SADI AS A HUMANIST

(a) Humanism
(b) Sadi as a Humanist
(c) Sadi in comparison with Firdawsi.
is a late arrival in the field of organized philosophy. So its systematic discussion is also of late origin. But its roots are old and deep — indeed, as old and deep as humanity itself, for, unlike other such systems — e.g. the Kantian Ethics — its code was not 'laid down' but 'evolved' with the human nature. It is not a garden planned and planted, but a virgin valley of natural flora just trimmed and fenced around. It is deeper than a philosophy and more congenial than a code. It is not a law of life, but life itself. It is not life's dictum, but its expose. It does not prescribed how life should be lived, it only shows how evenly-balanced, normally developed human beings live their rich and vivid lives. It is the budding, the flowering, the fruition of that supreme blossom of creation called the Full ‘man, for perfection is heavenly and consorts, not with him who is heaven's emigre.

The scope of Humanism being as broad as it is and its roots in time and nature being as deep as they are it is not easy to define it minutely yet comprehensively. However, the task has been attempted by many, and the following definitions are the tentative results of those attempts. It would fruitful to quote from various Encyclopaedia and writers;
1. *Oxford Dictionary*

"Humanism is a system of thought or action which is concerned with merely human interest. Humanism is the philosophy which recognizes the value and dignity of man and makes him the measure of all things, and its main object is to understand and explain human nature. Humanity, with its different aspects, psychological as well as intellectual, is the central object of its interest."

2. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

"Humanism is the attitude of mind which attaches primary importance to man and to his faculties, affairs, temporal aspirations and well-being. The term Humanism has been derived from Latin's 'Humanus' and it was often regarded as the characteristic attitude of the Renaissance in western Europe. The Greek and Roman classical writers regularly distinguished the 'human' or 'humane' on the one hand from the bestial, and on the other hand, from the divine; but in making the latter contrast, they usually stressed
some pathetic aspect of the human, such as
mortality or fallibility. Medieval Christianity,
however, suggested that man's life on Earth
was significant only in so far as it affected his
soul's expectation of God's mercy after death,
and it was against this belittling of his
natural condition that the humanist of the
Renaissance asserted the intrinsic value of
human life before death and the greatness of
his potentialities. As ecclesiastical influence
waned, the protest of humanism was turned against
secular orthodoxies that subordinated man to the
abstract concepts of political or biological
theory..."

3. Chamber's Encyclopaedia

"... Thus the word Humanism came to present not
only a system of education based on the Greek
and Latin classics, but also any system of
thought which set out to exalt or defend man
in his relation with God, with nature, and with
society..."

4. Encyclopaedia Americana

"The word Humanism has a variety of meanings.

In the history of European thought, it is used in the narrowest sense to ascribe to that kind of study of the Greek and Latin classics which is accompanied by the conviction that these classics contain the highest expression of human value. By extension, it is applied to the liberal arts and specially to those subjects like Grammar and Rhetorics which were considered by their practitioner to be most directly relevant to the right conduct of life. Literature, ethics, and politics are, in this way, included among the humanistic disciplines, distinguished from the natural sciences on the one hand and from the metaphysical and theological speculation on the other. Finally, Humanism may mean any philosophical or ethical system centered on the concept of the dignity and freedom of man."

5. The American People Encyclopaedia

"Humanism is a term generally implying practical interest in humanity. Man is essentially a doer, not a thinker, and knowledge must therefore have as its main object the solving of problems pertaining to humanity, the humanist declared. This school of thought developed in the 15th century and

was born of opposition to scholasticism, the main concern of which, claimed the humanists, was with abstraction, such as God, religion etc.

6. Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences

"That the word Humanism was appropriated by a famous literary and intellectual movement of the Renaissance, was more or less of a historical accident, but that it should be also applied to several other philosophic movements was only natural. For it is clearly a suitable term to characterize any view of the world for which humanity is the central object of interest; and as such views are numerous, it speedily acquires a plurality of senses. Their common point of interest, however, is always the human aspect, as opposed to superhuman or the merely natural. The most fundamental formulation of philosophic humanism is still to be found in the dictum of Protagoras that 'Man is the Measure of Everything'. This formula lays the sharpest stress on the relativity of all knowledge to human capacity..."
7. The Humanist Outlook

"Humanism is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "any system or action which is concerned with "merely" human interests". The point of the word "merely" here is that it excludes theology. The early humanists, who took Erasmus for their master, were believers in Christianity; but they did not think it right to apply religious tests to every form of intellectual activity. In particular, they attached an independent value to the study of the languages, literature, history and mythology of ancient Greece and Rome; it is for this reason, indeed, that classical studies still go by the name of the "humanities". At the same time they took the first step toward freeing the human mind from religious control.

Freedom of thought and speech was a form of resistance to authority. It rested on the principle for which Prof. Flew argues that one should not be required to accept as dogma what is known to be true. The adherents to this movement were not nationalists in the

1. Introduction by A.J. Ayer.
philosophical sense of the term; they had confidence in the power of human reason, but they did not believe that reason alone, unaided by observation, could discover how the world worked. This open critical spirit has continued to be the distinctive mark of the humanists. The hostility of the humanists to rigid and uncompromising religious dogmas was not evinced only in their fidelity to natural sciences, it extended also to questions of human conduct. This did not mean that their moral principles were necessarily different from those who were held by their religious antagonists. The difference lay in their denying that morality either had a religious basis or needed a religious sanction ..."

1. Mackenzie, J.S.: Lectures on Humanism

"Humanism is the point of view which regards human life as an independent centre of interest, or, in, in old Greek phraseology, the 'helm' by which the universe is steered. In this sense, I contrast it with the more familiar term 'naturalism' — the attempt to understand human life in the light of the forces that operate in

1. London, 1907, p.27
the world around it — and also with supernaturalism, that which seeks for the explanation of the world in supernatural powers. From both these points of views, the course of human life is apt to appear in the phrase of Mr. Balfour, as a 'brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets'; whereas, from the point of view of humanism, it is only by reference to man's life that the rest of the universe gains dignity and significance.

Humanism may be described as the attitude of mind which seeks the key to the world in the life of man, or, at any rate, the key to man's life within himself. As Bishop Berkeley says "human mind and other minds like man's, are the only things that really exist, and consequently, in studying man we are truly studying everything."

9. Radhakamal Mukerjee: The way of Humanism, East and West

"Humanism may be defined as an integrated

1. Bombay, New Delhi, 1963, p.1
system of human meaning, goals, and values, and harmonious programme of fulfilment, individual and collective. It seeks to clarify and enrich man's goals, values and ideals and achieve his full humanness through bringing him in ever deeper and more intimate kinship and harmony with the surrounding life, society and cosmos. Humanism rests on 'value-realism' which is not an abstract notion but involves the concrete fulfilment of human life and potentialities that is itself invested with the highest value by, and for man's self. Man Kind's universal experience at the level of both the self and society is that the real value of human fulfilment — the aim of all humanists — is supreme...." 

1. Ralph Barton Percy: The Humanity of Man

"— Humanism is essentially a philosophy expressing a reaction against the unnatural stress asceticism places on self - denial. It puts its trust in desire and enjoys life with a
good conscience. It cultivates the art of happiness. This does not mean that Humanism lacks discipline, but that its self control is constructive and justified by fruitfulness. Humanism finds no virtue whatever in self-denial and self-torture. It finds the good things of life to spring spontaneously from an original fund of instinct enriched by growth and social intercourse. Humanism is a creed dedicated to man. It idealizes man without divorcing him from nature. Its object is existent man taken in respect of the faculties and achievements which dignify him. Humanism may or may not substitute for religion. It is consistent with theism, but does not degrade man in comparison with God or replace man by God as the only Being worthy of reverence that which dignifies man must be something granted to him by the grace and condescen of another Being. It will not suffice to say that man is a mere receptacle, a beneficiery of salvation .... Humanism is committed to accept human nature and is therefore obliged to take the bad with the good and so construct a supreme concept of
nature which will embrace both the good and the evil as those appear from man's limited point of view ...."

11. Crane Brinton; Shaping of the Modern Mind

".... They (the humanists) believed that man is a measure of all things and that each man is a measure for himself. The tag word is 'individualism' —— these men were great individualists as opposed to the timid conformists of the Middle Ages. They were men who dared to be themselves, because they trusted their own natural powers, in something inside themselves ...."

After going through these definitions carefully, we will now discuss Humanism at length and will critically analyse the various social, political, and emotional factors which worked together to give birth to the most multi-faceted interesting and complex philosophic ideology — Humanism.

