

## The Reflection of the Common Comprehension of Iranians in the Historical Texts (3rd to 6th hijrī centuries)

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**Abstract:** The book of counsels of the ancient Iran (known as *andarznāmi*) contained the political ideas of Iranians on the principles of governance. The necessity of the knowledge and application of such idea was felt very soon in the Islamic period. Therefore, the themes of these books of counsels were used for the compilation of *Sīyar al-mulūk* (the biographies of kings). In addition, the historians of this era wrote their history books under influence of the political ideas of Iranians. The main readers of these works were the kings and rulers of that time. Most of these works were written to criticize the existing conditions and provide practical solutions and instructions for the correction of the society, ensuring the security and prosperity of the people. This research aims to study the influence of the common knowledge of Iranian society on the political management of Iranians as reflected in the historical texts of the Islamic period (from 3rd to 6th hijrī century). Moreover, it aims to find out that if such an influence was effective in the adoption of the method of their historiography. The findings of this research from the historical texts of those periods show that the historians were influenced by the common knowledge of the society, that is, the governance traditions, and wrote their history books based on the methods proportional to such an influence, that is, based on a critical method.

[Parvin Torkamany Azar. **The Reflection of the Common Comprehension of Iranians in the Historical Texts.** *Researcher* 2014;6(2):1-7]. (ISSN: 1553-9865). <http://www.sciencepub.net/researcher>. 1

**Key words:** common Comprehension, Iran, history texts, governance principles, 3rd to 6th hijrī centuries.

### 1. Introduction

Any cultural heritage remained from the ancestors is like a page from the book of the identity of human societies. The history of the motifs of pre-Islamic Iran can be used by today's Iranian people to survey their identity. The function of history in revealing the story of people is to show the continuation of human life in the course of time and create links between the gaps existing in the history of human societies.

Those, who write the history, belong to specific time and location and have their own beliefs, ideas and cultural approach. They are a member of the society, in which they live, and which has its own cultural, social and political backgrounds that is considerably different from those of other societies. Therefore, in addition to the historical data and reports of events provided by historical text, there are meanings and concepts hidden in such texts that can be revealed only by recognizing the grounds of their compilation.

Those who created the events of the history and those who reported such events are human being, who is not an unwilling creature or empty of mental background, beliefs, and experiences. Therefore, any event created by human being is based on the intent and meaningful objectives as well as written or unwritten social conventions. The common knowledge includes the practical and applied knowledge known by everyone in a society. Such knowledge has a fixed nature and substance. However, as they are a part of

the culture of a society they are updated in the course of time and along with the cultural, political, and social changes of the society.

In this research, common Comprehension has been considered the same as the social and political culture of a society. The common knowledge, i.e. a part of the culture of a society, is the original beliefs of the people of that society having its origin in an unknown point of time – mythological history. Such knowledge was subject to different changes and vicissitudes in the course of history, and developed and updated to adapt itself to the new ideas and beliefs. This caused that the common knowledge retain its validity and status among the people of the society, and be based on the values accepted by those people.

A part of the historical literature written by the Iranian historians in the Islamic era contained epic and mythological narratives that were influenced by the common knowledge of the society. Such epics and myths show the interest in idealization and modeling on their native characters and states. The appeal of the historians for myths and epics show that they were loyal to the old national ideals and desires of their people. The common knowledge encourages historians to provide models based on historical experiences and although they depict an ideal situation, such an ideality approaches the reality of the time of the historian, and can be realized in a broader level.

An important part of the literature of the pre-Islamic period including *Khudāynāmi* (history of

kings), *Kārnāmi* (the Records of Kings), and *Ahd* (Recommended of the Kings) contained the counsels of a king on the governance of their country Iran, and its use in political management for building an ideal society (1). The necessity of the principles of the governance adopted by the Iranian kings and their application in successful political management of the country was needed in the Islamic period too. This encouraged the Iranian people to revive the culture of the pre-Islamic era and adapt it to their Islamic beliefs. Such works titled *Andarznāmi* (book of counsels) were the main source for writing books during the Islamic period under the title of *Sīyar al-mulūk* (biographies of the Kings) (2). Moreover, a part of the books written during the Islamic period by the Iranian historians was allocated to this issue.

