Chapter 1
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Sayyid Ali Hamadani, popularly known as Amir-i-Kabir and Shah-i-Hamadan who in the 14th century, chose to work for the cultural transformation of the life of the people in the hilly zones of Central Asia, North and South of Pamir range to forge spiritual unity among them and to present such political ethics to them that could bring about peace not only among the kings and princes of the time but also between the rulers and the ruled. In Khulasat al-Manaqib there are references to the names of several places visited by the Sayyid such as Khatlan, Balkh, Badakshan, Shiraz Yazd, Syria, Baghdad, Turkey, Transoxiana, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Zaytoon (China) apart from Kashmir which he visited thrice and made this country the center of his Sufi and spiritual activity.

Among 117 works (big and small in Persian and Arabic languages) which Sayyid Ali Hamadani wrote on different subjects like logic, philosophy, jurisprudence, political science, ethics, Sufism and commentaries that are extant in different libraries in Iran, Europe and other countries of Asia.

Sayyid Ali is prominently credited with writing on the instance of kings and disciples, the famous Dhakhirat al-Muluk, the book of Islamic ethics, sufi thought and political theory. This book is more profound and substantial than Ahkam al-Sultania of Al-Mawardi, Nasihat al-Muluk of Ghazali and Siyasat Nama of Nizam al-Mulk Tusi.

In Dhakhirat al-Muluk, Hamadani raises a just ruler to the position of the deputy or Vice-General of Allah. He holds that Allah made it imperative
that there should be among the people a perfectly 'Adil ruler (righteous and just), who would properly discipline the activities of the progeny of Adam عليه السلام to strive to execute the decrees of the Shari’ah strictly. Like many other Muslim political thinkers, he believes that the implementation of the religious law, strengthening of Islam and faith, depends upon the Sultans (kings) and their officers. In his opinion strictness and implementation of authority are inevitable in the execution of religious law.

His thought, besides showing clarity of approach for good governance, also provides religious guidance to the rulers of his time, aiming at the revival of the Caliphal polity. Hamadani regards Adam عليه السلام as the first man who was bestowed by Allah, with Sultanate (kingdom) and Nabuwiyyah (prophethood). He regards Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم as the model of the statesmanship for entire mankind. He divides the rulers into two distinct groups:

a. Those who follow and strive to establish the ordained laws of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and Sunnah of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم dispense justice and give their dues to the people. They are the vicegerents of Allah on the earth.

b. The other group consists of the rulers who negate the ordained laws of Allah, do not follow the Sunnah of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and act according to their own wish. They, according to Hamadani are the enemies of Allah and His Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and the imposters (vicegerents of the Satan and Dajal) on the earth.

Hamadani identifies the qualifications of the ruler of the Islamic State. He clearly categorises the rights and duties of the subjects of a state and
clarifies the obligations of a ruler towards his subjects. He holds that sagacity, prudence and wisdom are pre-requisites for a ruler. Hamadani holds that there are two types of subjects in a Muslim state, the believers and the non-believers. Hence their rights and duties differ accordingly. However, some fundamental rights like, right to life and property, right to equality, right to legal defense, right to privacy, right against exploitation, etc. are shared by both the communities.

Hamadani gives a separate mandate for dealing with the *Ahl-i-Kitab* (people of a [revealed] books i.e., Jews and Christians). This mandate is composed of a set of twenty directives that are believed to have been formulated by the Caliph Umar (r.a.) on the *Ahl-i-Kitab*. He regards that it is imperative for every Muslim ruler and governor to make the covenant of Hadrat Umar (r.a.) as the basis of their treatment of *dhimis* (non-Muslim subjects).

Hamdani’s classification and explanation of fundamental rights is quite relevant to the modern world. He demands a high moral standard both from the ruler and his subjects. It is the important task of a ruler to lead his subjects to a better end and treat them with benevolence, love and justice. The ethico-political thought of Hamadani stands valid and relevant even today, as it contains elements, which are applicable universally in human society.

He presents a systematic set of fundamental rights. In his treatment of *Dhimmis*, he follows a humanistic outlook. For the maintenance of peaceful political life he not only speaks of rights but lays emphasis on duties also. In his opinion every duty pre-supposes a right and every right implies a
responsibility. In other words, there is neither an absolute right nor an absolute duty. They are closely related to each other. No socio-political system is likely to succeed if it does not bring coordination between the two.