Humanism is the philosophical and literary movement which originated in Italy in the second half of the fourteenth

1. New York, 1953, pp.29-30
century and diffused into the countries of Europe, coming
to constitute one of the factors of modern thought and
culture. Humanism was, like its counterpart in religion —
Protestantism, the basic aspect of the Renaissance, and
precisely that aspect through which Renaissance thinkers
wanted to reintegrate man into the world of nature and
history and to interpret him in this respect. In this sense,
the term Humanism derives from 'humanitas' which at the time
of Cicero meant the education of man as such — the edu­
cation favoured by those who considered the liberal arts
to be instruments, that is, disciplines proper to man which
differentiate him from the other animals. The humanists held
that through classical letters, the 'rebirth' of a spirit that
man has possessed in the classical age and has lost in the
Middle Ages could be realised — a spirit of freedom that
provides justification for man's claim of rational autonomy,
allowing him to see himself involved in nature and history
and capable of making them his realm. This "return to
antiquity" did not consist in a simple repetition of the
ancient past but in the revival and development of capacities
and powers that the ancients possessed and exercised, but which
had been lost in the Middle Ages. The humanists rejected the
medieval heritage and chose that of the classical world. The pri­
vilege that they accorded to the humanities — poetry, rehtoric,
history, ethics and politics — was founded on the conviction
that these disciplines alone can educate man as such and can
put him in a position to exercise freedom and to understand the cosmos. This revival of the classics was first started in the great age of Greece by adopting Greek thought in Roman education. The zeal with which Petrarch, who can be called the forefather of Humanism, retraced the classics and the qualities of intelligence and memory which he displayed in interpreting them are unequalled by his predecessors. The richness and ease of his style and the elegant fluency of his Latin were also quite novel features. Petrarch shun all systematic and dogmatic doctrine arbitrarily imposed on man — whether it be scholastic philosophy, law or even political services and discipline. He, like a true humanist, asserted his freedom of choice and of initiative. This new doctrine which recognized man's importance in this world, giving him full freedom to choose and select guided by his own intellect and judgement — a freedom never granted to a man till that time — opened up vast prospects for Petrarch's contemporaries and they traversed them with vigour and sincerity. Calling Petrarch their master, they passed on his message to coming generations. It was a message of freedom and individuality — the chief and basic concepts of Humanism. This message of Petrarch and his successors acquired new dimensions during the 14th century, and Florence, the literary center of Italy, became the center for this new learning also. It was by no accident that
Italy became at once the home of the Renaissance and the cradle of modern thought. It was more ripe for this humanistic mobilization because of two reasons: firstly, it was in Italy chiefly that the connection with antiquity had been preserved, and when the literature of antiquity once more saw the light, the Italians were able to make it their own in a quite special and independent manner, since it was the work of their own past, flesh of their flesh, bone of their bone. The Italians envisaged the Greek literature—which in the fifteenth century became once more the object of enthusiastic study. The great importance for the history of culture of this general return to the literature of antiquity—to the study of antique history, philosophy and poetry—was that it revealed to men the existence outside the pale of the Church, of a human intellectual life, following its own laws and possessing its own history. Secondly, it was owing to the historical circumstances of Italy that this new philosophy flourished and became so popular there: The partition into many small states which were the arenas of continual political struggles, during which usually no store was left unturned which could lead to attainment and maintenance of power, brought about the dissolution of the social order of the Middle Ages and the a general inclination towards — Humanism.
Thus, in the first half of the fifteenth century, this new philosophy spread to all the parts of Italy to such an extent that eventually Humanism and Italian culture became synonymous. However, since Petrarch's school was not merely Italian, humanistic learning developed outside Italy as well, although its growth was slower, and more fraught with obstacles. This humanistic movement outside Italy — though basically Italian took the shape of an independent product, and later, at the very time when Italian Humanism was losing impetus, Lefure and Bude' in France, Colet and More in England, and above all Erasmus gave a European significance to Humanism. It was a long way from Petrarch to Erasmus, and along the road new objectives were discovered and attained, in which at least the names of I. Bruni, L. Valla, G. Pontano and Aldo Manuzio must be mentioned.

However, back to earlier times; gradually Humanism gained more and more impetus in and outside Italy; so much so that it did not merely remain a 'school of thought' or a 'philosophy' — it became a revolt, like Protestantism, against the double standards of society and religion, and it may aptly be called, "The Humanistic Revival" — the basic concept of the Renaissance. Crane Brinton says in his
"... Once upon time, a pair of fair-haired twins named Renaissance and Reformation, persecuted and abused turned against their wicked but doddering step-mother, the Catholic church of the Middle Ages...."

Both the Humanists and the Protestants worked together for the emancipation of the mankind. They were conscious rebels and were rebelling against the same thing — against the familiar, but to sensitive minds, painful gap between the 'ideal' and the real; and against a general degradation and de-humanization of the mankind which was a prominent feature of the Middle Ages. This uncomfortable gap between the ideal and 'real which existed there throughout the Middle Ages, was by the fifteenth century almost too ide for the most ingenious explanations to close. The ideal was still Christian, still an ideal of unity, peace, security, status, organization, the reality was wars, divided authority — even in the Papacy which should reflect God's own serene unity — a great scramble for wealth, and a general humiliation of mankind. In the Middle Ages man was valued according to his union with Church and corporation. The natural man, with
his purely individual, emotional life was of no account, and was not regarded as authorised. (Burkhardt has well shown in his work on the culture of the Renaissance how the propensity to individualism and the need of a purely personal development could not fail to arise under the influence of the historical conditions in Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth century).

The Renaissance was a protest and revolt against obsolete science and it liberated the inquiring human mind from subjection to the written word or official authority of Church and state. And the Humanism which grew out of the Renaissance and which, indeed, was the inner meaning of the Renaissance, was a return to man and nature from the trammels of an artificial system of life and thought, based upon a supernatural conception of the world.

"... The common characteristic of the Humanists is the escape, more or less thorough, from the fetters in which human thought had been confined — an escape into a wider freer world where all facts were relevant, where all theories had to be tested by relating them to their discoveries, and all formulae recast in accordance with their new-old light — an escape whose prime cause was the new enthusiasm for the poets,
historians and philosophers of Greece and Rome, and the scriptures of the old Testament and New Testament, regarded no longer through the distorting medium of allegorical interpretation, but reverently, patiently, and critically studied...1

It was along these lines that humanism set out to emancipate the human being and to quote Protagoras 'to make him the measure of all things'. It was not only a complex movement of Arts and Philosophy, it was a revolt against a 'way of life', a system — a system it found corrupt, overlaboured, stale, unlovely and untrue. The humanists were rebelling against the social and moral code of their time in which there was absolutely no place for reason, logic and intellect and when tradition and dogma ruled supreme. The Church and the state had all the authority and both these institutions had become corrupt and exercised undue authority on men and women. The ideal of 'Truth' and 'Beauty' and 'Modesty' was there alright but it was confined only to the Holy Books and ethical treatises. Nobody bothered to teach the common man how he can live his life successfully on this Earth with the help of his own intellect and reasoning.

All the efforts were focussed on religion and the 'life there-after', totally ignoring the fact that this earthly life is also important and that a man can live happily if he is guided by Reason. Man, the most fascinating and the 'Best Creation' of God had forgotten his proper place in this universe. He had forgotten rather, he was 'made' to forget that he was the superior and the supreme in this cosmos and he must try to justify his existence and to achieve and conquer everything which this Universe offers. The Fathers of the Church reduced Man to mere Nothing which was sent to the Earth in disgrace and so here he must compensate for his sins and the soul aim of his life was to live and act according to religion and age old traditions. Happiness and success were regarded ahea and almost irreligious! Reason, that magic word, was considered blasphemous by those self-appointed demagogues! It was against this abnormal way of life that the Humanists revolted:

"...It was a revolt, more or less complete with a new sense of freedom and individuality, a deliverance from bondage into a world of no restraints. Every shade of free activity, from one end of the spectrum to the other, from the unblushing libertinism of the newly emancipated to the reforming zeal of those who had found the
highest and final standard, is to be found within the rank of the humanists...."

The Humanists believed that we are to seek for the key of the Universe, or at any rate, for the key to man's life within himself. "To be 'men,' to play the game of life beautifully seemed to be their highest ambition. And the reason that they were so much attracted by Greece and all that is Greek was that the ancient Greeks 'played the game of life' to quote Goethe - 'more beautifully than any others and their interest seemed always to lie in life."

".... The Humanists were not called upon by the conditions of their lives, like most modern people, to put forth great efforts for the subjugation of natural forces; they did not get captured by an imperial mission, like that of the Romans, nor was it their tendency, like most oriental people to seek peace in the contemplation of the absolute and infinite. They wanted to live beautifully and die beautifully and to behave neither like 'subhuman' nor like superhuman but like 'human'. Their religion, their art, their literature were all eminently humane"

I. Lectures on Humanism, by J.S. Ackenzie
This was the reason that the Humanists idealized the Greeks. The Greeks were indeed born Humanists and Humanism — in the broader sense in which we are using it here — is certainly not to be found in the teachings of Comte or the Pragmatists, but rather in the lives and culture of the ancient Greeks. Thus, our modern Humanists chose the Greeks as an ideal for them and for the common people — an ideal not lofty or sublime, but 'humane'.

"... They found that the Greeks — Romans — were gentlemanly, disciplined, moderate in all things, distrustful of the wild, the excited, the unbuttoned, the enthusiastic, free from superstition and rigidity — but by no means irreligious —, controlled, mature men of imagination not narrow rationalists...

Inspired by these balanced and 'humane' lives of the Greeks, the humanists tried, through their philosophy which was a more systematic and elaborate form of the above mentioned Greek ideology, to infuse the same spirit in the men and women of their time and to make them behave like healthy human beings, not like religion - obsessed robots! They wanted Reason to be the driving force of the human machinery and

1. Shaping of the Modern Mind
they believed that because of his inherent goodness and reasoning capacity man can be the measure of all things. In other words, Humanism was a return to man and nature from the trammels of an artificial system of life and thought, based upon a supernatural conception of the world. It liberated the man from the unhealthy and crippling influence of the Church and the state, boldly declaring that for a normal and balanced life there must be a harmonious development of human body and soul. Humanism denotes, then, not only a literary tendency, a school of philologists (they were all men of letters who set out a pattern and standard for modern scholarship, studied ancient languages and introduced analytical and historical standards of criticism), but also a tendency of life, characterised by interest for the human, both as a subject of observation and as the foundation of action.

So far we have seen Humanism in a general and broader perspective (because it is in this general and broader sense that the term has been used in the present thesis), now let us cast a hurried glance on the purely philosophical and technical aspect of Humanism and see what philosophical and technical changes it had gone through from the 14th century to our times.

