

## **Saadi's Golestan, Anxieties and Challenges of Contemporary Human Beings\***

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### **Abstract**

Of the various literary works, which have come to exist during the centuries and civilizations, few are capable of remaining in the universal history of literature and culture. Also among these few, only finger trip has become immortal on the people's mind and memory. One might conclude that having joint humanistic concerns is a cause for the immortality of any work of art or literature. The more a literary work deals with commons, questions, subjectivities and human pains, more people will find their own feelings and "their heart word" in it. Undoubtedly, "Saadi's Golestan" can be considered one of such works.

The present study reconsiders Saadi's Golestan in terms of anxieties and concerns that contemporary human beings are encountered with. Since Saadi's strategies and techniques are based on his humanitarian experiences, wisdom and high qualities of genius, intellect and attention to readers, in many situations, it appears to be a solution for the contemporary human problems, and this is the secret to the Golestan's durability.

The research, using descriptive-analytic method and through an inter-textual and induction approach, tries to explain Saadi's humanitarian views and his strategies and techniques to respond to the contemporary human pains and challenges. According to the outcomes of the research, a great part of Saadi's sayings in Golestan is based on his humanistic views and his solutions to the social and spiritual (existential) anxieties and crises. Therefore, his teachings, surpassing the place and time, often can be a healing to the contemporary human's sufferings and a solution for his ongoing challenges.

**Keywords:** Saadi's Messages; Contemporary Human; Anxieties and Challenges; Golestan.

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## Introduction

Through human life span, besides such common concepts as wish, hope, satisfaction, grief and pain that do change in the passage of time, there appear some challenges and crises that can be obvious or hidden in the pattern of a society, proportional to historical periods and other factors of an era; challenges with unique artistic and literary capacities like aesthetic dimensions, in one hand, and capability of meaning production, on the other, which have made them the best setting for posing such issues.

Thus, within the history of Persian literature and culture, there are works that have gone beyond the levels and boundaries of their own eras and are regarded as “productive” cultural texts because of their intellectual richness as well as dynamic posing of onto-logical, epistemological and anthropological fundamentals. By

productive, we mean that they, having an artistic language, produce new concepts correspondent to the changes of every era.

Such works, created primarily as a result of reader-orientated concerns, the socialistic mind and moderate religious and humanistic world-outlook of the author, can act as a mirror reflecting desires, beliefs and realities of individual and social lives of their readers and, in fact, the Iranian society's conscience and mind.

*Golestan*, Saadi's unique masterpiece, is one of the great and reader-orientated works in Persian literature that, due to its concern for sociological rules (i.e. consideration for the temporal, positional and causal conditions), contains moral, social and humanistic messages.<sup>1</sup> In fact, through analysis of *Golestan's* content, one can draw the structural order and moral model, special to

Saadi's thinking system.

Saadi, having a reader-orientated approach, actualizes his creative ability in *Golestan* and, as he thinks universally and has messages for the people all over the world, does not speak of an unattainable world; rather he draws his words from the daily life of ordinary people and exposes his reader to a "real and sensible world" (Yusefi's introduction to *Golestan*, 1995: 30). But Saadi's sagacity and deep thinking in *Golestan* is due to anthropological bases, so it aims the pure nature of human and poses for every simple or complicated issue a cultural, moral and religious solution. Especially that Saadi offers his thoughts and viewpoints on the basis of appealing prophet-like experiences and methods. He tries to organize the order of words and meaning configuration in a way that, have fresh talks for every generation in all eras.

His attempt in creating a new school, realistically containing all aspects of life, is based on seeking for excellence, rightness, truth and deism. In Saadi's thought, spiritual relations and social connections among people enjoy originality. Therefore, he is seeking a life accompanied by success and exhilaration; far from tensions. Practical morality is obvious in his talk, and mysticism and religion connect to everyday-life (Eslami Nodoshan, 1977:578). In *Golestan*, one's eyes are opened to a world, where every human being with his unique thoughts and acts seeks the way to survive and prove himself. *Golestan* is an answer to this question: "How we can live nice, invite all people to righteousness and solve the life's problems?"

Saadi is a genius whose talent always appears in the very first look in his wonderful literary power and

its companionship with meaning inspiration. As neo-historians believe that excellent literary techniques not only are the conduct of historical conditions, but also they contribute to construct the history (Bertens, 2005:204). Saadi's talent has some other aspects; at the top is solving the paradoxical social problems such as the art of living happy and inviting others to happiness in the darkest political, social and industrial period of Iranian history, i.e. the time of Moqol invasion, sectarian, religious and racial struggles, and oppression and cruelty of the then emperors and governors. Nevertheless, this makes his works, especially Golestan, more universal and borderless:

"In the great realm of Saadi's works and his matches, universal and perpetual issues do rule. He goes from particular to the whole, and this is a characteristic of great literary

men; i.e. to draw general outcomes from minor details, events like the invasion of Mogul did not seem to them a new issue, rather they were seeking to solve basic human problems" (Eslami Nodoshan, 2004:122).

Though Saadi's works and especially Golestan are mainly rational, we are encountered also a kind of myth-orientation due to the literary elegance and style of expression. In fact, integration of form and meaning in Golestan is like archetypes that bear both emotional and semantic qualities simultaneously (see: Edgar & Sedgwich, 2009:222). It goes beyond the limits of both time and language, and concludes humanistic messages. Saadi's words are both about real life and beyond it. He lives in history and, at the same time, looks at ultra-history; he tries to connect all these to each other:

“Reading Saadi’s books, one sees a permanent connection and a coequal between wisdom and fantasy, a philosophy of sound wisdom, and a completely practical morality” (Masse, 1986:15).

He was trying to illustrate human beings besides the world, with all faults and virtues, controversies and contradictions, within an eternal discourse. So, in his *Golestan*, both the world and human being are described as they are; a right illustration of the real world with its all ups and downs and wonders (Zarrinkoob, 1985:235).

Every section of *Golestan* takes into account a “humanistic issue” in order to establish a humanistic interaction with the reader. The study of eight sections of *Golestan* proves such a claim. From this point of view, extracting Saadi’s messages about common humanistic challenges, in case of theory, would be adequate

and usual, and in the case of functionalism, would be useful and practical. Hence, his words have gone beyond borders and his fame has been spread out (Hakimi, 2006:25). Accordingly, Saadi’s *Golestan* should be considered as one of the richest sources in recognition of human common challenges. A work that does not pose only one specific nation’s problems and issues in a particular momentum of history, rather it addresses to the solution of these shortcomings. The existence of such an approach clarifies the necessity of conducting this research and the analysis of Saadi’s anthropological and epistemological outlook. Particularly, considering the fact that no research has been done so far in the realm of Saadi recognition employing this approach, such an interdisciplinary research can provide a new view to the studies of this domain.

### **Research Methodology**

The research method is descriptive-analytic on the basis of hermeneutic approach, and it tries to consider and explain Golestan in terms of Saadi's solutions to the crises of life, and provide tips for contemporary human beings in different aspects. Thus an index interpretation would be a bridge from Golestan's text to the today human's needs and concerns.

