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Bashiri's Working Papers on Central Asia and Iran

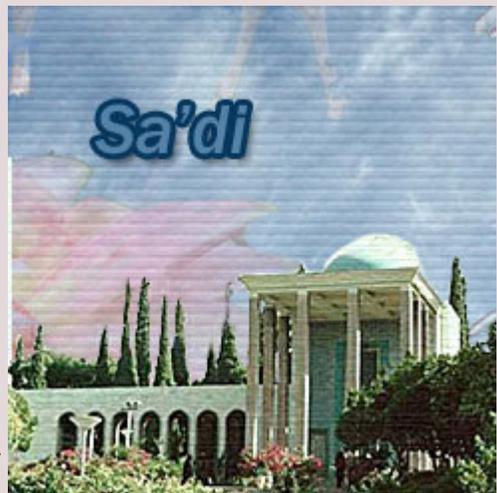
<http://www2.irib.ir/occasions/sadi/sadien.htm>

About Us:

As the site of irib (Islamic Republic of Iran's broad casting) was launched in 1998 (1377 solar year) the section called "Occasions " (as the part of the site) was activated seriously and began to create web pages on the following issues: Religion, nationality, politics and society...

(What is taken from Bashiri's Working Papers is color coded in red):

A new height in Persian lyric poetry is reached in the thirteenth century with Sadi, a versatile poet and writer of rare passion and eloquence. He holds a position in Persian literature, in terms of the power of expression and the depth and breadth of his sensibilities, comparable to that of Shakespeare in English letters. His sparkling *ghazals* display a youthful love of life and passion for beauty, be it natural, human, or divine. Sadi's dexterous use of rhetorical devices is often disguised by the beguiling ease of his locution and the effortless flow of his style; his masterly language has been a model of elegant and graceful writing.



Poet, prose writer and thinker, Muslihuddin Abu Muhammad Abdullah ibn Mushrifuddin Sa'di, also referred to as Shaykh Sa'di and Sa'di Shirazi, was born in Shiraz in or around 1200. He died in Shiraz in or around 1292 of old age. Little is known about the formative years of the poet's life other than that his father, Mushrifi Shirazi, was a religious man and of a religious persuasion.

Sa'di's Education & Trips

Sa'di completed his early education in Shiraz. Sa'di left Shiraz for Baghdad where

he could study the Arabic language, Arab literature, hadith, the Qur'an, and commentaries on the holy book at the Nizamiyyah Academy. **Once his education was complete, he left Baghdad and until 1256, traveled extensively in the Middle East, especially in Syria, Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, and Abyssinia and in the eastern Islamic lands, particularly in Turkistan. In the east, he might have traveled as far as India.**

In this respect, **Sa'di** is very much like **Marco Polo** who traveled in the region from 1271 to 1294. There is a difference, however, between the two. While Marco Polo gravitated to the potentates and the good life, Sa'di mingled with the ordinary survivors of the Mongol holocaust. He sat in remote teahouses late into the night and exchanged views with merchants, farmers, preachers, wayfarers, thieves, and Sufi mendicants. For twenty years or more, he continued the same schedule of preaching, advising, learning, honing his sermons, and polishing them into gems illuminating the wisdom and foibles of his people.

Returning To The Home

1256 is the date usually assigned for the time when Sa'di's zeal for travel gave in to his desire to document the fruits of his travels. He returned to his home town of Shiraz which, under Atabak Abubakr Sa'd ibn Zangy (1231-60) was enjoying an era of relative tranquility. Not only was he welcomed to the city but was respected highly by the ruler and enumerated among the greats of the province. In response, Sa'di composed some of his most delightful panegyrics as an initial gesture of gratitude in praise of the ruling house and placed them at the beginning of his *Bustan*.

It is comprised of ten sections of verse, each a dissertation on wisdom, justice, compassion, good government, beneficence, earthly and mystic love, resignation, contentment, and humility.

Within a year of the composition of *Bustan*, Sa'di authored another volume which he entitled **Gulistan** (Rose Garden). The themes discussed include the manners of kings, the morals of dervishes, the preference of contentment, the advantages of keeping silent, as well as youth, old age, and the like.

Sa'di's collected works includes 65 odes out of which 20 are in Arabic. His odes are dedicated to such diverse themes as spring, Shiraz, didactic matters, and religion. Only 20 of his odes are devoted to either advising rulers or praising them. Sa'di also wrote 200 quatrains, 7 elegies, and 737 sonnets.

After the composition of the **Gulistan**, in 1258, Sa'di went into retirement and was heard of no more. He is the quintessential Muslim humanist, the first such wise man to be recognized in the West.

The world honors Sa'di today by gracing the entrance to the Hall of Nations in New York with this call for breaking all barriers:(1

Of one Essence is the human race,
Thusly has Creation put the Base;
One Limb impacted is sufficient,
For all Others to feel the Mace.

The opening statement of the Gulistan followed by this:

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MERCIFUL THE CLEMENT

Laudation to the God of majesty and glory! Obedience to him is a cause of approach and gratitude in increase of benefits. Every inhalation of the breath prolongs life and every expiration of it gladdens our nature; wherefore every breath confers two benefits and for every benefit gratitude is due.

Whose hand and tongue is capable

To fulfil the obligations of thanks to him?

Words of the most high: Be thankful, O family of David, and but few of my servants are thankful.

It is best to a worshipper for his transgressions

To offer apologies at the throne of God,

Although what is worthy of his dignity

No one is able to accomplish.

The showers of his boundless mercy have penetrated to every spot, and the banquet of his unstinted liberality is spread out everywhere. He tears not the veil of reputation of his worshippers even for grievous sins, and does not withhold their daily allowance of bread for great crimes.



**Sadi's tomb, locating in Shiraz, Fars
Prov.**

O bountiful One, who from thy invisible treasury
Suppliest the Guebre and the Christian with food,
How could'st thou disappoint thy friends,
Whilst having regard for thy enemies?

He told the chamberlain of the morning breeze to spread out the emerald carpet and, having commanded the nurse of vernal clouds to cherish the daughters of plants in the cradle of the earth, the trees donned the new year's robe and clothed their breast with the garment of green foliage, whilst their offspring, the branches, adorned their heads with blossoms at the approach of the season of the roses. Also the juice of the cane became delicious honey by his power, and the date a lofty tree by his care.

Cloud and wind, moon and sun move in the sky
That thou mayest gain bread, and not eat it unconcerned.
For thee all are revolving and obedient.
It is against the requirements of justice if thou obeyest not.

There is a tradition of the prince of created beings, the paragon of existing things, the mercy to the inhabitants of the world, the purest of mankind and the completion of the revolving ages, Muhammad the elect, upon whom be blessing and peace:

Intercessor, obeyed, prophet, gracious,
Bountiful, majestic, affable, marked with the seal of God.

What danger is there to the wall of the faithful with thee for a buttress?
What fear of the waves of the sea has he whose pilot is Noah?

He attained exaltation by his perfection.

He dispelled darkness by his beauty.

Beauteous are all his qualities,

Benediction be on him and on his family.

The tradition is that whenever a sinful and distressed worshipper stretches forth the hand of repentance with hopes of acceptance to the court of heaven, God the most high does not notice him, whereon he continues to implore mercy with supplications and tears and God the most holy says: O my angels, verily I am ashamed of my servant and he has no other lord besides myself. Accordingly I have fully pardoned him.

See the generosity and kindness of God.

The servant has committed sin and he is ashamed...