological behaviors and the colorful tail of the peacock.

In this sermon, the awe in the creation of tiny creatures such as ants and flies, and larger ones such as sea fish and enormous elephants are also considered displays of the power of God Almighty; Furthermore, God does not abandon any organism and manages it accurately, saving He sets its due date and the end of its path as. Representing the divine power and greatness about the philosophy of creation in sermons 165 and 185, the Imam (PBUH) said about the various plant and animal phenomena, "With the occurrence of creation, God proved his eternity, and with the rise of various phenomena, he proved his existence, and while creatures have peers, it was proven that God has no matches."

In Sermon 185, the wonder of the creation of the locust with two red eyes and two orb-like sockets, The fitness, and Anterior teeth and sickle-like legs like her, and the inability of farmers to deal with this creature - whose whole body is not even the size of a slender toe - have also been mentioned.

### Mathematical geography

Mathematical geography is one of the principal and specialized branches of geography. Employing the results of various sciences, including mapping, geodesy, astronomy, physics and chemistry, geometry, and mathematics, this field tests and measures the coordinates, dimensions, and position of the earth in space relative to other celestial bodies and their effects on human life. It comments in particular on different theories of cosmology and the early origins of life.

In the first sermon, the phrase "watada bialsukhur mydan 'ardih

" is mentioned, referring to the control of the earth's anxiety and stress by the mountains. For this part of the first sermon, many interpretations and explanations have been given, some of which are in line with current scientific findings and some not. Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi holds, "Mountains contribute to regulating the tide effect, and the roots of the mountains encompass the earth like armor to avert a permanent earthquake; And if the surface of the earth were flat, the speedy and circular motion of the earth around itself (positional motion) would create severe storms and the earth would become untenable" (Makarem Shirazi, 69).

Hence, the "mydan 'ard", or the anxiety caused by the positional motion, will be controlled by setting the mountains as nails in the ground. Consequently, the role of mountains in the weight balance of the earth and the instantaneous velocity and its changes through 24 hours will be provable. Were it not for the weight of the mountains, perhaps the earth would have moved faster in space than it does presently; accordingly, the word "wal'ard mihadana" would no longer be appropriate for it.

Most of the topics related to mathematical geography can be observed in the first sermon, which, like Surah al-Fatihah al-Kitab is at the beginning of Nahj al-Balaghah. In this sermon, after glorifying God, Imam (PBUH) has described the conceptual model of creation and the way of creation and development of life and has declared that the first action is to break the space and open the surroundings. In Imam (PBUH)'s statements, there is a complete relationship between the providence and the divine will in the creation of creatures and the universe. Accordingly, human beings and the environment in Nahj al-Balaghah, while having a mutual relationship, have a purpose and end that is mentioned everywhere in Nahj al-Balaghah - including in sermon 186.

Philosophically, mathematical geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is based on the grand idea of "God-centeredness and theism" and in studies and researches, considers the whole universe, and explains the process of creation with temporal precedence and latency. This precedence and delay can be seen in the first sermon of Nahj al-Balaghah, which is considered the Fatiha of the book Nahj al-Balaghah. First, the Imam (PBUH) speaks of the term "fataq al'ajwa"; Splitting the levels and opening up the surrounding space" and then the terms "shiqun alarja' w skayk alhawa"; Air creation", "fajir fiha ma'an mutalatimana w hamalah ely alrryh aleasifuh; flowing the life-giving freshwater and placing it on a fragile and gentle wind", etc., which represent the various stages of creation in the form of a mystery exactly from the start to the end. But in the theories of contemporary scientists, mathematical geography is expressed as "human-centered" and only within the solar system and by giving a series of inferences that can be changed.

The chief difference between the mathematical geography of Nahj al-Balaghah and modern sciences is in the following items. Nahj al-Balaghah considers creation as the result of divine grace, divinity, will, and blessing of God and has a goal and a starting and ending point, but recent sciences consider it accidental, without a goal, owing to the interaction of materials. In Nahj al-Balaghah, the general model of the universe is explained and viewed with a macro and hierarchical view of the universe and reached from the whole to the part; While in modern mathematical geography, they follow the partial model (micro) and try to generalize the results and justify the general model by introducing a smaller model (solar system) by deductive method. Philosophically, the conceptual model of Nahj al-Balaghah is based on "God-centeredness"; while the modern scientific model is based on "human-centered and central earth". The origin point of the universe in Nahj al-Balaghah begins with God and the creation and splitting of infinite spaces; while in the new sciences, it has originated by the Big Bang and quite by accident.

