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IMPORTANCE OF SIYASAT NAMA AND ITS MODERN RELEVANCE

INTRODUCTION

To begin with I thank the Almighty for giving the opportunity and blessing me with kind parents, helpful teachers and a loving family. For they all are the ones who have inspired me to take up a research work in this field. As I started my search for the topic for the thesis there was a vast range of topics, personalities, books and incidents to choose from. Persian being a language that has a rich history of over 3000 years thus an almost complete history of humanity can be covered under the rich language. From the earliest empires to the modern revolution human history has taken a lot of inspiration from the thinkers and philosophers who have written in the Persian language.

The Bachelor's degree in Architecture helped me learn a lot about the art and culture of the people of the region thus inspiring me to do a Master's in the Persian language. It was here that under the able guidance of Dr. Sakina Khan Head of the Department of Persian, University of Mumbai we were introduced to the various epics of Persian literature. The various epics had their own value and importance thus making it very difficult to choose a topic. With my architectural background I wanted the topic to have a lot to do with arts and architecture. But literature had to play an important role in the thesis work, this led to a lot of thinking and rethinking. I got an opportunity and did my second masters in archeology this took my love for art and architecture to a new level. I had never thought that Persian was so very much useful in the study of epigraphy and numismatics as an important part of our masters in archeology. Now with a greater zeal I wanted to take a topic that had art, history, culture and above all literature. I did my masters research in Mughal gardens a topic that helped me understand the thought process of the rich culture that thought and planed some of the best gardens in the world. The search for the topic still continued till Dr. Sakina Khan recommended the Siyasat Nama a book that was a part of our syllabus in the Masters Degree. The book is an epic and has all the possible angles for research work from the lessons, right from the earliest recorded kings to the latest political movements one finds the elements of spiritual and scientific teachings at one place. The writer Nizam ul mulk has written the book in a style that is easy to understand and its teachings are effective to the heart that purifies the mind and soul. Thus we finalized the subject but how to limit our research was an even more difficult task again Dr. Sakina Khan took the initiative and we discussed the topic with Professor Sharif Hussain Qasmi, Former head of the department of Persian, Delhi University. He was very delighted with the choice of the subject even offered to share his own research paper on the book. Thus with his suggestions and a lot of discussions finally here we have the topic that we have decided to do a research on the "Importance of the Siyasat Nama and its Modern Relevance". With a humble prayer to be able to complete the research on the topic I begin my journey with the help and guidance of all my teachers, family and friends. A Special thanks to my guide Dr Sakina Khan, Head of the Department of Persian and her entire team for their help and guidance.

Blessed are those who are guided and the best of the people are the ones who have a just ruler over them. Man has tried to interpret the various laws to gain power and in his quest to become the ruler has adapted various forms of powerful posts. Thus, giving rise to the concept of a king whose word is the law for his people. When the kings were not able to do justice they looked at the other men of wisdom to help them decide. These men of wisdom noted down the various decisions of the rulers and thus originated the concept of political writings.

Political literature has fascinated man for time immemorial hence as we look over the history of humanity man has changed his religion, food habits clothing designs and even his country and region. But the longing to rule over others remained constant. The various types of political literature gives rise to a society that adapts and behaves in a particular manner that gives rise to a thought process which leads to a peculiar behavior in the society.

The earliest man grew from savage life of might is right to the formation of family and tribe and he made laws that were to become morals and ethics for the following generations of mankind. This process of law making progressed over the times to become constitutions of states of the modern times. Thus, whenever we see any law made and implemented it's a part of a human progress that has been happening form a period which is as old as history itself.

The earliest forms of laws are seen in the Achemedian empire that are reflected in the edicts of the Cyrus cylinder telling humanity to behave as a community in spite of the racial and color differences. The political laws of Plato follow as example of the fundamentals that made the Greeks the super power of the world. The trade laws of the Harappan civilization saw its growth and so is the progress of the Egyptian civilization reflected. The laws of Arthshastra of Kautaliya saw how Chanakya helped the growth of an empire based on the cause of social justice. The Siyasat Nama of Nizam ul Mulk Toosi helped a simple nomadic tribe leader to grow into one of the mightiest empires that the world has seen. Thus, reflecting the effects of correct political thoughts and fundamentals on the masses and history.