In order to reach our goal, in the present research we should search the texts of the historical texts, data and signs related to theological knowledge of historians and then they should be interpreted (Burke, 2005, pp1-37. Geertz, 1972, pp1-37). The focus of historian to specific events of the history and the process type of it can be considered as some symbol and the hidden meanings in historical texts can be considered as the result of the goal and intelligence of historians in the manifestation of meaningful symbol (Misak, 2004, p8-9). The analysis of the symbols is only possible with consideration of the knowledge characteristics of the historian and the conditions of where he was living in (Blumer, 1969, p2). A historical researcher ends to understand the history through inference of the data interpretation process based on some specific assumptions (Callinicos, 1995, p132. Look at: Weber, 1915). And the decoding pattern of Stuart Hall can be a good help in this regard (Hall, 1980, vol2, pp57-72).

## 2. The Governance Traditions of Iranian People and its Reflection in Historical Texts

The historians of the Islamic period modeled on the books of counsels (*Andarznāmi*) to criticize the conditions of their time, and provided counsels and suggestions in their books for better governance of their society. This method was adapted from Iranian books of counsels and the books on government rules of the kings. The historians and the authors of the books on the biographies of the kings (*Sīyar al-mulūk*) of the Islamic period provided examples from the historical events and characters and compared them with those of their time to teach their rulers about the correct methods of governance through the study of the history of the past events and their consequences.

The counsels given by the authors of *Sīyar al-mulūk* and historians to the rulers of their time were focused on the study of the government rules employed by the previous kings, especially those, who

were of good fame. They believed that the rulers could acquire the experiences of governing a country by reading such books, and two main objectives were achieved, that is, the security and welfare of the people, and the permanence of the kingdom. Their purpose of reflecting the common knowledge of Iranian society was to improve the political conditions of their society and promote it as much as possible to an ideal state. Their reformist ideas made them to think about their society and find the shortcomings to remove them.

*Muskūyi* introduced governance as a craft (*muskūyi al-Razi*, 1379SH/2000M, vol. 6: 322). He advised the rulers and kings to study the history of the previous kings and the correct and effective traditions of governance to find out some solutions for their problems in the administration of their affairs (Ibid, vol. 5: 158). For such a purpose, *Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī* wrote the book *Aghd al-ulā lil-mūghif al-Aalā'* for the Turkish rulers of Kerman. According to *Kirmānī*, any ruler, who lacks the traits [that he suggested], he should acquire it by hard exercise (*Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī* 1339SH/1960M: 53).

Most historians and authors of *Sīyar al-mulūk* selected the example of a successful ruler and governance from the kings of Sassanid dynasty when they wrote on the principles of governance of Iranian people. Their most distinguished example mentioned in most historical texts as the role model of a successful ruler was *Khusru Anūshīrvān*.

The Iranian historians of the Islamic period arrived at the consensus that their rulers should learn the governing principles that was common during the pre-Islamic era in Iran. Therefore, they used the content of ethical-historical texts and adapted them for their purpose. *Dīnavarī*, the author of *Akhhbār al-tivāl* (book on general history authored in 227AH) stated, "Ardashīr was a person, who organized and enhanced the traditions of kingdom; he paid attention to anything to organize the society, and provided his famous *Ahd* (book of counsels) for the succeeding kings. This was an exemplary book of counsel, which was binding upon the kings, and they observed the advices and preserved the book. This book of counsel was like a lesson for them and provided them with a perspective of their kingdom" (*Dīnavarī*, 1371SH/1992M: 45). *Balamī*, *Hamzi al-isfahānī*, *Narshakhī*, *Muskūyi*, and the author of *Tārikh-i Sīstān* (the history of *Sīstān*) were the historians who were mostly impressed by the sociopolitical ideas of the pre-Islamic Iran.

*Muskūyi*, the historian of *Būyid* era in 10<sup>th</sup> century, introduced Sassanid dynasty as a successful example in governing of the country. He stated, "[the Sassanid kings] were the great kings of Persia and the most prominent of them. It is worth to follow them in governing the country and act like them." (*Muskūyi*

*al-Razi*, 1379SH/2000M, vol. 1: 415).

*Biyhaghī* introduced *Anūshīrvān* as a role model of justice (*Biyhaghī*, 1378SH/1999M, vol. 1: 155). *Nizām al-mulk* believed that the kings of Sassanid dynasty, especially *Anūshīrvān*, were the most justice kings and emphasized that people would enjoy prosperity during the rule of a just king (*Nizām al-mulk*, 1320SH/1941M: 53).