### **Military geography**

By definition, "military geography is a division of geographical science that examines all natural, cultural (human), and environmental influences on global, regional and local policies, programs, military plans, and combat/support operations." ... Military geography includes the use of geographical analysis method for military issues" (Safavi, 32).

The military geography of Nahj al-Balaghah sometimes deals with the analysis of the operation area and the role of natural or human impacts on tactical operations, and sometimes with the analysis of the battle scene, which is at the level of operational technique. And sometimes it addresses other important fundamental considerations that are effective in the result of the battle - such as the role of politics, diplomacy, sociology, command psychology, economic concerns and components of national power and people's will, and so on. Accordingly, part of these issues can be studied as geopolitical policies, "geopolitics", and part can be studied as military geography. In this segment, a brief reference is made to some related issues.

### **The necessity of preparation for jihad:**

I swear to myself, in the conflict against the enemies of the truth and those who are immersed in misguidance and evil, I will not be tolerant and weak for a moment. Hence, O servants of God, fear God, and escape from God to God, and stride in the route that is open to you, and brace the duties and the rules that He has arranged for you. Provided, Ali is the guarantor of your coming triumph, even if you do not have it presently.

Imam (PBUH) gave a speech to his troops on one of the first days of the battle of Safin in 37 AH:

O crowd of Muslims, make the underwear the fear of God and the outer garment the calm. Press your teeth to increase your endurance to enemy sword blows; Complete your combat armor; Move your swords a few times before pulling them out of the sheath; Look at the enemy from the corner of your eye and land the blow from the left and right and hit with the sharp side of the sword and reach the sword to the enemy by stepping forward.

### **Human geography in Nahj al-Balaghah**

Most of the Imam (PBUH)'s lectures and statements are directly or indirectly related to man and his requirements. In some Sermons and statements, such as the first one, the creation of man is addressed and man is considered a special being with a holy spirit. Accordingly, in these descriptions, the knowledge of Adam and the divine spirit and the prostration of angels and the rejection of Satan are presented, which in fact denote this point: Man is an essential and prominent element in the creation and among other geographical phenomena.

In some cases, Nahj al-Balaghah discusses the physical oddities or spiritual complexities of man; and sometimes speaks on the role and importance, and mission of man. Since man has two principal dimensions, in Nahj al-Balaghah, enough attention has been paid to the dimensions of human existence, as well as to the intellectual, scientific foundations and strategies of healthy social life and his maturity and development plan.

In Nahj al-Balaghah, man is looked from two general and specific perspectives. In the general dimension, Nahj al-Balaghah addresses all human beings, and in some sermons, the Imam (PBUH) deals with specific anthropology, that is, the introduction of the "perfect man", and describes its examples to the people. In some sermons about the precious existence of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Imam (PBUH) mentions the introduction of his personal characteristics and the lineage of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

### **Political geography in Nahj al-Balaghah**

This section of geography is related to the various phenomena, processes, and systems of government and management that stem from human activities on the planet. This branch of geography has been strongly touched by the prevailing western and humanist philosophies and ruling ideologies of societies (Mir Haidar, 1998, 12). One of the very profound and basic notions that have received special recognition in Nahj al-Balaghah is the "concept of government." This theory from the perspective of Nahj

al-Balaghah is radically different from modern theories and opinions. The notion of government in Nahj al-Balaghah and the thought and manners of Imam (PBUH) Ali is synonymous with management, trust, direction, training, and service. Hence, he strongly opposed oppression, self-centeredness, and authoritarianism. According to him, the government is not a bait and the goal, but a means to serve and revitalize the divine rituals. In his perspective, the ruler should be the trustee of God on earth and the bearer of justice in society, and the agent of Prevention of Vice among the people. Imam (PBUH) considers the government the field of difficult tests and suffering and trial; As in Wisdom 216, he called the ruling "madamir alwalayat" (The tracks of provinces).

In Imam (PBUH) Ali's political views, absolute sovereignty in the universe is for God Almighty, who has delivered this right of the government to the fair and worthy. On the other hand, God has given the people the right to define their political destiny, and the fulfillment of the government belongs to those people. Accordingly, for Nahj al-Balaghah, the origin of government has two bases: divine legitimacy and popular approval, and these two are required for each other. The government will be realized according to the divine bond and the acceptance of the people. Consequently, in the political view of the Imam (PBUH), the government is based on two pillars: the people who form the government, and the righteous who are considered its managers (Tehrani Delshad, 2006, 24).