Chapter I- Rise of the Seljuque Empire in Iran

Islam as a religion rose from the 6th century and became a great power all over the known world of those times the early phase saw the first four caliphs who are termed as the Rashidun Caliphate. This period saw the followers choosing their leader as per the situation. The rule of the Quran was established and the sayings of the Holy prophet were used as guidelines or the interpretations of the Holy Quran.

A kingdom type of state was formed by the Umayyad family which saw many unfortunate events of history. The Abbasids replaced the Umayyad family on the basis of their closeness to the family of Bani Hashim i.e. the family of the Holy Prophet s.a.w.w.

The Abbasids were not far behind their choice of the dynasty rule and thus a great empire was established bringing the golden age of Islamic era. The growth of Islam as a religion and the ever increasing kingdom saw many new customs and rituals being introduced into the orthodox Islam. The new regions brought with them prosperity in terms of money and gold but as a society there was a lot of confusion as each region with it brought new religious practices and customs. This gave rise to a lot of theological differences between the existing followers of Islam. The new converts had a new zeal and approach towards the new faith as a result there were many internal and sectarian fights resulting into riots and a lot of bloodshed. Many areas declared their autonomy and we started seeing the division of the Abbasid Empire and emergence of new provincial kingdoms.

By the beginning of the eleventh century, when the Caliphate in Baghdad was going through a weak period there rose a power from the tribes of Turkey. These sons of Seljuque were to change the face of world politics and create an empire like never before, giving the world some of the best examples of being independent rulers of a large nation and yet being under the central system of the caliphate. Their art and architecture, their patronage of the literary scholars and their love for law and order made them best examples of great rulers of their times. So great was their influence on the political thoughts that they stand as examples for the modern rulers, to an extent that, their art and literature has no parallel in world history and the scholars patronized by them are held in high esteem even in the modern times.

Chapter II - Advancement of Persian literature during Seljuque period

The use of Persian language in the state affairs had started with the Ghaznavid Empire and they had great patronage for the scholars of the Persian language. When the Seljuques defeated the Ghaznavids and established their kingdom the patronage to the scholars grew and so did the use of the Persian language. In the Seljuque's period what happened was that Arabic became the language of the religious scholars and the teachings of the theology of religion and Persian was used as language of the masses and the new evolving sciences. This freedom to the thinkers gave rise to many more great revolutionary thinkers who were to matter in the course of the change of world literature which acquired new horizons in this period.

The following famous scholars of the period whose life history we shall discuss in brief and give an account of their contribution to Persian literature and how they played role in the development of the society of the times.

1. Baba Taher Hamadani	1000	1055	Sufi mystic
2. Umar Khayyam	1048	1131	Poet mathematician
3. Sheikh Abu Jaffer Toosi	0995	1067	Religious scholar
4. Imam Ghazali	1058	1111	Religious scholar
5. Hassan bin Sabha	1050	1124	Nizari sect, assassins
6. Khwaja Abdullah Ansar		1088	Sufi saint
7. Nizam ul mulk	1018	1092	administration
8. Hassan ibne Haytam	0965	1040	mathematics

Chapter III - Life and literary attainments of Nizam ul Mulk Toosi

Nizam ul Mulk Toosi was the title of the great Persian scholar of the eleventh century. He as a scholar has left behind a legacy of his vision that is reflected in his works and the systems based on his works. He was the prime minister of the Seljuques for the last thirty years of his life. This helped the Seljuques to expand their empire and make it a strong kingdom that it became. The vision of Nizam ul Mulk saw the introduction of new systems in the development of the empire and the wellbeing of its scholars. A brief look at the life of this great scholar's life gives us an insight into the development of humanity as a whole.