If we take into account Shelley Meyer's word that "Right understanding, operates on the basis of rules and principles whose detection and recognition can guide to meaning deduction from every text" (Palmer, 1987/ 2009:1), and also accepting these words from Gadamer that "understanding, is not, like a twinkle of lucidity, an act that we do, rather it happens to us. Understanding is the effect of history. So, hermeneutic philosophy

regards understanding as an answer to the effective history but not as a subjective behavior" (quoted by Joel Weinsheimer: 2010: 62). Then reliance on hermeneutic approach can be helpful in analyzing the text of Golestan and extracting Saadi's views about the crises of contemporary human beings. Therefore, the text of Golestan, being aligned to "Hans Robert Jauss", should be considered as an open text (see: Makaryk, 2006:39) that, according to the reader's expectation of the text, guides him in different times and historical periods to an understanding of the text. In today's literary criticism, reader's understanding of the text does not more rely on the author and his illustrated model but to the reader himself and his affections and characteristics. To the extent that Gadamer, in his phenomenological outlook, emphasizes that a literary work does not necessarily provide us

always with a concrete meaning of the world, and the meaning relies on the historical position of the reader (see Hassani, 2010:135).

### **1.Challenges and Crises of Human Beings in Saadi's View**

If we take these words of Gadamer into account that "The circle of understanding, which interpretation does occur within its frame, should contain historical position and awareness of the interpreter, contemporary time of the work and the impact of its past" (according to Makaryck 2006:128), then the meaning understood from an innovative literary text like Golestan would be based on our historical position, in which the pivotal issues of life are pain and suffering, and seeks the help of philosophical and moral thought to offer traditional and practical solutions. So, to find the pivotal issue in Saadi's outlook,

to discover solutions to the crises and also to explain his messages to the contemporary humans, as Saadi's today reader, are all practical. Thus, before starting to deal with the outcomes of studying on Saadi's thought in Golestan, we need to explain briefly the challenges of today's world and refer to their origins:

#### **1.1. Contemporary Society's Challenges and their Origins**

From epistemological and anthropological points of view, individual and social crises have always been pivotal for philosophical debates: crises and challenges like gaps between generations, tradition and modernity, identity crisis, spiritual vacuum and absurdity, authenticity of material benefit and power, suppression or death of humanistic emotions, discrimination, injustice, etc., origins of which differ

in the view of different western and eastern researchers. Since, among the anthropologists of western world, it is the Existential Anthropology and Phenomenological Philosophy that claim to find the roots of human pains and crises, then we must first describe their intellectual framework in contrast to Saadi's epistemological and anthropological views.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century existentialists, including Paul Tillich, believe that roots of these challenges are in three existential anxieties and one non-existential anxiety:

### **1. The Anxiety of being Futile and Meaningless and Epistemological and Spiritual Crises:**

“The anxiety of futility happens when some especial spiritual concepts in life are on the threat of loss. In this sense, the construction of faith is ruined by some outward or inward processes. Man feels inability

to attend in a cultural activity and feels frustrated about what he admitted before. He leaves a favorite and starts to like something else and, after a short time, leaves the second and goes to the third. Because the meaning of them all has been demolished and the creative “Eros” has been converted into aversion and distaste. Everything is experienced but none satisfies” (Tillich, 2008: 84) because “the fall of absolutism, expansion of freedom and democracy, the emergence of technical civilization and its triumph on all its enemies and then the start of demolishing itself are all sociological preludes of the third main era of anxiety, i.e. the modern era” (Ibid: 99). Human's existential self-alienation and the fall of his spiritual life must be traced back in the meaninglessness of life.

Escape from spirituality is another kind to the anxiety of absurdity and



meaninglessness that was accompanied by modern secularism and also the separation of science and knowledge from spirituality and the holy being (Nasr, 2006:11). The roots of such a view are in the epistemological - anthropological problems; means that new fangled man has fixed his knowledge on a cognition, based and relied on experiment, deduction and wisdom-based learning, contrary to the traditional man who knew his knowledge as the result of intuitive wisdom and the holiness (Ibid: 20-22). With the dominance of discursive attitude, God has changed from a comprehensible concept into an abstract one and, finally, converted into a thesis that can even be ignored. The natural world was treated as a suitable place for posing analyses of the deductive intellect, and its outcome was increasing rupture of human knowledge aligned

with complete separation of science and morality” (Chittik, 2006:2). According to such attitude, the first cause of all pains and sufferings is man’s separation from that holy being and that mysterious, great and splendid being, i.e. God. If they are sad, ashamed and unsuccessful, it is because of this separation (Malekian, 2010:19). Also Kierkegaard believes that suspension of ethics, keeping out from faith, living in contemptible levels of material pleasures are the great pains of modern human, and the main cause to fear of meaninglessness, absence of ethical and faithful heroes, and effective presence and intensity of pseudo-heroes (see: Kierkegaard, 1387/2008: 90). He believes the only way in salvation from this dialectic and tragic condition and attaining to the “being” level, is the transition from sufferings and pains to calmness by living a faithful life, i.e. attachment

to pure faith and holiness (see: Vernu & Vall, 2007:128).

### **1. Anxiety of Death and Destiny**

that always affected humans, mind and soul and made them contemplates on, and tries to release from that. Especially that “anxiety of death increases along with its fast individualization; considering the fact that people in communication-oriented cultures face to this anxiety less” (Tillich, 2007:79). The wish for eternal life, which that is frequently used in man’s mythical beliefs and these myths are recreated in new forms and themes within new stories and movies, also uncovers this anxiety.

### **2. Anxiety of Feeling Guilty and**

**Condemnation** that has the same complicated characteristics as the anxiety of losing spirituality. This anxiety begins by moral self-

awareness and can guide us toward complete elimination of the self, feeling of condemnation, and the hopelessness caused by losing our destiny (Tillich, 2007:90). The main result of this anxiety is the loss of identity and self-alienation; because man’s inability in self-analysis drags him into anxiety of feeling guilty. As Bossuet emphasizes: “On the sin he committed, while searching for himself, man became wretch when he found himself” (quoted by Unamuno, 2008: 293). William Cooper (1731-1800), the English distraught poet, due to his permanent concern for sin and eternal destiny, writes: “Maybe Hell would be a refuge for my incurable pain” (abid: 79). According to this attitude, the first cause of all humanistic pains and sufferings is the misuse of self-authority and rebellion against

God. This rebellion is known as “sin” (see: Malekian, 2010: 16-18). It is the reason for man’s loneliness in the world, as Molavi emphasizes:

Ey ke dar peikar khod ra bakhte/  
digaran ra to ze khod nashnakhte  
To be har sorat ke ayi bisti/  
ke manam in vallah an to nisti  
Yek zaman tanha bemani to ze khalq/  
dar gham u andishe mani ta be halq  
(Molavi; 4, 803-805)

According to Tillich, “these three types of anxiety are entangled to each other in a way that all the time one of them is highlighted more but all the three take part in forming the general structure of anxiety. All kinds of anxieties and their fundamental unity are existential; that is they exist in human’s being explicitly, but in human’s destruction and self-alienation implicitly.

**4. Mental Anxiety**, which is the result of probable events in human’s

life. It is a kind of existential anxiety that appears under some especial circumstances (Ibid: 105), and is considered as an illness. Challenges created by this anxiety should be classified according to two sources: individual source, which is the place where pains, sufferings and psychological crises are born. In other words, mental crises belong to man's soul but not to social relations (see: Malekian, 2010:26). In this view, all those three anxieties have existential roots. Another source is the society source that deals with wrong social relations with the authenticity of material benefit as its pivotal theme (Ibid: 28). In such societies, "individuals, while living together, are separated and compete each other, and exactly to the reason that they are separated from each other, they are also separated from the society and their interrelationships" (Coulti, 1999: 157); relations that can

be called as “the theory of contradiction and self-alienation”.