Another essential feature of the political geography of Nahj al-Balaghah is its geopolitical expression and the features of the age of human ignorance in general everywhere in the globe - particularly in the Arabian Peninsula and in the times before the Prophet (PBUH)'s mission. Recalling human ignorance, the Imam (PBUH) describes the value and significance of Islam as a divine blessing for people so that they can pick the right way by comparing two different intellectual and political models and actively engage in their political destiny. This importance can be seen in many of the Imam (PBUH)'s remarks, including the second and twenty-sixth sermons.

One of the aspects related to the matters of political geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is the introduction of qualified and able people to rule the people. Imam (PBUH) sometimes conversed about the lives of the high prophets and their individual, social, and political behavior; and sometimes denoted his virtues to inform people. He further sometimes directed Muslims to their destiny by expressing the manners and traditions of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) and recollecting the time of his leadership. In the same way, he sometimes generally spoke of the lineage of the Prophet (PBUH) and expressed their noble attributes and qualities. In Sermon 74, he introduces himself as owning these qualities.

One of the key points in the study of political geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is how the people swore allegiance to the Imam (PBUH) and chose him for the caliphate. In modern political geography, in the form of electoral geography, this can be proposed as an entirely new tendency. The methods of the popular vote today are, at best, the choice of the minority by the majority, which is called democracy; In practice, the part of the people is a means that is predetermined to justify the selection of a person. But the election of the Imam (PBUH) for the caliphate is absolutely divine, through the appointment of the Prophet (PBUH) and the choice of the people, and uniquely - as we have no copy of it in the past, and at present only the election of Imam (PBUH) Khomeini by the people can be considered a minor match. If we consider the method of electing the three earlier caliphs, we will see that the only divine and popular government in this age is the Caliphate of the Imam (PBUH). Because the people, without being compelled, made their political destiny by intelligent choice.

### **Urban political geography**

The real image and political views of the people can be seen in some sermons, such as Sermon 4. In this sermon, Imam (PBUH) describes the political geography of Basra and its features. This sermon and some others related to the people of Kufa are a good foundation for the study of urban political geography, which is one of the modern trends in geography. The Imam (PBUH) repeatedly reprimands the Iraqi people, and especially the people of the cities of Basra and Kufa, and their unfaithfulness, their defiance, intellectual stress, and their internal dishonesty. In Sermon 25, he considers the Kufi followers so insignificant, commenting, "I swear by God that I knew the people of Shaam will defeat you. Because they are united in helping falsehood and you are discrepant in supporting the right. If I give a wooden



bowl of water to one of you, I'm afraid you will steal it." In sermons 13 and 14, he blames the people of Basra for their support of the infidels and their submission to the words of Aisha, and presents them as female soldiers and followers of the camels, and censures the disturbing and stinking land of Basra.

### **Significant intellectual courses and political parties in the Imam (PBUH) era**

In total, he fought with three major political factions and courses during his reign. The first group, the infidels or violators of the deal, were some internal powerful people who, under the banner of Aisha and under the direction of Talha and Zubair - two associates of the Prophet (PBUH) - and with the economic aid of the Umayyads entered the military encounter with the Imam (PBUH) at the onset of his reign.

In the Battle of Jamal, some people were killed and some were captured. They are also known as the "ashab jamal" (camel companions). The second group was the Qasitin or oppressors who, under the banner of the Umayyads and the leadership of Mu'awiyah, faced the Imam (PBUH) with deception and hypocrisy, to create divisions and sections among Muslims and usurp the caliphate. This group, which had no bright or influential history in Islam and the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and sought only to rule, set the first sparks of aristocratic and monarchical rule in Islam and forced the issue of "Hakamiah" (judgment) on Muslims in the battle of Safain. The third group, the Mareqin or Khavarej, were mainly stubborn, ignorant, and shallow. They who had false fanaticisms and were known as braggarts, assassinated, and martyred the Imam (PBUH).

### **Administration and government of the great Islamic country**

Another great theme of political geography in the noble Nahj al-Balaghah is the expression of the way the Imam (PBUH) ruled and exercised his dominion over the people and the vast Islamic country. The Islamic realm at the time of the Imam (PBUH) consisted of 5 states (or provinces and large regions): Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Iran, and Egypt. These sections were very distinct in terms of geographical area, population, race and nationality, culture, and customs; And in this great area, there were many Arab, Iranian, Armenian, Afghan, African, etc. races.

To manage this great realm, the Imam (PBUH) elected governors and in a completely controlled manner, through the Oyoun (Watchers) network, supervised the works of the government and attempted to ensure that justice, in its general and specific sense, was implemented in the country. Consequently, he set up the treasury system and determined salaries for each person over the Islamic country. In many cases, by announcing public or private directives, the powers and limits of the treasury were determined for each governor.