*Ibn-i Balkhī*, the historian of *Saljūgh* period, introduced *Anūshīrvān* as a practical example of just kings of Persia and suggested his tradition of governance to his contemporary rulers. "He established rules for the governance of country, maintaining of army forces, and administration of justice among the people of the world, and no king of the kings of Persia had developed such rules before him" (*Ibn-i Balkhī*, 1343SH/1964M: 102). He believed that the king, who did not know "the traditions of Persians" (ibid: 210) was not liable for being a king.

The books of counsels and *Sīyar al-mulūk* provided typically social theories on the pillars of society and their relations and functions. The main pillars of the society included army, the subjects of the country, and treasury. There was a reasonable and inseparable link between these pillars. According to the authors of *Sīyar al-mulūk*, such a reasonable link between these three pillars guaranteed the security of society and the prosperity of people. That is, for the security, a king required an obedient army, whom salaries had to be paid punctually. The payment of salaries depended on a treasury full of money, which was supplied by the subjects of the country, and the welfare of the subjects and prosperity of the society ensured such interests. According to *Anūshīrvān*, the kingdom depends on the army, which itself depends on wealth, and wealth depends on the taxes that itself depend on prosperity, which is achieved by justice (quoted from *al-Mas'ūdī*, 1409AH/1988M, vol. 1: 297). This was exactly an Iranian social theory. Reference made in the historical text to this theory proves its origin. This was pointed out by *Ibn-i Khaldūn* in his *Mughaddami* (Prolegomena) as he attributed this theory to the Iranians (*Ibn-i Khaldūn*, 1375SH/1996M, vol. 1: 70-73).

The most important point in this theory is the role of kings in the creation of balance between the pillars of society by the administration of justice. The Muslim Iranian philosophers and the authors of *Sīyar al-mulūk*, especially those lived in the first centuries after Islam, introduced justice as an integral part of kingdom. This was an interface between Iranian and Islamic cultures. In all books of counsels and *Sīyar al-mulūk*, justice was preferred over all attributes of a king. An Ideal king mentioned in philosophical texts and *Sīyar al-mulūk* is a just king. The events that happened at that time caused that the historians allocate, like the

intellectuals, a broader meaning to the justice of a king, in such a way that the justice of a king was even preferred over the several years of worship of a hermit.

According to *Rāvandī*, justice is the distinguished and most fundamental characteristics of a king (*Rāvandī*, 133SH/1954M: 69). In addition, *Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī* cited some verses of Quran and quotations of the Holy Prophet of Islam (*Hadīth*) in support of the value of justice and the status of the just people before the God, to show that an infidel king, who is a just person, is preferred over a Muslim tyrant. He believed that, "the kingdom survives despite infidelity, but it collapses in case of tyranny" (*Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī*, 1339SH/1960M: 53). This notion was accepted by some philosophers and religious jurists, and scholastic theologians.

What is the definition of justice according to the above-mentioned texts? It is believed that political justice means conferring any individuals his own place, granting each class of society its right, and creating a balance between the constituents of a society. Although the Iranian pre-Islamic attitudes were merged with the Islamic teachings and they took therefore an Islamic form on the surface, the definitions of society and the relation between its pillars and the application of political justice administered by the kings were the same as those that were common in the pre-Islamic Iran. *Fārābī*, the Iranian Shiite philosopher provided the same definition of political justice. According to him, political justice is achieved when any person has his own place based on his talents and abilities. Their removal from the so-defined place leads to injustice and chaos in the society (quoted from *Muhājer niā*, 1380SH/2001M: 184).

This interpretation of justice was used by the historians too. According to *Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī*, politics means that the king grants the different classes of people including the people of honor and noble class, scholars, scientists, ascetics, the militaries, farmers, landlords, merchants, and craftsmen the rank and position, which they are liable to. If lack of respect is shown for the aristocrats, noble families, and scholars, this is considered as an explicit cruelty (*Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī*, 1339SH/1960M: 54). According to *Nizām al-mulk*, Justice is that the king shows moderation in the possession of properties, treats people equally, observes the traditions of the previous righteous kings, and prevent to establish any wrong tradition" (*Nizām al-mulk*, 1320SH/1941M: 56).

It was always advised by the authors of *Sīyāsāt nāmī* (the book of government) to the kings to create a balance between the pillars of the society, that is, the army, subjects of the country, and treasury. What made these pillars to act correctly was the justice of the king that established a sequential relation between

these pillars. In case of justice in the society, the result of this relation was positive, and in case of injustice and lack of correct leadership and political approach, the result was negative. Such a positive relation between the fundamental pillars of the society was not only the factor of the survival of the sovereignty of the rulers, but also the factor of securing welfare and security in the society.