The theory of succession of needs by Abraham Maslow, American psychologist (1908-1970) who posed for the first time in 1954 in his book "Stimulation and Character" is almost in correlation to this philosophic attitude. In his view, human needs are to be met in five levels: first, physiological need to water, oxygen, sexual relation, and...; second, the need for safety that is going comes after physiological needs; third, the need for love; fourth, the need for self-respect; and fifth, the need for self-progress (Ibid: 28-29). It is clear that if social affairs are wrongly managed or if the environmental and involuntary problems disarrange the process of answering these needs, then the occurrence of anxiety and crisis will be inevitable.

## **2.1.Crises and Anxieties of Contemporary Man in Saadi's View**

### **1.2.1. Anxiety Caused by the Sense of Absurdity and Meaninglessness (Epistemic Crisis)**

Factors like disbelief in the Dooms Day, eliminating the sanctity from individual and social life (that was associated with rejecting religious spirituality), discarding myths (that could strengthen spiritual bases in society), and the world wars and their outcomes such as poverty, insecurity and feeling of despair about future, all were elements for bringing about nihilism and the crisis of spirituality vacuum in the modern era. Gadamer believes that “what somebody must learn from pains and sufferings is not this or that thing, rather it is the insight about his limitations, and absoluteness of the obstruction that disconnects human from the holy world beyond”

(narrated from Weinsheimer, 2010:61). It is clear that, sometimes, problems of life press man to the extent that if he had not have God to take refuge to, being entangled in nihilism could happen or even certainly happens. Though in his time, Saadi did not look at spirituality crisis as it exists now, and basically does not emphasize on the danger of nihilism, but he feels the danger of de-spiritualization from the society (however, in a different sense from today), such that some factors posed by Saadi might be of the same origin as contemporary crises:

**First** is the wrong of being rational:

*Everybody considers his wisdom as the most perfect one, and his children as the most beautiful. If wisdom disappears from the world over, then nobody would consider himself to be ignorant (Golestan, 175).*

According to Heidegger, the challenge that has also befallen to humanity today is "witlessness": "Today, humanity is escaping from thought. This escape is the beginning for witlessness. However, to reach such a quality necessitates man not to see and accept his brainless; even to the extent that he wants to refuse this escape" (Heidegger, 1389/ 2010: 122). He further regards the result of this escape as "escape from spirituality and spiritual insight" (Ibid: 122).

**Second**, according to a Hadith (narration) from the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) that "Poverty will result in atheism", Saadi considers economic disorder and social injustice as one basic factor causing poor religious and spiritual beliefs in a society, and he always warns about that.<sup>2</sup>

**Third**, duplicity is another factor that discards knowledge and

spirituality from the society. According to anthropologists, this is an anxiety, which is caused by “choice anxiety”. “Duplicity means to pretend that we have no authority and are forced to do what we are doing and cannot avoid doing that or even we cannot refuse the role we are. Describing different types of pretends that we commit forms a large amount of our existence and inexistence” (Warnock, 2007: 61). In Saadi’s outlook, duplicity originates from the nature of man’s knowledge, so one of the factors that cause spirituality aversion in a person is pretending to be religious, showing the lack of internalization of the spirit of religion:

- A devout man was called by a king. The devout thought that he would better to use some drug to be awakened and then the king would believe on him more. He did so but died as a result of the fatal drug:

Anke chon peste didamash hame maghz/  
poost bar poost bood hamcho piaz  
Parsayan roye dare makhloogh/  
posht bar gheble mikonand namaz  
(Golestan: 93)

*(The one whom I found full of knowledge, had a really frail body. Devotees even worship God back to Mecca, so as not to take refuge in creatures.)*

It is clear that such religious pretenders really lack knowledge and deprive themselves from that by laziness and leisure:

- It is narrated that a devout used to eat lots of food every night and read Quran completely up to dawn. A mystic heard this and said: If you eat a little amount of food and sleep the whole night, you will be more and more learned:

Andaroon az taam khali dar/  
Ta dar an noore maarefat bini  
Tohi az hekmati be ellate an/  
ke pori az taam ta bini (Golestan: 95)

*(Keep your stomach empty so as to*

*see the light of knowledge; if you lack wisdom, it is because of eating a lot.)*

**Fourth,** heedlessness and forgetting God is another factor in bringing about the anxiety of meaninglessness. To be getting used to habits and be fascinated by big wishes and also secularity are elements causing man to reject God, ending with spiritual crisis; the point Saadi speaks about clearly, warns humans about their neglect, and invites them to recover themselves spiritually:

Ey ke panjah raft u dar khabi/  
magar in panj rooz daryabi  
Khejel ankas ke raft u kar nasakht/  
koose rehlat zadand u bar nasakht  
Khabe noshine bamdade rahil/  
baz darad piade ra ze sabil  
Omar beraft u aftabe tamooz/  
andaki raft u khaje gharre hanooz  
Ey tohi rafte dar bazaar/  
tarsamat bar nayavari dastar (Golestan:52)

*(I am speaking to you who are over fifty years old but are yet asleep; you will not be lucky unless you save this short time remaining.*

*The man who died while he did not behave right will be shameful; the man to whom the coming of death has been warned but has not done and left good deeds yet.)*

Love towards God and to always remind Him as the pre-eternal beloved, are Saadi's solutions:

Vaghtist khosh an ra ke bovad zekre to  
mones/  
var khod bovad andar shekam Hoot chu  
Yones (Golestan: 187)

*(O my beloved God!) The one who is remembering you all the time are happy even if he, like Yones, is in the stomach of a fish.*

Saadi's anthropological view over the issues of life and his contemplation on individual and social life have made his texts to be full of exact psychological points, to the extent that most of his thoughts are admitted to be true according to contemporary psychology and anthropology (Eslami Nodoshan, 1976: 644); because, according to contemporary anthropological thoughts, love towards God is

considered as a necessity for knowing oneself and creating awareness and feel of freshness in life (see: Bultmann, 2006: 93-94).

**Fifth**, like anthropologists who, in their pathological view towards the dominance of technique and relativism consider these elements as the cause of relative unreliability of time, race, culture, etc. and thus the futility of truth-seeking (Ibid: 55), Saadi regards the great attachment to material life as a cause for anxiety of meaninglessness and as a result, suffering; because the lack of materiality in life would cause poverty and its existence would make man suffer of protecting it.<sup>3</sup>

In his view, extraordinary amassing wealth and tendency towards treasures will keep man busy such that not only he loses his lifetime but also misses the joyful living; perhaps to the time of death, he could not ever find the

opportunity to use all his stored wealth. Saadi's recommendation exactly reflects economic crisis and contemporary man's fear of his future:

Mal az bahre aasaayeshe umr ast/ na umr  
az bahre gerd kardane maal (Golestan:  
169)

*(Wealth is a means for the comfort of life, not the life for gathering wealth.)*

In Saadi's outlook, everything is for everyone and God has created His blessings for all, regardless of outward or inward differentiations. Thus he opposes the compile of wealth and power in some limited person's hands and depriving others. It is on the basis of such belief that Saadi says: Anybody who does not donate willingly, tyrants will grab his wealth by force:

Be rozegare salamat shekastegan daryab/  
ke jabre khatere meskin bala begardanad  
Cho sael az to be zari talab konad chizi/  
bede vagarna setamgar be zoor bestanad  
(Golestan: 93-94)



*(If you have a prosperous life, then pay attention to the poor. If you solve their problems, disasters will be void from your life.*

*If a poor asks you for charity, give him some, otherwise the tyrant will grab it from you by force.)*

**Sixth**, jealousy; this is an element that results in spiritual vacuum. To be malignant and jealous towards others is probably the result of false competition in every era and place of the world:

Shoorbakhtan be arezoo khahand/  
moqbelan ra zavale ne'mat u jah  
Gar nabinad be rooz, shabpare chashm/  
cheshmeye aftab ra che gonah?  
Rast khahi, hezar chashm chenan/  
koor behtar ke aftab siah  
(Golestan: 63)

*(Those of unfortunates wish fortunate people to lose their wealth and position*

*If bat cannot watch the world in the light of the day, then it cannot blame the great sun about that.*

*Frankly speaking, I believe that thousands of such eyes are better to be blind rather than a dark sun.)*

**Seventh**, extravagance in having material pleasures is another

problem in this sense. The high amount of materiality and, as a result, consumerism is considered as the main cause in the formation of negative outlook towards God in the view of thinkers like Nietzsche. According to Kierkegaard, living a life in which material pleasure, leisure and aesthetics are the main qualities is the basis for many contemporary cognitive crises (see Anderson, 2008: 98). Saadi's characters are mostly engaged in joyous dimension of life and have minor attempt to reach moral or even spiritual dimension. Saadi believes that ingratitude, dissipation, and not avoiding consumerism will mainly result in enmity and hatred, and one of the difficulties and challenges of contemporary human is ignorance of economic contentment as a virtue. Consumerism and ingratitude have become an uncontrollable competition for the modern man; the

element that sometimes ruins material or spiritual wealth. Saadi considers temperance in economy as a pivotal behavior:

Cho dakhlat nist kharj aheste tar kon/  
ke mikhanand mallahan soroudi  
Agar baran be kohestan nabarad/  
be sali Dejde gardad khoshk roodi  
(Golestan: 156)

*(If you have not much money, then consume less, as the sailors say: If it does not rain in mountains, even a big river (like Tigris) with a huge amount of water will dry out soon.)*

Economic contentment is a characteristic of the wit and the cause to be prosperous:

A Moroccan beggar told to Aleppian mercers: *"If you were fair and we were content with our property, then there would be no beggary around the world. (Golestan: 147)*

Therefore, Saadi knows material attachment as a pivot for every fault such as keeping out from spiritual source, and discourages man from that. As he speaks about that in the

conclusion of the parable of Greedy Merchant and the melancholia of worldliness<sup>4</sup>:

An shenidasty ke roozi tajeri/  
dar biabani bioftad az sotor  
Goft chashme tange donyadoost ra/  
ya qenaat por konad ya khake goor  
(Golestan: 117)

*(Did you hear about a merchant who fell down from his horse in the desert? He said that a greedy soul will be full just by two solutions: contentment or death.)*

In Saadi's moral model, we can find considerable resemblances to that of anthropological moral outlook. But, on the contrary to the existing moral theories that "know human the goal of morality because of his humanity itself, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, and ..."  
(Dabbaq, 1387/2008: 125-126), Saadi knows moral behavior sensible just on the basis of religious and intuitive qualities, i.e. according to the content of God. Thus he believes that while everything is temporary, then human must seek a lasting joy

and happiness; because:

*“Everything that is mortal does not deserve attachment” (Golestan: 54)*

Real joy and happiness is to gain the satisfaction of both the Creator (God) and the creature.

To gain such a virtue, he recommends practical solutions. In his attitude, charity will result in God’s contentment, and the soul of charity is to do good needs, not to have mere good appearance: “Being more handsome does not mean to be more virtual” (Golestan: 59)

Dalqat be che kar ayad u tasbih u  
moraqqa’? khod ra ze amalhayeh nekohide  
bari dar

Hajat be kolahe Baraki<sup>5</sup> dashtanat nist  
darvish-sefat bash u kolahe Tateri<sup>6</sup> dar  
(Golestan: 92)

*(What do your clothes benefit you? Take away yourself from disapproving acts; You do not need expensive hat to be blessed, instead*

*be darvish sefat and then having even a cheap hat, you will be blessed.)*

Enjoying a happy, sensible and hopeful character helps Saadi not to be unstable when encountered with ominous events of his time, but to turn into a social reformer. He believes that having no hope to the “Power” that is beyond all powers and also to an ever-lasting world that exists after this mortal limited world will cause anxiety and confusion; to have calm and hopeful soul is the best asset to bring about a convenient life. So unconditional surrender (submission) to God and accepting that what happens undesirably will increase man’s resistance in the harsh events of life and will give hope and convenience to man<sup>7</sup>, especially concerning the fact that gaining power, authority and wealth cannot be the ultimate goals of life because they do not last

forever, and are handed over from time to time like a deposit:

Che salhaye faravan u omrhaye deraz ke  
khalq bar sare ma bar zamin bekhahad raft  
Chenanke dast be dast amade ast molk ba  
ma be dasthaye degar hamchenin  
bekhahad raft  
(Golestan: 79)

*(What a long time and several generations had come to the world and went on then; as the authorities have been handed over to us from several previous generations, also it will be handed over to our inheritors.)*

One of the strategic pivots of Saadi's thought that is scarcely found among other Persian literary men, due to its difference to the monologue thinking and training system of the eastern countries including Iran, is his emphasis on dialogue and gaining dialectic knowledge. Though Saadi's language in his moral and training addressing is apparently monologue, in epistemological dimension, he emphasizes on those knowledge that are the resultant of dialogue. The

planned and structured parables of Saadi that must be necessarily based on characterization and dialogue between characters show his familiarity with the readers; as we see clearly this quality in "the controversy between Saadi and the assertive.

Another point in completing this thinking process, i.e. formation of dialectic knowledge that Saadi brings forward to contemporary man, is his recommendation on creating accurate and result-oriented basis for dialogue. In this sense, he always emphasizes on the principles of a dialectic and dual-understanding atmosphere, whether on the training level or on the social and scientific level, and knows its preparation as the sign of intellectual and social maturity of the society. In fact, one of Saadi's concerns is to form such an atmosphere in the society, as he points to this in his several parables

like the controversy between a learned and an atheist, in which the learned leaves the discussion to prove that a true dialogue necessitates equality and mutual respect (See Golestan: 129).

### **2.2.1. The Crisis of Loneliness, Identity-less, and Anxiety of Feeling Guilty and Condemnation**

The feeling of "loneliness" is one of the universal crises in the contemporary society. A more serious form of this problem is self-alienation (estrangement from oneself), not from others. In fact, not being familiar to oneself causes identity crisis. Today's industry-stricken man who has no time to have privacy with himself, gradually forgets himself and is emptied from inside. On the other hand, the restlessness in life and activities has demolished any opportunity for opening deep humanistic and

emotional relations. The outcome of such a bothering situation is a great sorrow and hopelessness that brings about severe individual and social sequences. Of course, such a status is the direct result of the unquestionable outcomes of industrial life and is clearly different from those causes in Saadi's social system that brought about "anxiety of loneliness" and "anxiety of feeling guilty and condemnation". But his anthropological understanding and nature-based cleverness in Golestan and his other works endorse this epistemological crisis in the society. Though, in his attitude, loneliness and feeling of guilty are of existential nature, however, contrary to western existential outlook, they are not because of the original sin or guiltiness of human nature, but along with the natural creation of anxiety in humans. Contrary to the humanistic anxiety, this is simply

solvable by practicing moral and epistemological principles. Now it is time to search in Golestan to find out what this ever cheerful book would have to solve our contemporary crises. In Saadi's view, the elements resulting in anxiety can be limited to the following:

### **First: Tyranny and injustice**

In Saadi's moral system, injustice is the reflection of selfish thought of rich and powerful men:

- It is narrated that a cruel man used to buy wood from the poor very cheap, and sell to the rich at high prices. A man of heart said to him:

Maari to ke hark e ra bebini bezani  
ya boom ke har koja neshini bekani  
Zoorat ar pish miravad ba ma  
ba Khodavande gheyibdan naravad  
Zoormandi makon bar ahle zamin ta  
doae bar aseman naravad

*(You are like a snake that stings every body or like an owl that digs everywhere it sits. If you are more powerful than us and can bother us, then be afraid of God. Do not behave people with cruelty to avoid the bitter sigh of the oppressed.)*

The ruler became nervous but did not pay more attention to him. Until one night his woods were completely burned out. That man of heart was crossing accidentally and saw his status. He heard that the ruler was saying to his followers: "I don't know from where this fire came to my woods." The man of heart answered: "From the broken heart of the poor..." (Golestan: 78)

### **Second: Anger and rudeness and not to be cautious towards people;**

an element that results in the anxiety of loneliness. Saadi considers bad temper as a big problem to human's soul and a suffering that beats the bad-tempered person and ends with his loneliness in the society.<sup>8</sup>

- *Agar ze daste balla bar falak ravad  
badkhoy ze daste khoye bade khish dar  
bala bashad (Golestan: 289)*

*(If the bad-tempered man goes to heaven escaping from tribulation,*

there he would have tribulation as a result of his bad behavior).