### **Historical geography**

Historical geography is a division of geography that investigates the natural, economic, human, and political conditions according to the historical passage (Nechiri, 2001, 8). The Qur'an defines the pre-Islamic historical era as "ignorance". This term is repeated exactly in Nahj al-Balaghah.

In Nahj al-Balaghah, there are several statements to report the situation of ignorance and compare it with the era of the coming of Islam. In Sermon 95 and Sermon 2, the characteristics of the era of ignorance are well defined. The astonishment and confusion of the people, the entanglement in seditions, the domination of whims and desires, the affliction of ignorance, the general blindness, the humiliation of the people, having the spirit of self-aggrandizement, arrogance, several slips, a time when scientists were silent and ignorants were held dear; An age in which the strings of religion were torn, the pillars of faith and certainty were precarious, differences in the principles of religion had arisen, and sin was committed openly and the devil was followed are among the symbols of such an era (Mottaqi, 2006).

Another prominent issue in Nahj al-Balaghah is the narration of the history of old nations and civilizations. In this respect, the Imam (PBUH), by stating the records of previous societies, encourages people to learn lessons. He states in Sermon 157, "Servants of God, time passes in the future as it did in the past. What has passed will not return, and what is, will not remain perpetually; Its end is the same as the beginning. Its ventures and events are similar to each other, and its marks are obvious; as it were that the end of life and the resurrection is calling you."

In the same sermon (192), he urges people to study the states and marks of the past, remarking, "Beware of the punishments that happened to the previous nations, and remember the states of the past in their virtue and hardships, and fear becoming like them. Thus, when studying and thinking of the lives of the past, commit to what was the cause of their excellence and destroyed the enemies and provided the health and well-being of their lives ... And avoid doing things that crushed their backs and their power - such as resentment, filling of hearts with avarice and envy, despairing of each other, and giving up helping each other.

### **Urban Geography**

Urban geography highlights the spatial system and location of the city and, like other parts of geography, examines the causes of urban dispersion, the similarities and socio-economic differences between them concerning spatial conditions .... Urban geography is the study of urbanism and municipal areas (Shokouei, 1993, 6).

But the idea of the city in Nahj al-Balaghah is different and pays attention to the governing factor, namely "ideology" and religion. As Imam (PBUH) Ali says in letter 69, "And live in large cities because they are the centers of the Muslim communities and avoid places where people are ignorant of God and oppress each other and do not help each other in obedience to God....." According to this comment, the best city to live in is a metropolis or a big city. Because it has a great Muslim population and is a place for the exchange of Islamic beliefs and culture, and they are better in terms of information and public awareness. It seems that the Imam (PBUH) paid great attention to the supremacy of ideology and religion in deciding the place of residence.

Imam (PBUH) Ali says in Wisdom 442:

The way of choosing cities for (social) life: And he (PBUH), said: No city is better for you than another. The best city is to receive you.

In this wisdom, the Imam (PBUH) has determined the criterion of superiority and preference, the choice of the city to live in, as the term "hamalaka". This word has been translated into different meanings by the analysts and translators of Nahj al-Balaghah. Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi has interpreted it as "the city that presents a means of peace and progress for you." He makes valuable remarks on "the topics of patriotism from faith" (Makarem Shirazi, 86).

In Wisdom 3, while declaring the anti-moral values of stinginess, fear, and poverty, he says, "The poor man is a stranger in his own city." In Wisdom 56, he calls poverty in the homeland exile, "Wealth in exile is like being in the homeland, and poverty in the motherland is like being a stranger." It results from these statements that the economic factor is also essential in choosing the place of residence and a city. In general, it is concluded that in the urban geography of Nahj al-Balaghah, the ideology-religion, culture, and environmental, human, and economic factors are decisive; To Islamize this branch of geography, there is a need to reform the thoughts, attitudes, and philosophies of urbanization and urbanism.

### **Medical Geography**

Using the data of two independent sciences of geography and medical sciences, the trend of medical geography tries to examine the reasons for the incident and the manner and extent of the spread of diseases on the planet and present a proper solution to improve human health. Medical geography is defined by Professor Shokouei as "Recognition and role of environmental conditions, soil, climate, and seasonal shifts related to the spread of diseases, social, political and economic conditions of the place concerning the emergence and spread of diseases, proposed solutions for equitable distribution of medical services in cities, villages and at the district level, the location of clinics, hospitals according to the urban hierarchy and population of urban neighborhoods, the theory of the spread and spread of diseases, the birthplace of different diseases and how to spread it and other issues" (Shokouei, 88).