Humanism may chiefly be classified into two distinct systems:

1. The theocentric (which existed even before the Renaissance).
2. The Anthropocentric. (which came into existence during the Renaissance and with which we are chiefly concerned here).

The first fifteen centuries of our era were dominated by the Theocentric system while the last four centuries by the Anthropocentric.

The theocentric type of humanism was preached in the medieval period in Europe and abroad by all the great thinkers of those times such as Anselm (1033-1109 A.D.) 1 Abelard (1079-1142 A.D.) 2 , Aquinas (d. 1274 A.D.) 3 , Duns Scotus (d.1308 A.D.) 4 , etc. Man, with his complex interests and cultural aspirations received a large acknowledgement in the speculative scheme. This scheme was not anthropocentric: everything in was focused upon God the author and finisher of all creation. That is what distinguishes it from the Renaissance Humanism and the Humanism prevalent during the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

The revolution that took place with the Renaissance and the change that transformed the basic concept of

2. Ibid, p.174
3. Ibid, p.191
4. Ibid, p.195
Humanism is ill-described as the change from trust in authority to trust in reason. Rather, it was a revolution in the objects of man's rational interest — from thought concentrated on his otherworldly destiny to thought concentrated on his present habitation, — the world of time and space. Everything was changed now; the revival of the great Platonic tradition, in combination with a new interest in facts, i.e. in observation and experiment called into being the new knowledge — the knowledge of the positive sciences of man and nature. The old world outlook, in which man and nature found their status within an order that was supernatural and divine, yielded place to a new one in which man and nature filled the picture, with God fading a little in the background, and nature ever more and more being subjected to the sovereignty of man.

When we turn to philosophy for a dispassionate exhibition of this new world — outlook, we find it explicitly formulated by Descartes (1596-1650 A.D.) "The wheel of thought thus revolved in full circle" — from the Middle Age orthodoxy to the recognition of modern thought, from God as reason to Reason as God, from faith in the God man to faith in man; and thus the ideal of perfected humanity had its birth. This was the ideal that inspired the prophets of Humanism, both

2. Descartes established his famous formula, Cogito-Ergo-Sum, i.e. I think, therefore I exist.
3. History of Philosophy, p. 243
But before the nineteenth century has passed, a new outlook was dawning upon men's minds. New ideas were winning ascendency, some of them theocentric others indifferent and some even hostile to religion. And thus we come to the twentieth century movements in Humanism, like Pragmatism, Marxism, Personalism and existentialism.

This was a brief sketch how Humanism purely technical and philosophical Humanism — has developed and what different ideologies it has represented at various stages. But this was a purely technical Humanism, and as we have said earlier, we are using the term in a much broader and more 'human' sense. We are dealing with it as a 'philosophy of life' which can neither be time bound nor can be confined to a particular period. It came into existence when Adam put his foot on this Earth and will continue to exist till the last man bids farewell.

It was there when no particular "ism" was allotted to it and will remain there even if the term is wiped out from the pages of philosophic treatises. To repeat what we have said in the very beginning of this chapter: Humanism is deeper than a philosophy and more congenial than a code. It is not life's dictum, but life itself. It is not life's dictum, but its expose'. To quote Grame Brinton:
Let us then take Humanism as a kind of cover-all under which may be grouped all men whose world view is neither primarily theological nor primarily rationalistic.... A Humanist can be a theologian trying to do without a personal God, an educational reformer who thinks we have too much of natural sciences and not enough of the humanities, a philosopher who holds that humans are rather more than animals if less than God. So if we limit ourselves to the Renaissance admirers who are usually classed as Humanists, we shall miss much.

But at the same time we must also bear in mind that there are some very basic concepts of Humanism which are the distinguishing characteristics of a humanist — whether he is a theologian, an educationist, a historian, a philosopher, a litterateur, or, like our Shaikh, a poet. These distinguishing features of Humanism are being given below and it will be along these guide lines that we will Sa'di as a humanist. Here we are just enumerating them, a fuller discussion will follow in the next chapter when we will apply them to Sa'di's works:

1. Man is a Measure in Himself and for Himself, or Man is a Measure for All the things.

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[1. Shaping of the Modern Mind, pp.30-31]
7. The various development of body and soul.
8. A Rational Interpretation of Religion and Morality.
9. Exaltation of Freedom
10. Love of Beauty and optimism.
11. Compassion
SADI AS HUMANIST

بی‌آدمی عظمتی که گزاند کرار آرزوی فریب‌هایت را نیک‌پرماند
چو عظمتی بی‌واز چو دریابگر دوژ عظمت‌هارا نیک‌نادر کرار
تازه مفت دیگران بی‌غی
زنغال یک ملت نیک‌آمدی
CHAPTER II

SADI AS HUMANIST

The preceding chapter (in which we have defined Humanism and given its historical background) was to give the reader a general idea about Humanism, so that he can judge for himself how far the present writer is justified in calling Sadi a humanist. Naturally we cannot confine the versatility of the Shaikh of Shiraz in the technical framework of humanism - his genius is too vast and multifaceted to be defined by the term 'humanistic'. He was a lover of humanity and an admirer of this exquisite creation of God - man and his work is profoundly permeated by the same love of humanity and human being. He was not a thinker like Plato, he was not a philosopher like Erasmus, he was simply a full-blooded man, having an intuitive insight into human nature, who realised the worth of man and considered him to be an object of admiration - nay, even idealisation. Humanity and man are the central point of his writings, and he studies and analyses the human
life in all its various aspects. His belief can be summed up for us in the following couplet of Pope:

"Know then thy self, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man."

This general 'study' of mankind is the theme of Sadi's works; therefore it will be unwise to shackle his boundless imagination in the technicalities of any 'ism', yet at the same time this is also a fact that we find Sadi's ideology strikingly close to the philosophy of the humanists of the 14th century; we see the ideals of Schiller and Erasmus realised in the writings of this 12th century Persian genius. Matthew Arnold says about poetry that poetry is the reality, philosophy the illusion. In Sadi's case this proves to be absolutely true: what the humanists tried to define by philosophical maxims and dialectic expression, the clever Shaikh tells us in his witty and interesting anecdotes of Ṣeṣa and Ṣeṣa.

As a matter of fact Shaikh's ideas reflect the views of the Renaissance period humanists to such an extent that he may well be called the forefather of this particular school of thought. In the present chapter, we will discuss some fundamental views of the humanists and will see how far does Sadi conform to them:

1. **Man is a Measure in Himself and for Himself:**

The famous dicum of Protagoras that 'Man is the
measure of all the things' has been the motto of almost every humanist - from the 14th century to the Modern times. In simpler words, it means that man is the most powerful and admirable creation of God and "it is only by reference to man's life that the rest of the universe gains dignity and significance". It is the name for those aspirations, activities and attainments through which natural man puts on super-nature. The model for the believers of this motto is neither natural man nor a supernatural substitute - it is precisely a duality of natural man and his possibilities of transcendence. They believe that man is the heir of God himself and he is the center point around which this universe rotates.

According to them, man is too superior and independent to be governed by these mundane worldly laws; instead he should himself be the yardstick and the standard for his activities - he should try to understand this cosmos with the help of the faculties granted to him by God and to direct the path of regulate his life according to the relation of things with his self, judging each and every situation on its own and deciding his course of action guided by his own intellect and power of judgement, not by some set moral and social code. This means that there

I. Lectures on Humanism, by J.S. Mackenzie.
is no moral standard detached from and lying outside man.
The happiness and well-being of man, both individually and
collectively are the best and only criteria to judge his
conduct. Religions and traditional moralities with their
uncompromising insistence on conformity, with their
constant and stubborn refusal to accept that "the old
order changeth yielding place to new - " they with all
their restricting shackles cannot help man to fulfill
himself either spiritually or materially. So if he wants
to live happily and successfully he must free himself from
all these and search for real happiness inside himself.
This faith in man is best summed by Pico in the famous
words he attributed to God in the oration on the dignity
of man.

"... I have given you, Adam, neither a pre
determined place nor a particular aspect
nor any special prerogatives in order
that you may take and possess these through
your own decision and choice. The limitations
on the nature of other creatures are contained
within my prescribed law. You shall determine
your own nature without any constraint or
barrier, by means of the freedom to whose
power I have entrusted you...."
Let us now see how far did Sadi conform to this basic viewpoint of the humanists:

In Sadi's time, for governing the human conduct, there were no worthwhile social, political, or philosophical systems. Religion reigned supreme. It is a matter of wonder, how in such a dry set-up, such a daring and liberal soul could have reared its head and flourished! He, with the help of that rare insight which he had into the nature of a man, came to the conclusion that the ideal of humanity can never be achieved by uncompromising rigidity and puritan orthodoxy. (Today, the retreat of religion before the onslaught of the rational and humanist revolution is more the result of the former's uncompromising rigidity than the latter's aggressiveness. The more interfering and fussy is a religion, the narrower is its appeal and the swifter its decay. Judaism arrived with a peal of thunder, but now is no more than a faint reverberating sound. Islam did better with its spirit of liberty and compromise. Christianity, as reformed by the later days free thinkers is faring the best).

He realised that for his spiritual and material fulfilment, man shall have to look inwards into his own self and conform his conduct to his own personal needs and to the requirements of his society in general. He also realised that man, a free-willed agent of nature, can never
be 'forced' to do anything, and that 'fear — on which most of the religious and social laws were based in those days — can never inspire man to do good and avoid evil.