The establishment of an appropriate relation between the army, subjects of the country, and treasury was on vital importance for the kings, and the management of this relation was the guarantee of the permanence of their kingdom and the country. In defining the kings and the rulers of the territories, *Mas'ūdī*, who was influenced by the political ideas of Iranians, stated that the countries and people required the kings, who were firstly pious and competent, and then insightful, skillful, just, virtuous, and politically informed to govern, and organize the management of the country, and acquire properties. According to *Mas'ūdī*, the country depends on such a king, who develops the cities, protects the borders, and decimates the enemies. Since behaving equitably survives the kingdom in the course of history (al *Mas'ūdī*: 36).

The author of *Tārikh-i Sīstān* (the History of *Sīstān*) emphasized the importance of the vital link between the three pillars of the society including the army, the subjects, and the treasury, and therefore, he recognized the role of a competent king in directing these three pillars, since if this link is weakened, "the actions are undermined and the state is collapsed" (the History of *Sīstān*, 1366SH/1987M: 277).

*Ghazālī* introduced the justice of the kings of Iran as the reason of their survival. According to him, "Iran was governed by the Magi for about four thousand years, and the country was ruled by their dynasty, they administered justice among the subjects of the country and protected them without inflicting cruelty. They developed the world by justice and equity (*Ghazālī*, 1351SH/1972M: 82). *Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī* believed, "the justice of a king is the guard of his realm" (*Afzal al-dīn Kirmānī*, 1339SH/1960M: 53).

The other practical result of the justice of the kings was the security and prosperity of their territory. A treasury full of money spent for the welfare of the subjects of the country and maintaining the army was one of the obligations of the kings. This money was used for the payment of salaries to the militaries and cultivation of wastelands in order to develop agriculture, which was a factor of the prosperity and security of the society. This was the obligation of the king to his subjects. *Tansar*, the Zoroastrian priest of *Ardashīr* era, wrote in a letter to one of the local governor, "when the subjects of the country become poor, the treasury of the king becomes empty, and the militaries are not paid, the kingdom is lost (*ibn-i*

*Isfandyār*, 1320SH/1941M, vol. 1: 27). This idea continued until several centuries after the conquest of Islam. *Unsur al-ma'ālī-i Kiykāvūs*, a king of *Ziyārī* dynasty during the late 11<sup>th</sup> century, advised his son, "while the subjects becomes obedient by force of an army, the army is maintained by the subject too, as the salaries of the soldiers is supplied by the taxes paid by the subjects, who becomes rich and prosperous by justice" (*Unsur al-ma'ālī-i Kiykāvūs*, 1285AH/1869M: 208).

The historians devoted attention to the governance traditions of Iranian kings, and described history as a complicated interaction between the different social actors and sectors. They studied the models of the relation and interaction between the triple pillars of their society in order to find an explanation for the management shortcomings of their time.

The works of the historians of that era lacks naturally the modern sociological terms and sociopolitical theories. In addition, they emphasized the role of the God in the historical events (as the reason of human's existence) and believed that after the God, the wealth and army were the two factors that could protect the solidarity of the reign. In these texts, the word '*Adl* (justice) means implicitly *tavāzun* (balance).

The first work written in the Islamic period on the governance principles was a treatise authored by *Tāhir ibn-i Hosīn* for his son Abdullah. In this treatise, *Tāhir* told his son, "Understand the letter that I have written for you, read it many times, and follow its instructions". The letter of *Tāhir ibn-i Hosīn* to his son *Abdullāh* focuses on the above-mentioned pillars of society (*Tabarī*, 1358AH/1939M, vol. 7: 165-166). According *Martensson*, *Tāhiri*, the history contains an historical analysis grounded in a theory of society as consisting of groups and institutions with potentially conflicting interests. She believes: *Tāhiri* theories about society has been active on the complex functional interact on sectors of society and different actors. (*Martensson*, 2005, pp287-331)

*Mas'ūdī* provided the criteria of the kings and rulers of territories and stated, "it is required the kings and rulers to be pious, insightful, competent, just, and politically informed to administer the affairs, organize the society, and acquire properties. When the pillars of the society are underpinned, the territories are developed, borders are protected, and enemies are defeated. Justice ensures the permanence of the state, and the world is conquered by justice (*al- Mas'ūdī*: 3).