One of the researchers in this area holds, "Medical geography is a division of human geography knowledge that concentrates on the spectra of health geography and health care systems" (Dehghani, 2013). In Nahj al-Balaghah, there are references to the impacts of climate on human beings and their biological and psychological changes, which are discussed in the following.

In sermons 13 and 14, which were issued following the end of the Battle of Jamal in 36 AH, the Imam (PBUH) rebuked the people of Basra and said, "The soil of your city is the worst of soils, it is closer to the water than anywhere else and farther from the sky, And 9 tenths of evil and corruption lies in your city. Whoever is in your city is entangled in sins, and whoever leaves it is under God's forgiveness." Allameh Jafari in the description of this sermon and connection with the natural characteristics of the city of Basra states, "1- Salinity of water 2- Proximity to water 3- Dirt and stench of land adjacent to water 4- Depth of land."

In Sermon 14, the Imam (PBUH) considers the role of environmental factors such as proximity to water and distance from the sky decisive in knowing the people of Basra and says, "Your minds are weak and your thoughts are absurd; So you are a target for the shooters and a bite for the eater and food for the hunter." Geologically, it has been proven that 70% of Basra soil is marshy. This is due to the infiltration of seawater in the soil of this region and the existence of many estuaries. Plus, 90% of the Basra area is located on plentiful oil and gas resources, and its climate is hot and humid.

In some sermons or letters, the Imam (PBUH) uses the phrase "sharibaan wbya" (Cholera-prone water) as a metaphor for the corruption of the source of religion by the Umayyad, which is close to the findings of modern science. In Sermon 175, he rebuked the people of Medina, saying, "What is the matter with you that you turning away from your God and inclining to other than Him, like the cattle left behind by its shepherd in a Cholera-prone desert with sickening waters?"

In many sermons, such as Sermon 198, Imam (PBUH) considers virtue and fear of God a remedy for heart diseases and a lightening of the hearts and a cure for body pains. On the other hand, he regards the Qur'an as a healer that heals disturbing diseases and medicine after which there is no infection. It has also been medically confirmed that the root of many physical ailments has a spiritual and psychological origin. Hence, in Islam, the health of the body and soul are discussed together.

In Sermon 234, the Imam (PBUH) considers the roots of people's differences to be the difference in their nature. Since humans were primarily a mixture of salty and sweet, hard, and soft soils that are as close to each other as these materials are and as far apart as their materials are. In Wisdom 27, he said, "Make do with your pain as much as it does with you." In Wisdom 42 he explains the effect of disease on the absolvment of sins, and in Wisdom 108 he points to the marvels of human creation, which almost express the human physiological structure. In Wisdom 181, he considers health as the product of forethought, and in Wisdom 225 and 256, he considers jealousy as the pest of health. In Wisdom 311, the Imam (PBUH) refers to the disease of leprosy (white spot and psoriasis), which in fact expresses his curse on Anas ibn Malik.

## **Conclusion**

The objective of this research is to investigate the science of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah. In this investigation, the main nature of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is related to theology. In more detail, geography is a medium and a means for divine knowledge and cognition and knowledge to make the ground for human entry into the category of divine cognition. From this view, the science of geography actually renders a model of epistemology and a religious-scientific worldview to understand the greatest reality of existence: God Almighty. The subject of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is the examination of the relationship between man and God and God with man, the relationship between nature and man and vice versa, and ultimately, the between nature and man with God, which unlike scientific geography, which deals only with the link between man and the environment, focuses on a more significant relationship: the one with God.

The range of this knowledge in Nahj al-Balaghah can be extended and studied in three significant main spaces: earth space (lithosphere); Vital space (bio-travel), space encompassing the earth (atmosphere). If the intellectual and philosophical grounds of the knowledge of geography are provided from revelatory-religious sources, it can be powerful in the evolution and progress of man and reaching God. Furthermore, the method of research and geographical knowledge in Nahj al-Balaghah is based on all the epistemological methods that are relied on in Islam - such as intellect, sensory ways, intuition, etc. Consequently, geography is a function of man's mission given by God, himself, and the community. The

final purpose of the knowledge of academic geography is only to learn the interrelationship between man and the environment, which is incomplete owing to not fulfilling the religious and monotheistic demands of man. But from the view of Nahj al-Balaghah, geography finds a significant and divine direction with the introduction of the parameter of divine knowledge, and the knowledge of geography can be examined and studied in the religious-scientific worldview. Accordingly, the nature, region, and subject of geography in Nahj al-Balaghah are radically different from the humanist scientific view and attitude of geography; and the knowledge of geographical phenomena is developed concerning the divine knowledge. For this reason, geography in Nahj al-Balaghah is considered as a background and a factor for real knowledge and perception of the philosophy of life and the universe.

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