No doubt fear can and does prevent man from doing evil, e.g. fear of legal punishment can stop him from committing social crime, fear of moral accusation can keep him from indulging in immoralities, and fear of Divine punishment can stop him from committing sin. But these legal, moral or religious taboos can only check the evil-doings superficially, for they cannot take out the roots of evil from the society. They can only stop a man from doing evil but they cannot inspire or 'instigate' him to do good. That is to say, if a man does not believe in religion, or if he is sure not to be caught by the social or moral law, he can commit religious and social crimes. (As a matter of fact, all this corruption and double-standards of our society originate from this overlooking of the psychological phenomena by our moralists and socialists).

Sadi, like a true humanist, realised this weakness of our social and moral system and the chaos resulting from this. This moral and social chaos was at its peak during Sádi's time. The period of Sádi was the terror-stricken reign of the deadly Mongols. These Mongols were
corrupt and cruel people who knew nothing of religion and less of morality. Now it is a fact that the ruled always reflect the character of their rulers. So the whole of the Iranian race was totally degenerated and corrupt at that time. (This moral and social degeneration is best depicted in the works of that marvellous satirist of the Persian language - 'Ustad-e-Zâkâni').

This disgraceful debasing of the mankind - the most noble creation of God - was unbearable to our sensitive humanist, Sâdi. He reacted to it and set out to remedy it and to reinstate his fallen idol on the pedestal it rightfully deserved. He was an intelligent man possessing an extraordinary insight into human nature and psychology, so he at once realised that the fault lies not with man but with the defective moral and social system of our society which did not realise the real worth and dignity of man and chained his sublime and aspiring soul with unnecessary and superfluous laws.

Sâdi, who had unfailing faith in man, and who believed that this whole universe has been created because of man, wanted to make man 'the measure for every thing.' He believed that man is the super-creation of God, the generating force of this universe and every other creation has been created because of man and gains significance only with relation to man. All the mysteries of the
universe are inherent in this world. This, as OTIS says:

This / of the Divine Beauty is the ruling king of this world and it is for his benefit that have been created:

(The clouds, air, sun and moon each of them are busy for you; so that you earn your daily bread and not waste your time.)

He further elaborates on this and states his point of view in ten consequent couplets of Īstān - these lines clearly show that he believed man to be the measure of everything:


1. Diwan-i Hafiz p. 136
2. Kulliyat, p 68
3. Ibid, p. 373
(Night is for your comfort, day likewise,
The bright moon and the world-illuminating sun;
Etainer-like, on your account the heavens
Ever spread out the carpet of the spring;
Though wind and snow there be, or rain and silt,
Though thunder plays polo and lightning wields swords —
All are subservient functionaries,
Who nourish seed for you within the earth!
If you suffer thirst, still seethe not sorely,
For the Carrier in the cloud will bring you water on
His shoulder;
And from the soil He brings the colour and scent of
Sustenance.
A showplace for the eye, and brain, and palate;
Honey He gives you from the bees, and manna from the air,
Fresh dates He gives you from the palm, and date-stones by the heap;
The palm-binders all must gnaw their hands,
Confounded that none such a palm has ever bound!
Sun and moon and Pleiades are all for your sake,
Serving as lamps in the roof of your dwelling;
From thorns He's brought you roses, from the ladder
Musk,
Gold from the wineworking, fresh leaves from dry wool.)
Sadi believes that this miraculous and magnificent creation for whose benefit God has created has to be the measure of every thing and it is unwise to bind him to any social or moral law. Man is a law in himself and for himself so he cannot and should not conform to any rigid social or ethical code - rather, he should judge and evaluate every situation on its own, and act according to his judgement and the welfare of his fellow beings: For example, if he has to violate any set moral or social law for the larger interest of mankind, he is free to do so. If a (A falsehood resulting in conciliation is better than a truth producing trouble.) can be helpful in saving a man's life, it is undoubtedly better than ; or if kindness proves to be harmful to the society, it no longer remains a virtue, but becomes a vice:

(To have me ay upon the bad is to injure the good; to pardon tyrants is to do violence to dervishes. If thou associatest and art friendly with a wretch we will commit sin with thy wealth and make thee his partner.)

Likewise, Sadi analyses each and every single situation on its own merits and demerits, and tells us different
course of action in different situations - sometimes conforming to the ethical values, sometimes contradicting them. On one occasion he says:

\( Until a matter by management be concluded, 

\text{The conciliation of an enemy is better than conflict;} \)

On another he declares: \( \text{Strike the head of a serpent with the hand of a foe because one of two advantages will result. If the enemy succeeds thou hast killed the snake and if the latter, thou hast been delivered from a foe.} \) Sometimes he says:

\( \text{Yet if you're soft the foe grows bold;} \)

And yet another time he advises:

\( \text{Even if you are angry with someone, delay his punishment as long as you can.} \)

Both his Gulistān and Ṣūstān are full of this rational approach towards things. Here one thing must be pointed out: in the minds of most of Sadi's critics some confusion seem to prevail about the interpretation of various of his sayings relating to human morals. They tend to think that by asking man the measure of everything, he

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1. Kulliyāt, p. 262
2. Ibid. p. 200
3. Ibid. p. 231
4. Ibid. p. 232
5. The attack on the Shaikh's " comes from
is allowing him to exploit the situation according to his own whims and fancies and is giving him permission to violate the social and moral laws to suit his own convenience. The reason for this misunderstanding and confusion no less an august quarter than the reigning monarch of the Shaikh's homeland. Says the Shah in his (pp.499-500)

The Shah bases his strictures on two principles, one religious and the other ethical and sociological. As for religion, one single tradition of the Prophet of Islam should suffice to mollify the royal occuser:

The judgment of morals is also identical with the above Prophetic Tradition, but it needs elaboration and will be dealt with in the detail in the present discussion.
is Sadi's practicality and the apparent contradiction obtaining in his various sayings. For example, in one place the Shaikh says:

(He whom the shah follows in what he says, It is a pity if he speaks anything but what is good)

and at the other, he seems to effect a complete right-about and advises:

(Should he in plain day say it is night, It is meet to shout: 'Lo, the moon and the pleiades)

Likewise, at one time we see him likening an untruth to a " Mendacity resembles a violent blow, the scar of which remains, though the wound may be healed, Seest thou not how the brothers of Joseph became noted for falsehood, and no trust in their veracity remained.)

And the next moment, his pen lays down the famous, or infamous according to the outlook of the reader - addicts:

I. Kulliyāt, p. 78
2. Ibid, p.103
3. Ibid, p. 211.
In the Kulliyāt, there are innumerable instances where he condemns carnal lust and solemnly advises abstinence. The whole of the following ghazal runs in this strain:

And he supports his abstract disapproval by pointing to this very practical hazard:

(Cut off the branch that puts its head in the house of your neighbour, because it will cause conflict.)

But against all this may be juxtaposed the entire fifth chapter of his Bulistan with its subtle and sweet undertones of permissive and deliberate indulgence.

These contradictions and the very practical approach of the Shaykh in various situations, led the Shaykh's commentators to commit a curious error — they named him a "Practical Ethicist" and his philosophy of "Man is a

I. Kulliyat, p. 493
2. Ibid, p. 693
3. Pious sentiments and aspirations, indeed abound; but, they are, as a rule eminently practical...."
measure in himself "practical ethics". But this means that their judgement was based only on one half of the whole truth. They either did not appreciate the other half, or failed to be attracted by it. This was an unfortunate omission. We may call Sādī a 'Schizophrenic' if we like, there is a sort of dualism in his writings, but we cannot call him a practical ethicist without shutting our eyes to a very considerable and very important portion of his work. The reason why the Shaykh's critics committed this error is not far to seek. The old principles of morality proclaimed by Sādi had since long lost their significance and, by constant and universal repetition, had become meaningless platitudes. "Be Truthful" and "Be Chaste" had been ineffectually uttered a thousand times, and now there thousand and first utterance could also make no impression. But, (In the exuberance of youth, as it usually happens and as thou knowest).

were, indeed, strains new to the ears and not to be found in any of the expositions of the Aristotelian Ethics. They drew immediate attention and demanded some satisfactory explaining away. To confuse the reader all the more, there

I. Kulliyāt, p. 163
was the Shaykh's undeniable pêty on the one hand, and there were these hard nuts on the other! Out of sheer panic and confusion, the bewildered critic took the help that came most handy to him -- that of the euphemistic term of 'Practical Ethics'. But the apologetic undertones of this term strikes the ear at once.

This 'Practical Ethics' deserves a closer examination for determining if it is really a moral system, and, as such, a useful formula to explain Sadi's seeing anomalies. Logical scrutiny reveals it to be a hybrid of pure moral science and Machiavellian opportunism. It says in effect, 'Sin if you like, but sin to reap a profit'. In other words, according to this ethical system (if at all it can be called an ethical system), we may throw the ethical standards overboard but as long as we can bring some selfish and utilitarian justification in our defence, we may be dubbed a 'man of convenience' and we may not be condemned as a downright sinner. Now this is a strange incongruity of our time-honoured moral law and its uncompromising moral judgement! In, our ethical spectrum there are only 'white' and 'black', no 'grey'. In other words, the moral philosophy recognizes 'good' and 'bad' but it is not acquainted with the 'Indifferent'.

I. Kulliyat, p. 163
or the 'Natural'.

So, it will be a pity if Sadi's philosophy of 'Man is measure in himself' can be defended only by such dubious means as 'practical ethics'. All the works of the Shaykh are so infused with saintly virtues that we may only call him a Machiavellian either through check or imbecility.

Then how is one to defend him? In the simplest and best way: by summoning in his support the one fundamental law on which the entire framework of ethics is based: that there is no CATEGORICAL LAW in the moral philosophy. The infinity, breadth and expense of this law rudely brush aside any notion of rigid conformism. Briefly, and practically it means that there are no set 'Dos' and 'Dons' to regulate man's conduct, that every situation is to be judged on its own merits (as believed and preached by the humanists) and the line of action chosen accordingly.