Nizam ul Mulk's original name is Abu Ali Hasan Ibn Ali Toosi. He was born in Toos. He was the *vizier* of Seljuque Empire. His father Abul Hassan Ali was an officer to Ghaznavids. Nizam ul Mulk received really good education due to his father's position. As well as his father, Nizam ul Mulk was also serving for Ghaznavid government. Seljuques defeated Ghaznavids in 1040 and captured the rule of Ghaznavid lands. Nizam was already working within government. Therefore Nizam ul Mulk switched to Seljuque government. Later, he became the chief administrator of the Khorasan province. Alp Arslan who conquered Ghaznavid lands, appointed Nizam ul Mulk as his *vizier*. He remained in that position until the end of Alp Arslan's reign and continued his duty in the Malik Shah's reign until he was assassinated.

He had a full authority in the government. He was also dealing with education and established Nizamiyyah Schools. These schools are considered as the first *madrasas* of the Islamic culture. They were established in Baghdad, Isfahan, Nishapur, Amol, Balkh, Mosul, Basra and Herat in the 11th century.

Here, in this chapter a brief account of his life and services as an able minister till his death will be given.

Chapter IV - An Introduction to Nizam-ul-Mulk's magnum opus, "Siyasat Nama"

The "Siyasat Nama" also called as Siyar ul Mulk is a book in which Nizam ul Mulk drew up a set of protocols for the governance of the empire called the Siyasat Nameh under Malek Shah. After administering the affairs as a vizier for Malek Shah for some thirty years Nizam ul Mulk was overthrown and impeached after he had rashly declared that his cap and ink-horn, the badges of his office, were connected by divine decree with the throne and diadem of the Sultan.

Justice is the most important virtue, and Nizam ul Mulk recommended the king hold court on two days of the week to hear complaints personally and redress wrongs so that oppressors would curb their activities from fear of punishment. Tax collectors should take only the amount due and with civility. Officers should be investigated secretly and if impropriety is found, they should be removed from office and be replaced by the learned and pious.

A ruler should be generous in his acts. Nothing is better than generosity, and kindness, and hospitality. Any peasant in need of oxen or seed should be given a loan to keep him viable. The story is told of how Sultan Mahmud, afraid that he was not handsome, was advised by Ahmad Ibn Hasan to take gold as his enemy so that men will regard him as their friend. Mahmud then became generous and charitable, and the whole world adored him.

Luqman, the Wise, noted that "knowledge is better than wealth, as you have to take care of wealth, but knowledge takes care of you". Nizam ul Mulk believed that sound judgment is better for a king than having a powerful army. Nizam ul Mulk believed it was the perfection of wisdom not to become angry at all; but if one does become angry, intelligence should prevail over wrath. The wise have said that patience is good, but it is even better during success. Knowledge is good, but it is even better with skill. Wealth is good, but it is even better with gratitude and enjoyment.

Nizam recommended having different races among the troops so that they would compete with each other to excel. He described Alp-Tegin's rise to power from a slave and page of the Samanids to a commander. He punished a page for taking hay and a chicken from a peasant without paying for it as he ordered. This made other soldiers afraid, and the peasants were safe. His justice led the winning of faith of the citizens. Thus, making the government trustworthy.

Here as an introduction we shall discuss fifty chapters of the Siyasat Nama in brief.

Chapter V – Siyasat Nama, its teachings and modern relevance

Nizam ul Mulk's Siyasat Nama was influential in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. It was mostly taken as a guide for governance but it is also a very important historical source. Therefore it is considered as a part of Islamic Historiography as well as Persian Historiography. The work became a good guidance for the emperors even after his period. Especially because he includes examples from his ancients, the historical content of the work is reliable for the next historians. His way of working with historical events or stories together with hadiths and Qur'an verses also represents the historiography of that particular period he lived. The Siyasat Nama is a book that was to inspire the political writings of the latter period. The teachings of the Siyasat Nama shall be discussed under the following heads in order to make the Siyasat Nama as the base for many a political thoughts and reasoning, as well as for future researches in the field.

1. Ethical/Moral Aspects
2. Administrative elements
3. Political factors
- 4 .Religious components
5. Any other important point as a part of Siyasat nama's teachings.

Conclusion

As the title itself suggests the summary of the research output and findings will be listed out here

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