*Isfahānī* used these criteria to evaluate the previous and contemporary rulers (*Isfahānī*, 1346SH/1965M: 185). In his historiography, *Muskūyi* devoted attention to the principles of governance exercised by Iranians. Following such

ideas, he suggested the cooperation of the army and the subjects of the country, as it was required for the survival of the kingdoms. Such cooperation was realized when the treasury was rich and there was an interaction between the pillars of the society (*Muskūyi al-Razi*, 1379SH/2000M, vol. 5: 391). As an example, he refers to the success of *Ali ibn-i Būyi* in governing the two pillars of the society, that is, the army and the people, and this was achieved by relating them to the treasury. In general, the approach adopted by *Muskūyi* had its origin in the political ideas of Iranians. He attached great importance to finance and army as the major pillars of the society. Therefore, he addressed criticisms at the economic affairs and conditions of the army. He criticized the rising prices of foodstuffs, poor economic conditions, breakout of diseases, high mortality, and earthquakes that happened during the rule of *Būyid* dynasty and caused severe damages to the property and life of people. He attributed all these severe conditions to the inappropriate management and failure of the rulers in careful planning.

In *Tārikh-i Biyhaghī*, army, subjects, and treasury have been referred so many times. According to *Biyhaghī*, when these pillars are administered correctly, everything will be correct. He explained this issue by an example: "the king and the people are like a tent which is erected by a beam and fastened to the ground by ropes and nails. The tent is the religion of Islam, the beam is the king, and the ropes and nails are the subjects of the kingdom. As the tent is pitched by the beam, a tent lacking beam will be collapsed and there will be no tent, rope, and nails anymore" (*Bayhaqi*, 1378SH/1999M, vol. 2: 515).

Like other authors of *Sīyar al-mulūk*, *ibn-i Balkhī* focused on the three factors of army, subjects, and treasury and their relations. According to him, the permanence of the kingdoms and the kings of the ancient Iran depended on the satisfaction of the army and the subjects of the country and it was achieved by observing the principles of governance. He emphasized the sequential cycle existing between these pillars and stated, "the governance is possible by means of an army, and army is maintained by money, and money is earned by prosperity, and prosperity is achieved only by justice, and this is an advice translated from Pahlavi language to Arabic" (*ibn-i Balkhī*, 1343SH/1964M: 52). He narrated then a *hadīth* from the prophet of Islam on the permanence of the kingdom of Sassanid dynasty, and pointed out the administration of justice among the people of their country (Ibid: 53) to make the king understand that justice and prosperity are the most important factors that can survive the kingdom, and they are achieved only by paying correct attention to the main pillars of the society including army, subjects, and treasury. According to *Rāvandī*, "the means of conquering the

world is money, and money is achieved by justice and politics, and the results and advantages of having these two are brought to all people" (*Rāvandī*, 1333SH/1954M: 186).

### 3. Conclusion

The common knowledge of the society of Iran, that is, the culture of Iranian society, was influenced by the pre-Islamic ideas, which brought to the Islamic period by explaining them through Islamic teachings. This common knowledge influenced the historians' attitude towards historical events. One of the most important notions brought from the pre-Islamic era to the Islamic period was the principles of governance of Iranian kings. Therefore, the historians of that time adopted the successful models of governing of the country from pre-Islamic kings and transferred it together with the common knowledge by means of comparison. The Iranian social theory of the pillars of society and the necessity of a balance between these pillars, as well as the significance of the justice of kings for the establishment of a balanced society are cultural credits that necessitate the existence of a moderate state for ensuring the interests of all individual and collective interests. This was formed in the collective conscious of Iranian society and remained up to that time.

The significance of the historical books of that era is that they offered historical experiences in the proper traditions of governance. Their interface was the attention paid to the justice, ability, and insightfulness of the rulers in the administration of justice and balance link between the pillars of society that guaranteed the security and prosperity of the society and as a result the survival of the kingdom. They focused on the main pillars of the society including the king, the subjects of the country, army, and treasury, and investigated the historical events of their time to discover the shortcomings in the society and provide solutions based on the prior experiences. They introduced justice as the most important ethical trait of the ruler that can organize the society, and believed that any problem in the society was due to the improper management and ignorance of the kings of the rules and principles of governance.