To take an extreme example, a general taboo against man-slaughter is very necessary for the protection and preservation of the mankind. But the death sentence to the criminal continues in this prohibition's spite (or in its support?); and when committed by the hands of Justice, man-slaughter becomes the Supreme Penalty. Surely, to tell a judicious untruth (نكتة مبررة) is not more dire than to commit a judicious murder!
The reason and justification of this argument are borne out both by the ancient and modern Ethics.

First, let us look into the theory of the ancient Greek philosophers. The Greek ethics enumerates four Cardinal Virtues: Temperance, courage, justice, and wisdom. The first three refer to the three aspects of man's inner self — Affection, conation, and cognition, and the fourth represents the factor of balance and harmony which should obtain in the workings and inter-relation of these three. Temperance keeps the human feelings and emotions in check; courage stands guard on our wilful acts; and justice is to ensure that we do not err in our prediction of realities. And there can no umpire to adjudge between, and direct the above trio, each one of them might have gone its own capricious way, to the detriment of the other two — rather to the detriment of the human individual and the human society themselves. Temperance could have led to celibacy, courage to foolhardiness, and justice to harshness or downright tyranny. It is in such cases that wisdom supplies the necessary checks and balances and points the proper path of moral conduct. It is on this level that, according to the dispensation of our wisdom, a man slaughter becomes either a murder or a capital punishment, the untruth becomes a lie or a tactful statement, and sex becomes licentious
promiscuity or sacred bond of marriage.

Modern Ethics says the something but in its own modern way. It lays down that the moral standard is the Ideal, and that the Ideal in its own turn, is the 'harmoious development of body and soul' (of which more later) -- or the self, which, in its turn are the same old virtues, affection, compassion, and cognition. Here the role of the umpire (which was given to wisdom in the old ethical order) is entrusted to a sublimated 'Self Regarding Sentiment'. The result is exactly the same: the is no rigid code of moral conduct, there are no fixed commands and prohibitions, there are only general guiding lines for our moral conduct. The well being of the individual and the society (two facets of the one thing) is the Supreme End, the means to attain that end may be adjusted to the requirement of each particular occasion.

Thus if Sadi's writings and his philosophy of man is a measure is viewed in this light, it is hoped that the stigma of 'Practical Ethics' will be transformed into the seal of 'rationality' and 'love of humanity,' and when during the argument which is to follow, the term practical will be used (because of the lack of a better word) for various of his sayings, it will not be misunderstood to mean 'opportunism', it will mean: 'that which is helpful
to man for living a successful and happy life — the ultimate goal of a humanist.

Apart from this ethical justification, there are two more things in favour of this Protagorean belief which our Shaykh practised: one is his faith in the basic goodness of man, and the other is the relation, rather the interrelation of the individual and the society. Firstly, Sa'di, like every other humanist, believes that basically every human being is inclined towards goodness. He had faith in 'natural' goodness rather than 'acquired' goodness. Sa'di, like Rousseau, observes that everything is good as it comes from the hands of the author of nature and that virtue is very much in the nature of man, and has not to be imported or implanted in man's nature. The so-called caprices of man are the results of bad training; an unfair suppression of some of his instincts and an undue obligation of some others, and of disbalanced obeying or commanding. Goodness is thus an original condition, evil is the acquired one. So if man is made the measure of everything and all his emotions and instincts are harmoniously developed, then there is no reason why he will not be good for the society.

Another thing which made Sa'di believe in the 'Man is a Measure' ideology was his belief that even if a man is free from all moral and social taboos, he will not do
anything which is harmful to the society because the welfare of the society, in its turn, is nothing but the welfare of the individual himself; these are two distinct and opposite ways of looking at the society: one is to regard it as an aggregate of which the individuals are the units, like pebbles in a heap of pebble stones, the other is to regard it as an organism of which the individuals are the parts, like limbs in the human body. An aggregate may roughly be said to be a collection of disjointed, unrelated things, having no inter-action or inter-relation in its units. Each of them stands and counts for itself and no more. If one is removed the only change in the aggregate is one minus; if one is added the only change in the aggregate is one plus - this and no more.

The Shaykh, does not uphold the theory of society being an aggregate. He maintains that our society is less of an aggregate, more of an organism. Had the society been like an aggregate, the coming and going of an individual would also have signified one plus or one minus and no more. But it is not so. If a Newton gets born or an Akbar passes away, society is immensely affected thereby. Thus the human society is like an organism of mutually dependant parts having a chain of inter-relation and inter-action. This inter-relation of the individual and the society serves as an equilibrium between the two (because the
individual is sure to get in return what he live to others, i.e. society.) It is a sort of mutual give and take between the individual and the society, so even if there are no moral or social bindings for man and he himself is the measure for everything, this interrelation and interaction of the society and individual will let him not be selfish or self-centered, and will inspire him to do good and not to harm the society in any way. Sadi very clearly defines this relation of the individual and the society in the following famous

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1. This faith in the basic goodness of man and the inter-relation of the individual and society is best described by Darwin in the fourth chapter of the Descent of Man where he has accumulated examples of co-operative behaviour among social animals. Says he:

"It can hardly be disputed that the social feelings are instinctive or innate in the lower animals, and why should they not be in man?"

He concludes the chapter with what may be regarded as the classical statement of the humanist view on the social basis of morals:

"The social instinct - the prime principle of man's moral constitution - with the aid of active intellectual powers and the effects of habit, naturally lead to the golden rule 'As ye would that man should do to you, do ye to them like wise', and this lies at the foundation of morality."

2. Kulliyat, p.87
(The sons of Adam are limbs of each other
Having been created of one essence.
When the calamity of time afflicts one limb
The other limbs cannot remain at rest.
If thou hast no sympathy for the troubles of others
Thou art unworthy to be called by the name of a man.)

This clearly shows that Sadi too, like every other
humanist, believed that individuals are parts of the
society like limbs in the human body and that every individual's welfare is closely linked with
the welfare of his fellow beings:

Thus, when man is basically good, a sing with
principles and with a certain goal infront of him, and
when the relationship of the individual and the society is
inter-depandant, he will not do anything which is harmful
to the society even if he is free from social and moral
binding and is a measure in himself. So it will not be
hazardous, as feared by most of our faint-hearted moralists,
to substitute blind obedience with discriminating choice.
So our Shaykh, having faith in these two basic concepts
of humanism (i.e. basic goodness of man, and the inter-
relation of the individual and the society), boldly decl are
Free Will to be the guiding force for all men. He raises man from the pedestal of a robot to the throne of the son of God.

Let us now see, in the light of his sayings, how far does Sadi, conform to the maxim of Protagoras and what practical 'practical' wisdom he has to teach to his readers:

He says in Kūtān:

(Goodness and mercy have their place,
But to be good-natured with bad men is bad!
Put no pillows round the mean man's head;
Better on a stone the head of one who injures others!
Practice not good with evil men, you who have good fortune.
Only an ignorant fool plants trees in salty soil!

I. Kulliyat, p. 320)
I say not, care not for human kind; 
But waste not generosity on those not human! 
In manners be not mild with one who's rough; 
One does not stroke a dog's back like a cat's! 
(Yet, to be fair, a grateful dog 
is better in conduct than people who're thankless.).

Kindness and 仁慈 is commendable in our social system 
and we are advised to be kind to all and anybody, whether 
they deserve it or not. But Sadi, that great Persian humanist 
does not believe in this. He does not say like Ghazâlâ: 

instead, he defies the social reformer and boldly deol ares

He was not insensitive or hard, he was not unfeeling or callous - he was humanity itself (much more human than our so-called social reformer) and it was his love of humanity which made him say "گن ایان یا کسب": he did not want to ignore the بقیه of any man because this will encourage him and he will go on doing evil to the mankind and it will be difficult to check him at a later stage because he believes that:

I. Kîmiyâ-i- Sa'âdat, pp. 326-27 
2. Kulliyât p. 80
(A tree which has just taken root
May be moved from the place by the strength of a man
But, if thou leavest it thus for a long time,
Thou canst not uproot it with a windlass.
The source of a fountain may be stopped with a bodkin
But, when it is full, it cannot be crossed on an elephant.)

Thus, in order to stop him at the very initial stage, he
lays down the rule strictly:

1

(To do good to wicked persons is like
Doing evil to good men.)

and

2

(Condonation is laudable but nevertheless
Apply no salve to the wound of an oppressor of the people
He who had mercy upon a serpent
Knew not that it was an injury to the sons of Adam.)

Kindness towards animals is morally commendable, but
according to Sadi, if it proves to be injurious to man then:

. Kulliyat p. 80
2. I'Id p. 199
The following of Bustan states the Shaykh's point of view in this regard:

(I've heard a man once knew a household's care,
For wasps had made their nest upon his roof;
His wife, however, said: 'Lay not a finger on them,
Lest from their home the poor things be dispersed!
The wise man at this betook him to his business.
At length, one day, they stung the wife.
And she, imprudent as she was, by gate and roof and lane
Did cry for help, the while her spouse was saying:
'Make not, good wife, a sour face before mankind;
You yourself said the "poor" wasps should not be killed

I. Kulliyat, p. 290
How to evil men should one do good?
Long suffering but magnifies the bad in evil men.
When by a hard you see mankind tormented,
Torment his gullet with a sword that's sharp!
What dog is there for whom a table's spread?
Instruct him, rather, to be given a bone!
How well the village-elder coined that saw:
The beast that kicks is better heavy-laden'!
If kindliness is practised by the watch,
No one can sleep at night for fear of thieves
Within the ring of conflict, cane and lance
Are a hundred-thousand times more valuable than
sugar cane.