- Extraordinary anger brings about horror<sup>9</sup> and untimely favor will discard splendor. Be not that angry that people get away from you and not that calm that they become cruel towards you.

### Third: Hypocrisy and distrustfulness

- Once a devout man was guest to a king. When they began eating food, the devout ate less than he used to eat. Then in the time of pray, he said more prayers than he used to say in order to make king and others think he is a man of God.

Tarsam naresi be Ka'be ey a'rabi  
kin rah ke miravi be torkestan ast

*(I am afraid you do not reach the main goal because the way you are going is wrong.)*

When he came home, he asked for

food. His clever boy said: "In the temple of the king, didn't you eat enough food while you were his guest?" Father answered: "I ate less in his presence so as to gain a better prestige". The son said: "Say those prayers once more, because it was not a prayer for God".

Ey honarha nahade bar kafe dast/  
eybha bargrefte be zire baghal  
Ta che khahi kharidan ey maghroor/  
rooze darmandegi be sime daghal?  
(Golestan: 88-89)

*(I am speaking to you, who show your virtues to people hypocritically and hide your faults from their eyes: What will you earn with such a conduct in the day of resurrection?)*

### Fourth: Stinginess and malevolence

- I have heard about a rich man who was famous because of stinginess as Hatam Taii was famous for his forgiveness. He was apparently very healthy with lots of worldly bounties but intrinsically he was stinging to the extent that he could not forgive even a little amount of food ... I heard he was traveling

with ship through the Red Sea to go to Egypt. There was a storm in the sea and...

Daste tazarro' che sood bandeye  
mohtaj ra/  
vaqte doaa bar Khoda, vaqte karam  
dar baghal

[It is quoted that] he had poor relatives. [After his death], they became rich, using the rest of his wealth. I saw one of them during that week, riding a horse and a slave running after him. Because of our old familiarity, I came to him and said:

Bekhor ey nik sirat sereh mard/  
kan negon bakht gerd kard u nakhord  
(Golestan: 117-118)

**Fifth: The opposition between generations** is another element in fading the emotional atmosphere, feeling loneliness, and losing identity. This social disaster is mainly the result of false social interrelationships and cultural metamorphoses. In the sixth section

of his Golestan through some parables, Saadi speaks about such opposition and danger of losing identity, like this parable:

- Once upon a time, I was a guest in an old man's home in Diyarbakir (today in Turkey) who had lots of wealth and a handsome son. One night he said: "I have had no other kids in my life except this little son. There is a shrine tree in this area and people go there to ask for their requests to God". I spent long nights at this tree crying; finally, God gifted me this child." I heard his son, whispering to his friends: "I wish I could know where is that tree, to go there and ask God to make my father die". So the man was content with his son that he is a wise boy, and the son uttering that his father is too old.

Salha bar to bogzarad ke gozar/  
nakoni soye torbate pedarat  
To bejaye pedar che kardi kheyr?/  
Ta haman cheshm dari az pesarat  
(Golestan: 151)

*(Even after several years, may you*



*not go upon your father's grave (to remember him and pray for him?)*

*What have you done for your father's blessing through these years, to expect the same from your son?)*

**Sixth: Ignorance and lack of insight:** As Saadi, in many parables, emphasizes that in an allegorical approach, like the following:

- A man had eyesore. He went to the veterinarian for treatment. The veterinarian poured what he used for animals in his eyes and he became totally blind. They came to someone to judge between them. The judge said that the blind man cannot blame the veterinarian, because he is as stupid as a donkey for going to a veterinarian to treat his eyes. His aim was to emphasize that you must not concede a great job to somebody who is amateurish, with the remorse, all but wise is attributed mindedness out:

Nadahad hooshmande rooshan ra'y/  
be foromaye karhaye khateer

Booryabaf agarche bafande ast/  
nabarandash be kargahe harir  
(Golestan: 160)

*(A wise man does not concede great job to an ordinary man. A tailor who weaves mat has no way to a silk sewing workshop.)*

**Seventh: Impatience and intolerance in facing with opponents**

- Galen saw a stupid person who was beating and misbehaving a learned man. Galen said; "If that man was a wise man, then he would not have been quarreled to that stupid".

Do aqel ra nabashad kin u  
peykar/  
na danaee setizad ba sabokbar  
Agar nadan be vahshat sakht  
gooyad/ kheradmandash be  
sakhti del bejooyad  
Du sahebdel negah darand  
moe/ hamidoon sarkesh u  
azarmjooee  
Vagar bar har do janeb  
jahelanand/  
agar zanjir bashad bogsalanand  
Yeki ra zeshtkhooee dad  
doshnam/ tahammol kard u goft  
ey khoob farjam  
Battar zanam ke khahi goftan  
ani/  
ke danam eybe man chon man  
nadani  
(Golestan, 129)

*(The two wise men do not*

*quarrel, and a wise will not quarrel with a stupid; if the stupid speaks impolitely, then the wise answers calmly.)*

**Eighth: Hurry in doing affairs, especially in speaking**

- Someone who interrupts the other's word is known as an element causing separation and also a stupid person.

Nadahad marde hooshmand javab/  
magar angah kazoo konand soal  
Garche bar haq bovad farakh sokhan/  
hamle da'viash bar mahal konand <sup>10</sup>  
(Golestan, 186)

*(A wise man does not answer until being asked. The words of a talkative person, though being right, are accused of being impossible.)*

**Ninth: Discrimination in social act**

Today's hasty man has problems in establishing communication with himself, others, and God; because he has lost his previous moral principles and has not replaced them with new and suitable model. The moral principles of a society are mainly under the influence of its culture and

world outlook; however it seems that there are some issues admitted and believed in all societies. Maybe we can name such moral principles as general morality; a point on which also Saadi emphasizes: Like the story of a prince who was short and ugly, while having handsome and tall brothers. His father, the king, used to behave him with humiliation and discrimination. Then there happened a battle, he became the commander of the army, and defeated the enemy splendidly" (See Golestan: 60).

**Tenth: Exaggerated individualism (selfishness)**

In today's world in which most of people are entangled in their greediness, self-desires are become confused with other's wishes. In contemporary thought, these kinds of contradictions justify individual freedoms on the basis of "laws".