In the perspective of the historians of this era, the interaction between the pillars of society can be so organized that it protects the kingdom, and provide the people of the society with advantages. In contrast, an unorganized interaction may cause a chaos in the society and as a result the collapse of the kingdom. A correct interaction between the pillars depends on the competence and insightfulness of the king if the administration of justice.

### 4. Notes

1. *Tājnāmi* is a book containing the counsels on the rules and principles of governance and royal traditions of ancient Iran (*Muhammadi*, 1384SH/2005M: 162). *Balamī* referred to the speech given by *Manuchehr* and stated, "[manūchih] delivered a speech that is necessary for all kings to read his lecture and follow it" (*Balamī*, 1378SH/1999M: 251).

The letter of *tansar* contains important political and managerial issues of Sassanid period. This complete letter was recorded by *ibn-i isfandyār* in the book *tārikh-i tabaristān* (History of *Tabaristān*) (*ibn-i Isfandyār*, 1320SH/1941M, vol. 1: 15-41).

*Kārnāmi Ardashīr Bābakān* (the records of *Ardashīr*) is the counsels of *Ardashīr* to his son *Shāpūr* and his correspondences to the governors and public servants throughout the country (*Aīni vand*, 1377SH/1998M, vol. 1: 561; *Muhammadi*, 1384SH/2005M: 172-173).

*Mas'ūdī* mentioned a large-size pictorial book on the kings of Sassanid dynasty. In 303AH/916M, he found a book in the house of an Iranian nobleman in the city of *Istakhr*. The book was on sciences, the history of the kings, buildings, and action plans of Iranians. This book was a source of *Hamzi al-Isfahānī*.

The book of *muskūyi* is another reference that provides us with the historical texts on the history of pre-Islamic Iran. *Muskūyi* put some of these texts in his book. The speech delivered by *manūchih* is "the first known lecture" (*Muskūyi al-Razi*, 1379SH/2000M, vol. 1: 62).

*Khusru Anūshīrvān* is the speeches and self-biography of *Anūshīrvān*. This is some parts of the biography of *Anūshīrvān* and his policies, which was narrated by *Anūshīrvān* himself about his life and governance (Ibid: 188 & 204). The Author of *Mujmal al-tavārikh va al-ghisas* introduced a book titled *Bahman nāmi*, which was versified by Hakim *Irānshāh ibn-i abī al-khiyr* " (*Mujmal al-tavārikh va al-ghisas*: 92). The book *Dīvān-i Adab* was a source of ancient Iran, and it was used by *Gardīzī* as his sources.

*Sandbād nāmi* is another book written for giving counsels to the kings on the rules and principles of governing of country. This book was originally in Pahlavi language, and translated to Farsi during the rule of *Sāmānīd* dynasty. This book was versified by *Azraghī Heravī*, the poet of the 6<sup>th</sup> AH century. *Zahīrī Samarghandī* paraphrased this book in a simple language and used verses and stories for better understanding of the text. The book has one main story and thirty-three tales attributed to the main story. The purpose of the book is to teach the principles of governance. *Sandbād nāmi* is believed to belong to the Parthian era.

*Kalīli va Dmni* is another book on practical philosophy and principles of governance. It is said that

the book was originally authored in India and in Sanskrit. *Anūshīrvān* was told that there was a book of animal fables in the treasure house of India, which was required by any king for the management of his subjects, administration of justice, and decimation of enemies" (*Kalīli va Dmni*, 1347SH/1968M: 34-35). *Burzūyi*, the Physician, was sent to India by the order of *Anūshīrvān* the king of Sassanid dynasty to find the book and translate it to Pahlavi language.

2. *Nizām al-mulk* authored the book *Sīyāsat nāmi* or *sīyar al-mulūk* in 485AH upon the request of *Malikshah-i Saljūghī*. *Nizām al-mulk* stated, "[the king] ordered me to write about everything good in the biographies of the kings, what the kings had to follow inevitably, and what the kings exercised in the past and now is not fulfilled, whether considered pleasant or unpleasant" (*Nizām al-mulk*, 1320SH/1941M: 5).

The book *Nasīhat al-mulūk* (Counsels to the Kings) was written by Imam Muhammad *ghazālī-yi tūsī* upon the request of Sultan Muhammad bin *Malikshah-i saljūghī* or Sultan *Sanjar Saljūghī* in 500-505AH/1107-1112M. This book is on the religious beliefs and governance traditions, and governing of the kingdom.

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