Not everyone deserves a gift of property:
One asks for property, another to be properly told
off!
If you caress the cat, he'll carry off the pigeons;
Ratten up the wold; in pieces he'll tear Joseph.)

Forgiveness and generosity can be said to be the
height of morality and one of the most noble qualities of
man. But here also, Sadi makes, man the measure and preaches
that which is practical, or in other words, which is 
and
helpful for living a happy life. He does not believe in the
Christian ideal and does not offer his other cheek!
Rather, he believes in the more practical and humanistic
approach of Islam which says: “eye for an eye and ear for an
ear” Sadi advises his fellow beings to take their revenge

I. “you must love your enemies and do good and lend without
expecting any return and you will have a rich reward”.
Old Testament.
2. (We ordained therein (i.e. in the Pentateuch) for them:
“Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear,
tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal”. But if
any one remits the retaliation by way of charity,
it is an act of atonement for himself (translation by
Abdullah Yusuf Ali). Sometimes Sa’di inspires us “to
retaliate by way of charity” also, but mostly he prac-
tises the first half of the Ayat.
from their enemies and to destruct and destroy them:

(Strike the head of a serpent with the hand of a foe)

(Do not pity the weakness of a foe because when he gains strength he will not spare thee.)

(It is not the part of wise men to extinguish fire and to leave burning coals or to kill a viper and leave its young ones.)

(Who despises an insignificant enemy resembles him who is careless about fire.)

I. Kulliyāt, p. 199
2. Ibid, p. p. 199
3. Ibid p. 80
4. Ibid, p. 198
5. Ibid, p. 96
It is narrated that an oppressor of the people, a soldier, hit the head of a pious man with a stone and that the dervish, having no means of taking vengeance, preserved the stone till the time arrive when the king became angry with that soldier, and imprisoned him in a well. Then the dervish made his appearance and dropped the stone upon his head. He asked: 'Who art thou, and why hast thou hit my head with this stone?' The man replied: 'I am the same person whom thou hast struck on the head with this stone on such and such a day.'

When thou seest an unworthy man in good luck
Intelligent men have chosen submission.
If thou hast not a tearing sharp nail
It will be better not to contend with the wicked.
Who grasps with his fist one who has an arm of steel
Injures only his own powerless wrist
Wait till inconstant fortune ties his hand,
Then, to please thy friends, pick out his brains).

(Extinguish it today, while it may be quenched,

I. Kulliyāt, p. 196)
Because when fire is high, it burns the world.
Allow not the bow to be spanned
By a foe because an arrow may pierce.)

One thing must be borne into mind: Sādi uses the term
in the broadest sense of the term. He does not mean
the \( \mathbf{f} \) of a particular individual, but the \( \mathbf{f} \) of the
entire mankind and human society. His hero, or \( \mathbf{f} \), is the
real man -- symbolic of every human quality --- and the 'enemy'
whom Sādi wants to destroy (or advises his hero to destroy)
is the symbolic enemy of humanity and human being.

On the contrary, if the enemy is of an individual only
and human welfare (in the larger sense) is not at stake, then
we see this believer of \( \mathbf{f} \) completely transformed -- his love and compassion for his fellow beings (the
same love and compassion which earlier, in a different
situation, made him say \( \text{ما بَدَّلِكَ إِلَّا الْمُلْهَٰلُ} \) makes him
sing a completely different tune: we see him adv sing
the king to have mercy on his enemies:

(When you have mastery of your enemy,
Ill-treat him not, for his is sorrow and to spare!

I. Kulliyāt, p. 239
A living foe who's broken to your skirt-hem
Is better than one whose blood lies on your neck!

Here the enemy is of an individual (the king) only, so our self-sacrificing humanist advises the king to forgive him.

All the Shaykh's sayings were focussed on the life and welfare of the human being, sometime condemning a certain thing (because it is harmful to man) another time recommending it because it is advantageous to human being and human society at large, hence the contradiction which we have discussed earlier. We have already seen how he wants to destroy the enemy, now see his other side also where he is all compassion and sympathy:

(Treat mankind gently. O you who have good fortune! Lest God call hardly with you on the morrow! Subordinates' hearts should never broken be, Lest you one day become subordinate).

In the famous (One given to generosity lacked resources, His wherewithal not being to his munificence' measure.)

1. Kulliyát, p. 277
2. Ibid, p. 275
He says that one should not hesitate to even sacrifice one's life for his fellow beings, because:

(A body, live of heart, asleep beneath the soil,
Is better than a world of live men dead at heart:
Never will a live heart know destruction,
What matter if the body of a live-heart dies?)

We have seen earlier that he says:

but that was when kindness to animals could have proved harmful to human being, otherwise, he thinks that if one is kind to animals, all his sins will be forgiven by God:

I. Kulliyat p. 276
2. Ibid, p. 276
(One in the desert found a thirsty dog, 
With naught of his life but the last gasp left; 
That man of scarcely ritual made his hat a bucket, 
Binding his turban thereto as a rope; 
His loins he girt in service and opened up his arms, 
And gave the helpless dog a draught of water 
At all of which the Messenger proclaimed that man's condition 
As pardoned by the Arbiter of Sins;)

And he draws a conclusion from this, inspiring man to be kind 
to his fellow beings:

(For if the Truth as Moses a kindness to a dog, 
How shall a benefit to a good man done be missed?)

These examples will suffice to show that Sadi, like 
a true humanist, had faith in the famous maxim of Protagoras 
and evaluated and analysed each and every situation on its own, giving man the right to choose his own course of action. Now we will give some more examples from his Gulistan and Bustan which will show how rational and 'practical' his approach was towards life and what useful tactics he practised and preached for a happy and successful life. Both his Gulistan and Bustan are full of these worldly tactics, here we will reproduce only a few of them.

I. Kulliyat p. 276
('Dread him who dreads thee, O sage,
Although thou couldst cope with a hundred like him.
Seest thou not when the cat becomes desperate
How he plucks out with his 4 claws the eyes of a tiger?

(Saline earth will not produce hyacinths
Throw not away thy seeds or work thereon
To do good to wicked persons is like
Doing evil to good men.)

(Account him not a friend who knocks at the door of prosperity.
Boasts of amity and calls himself thy adopted brother, I consider him a friend who takes a friend's hand.
When he is in a distressed state and in poverty.

('In the sea there are countless gains,
But if thou desiriest safety, it will be on the shore.)

I. Kulliyat p. 85
2. Ibid, p. 82
3. Ibid, p. 92
4. Ibid, p. 92
(Until a matter by management be concluded, the conciliation of an enemy is better than no conciliation.)
When you cannot break a foe by force,
You can fasten trouble's door by favour
Does harm from an adversary give you concern
Tie his tongue with the spell of kindness!
Instead of spikes, spread gold before the foe-man,
For kindness blunts sharp teeth.
Kiss the hand it is not meet to bite:
Deal with the victors by guile and self-abasement!
Rustam by skilful management came to bondage,
And Isfandiyar escaped not his noose
The foe-man can be skinned as occasion serves:
Conciliate him, ten, as though with a friend!
Strike not against a force that's bigger than your own,
For one can't strike a lance with the finger!
And if you are the more powerful to the fight,
Manly it is not to do violence to the powerless
- you elephant-strong or lion-clawed,
Peace in my view is better than war;
But if the foe asks peace, turn not your head away,
But if it's war he seeks, turn not aside your bridle!
Forsake not the veteran elder's sound devising,
For many a matter the ancient has experienced;
Brass foundations can be o'erthrown
By youths with force, by veterans with good judgment!

These couplets of Sādi are the best advice that can be given to a king about war tricks. Sādi was a well-travelled man who had experienced life in all its and all his sayings in Gulistan and Bustan are based on his own experience of this world. He knew this world and its ways and wanted others to benefit from his experiences. In the following

be tells us how to live in this world:

I. Kulliyāt, p. 456
As we all know Sadi was not a recluse, he was well-versed in all the worldly matters, so all the observations of the "things about this world and its social set-up are based on truth. He knows that inspite of our efforts, we cannot live peacefully in this world, because whatever we do, we will always be criticised by others:

I. Kulliyāt, p. 456
But none escapes the hand of cruel tongues.
Be he a self-displayer or a worshipper of the Truth,
Let but a person choose the nook of solitudes,
Having no great liking for society,
And they 'll reprove him with: 'Hypocrisy and fraud!
He flees from men as does a demon!
Or if he's smiling-faced and mixes easily,
They 'll reckon him not chaste or austere;
A rich man by backbiting they will flay,
Saying: 'If there's a Pharaoh in this world it's he!
Yet if one destitute should weep hot tears,
They 'll call him 'luck-inverted, murky-eyed.'
But if he grows content and self-preservation,
He's bound to fall foul of some folk's aspersions:
Such a mean fellow will die like his father,

I. Kulliyât, p. 456
Letting go wealth and bearing off regret!
No man finds escape from the hands of others,
And he who's caught has no recourse but to endure.

Thus:

(If in the world there's one who has escaped the world,
He's one who's shut his door against mankind upon himself)

(Reveal not thy grief to enemies
Because they will say 'La haul' but rejoice)

Only Sadi could say that one should not disclose
his misfortunes to one's enemies because:

The following two couplets from Bustān are typical
examples of Sadi's practical approach towards good and bad:

(For your own sake, care for the yeoman,
For the happy labourer does more work.)