Laws that have been themselves written by human and mostly have inner contradictions. Of the most important crises of contemporary human are "individualism" and "selfishness"; that is paying too much attention to ones' self and fainting gratitude and losing the sense of generosity. Today, love is not considered as a divine blessing but a kind of emotional trade. Saadi who is the poet of love and emotions, rejects individualism and prefers social benefits to individual benefits. If he recommends something, he looks to the society as a first concern and to individual as a second. He believes in gratitude, tolerance, politeness and generosity towards others, and suggests that anything contrary to these virtues would cause the anxiety of guiltiness:

- I have heard of an emperor who had a whole night of pleasure as saying:

Ma ra be jahan koshtar az in yek dam nist/  
kaz nik u bad andishe vo az kas qam nist  
(*I have never ever been as happy as  
I am now, because I have no  
suffering and no one has suffering  
either.*)

A poor and almost naked man,  
sleeping outside in cold weather,  
hearing this, said:

Ey anke be eqbale to dar alam  
nist/  
giram ke ghamat nist, ghome ma ham  
nist? (Golestan, 67) <sup>11</sup>

(*If you, who are the most fortunate  
in the world, have no suffering, why  
don't you even think of our  
sufferings and pains?*)

Through an inter-textual look to Golestan, the influence of antecedents' moral and mystical works is clear; for example, in Qoshirie Treatise, we read the same concept as in Saadi's work: Joneid said: "*I am asking forgiveness of God for thirty years because of a gratitude.*" I said: "What for?" He said: "Baghdad caught fire and somebody informed me that my shop had not burnt and I appreciated God for that; but I am sorry for that

appreciation for thirty years because I preferred myself to other Muslims (Qoshirie, 2004:31).

Saadi believes that such selfishness is solvable to some degree through a humanitarian view- on which contemporary anthropological view certainly emphasizes as well. An element that we can name it: "*Love to humanity*" or "*Humanitarian love*". Love towards humanity needs to refuse national or territorial blinkers, admitting political and socio-economical equality of all human beings, converging customs and habits of life, and forming a more humanistic and united education system. This kind of life is increasingly seeking for universal peace" (Scheler, 1388: 124). Thus it contradicts those kinds of superior and hierarchical feudal models of life.

The difference between Saadi's humanitarianism and humanistic humanitarianism- to which August

Komte was claimer of founding- "is not to place man in the position of the Great Existence" (Ibid: 125) but love to the generosity and respect of those human beings who have the same clean nature:

Bani adam a'zaye yekdigarand/  
ke dar afarinesh ze yek goharand  
Cho ozvi be dard avarad roozegar/  
degar ozvha ra namanad gharar  
To kaz mehnat digaran bighami/  
nashayad ke namat nahand adami  
(Golestan, 44-45)

*(All human beings are parts of a whole body; when a part begins to be painful, then other parts become inconvenient.*

*If you do not concern about others pains, then you do not deserve the name of human.)*

So, Saadi's humanitarian love does not completely resemble existential humanitarianism that is a protest against nationalism and refusing it, and also revolt against every kind of systematic community; rather it is a theocentric love; because human is a gleam of God's light and also a mirror to His beauty and splendor. Optimism

towards other people and not just concerning oneself, not only is the basis for Saadi's humanitarianism, but also, in his view, is the main factor of being a human (See Golestan: 159).

### **Eleventh: Scientific pride**

One cause of man's loneliness, especially after modernity, is the pride resulting from technology and scientific progresses. One important solution does Saadi recommend that can be effectual to contemporary crises as well is to avoid false pride resulting from gaining knowledge. Saadi notifies intelligently that an individual can not learn all sciences. Therefore, in order to gain knowledge and raise one's level of understanding, there is no way unless to sit in by scientists and experts. So, to raise knowledge and insight, one should co-operate with other people. Here, Saadi points to the word of Imam Mohammad

Qazali, the figure to whom Saadi used to pay much scientific and moral respect (Movahhed, 1999: 52): "Someone asked Imam Mohammad Ghazali: How did you attain to such a level in sciences? He replied: Everything that I didn't know, I was not afraid to ask about."

Bepors harch nadani ke zolle porsidan/  
dalile rahe to bashad be ezze danaee  
(Golestan: 185)

*(Ask about everything you don't know, and then the prostration of questioning will guide you to the glory of knowing.)*

In a society, where indolence and laziness are dominant, then people would not have enough knowledge about most issues of individual and social life; or even if they have knowledge, they would not act that due to many barriers and limitations. Thus, in such societies, there is not seen any great material and spiritual progresses. People in such societies mainly resemble a compile of stored

information, whose information is burned, useless or out-of-date. In this sense, Saadi believes the knowledge that is not acted, is useless<sup>12</sup>:

Elm chandan ke bishtar khani/  
chon amal dar to nist nadani  
Na mohaqqeq bovad na daneshmand/  
charpae baro ketabi chand  
An tohi maghz ra che elm u khabar/  
ke baro heyzom ast ya daftar  
(Golestan: 170)

*(If you gain more and more knowledge but do not act that, you are a foolish. An animal that carries some books is not an investigator, nor a scientist. How a donkey can understand what is it carrying; wood or a notebook?)*

In Saadi's view, useful knowledge is humanitarian knowledge. Having such knowledge, man is free from selfishness and can attain to love and like others:

Sahebdehli be madrese amad ze  
khanegah/  
beshkast ahde sohbate ahle tariqe ra  
Goft: Mian alem u abed che farq bovad  
/  
ta ekhtiar kardi az an in fareeq ra?  
Goft: An gelime khish bedar mibarad ze  
moj/  
vin jahd mikonad ke begirad ghareeq ra  
(Golestan: 104)

### **Twelfth: Having unfair judgment and superficial outlook**

The anxiety of feeling guilty and self-condemnation is the result of unfair judgment. Fair judgment is possible through avoiding emotional orientations. To avoid unfair judgment, one should first be free from exaggerated friendship or enmity. According to Saadi, avoiding friendship and enmity will result in a fair judgment:

Kasi be dideye enkar agar negah konad/  
neshane soorate Yusuf dahad be  
nakhoobi  
Vagar be cheshme eradat negah koni  
dar div/ fereshteat nemayad be cheshme  
karrobi  
(Golestan: 133)

*(If you are full of enmity, even the attractive face of Josef will be an enemy to you. And if you look at a monster friendly, he will seem like an angel.)*

In the view of Saadi, a right judgment not only requires avoiding friendship and enmity, but also reliance on sensibility and avoiding

one-dimensional outlook. It is clear that, in this view, a fair judgment is one in which the two sides of the quarrel can speak about their reasoning. As in “The controversy between Saadi and the assertive”, he intentionally narrates a discussion, whether real or unreal, to pose this issue and gradually invite the reader to contemplate and then to be fair.

### 3.2.1. Anxiety of Death and Destiny

Thinking about death is an issue that has engaged human’s mind from the very beginning of the history. Man's doubt about annihilation of life has limited his tendency towards living. The wish for eternity or desire to commit suicide is both the result of such doubt on the philosophy of existence and its end; as Molavi points to that:

Az koja amade am, amadanam bahre  
che bood? Be koja miravam akher,  
nanomae vatanam

Considering the difference that

suicide comes from hopelessness, and desire for eternity does originate from epistemological sources and taking refuge to God: “Believing in God's words means to avoid any humanistic security and consequently, to overcome the hopelessness caused by the effort in finding security; an effort that is always useless” (Boltman: 2006:53).