Sayyid Ali’s thought, contains certain valid and humanistic principles, which can make the human society peaceful, dynamic, prosperous and authentic, if applied in right earnest. He speaks of the duties and responsibilities of rulers for the betterment of man and the welfare of the society. He demands them to follow the principles of justice, equality, love, kindness and benevolence and holds them responsible for the eradication of all types of evils from the human society. He makes it incumbent on the people, to abide by the ideal principles, revealed in the book of Allah and practiced by Prophet Muhammad صلی اللہ علیہ وسلام.

Hamadani, unlike other Muslim theologians, lays down criteria for legitimate kingship. Ibn Taimiyyah recognized the Sultan as the shadow of Allah and opined that even an unjust ruler was to be obeyed. Abu Yusuf, too, does not prescribe any check on the absolute power of the Caliph. Hamadani on the other hand, while defining a ruler says that a ruler who does not have a benign attitude towards the people is the “Caliph of the devil”. He stipulates two criteria for a good ruler: (i) ruling according to the Shari‘ah and (ii) a benevolent attitude towards the subjects.

Hamadani’s Dhakhirat al-Muluk was a favourite book with scholars during the pre-Mughal regime in India. This is borne out by the fact that most of the orientalist libraries contain its Manuscript copies. The copy available in
the National Museum, New Delhi, bears the seal of Aurangzeb’s *Qadi al-Qudat*, which shows that the *Qadi* had the book in his personal collection.

Translation is undoubtedly a tough exercise — tougher than perhaps producing a book in prose or composing a verse in poetry. While transferring a word from one language to another, harder intellectual labour, coupled with masterly understanding of literary technicalities may enable a threshold scholar to realize this dream. But what is strikingly significant to note is that transferring simultaneously the thought, the excellencies and the artifices is the longest part of it. When an exercise was undertaken, the present scholar had to transfer his mind, soul and body, all put together from one world to another — a huge transformation indeed. Although perfection is only for Allah but the scholar has put an all time effort to fulfill the realization of the dream of translating such big work into a language (English), which it has not been produced into, so far.

The research done by the present scholar produces an annotation and the translation of *Dhakhirat al-Muluk* (one of the finest works written in Persian by Sayyid Ali Hamadani) into English in addition to assessing the role and impact of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani in Kashmir and a review of his works.

**Relevance and Objectives of the Study:**

Scores of Academics, Teaching and Research Centers have been instituted in Iran, India, Pakistan and Central Asia in the memory of this world renowned sufi and political thinker. Besides, his religio-political and sufi thought has been the theme of dozens of national and international seminars
across the world more than one hundred books and research works have been written about Sayyid Ali in the aforesaid countries.

The present human society that has become devoid of ethical and moral values and is pathetically torn by extremist ideologies and ravaged by terror and violence, needs to be remedied by the expositions and writings of men like Sayyid Ali Hamadani. In order to make available to the human society the teachings of this great luminary of Islamic thought, his book, *Dhakhirat al-Muluk* needed to be translated into English language. This being a great contribution in the field of Islamic studies is a fresh discovery in the annals of Islamic intellectual and cultural heritage.

**Review of Literature**

In view of its wide ranging relevance for Islamic history and culture *Dhakhirat al-Muluk* has been translated into Latin, French, Turkish and Urdu languages. Mossieu Salvin translated it into French language in 1829 A.D. Again Earnest Federick and Karl Rozenlam translated it into Latin languages in 1852 A.D. and Mustafa bin Sharban Saruri translated it into Turkish language. One more translation of the book was made into Pashtoo language. In addition to the above, four Urdu translations of the book have been produced in India and Pakistan so far.

**Methodology**

The book has been translated and annotated with the help of some prominent manuscripts of the book available in India and abroad besides consulting some initial printed editions of the work. The translation has been
undertaken without distorting the basis contents of the text with the help of
classical and modern Persian and Arabic lexicons.

One of the tentative chapters in the Synopsis entitled, "A Brief Analysis
of the Contents" has been merged with the Chapter 4 of the Thesis, as it has
been discussed in the Preface of the Book and then in detail in the transated
chapters.

Inspite of all the accomplishments, it is clearly known to me that
Perfection belongs to Allah alone. This is my humble contribution not only to
the academics but it is meant for the society, which is badly immersed in
transgression and misdemeanors. I hope the work will, to some extent, prove
to be constructive and valuable in the service of the humanity.