He advises us to be kind and sympathetic to the
labour-class not because it is morally recommended, but for
the every practical reason:

I. Kulliyāt p. 153
2. Ibid, p. 229
Some can be said about the following couplet:

(THE MILITIA THAT IS NOT CONTENT WITH THE PRINCE
WILL NOT KEEP WATCH ON THE BORDERS OF THE REALM.)

Sādi whole-heartedly agrees with that of his Gulistan who did not teach the three hundred and and sixtieth trick of Gullūn to his student because he believed that

(Do not give so much strength to thy friend that, if he becomes thy foe, he may injure thee.)

The entire eighth chapter of Gulistan is full of this invaluable practical wisdom of Sādi. Here we are giving a few of the Shaykh's witty and practical observations:

(A DISCIPLE WITHOUT INTENTION IS A LOVER WITHOUT MONEY; A TRAVELLER WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE IS A BIRD WITHOUT WINGS; A SCHOLAR WITHOUT PRACTICE IS A TREE WITHOUT FRUIT, AND A DEVOTES WITHOUT SCIENCE IS A HOUSE WITHOUT A DOOR.)

Here the phrase of Sādi is noteworthy. Sādi, inspite of being a poet and a lover does not hesitate

1. Kulliyāt p. 239
2. Ibid, p. 101
3. Ibid, p. 209
in criticising love, and with an amused smile on his lips
he mildly condemns:

(Everyone thinks himself perfect in intellect and his child in beauty.)

(Musk is known by its perfume and not by what the druggist says.)

(Satan cannot conquer the righteous and the sultan the poor.)

(The Most High sees a fault and conceals it, and a neighbour sees it not, but shouts.)

(Anyone as associating with bad people, although their nature may not infect his own, is supposed to follow their ways to such a degree that if he goes to a tavern to say his prayers, he will be supposed to do so for drinking wine.)

1. Kulliyat, p.196
2. Ibid, p.201
3. Ibid, p.205
4. Ibid, p. 207
5. Ibid, p.213
6. Ibid, p. 210-II
(As long as an affair can be arranged with gold, it is not proper to endanger life.)

(Wrath beyond measure produces estrangement and untimely kindness destroys authority. Be neither so harsh as to disgust the people with thee nor so mild as to embolden them.)

(However much science thou mayest acquire Thou art ignorant when there is no practice in thee Neither deeply learned nor a scholar will be A quadruped loaded with some books. What information or knowledge does the silly beast possess Whether it is carrying a load of wood or of books?)

1. Kulliyat p.198
2. Ibid, p. 199
3. Ibid, p. 197
2. **Harmonious Development of Body and Soul:**

The foregoing discussion is so much inter-connected with the present one that it (i.e., 'Man is a Measure...') will remain incomplete if we do not supplement it with yet another basic concept of humanism that of: "a harmonious development of the body and soul of man". As a matter of fact, this belief is the natural and necessary result and outcome of the humanists' fundamental principle that 'man is the measure of everything'; when man is the measure in himself and he is generating force c.

All his aspects and faculties must be taken into account and there should be a harmony in his spiritual and material life. In other words, they believed that nature is the realm of man and that the features which tie him to nature (his body, his needs, his sensations) are essential to him to the point that he cannot abstain from them or ignore them. Thus, the humanists, while exalting the soul of man for its powers of freedom, did not forget the body and that which pertains to it and they craved for a harmonious development of both. According to the *Encyclopaedia of Social Science*:

"..... Humanism was essentially a protest against the dehumanizing and depersonalizing of man ............and its polemic was directed
against the intellectualistic assumptions
of the traditional logics which systemati-
cally ignored the psychological side of man
and the influence of volitions, desires,
emotions, purposes, biases and personality on
our process of thought .......

Ralph Barton Perry says in his Humanity of Man:

"Humanism is essentially a philosophy
expressing a reaction against the unnatural
stress which asceticism places on self-denial.
This, does not mean that humanism lacks
discipline, but that its self control is
constructive and justified by fruitfulness.
Humanism finds no virtue whatever in self-
denial and self torture. It finds the good
things of life to spring spontaneously from
an original fund of instincts enriched by growth
and social intercourse. Humanism is a creed
dedicated to man. It idealizes man without
divorcing him from nature. Its object is existent
man taken in respect of the faculties and
achievements which dignify him..... Humanism is
committed to accept human nature and is therefore

I. Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences.
2. Humanity of Man by Ralph Barton Perry
obliged to take the bad with the good and so construct a supreme concept of nature which will embrace both the good and the evil as these appear from man's limited point of view......

In the natural man humanism envisions the union of a physical nature with the spiritual perfections..."

(This union of physical nature with the spiritual perfections' when interpreted by the humanists, becomes the famous humanistic epithet: 'harmony of body and soul').

When we go through Sadi's works, the fact instantly strikes us that Sadi too believed in this basic concept of humanism and wanted man to follow all the instincts of nature along with his spiritual aspirations. He did not believe in the doctrine of 'Innate Depravity' according to which the original sin of Adam has been engrained in the very nature of man, and so the function of the society was to curb and suppress everything (i.e. his feelings, desires, instincts, emotions) that is natural in man. He did not consider passions and emotions to be the diseases of the soul - as considered by most of our moralists and social reformers - neither his cardinal maxim was 'abstain and bear'. He loved life and wanted to cultivate it, such as it has pleased God to grant it to us - a curious mixture of spiritualism and materialism. He believed that man should heartily and gratefully accept what nature had bestowed upon him and
should not wrong the great and all-powerful Giver by refusing, annuling or disfiguring His gift. He believed in man's spiritual transcendence, but at the same time, he did not want man to despise or ignore his bodily urges, his emotions, his instincts. His motto may be said to be "live comfortably to nature " and "follow nature". In other words, he wanted man to live and act according to his instincts and emotions which had been implanted in human nature by the Greater Himself - how and to what extent he can he employ these instincts and emotions in various situations should be left to his own 'Free Will' (which is a simpler way of saying that in every situation man should be a measure in himself. It is in this way, as said earlier, that both these concepts of humanism - harmonious development of body and soul and man is a measure in himself - are interdependent).

Now this principle of Free Will and of letting man follow his natural instincts had always been a very controversial point with our social reformers, and after reading the above lines, he may accuse the humanists in general and Sadi in particular, of giving man undue liberties and allowing him to ignore all moral and social laws. At a glance, he seems to be justified in his forebodings, but when we look at it closely and analyse the various psychological and philosophical factors on which these two concepts have been based, we come to the
conclusion that this fear is absolutely baseless. But before entering into a fuller discussion of these factors to justify the humanists, especially our Shaykh, let us first listen to what social reformer has to say against the principle of Free Will and of a healthy development of all the natural instinct of man. To put it briefly and bluntly he fears that these two things, combined together, may turn man into scoundrels. They may run amuck and injure or destroy their fellow beings. Being free agents they may choose to act selfishly and refuse to follow those laws of 'live and let live' which are essential for the continuance of all social life. Are these moralists really justified in their fears? Are the humanists mistaken in putting their faith in man? Can we not entrust the task of prevention to the individual itself? If we do, will our trust be betrayed? To answer these questions we should get a peep into our mind.

If we examine closely our mental phenomena, we will observe that our instincts and impulses backed by emotions present a list of alternative activities before our will. The latter chooses from that list some particular action for the moment. It is prompted in its choice by the idea of the measure of pleasure which that particular action is likely to give to us. (In psychological jargon, this is called the law of Hedonic Selection). It is like your seeing the menu of a restaurant and selecting from it some particular dish.
which appears delicious to you. The dishes are there, you have only to make a choice. In the same way, our instincts lay down different modes of action before our will, and it selects one from that panel of possible alternatives. This act of choice is neither good nor bad; it is the 'object' of choice which determines the moral quality of the act of the will. Again, it is not the object of choice presented by some instincts which are good and the objects presented by others which are bad. It is the habitual suppression of some instincts and the habitual gratification of the other which is bad. Thus, it is wrong to call some instincts good (or social) and some bad (non-social). The instincts, as given to us by God, are all good; it is after getting related to objects that they deserve these epithets; finding together of men for achieving some common goal seems to be the most social thing in the world. But a band of robbers strikes out at the very roots of social security. Eating food appears to be a peculiarly personal affair of the individual. But every morsel of wholesome nourishment swallowed by a brave soldier strengthens the sinews of national defence.

All of these instincts and innate tendencies are accompanied by their relative emotions. For example, we have the instinct of curiosity with the emotion of wonder, the instinct of flight with the emotion of fear, and so on. Now emotions accompanying some instincts are pleasure le
while those accompanying others are painful. Psychology tells us that man always seeks pleasure and avoids pain. This is such a fundamental principle of human life, that it has been raised by the psychologists to statutory dignity and is termed the Law of Hedonic Selection. As was hinted earlier, the case against the fundamental principles of humanism (i.e. man is the measure of everything, and harmonious development of body and soul) is based upon this same law. It is feared by the faint-hearted sociologists that individuals, if left to his own desires, will always seek to gratify those instincts which give him pleasure and suppress those which give him pain. Constant repetition will help to form habits and habits will grow into character (for character is a bundle of habits). Moreover, the mind will develop dispositions to feel and act towards certain objects in certain set ways. The habit of will will always dispose man to act uniformly. And, as at the root of all such actions will be the desire to seek pleasure and avoid pain, only those activities will be indulged into which give pleasure and those avoided which give pain. There will be no harmonious development of the self, but a lop-sided growth. Furthermore, and this is what particularly concerns us here, we will become selfish. What we do for ourselves is called self-gratification and all self-gratification gives pleasure. What we for others usually involves some amount
of self-sacrifice, and all self-sacrifice is painful to some degree. This is the reason that our social reformer challenges these views of the humanists. They fear that by following these principles, we will habitually indulge in self-gratification, and avoid self-sacrifice, we shall become self-centred and anti-social. This, when carried to extreme, will herald the law of the jungle and the end of the society.