The fear of being anonymous and not having a name and fame<sup>13</sup> after death is another kind of anxiety of death and destiny: “One great sensation and concern within us is that we try to protect our name, fame and remembrance.” According to Torah, it is from this sensation that envy is born; a feeling that begins the first crime of the history of humanity: The murder of Abel by his brother Cain. Their quarrel was not for food, but for making their name eternal. Envy is thousand times more frightening than hunger;

because it is the hunger of soul. If life's ordinary difficulties like the need for food were solved immediately, then the Earth would become a hell; because it would become a field for survival of names and fames<sup>14</sup> (Boltman, 2006: 93). As "Rodrigo Arias" (a dramatic hero of the Spanish dramatist, Gillian De Castro (1569-1621), after his quarrel and victory against Don Orzunas De Luara, while he himself was dying too) cries: "I will die but my name and fame will be eternal" (quoted by Onamono, 2009: 93).

In Saadi's teachings, anxiety of death and destiny is created from two considerable views:

**First, it has an existential nature,** and has origins in human's inner nature; like Saadi's concern for leaving a good name and fame (that is, indeed, one of the many reasons for writing Golestan); as Saadi emphasizes this point:

Dolate javeed yaft hark e nekonam zist  
kaz aqabash zekre kheyr zende konad nam  
ra (Golestan: 55)

*(Everyone who lived well would be eternal, because after his death, he is remembered for his good acts and then his name will be eternal.)*

In his attitude, the anxiety of death and destiny will have a fortunate end, if one takes refuge in God and has moderation in hope and fear; a belief that is the result of his religious attitude.<sup>15</sup>

**Second is outward source;** it means that, sometimes, the anxiety of death and destiny originates from the society and its social and political relations. Since the fate of today's affairs and people is assigned on the frame of internal and external politics. Institutions and public relations are directed towards social approaches and behaviors. Economy, family, social classes, judicial and legal issues, relations



between individuals and generations, and... are all subsystems of public policies.

Saadi, several centuries ago and according to the governmental system of his time, intelligently speaks about this outward element, especially in the first section of Golestan (i.e. "On the behavior of kings").<sup>16</sup>

In his attitude, through training a sagacious farsighted generation, we can help to treat (remove) this anxiety; as he says in the parable of the teacher who taught a prince and was very strict to him and even beat him, and then was reprimanded by the king for such strictness:

“Why don’t you behave the sons of peasants as strictly as you behave mine?” The teacher answered: “Because, generally, all people should speak and act in a rational manner, especially the kings, as everything they do, will be

immediately spread over” (Golestan: 251).

Prudence in social and political relations is one of Saadi's solutions to anxieties caused by social life. Speaking about interactions between individuals and also between societies, he prudently recommends a friendly manner, but meanwhile believes that, facing with enemies, one should not be careless and regard them as small and unimportant:

Dani ke che goft Zal ba Rostam gord?/  
Doshman natavan hagir u bichare  
shemord  
Didim basi ke abe sarcheshme khorad/  
chon pishtar amad shotor u bar barad  
(Golestan: 62)

*(Do you know what did Zal said to Rostam? He said you should not consider your enemy as poor and unimportant.*

*Though we have seen them many times drinking water from this river, but if they could come nearer, they would take away our camels with the goods on them.)*

It is clear that such an advice is

practical, even in the contemporary political and social relations between governments and countries. On the other hand, Saadi warns about making a friendship with those who have relations with your enemies; because it is sensible that your secrets be overlaid from your enemies (See *Golestan*: 172).

### Conclusion

*Golestan*, having an educational nature and being reader-oriented, is full of Saadi's pathological views and his intelligent and humanitarian solutions to individual and social problems. Since, explaining humanistic concerns is not limited to a specific time or place, so Saadi's *Golestan* is capable of interpretation nowadays. Therefore, conclusions of this research can be summarized as follows:

1. In a hermeneutic approach to *Golestan* and also comparing

between Saadi's views and contemporary moral theories like anthropological and existential moralities, we can conclude, more than every other time, that Saadi is not only a moral teacher, but also a skilled psychologist and anthropologist; because his existential attitude towards social crises and challenges is not so different from that of contemporary existentialists who have mainly existential and intrinsic moral concerns. Nevertheless, Saadi's moral model conforms to the Islamic model in which the prosperity and freedom of human beings depend to God's contentment and reliance to Him.

2. Like moral anthropological outlook, social crises, in the attitude of Saadi, originate from three existential anxieties: anxiety of feeling guilty and condemnation, anxiety of meaninglessness and lacking insight, and anxiety of death

and destiny. However, in his view, there is a dual relation between formation of inward and outward crises. It means that lots of crises happened in societies are the result of human's inward disorders and his eternal existential anxieties, and sometimes, training cannot change the wrong basis of incapable people. Then psychological and behavioral acts resulting from those wrong bases will cause false behaviors like injustice, greediness, envy, tyranny and cruelty, pretending, and so on, especially from those who have power and wealth. All of these may cause and increase existential anxieties.

3. *Anxiety of feeling guilty and condemnation*- that all the time exists within human because of his authority in doing and acting. In the attitude of Saadi, this anxiety does not originate from the first sin of Adam, or the pessimistic

anthropological view of thinkers like Schopenhauer who believes that man is a wicked creature. Rather it is mainly the result of individual acts and social relations, in both individual and social levels. In his view, feelings of guilty and condemnation while having an existential origin are formed because of training, style of thinking, and social relations. Hypocrisy and distrustfulness, tyranny, selfishness, squandering and wasting, greediness, opposition and gap between generations, stinginess and malevolence, and scientific pride are all factors to bring about this anxiety. Contrary to humanistic anxiety, Saadi believes that the following actions can be the remedy: acting moral principles and abstinence, humanitarian love, temperance and moderation, tolerance, avoiding unfair judgment, and earning useful and applied

knowledge.

4. Saadi had no discussion on the crisis of absurdity (nihilism), because such an issue did not exist in his time or, at least, his educational and moral view was an obstacle to think about such an issue within himself and also foreseeing it for the next generations. Nevertheless, he had an emphasis on the danger of meaninglessness and eliminating insight in social behaviors. Impiousness, ignoring and even eliminating God from daily life, behaving hypocritically to reach material aims, authenticity of material pleasure and economic injustice are elements of the anxiety of meaninglessness and loneliness. Saadi believes that Theocentrism, virtuousness, moral living, attention to dialectic ethics and tolerating the view of opponent are among the solutions to such a crisis.

5. In Saadi's attitude, anxiety of

death and destiny can be considered from two viewpoints: the first one has an existential nature and originates from human nature; like the concern about name and fame after death, which is indeed one of Saadi's reasons for writing *Golestan*. In his attitude, the anxiety of death and destiny will have a fortunate end, if one takes refuge in God, and follows moderation in hope and fear. The second one has an outward origin. It means that, sometimes, the origin of the anxiety of death and destiny is in the society and its social, political relations and selfishness in economics. These problems, according to Saadi, will be solved by paying due attention to and being precise in having rightful relation with others, educating a sagacious farsighted generation for administrating the country, being prudent in international relations, preferring other's (public's) benefit,

to one's own interests, and most importantly, taking into account God's contentment in economic relations.

