

Aesthetics of the 16th Sermon of Nahj al-Balāghah in the Light of Formalist Criticism

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Abstract

The Nahj al-Balāghah is a valuable work for which its analysis and interpretation from a formalist viewpoint reveals both its external and internal resplendency and elegance. The formalists examine the exterior and structural aspects of the work and inspect it while disregarding historical, social, psychological and marginal contexts surrounding it. This research, using the descriptive-analytical method, attempts to analyze and examine the 16th sermon of the Nahj al-Balāghah by relying on formalistic criteria. This goal has been achieved by examining and analyzing the texture of the literary work and its constituent elements, i.e. consonants and vowels, syllables, images, metaphors and more. The findings of the research point to the conclusion that Imam Ali (as) was as much attentive to the structure and form as he was towards context. Imam Ali (as) has created meanings beyond the words' significance by embellishing the form of the work with all kinds of artistic and expressive techniques.

Keywords: Nahj al-Balāghah, 16th Sermon, Formalism School, Coherence, Imagination.

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