### Notes:

1. However, in this sense, we sometimes face reduction-oriented views like that of Ali Dashti, who believes that Golestan has no moral system, and compares it to a "Jong" or "Kashkoul" (see Dashti, 1977: 246).
2. Ey gereftare pay bande ayal degar azadegi maband khiyal
3. Ghame farzand u barg u jame vo qoot bazat arad ze seyr dar malacoot.
4. Agar donya nabashad dardmandim vagar bashad be mehrash paybandim
5. Balaii zin jahan ashoobtar nist ke ranje khater ast ar hast var nist.
6. As in the parable of "Son of reach man and son of poor" (Golestan, seventh section, parable number 18):
7. Marde darvish ke bare setame faqe keshid be dare marg hamana ke sabokbar ayad
8. Van ke dar dolat u dar ne'mat u dar asani zist mordanash zin hame shak nist ke doshvar ayad
9. Be hame hal ke ze bandi berahad behtar az hale amiri ke gereftar ayad (Golestan: 162).
10. "Baraki": is a kind of cheep hat made from the wool of camels, and "Tatari" was an expensive hat (See Yusofi, 1989: 336).
11. "Tatari" means from Tatar: The name of a Mongolian tribe, people of which were wild, yellow in skin and inhabitants of northern Asia (Ibid: 336).
12. As he writes:
13. Gar bihonaram u gar honarmand lotf astomidam az Khodavand
14. Uo chareye kare bande danad chon hich vasilatash namanad
15. Saadi rahe ka'beye reza gir ey marde Khoda dare Khoda gir (Golestan:108)
16. See: Askari, Ali, 1387/2008; "Affection, tolerance, severity, and violence in Saadi's works (Rokhsare Andishe Collection of Articles) Tehran: The Research Center for Persian Language, page 382.
17. Here, "horror" means loneliness, isolation, scare and hatred (see: Yusofi, 1989:441).
18. Since Saadi believes that being expertise on discourse is necessary for conveying meaning and moral advices, so he constantly emphasizes on "considered speaking": "If you know something will become apparent to you soon, then have no hurry to ask about that,

- because such an action even causes a king to be less respected" (Ibid: 185):
19. "I have heard that a sage had said once: "No one admits his ignorance, unless he who interrupts a speaker."
  20. Sokhan ra sar ast ey kheradmand u bon mayavar sokhan dar miane sokhan
  21. Khodavande tadbir u farhang u hoosh nagooyad sokhan ta nabinad khamoosh (Golestan:130)
  22. The following parable is also of the same kind:
  23. I think about the reproaches of enemies who, in my absence, ridicule me and consider my attempts on my family to be distrustful:
  24. Mabin an bimorovvat ra ke hargez nakhahad did roye nikbakhti
  25. Ke asani gozinad khishtan ra zan u farzand bogzarad be sakhti (Golestan: 70)
  26. Unfaithful learned is like a blind man with a lighter in his hand; he guides, but he himself is not guided (Golestan: 286).
  27. They asked: "What does a deedless learned look like?" He answered: "Like a bee that does not "make honey." (Golestan: 301)
  28. From psychological point of view, we can consider the anxiety of name and fame as one of the important concerns of great literary figures of Iran; as Ferdowsi's biggest anxiety in Shahname, along with his concern for re-establishing national identity and fighting national self-neglect, is that he fears for his name and work not to be eternal (His beginning poets are repeatedly contain the word "name"):
  29. Be **name** Khodavande jan u kherad kazin bartar andishe bar nagzarad
  30. Khodavande **nam** u Khodavande jay Khodavande roozi deh e rahnamay
  31. Khodavande keyvan u gordan sepehr forozandeye mah u nahid u mehr
  32. Ze **nam** u neshan u goman bartar ast negarandeye bar shode peykar ast... (Ferdowsi, 1378:17)
  33. And his obvious reference to the eternity of his name and work, after writing the work and dedicating it to Soltan Mahmood Qaznavi, is an evidence for this:
  34. Cho kodak lab az shire madar bashost ze gahvare Mahmood goyad nokhost
  35. To niz afarin kon ke goyandeei bedo **nam** e javid joyandeei (Ibid: 26).

36. From anthropological point of view, this can be an emphasis on the anxiety of name and fame in Ferdowsi; an anxiety that exists in his mythical heroes as well.
37. If we look at the poems of Hafiz, from this point of view, we can find some parts, like the following line, that shows his existential anxiety for name and fame too:
38. Az nang che gooi ke mara **nam** ze nang ast / vaz **nam** che pors ke mara nang ze **nam** ast.
39. In his Mathnavi, also Mulana points to the concern for name after the concern of food:
40. *Adami avval hariese nan bovad zan ke qoot u nan sotoone jan bovad*
41. *Chon be Nader gasht mostaghni ze nan asheghe **nam** ast u madhe shaeran (Molana, 4: 608-610).*
42. 15- The following parable can be a proof to such a claim:
43. Somebody came to Egypt's Zonnon and said: "I am serving the king by day and night; I hope for his favor, and fear of his anger towards me. Zonnon cried and said: If I could worship God as you worship the king, I would become one of the righteous men to God."
44. Gar naboodi omide rahat u ranj paye darvish bar falak boodi
45. Var vazir az Khoda betarsidi hamchenan kaz malek, malak boodi (Golestan: 80).
46. Like this parable:  
A Greek emperor had an illness. Physicians, in a consensus, declared that the illness has no remedy but one, that is to find the gall bladder of a person with especial characteristics. The emperor ordered to find the man. They found a guy who was son of a peasant and had those characteristics. The emperor called the parents and presented them with lots of wealth. On the other hand, the judge issued the *Fatwa* that there is no problem to sacrifice a peasant to treat the emperor. The young guy then looked towards the sky and said: "Parents do love their children, but my parents ignored me because of the wealth the emperor gave them. Then every one who has a complaint goes to the judge; but the judge has sentenced me to death and the

emperor is doing the job. Now there is no option left except taking refuge to God” (Golestan: 75-76).

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## گلستان سعدی و اضطراب‌ها و بحران‌های انسان معاصر\*

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از میان آثار گوناگون ادبی که در طول عمر تمدن‌های دیرپا و طی سده‌ها پدید می‌آیند، تعدادی اندک قابلیت ماندگاری در تاریخ ادب و فرهنگ جهانی را می‌یابند. از همان‌ها نیز تنها آثاری انگشت شمار با جاودان شدن در ذهن و حافظهٔ مردمان بختیار می‌شوند. شاید بتوان گفت، دربرداشتن دغدغه‌های مشترک بشری، یکی از اسباب ماندگاری هر اثر ادبی یا هنری است؛ هرچه اثر ادبی بیشتر به مسائل و مشترکات یا ذهنیات و رنج‌های انسانی بپردازد، مخاطبانی بیشتر با آن احساس همذات‌پنداری پیدا می‌کنند و «حرف دل» خویش را در آن می‌یابند. بی‌گمان «گلستان سعدی» را می‌توان در زمرهٔ این آثار به شمار آورد.

این پژوهش، گلستان سعدی را به لحاظ مسائل و دغدغه‌هایی که انسان معاصر نیز با آنها دست به گریبان است، بازخوانی می‌کند. از آن جایی که راهبردها و راهکارهای سعدی بر تجربیات انسان شناسانه و ساحت‌های متعالی ذوق و فکر و مخاطب‌محوری وی استوار است، در بسیاری مواضع هنوز هم راهگشای امروزیان به نظر می‌رسد و این رمز مانایی گلستان است.

این پژوهش، به شیوهٔ توصیفی - تحلیلی و با تکیه بر رهیافت هرمنوتیک، کوشیده است، نگاه سعدی به دغدغه‌ها و بحران‌های فردی و اجتماعی و نیز راههای برون رفت از آنها را واکاوی نماید. مطابق نتایج این پژوهش بخش اعظم بیانات سعدی در گلستان، مبتنی بر نگاه انسان‌شناختی او و ناظر بر حل بحران‌ها و اضطراب‌های وجودی (اگزیستانسیال) جامعهٔ انسانی است، از این‌رو، آموزه‌های او با گذر از محدودهٔ زمانی و مکانی عمدتاً می‌تواند پاسخگوی رنج‌ها و چالش‌های انسان معاصر نیز باشد.

واژگان کلیدی: اضطراب و بحران، انسان معاصر، پیام سعدی، گلستان.

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