Are they justified in their thinking? Do the humanists really allow man to go astray and harm the society, or is there some solid and psychological reason behind their principle of free will and harmonious development of bodily instincts? Yes, there is, and it is founded upon those very psychological laws on which the case against the humanists has been based: pleasure and pain are of various kinds. The kind with which we dealt above is the lowest. It is that elementary type of pleasure which the animals also have. But certainly man is higher than animals. He is capable of feeling some higher and indirect forms of pleasure and pain also. In the early stages of his growth, i.e. the childhood, reward and punishment supply the indirect basis of pleasure and pain. Later, praise and blame suffice. This is on a higher and ideal level. By association the individual learns to link mentally certain of his activities with this higher form of pleasure and
and certain others with this higher form of pain, and he tries to avoid the one and to go in for the other. The Habits of Will are formed which ultimately combine to make character.

The instinct which counts most and is relied upon most by the humanists in the complex process of character formation is the instinct of self-assertion or self-display with its accompanying emotion of elation. It will ship in the growth of a strong sentiment around the individual's self. This is called the 'Self-Regarding Sentiment' (we have discussed in the previous discussion what this Self-Regarding sentiment is). By its means we idealise our self into the position of an idol. In whatever we do, we have an eye to the glory of our idol; i.e., we strive to do that which we may add to its honour, we try to avoid that which may turn to its discredit. We feel sorry if it is degraded; we feel pleasure if it is exalted. Mark this last statement and we see how the idealisation of self supplies the pleasure-pain basis for our actions. We give reins to our instincts and tendencies only so far as they do not injure our self-regarding sentiment, i.e., so far as they do not bring dishonour to us.

This idealisation of self works some other wonders too. It introduces us to new types of pleasure and pain in the process of self-development. Nay, not only this but it transmutes the very qualities of pleasure and pain
In the lower level, what pain is more tortuous than death? In the higher levels, what bliss is more perfect than the bliss of a dying martyr? Indeed, it is in cases such as these where the total abnegation of self becomes its complete fulfilment, and where to lose oneself may rightly and truly be said to find oneself. Or take another example, a monkey snatches away an apple from the hands of a child; what sobbing lamentations ensue! A woman sacrifices her ornaments for the national ornaments; how serene is her contentment! In both instances, the acquisitive instinct sustains an injury. But in the case of the woman a strongly developed self-regarding sentiment is there to transform its pain into pleasure, while in the case of the child it is not.

Another important point in this connection. Human self is a curiously elastic thing. An egoist (a self-centered, anti-social individual) narrows down the conception of self to his own person. So long as he is able to dine well, he worries little if his children starve; so long as his own home is not approached, he cares not if an enemy invades the country or the other a- humanist, or an altruist so extends the conception of his own self that it covers his entire home, his home town, his home country and even wider horizons. He rejoices if others are happy, he grieves if others are in misery. The boys of a school cheering frantically their football team is a familiar spectacle.
Those boys identify their selves with their school; the idea of their own self includes the idea of their school, the victory of their school team is regarded by them as their personal victory. This same sentiment when expanded further envelopes the whole humanity in itself and a fully developed self completely identifies itself with the society and sees its own pleasure and pain in the pleasure and pain of the entire humanity. Said, that great humanist, meant the same thing when he wrote his famous lines:

While we have been discussing the self and its instincts and sentiments, you may be wondering what have become of our arch villain, the Free Will. In fact it has been all along there, silently yet decisively helping the individual to make the right but difficult choice. Had it not been there, it would have been difficult for our martyr to disregard the joint promptings of his instincts.

I. Kulliyat p.87
of flight and self-preservation and to decide in favour of his self-regarding sentiment. So you see, our supposed to be villain of the piece proved to be, if not a hero, at least a very necessary evil.

After discussing at length our mental and psychological phenomena, we can be sure that the humanists are justified in their thinking; and what useful possibilities will open for the social training of the individual if, instead of crushing the growth of his self, it is helped to develop and expand towards deeper and broader maturity.

Sadi too, being a born humanist, realised this. He felt that to make the individual a good or social man (both things ultimately meaning the same) it is not necessary either to disturb the natural plan or balance of his instincts, or by stifling his free will and individuality, to turn him into a robot. The thing can be accomplished in better and healthier ways — by letting all his natural instincts and tendencies to grow harmoniously, by assisting him to develop sentiments of the right type, by letting him acquire habits of the right kind, by aiding him to form a broad and well-proportioned conception of self, in one word, by making him a measure in himself, and by a harmonious development of his body and soul. This is the reason that on one hand, we see the Shaykh extolling man for his spiritual capabilities and inspiring him to attain further heights;
and on the other, he appreciates man's mundane qualities as well and thinks them to be a necessary part of his existence. At one time, we see him writing pages and pages about and reciting the following memorable lines:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{\textit{...}} \\
&\text{\textit{...}}
\end{align*}
\]

or

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{\textit{...}} \\
&\text{\textit{...}}
\end{align*}
\]

and at the other, we see him devoting two full chapters to and uttering those famous words:

Let us now cite a few examples from the Shaykh's to prove our point. First, we will deal with the spiritual side of the Shaykh, and then we will bring out the less spiritual but more colourful and interesting aspect of his personality:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{\textit{...}} \\
&\text{\textit{...}}
\end{align*}
\]

I. Kulliyät p. 466
2. Ibid, p. 447
3. Ibid, p. 120
4. Ibid, p. 120
(I remember having once walked all night with a caravan and then slept on the edge of the desert. A distracted man who had accompanied us on that journey raised a shout, ran towards the desert and took not a moment's rest. He replied: 'I saw bululs commencing to lament on the trees, the partridges on the mountains, the frogs in the water and the beasts in the desert so I bethought myself that it would not be becoming for me to sleep in carelessness while they all were praising God'.

Yesterday at dawn a bird lamented, Depriving me of sense, patience, strength and consciousness

One of my intimate friends who had perhaps heard my distressed voice Said: 'I could not believe that thou Wouldst be so dazed by a bird's cry.'
I replied: 'It is not becoming to humanity That I should be silent when birds chant praises.'

(Externally the dervish shows a patched robe and a shaved head but in reality his heart is living and his lust dead.)

I. Gulistan p. 131
To the friends of God a dark night
Shines like the brilliant day.
This felicity is not by strength of arm
Unless God the giver bestows it.

Take the road of kind and liberal men:
Why stand you still? Take the hand of one who's down
Indulgent be, for those who're men of Truth
Are customers at the lustreless emporium;
The generous man's a saint, if you would have the truth
Generosity's the practice of that King of Men, 'Ali !

1. Golestân p. 213
2. Mâstân p. 274
3. Ibid, p. 310
I've heard that once, before dawn, on a feast-day, from a bathhouse there emerged Bayazid; All unaware, a pan of ashes was poured from a mansion down onto his head, At which he said, turban and hair dishevelled, And rubbing his palms in gratitude upon his face; 'My soul! I'm fit for the Fire - Shall I, then, look askance at ashes?)

Great ones look not upon themselves; Ask not regard-for-God from one who's self-regarding Greatness lies not in reputation or report; Eminence is not pretension or conceit; At resurrection, him you 'll see in Paradise Who for the Idea quested, but let Pretension go!

The best manifestation of this spiritualism is in his Qasā'id, we are writing below the Maṭlī'as of a few of them:

I.  'Auṣṭān p. 310
2.  Kulliyāt, p. 446
1. Kulliyat p. 445
2. Ibid p.450
3. Ibid p.460
4. Ibid p. 466
5. Ibid, p.484
How see this soft - spoken humble Darvish transformed into a witty, smart and vivacious man who understands and respects human nature in all its aspects and who, with an understanding smile on his lips teaches man how to behave in different situations. He knew that in order to live a rich and successful life, only spiritual development is not enough, instead, there should be a harmonious development of both the body and the soul of an individual. So he helps and encourages man to develop his desires, instincts and emotions to a broader and higher level. He feels that every instinct and feeling which has been implanted in

1. Kulliyât, p. 485
2. Ibid, p. 489
3. Ibid, p. 492
human nature by the Greater like, pleasure, pain, love, hate, anger, revenge, compassion etc. play an important role in the development of man's character and personality. Thus, all of these instincts and emotions should be encouraged and properly attended to. In Sadi's writings we see him experiencing all of these feelings and emotions and giving them their due importance.

Love is perhaps the strangest of all human emotions. Now this latter type of love has always been looked down upon by our moralists. They consider it to be undignified, childish and even immoral. But our Shaykh thinks differently. He thinks that it may be childish, but it can definitely not be called 'immoral'. It is a part, and a very integral part of our existence; a weakness (if at all it can be called weakness) but a very sweet, enjoyable and pleasant weakness which can aptly be called 'the last infirmity of a noble mind. It is a natural instinct of man and so it is nothing to be ashamed of. It is an aspect of human life, like so many others, so it must be accepted and treated like one; and one should talk about it frankly and without feeling any embarrassment as the Shaykh himself does. He says very simply and in a matter of fact tone:

I. Gulistan p.163
The syllable of جَلَّان shows that Sadi thinks love to be a natural phenomena in human life which every one experiences - and the Shaykh is no exception.

(In the exuberance of youth, as it usually happens and as thou knowest)
He too loved and the "سَارِدان" and loved with the full intensity of his sensitive heart.

I. Gullistan, p.163
2. Ibid, pp. 166-67
3. Ibid, pp. 167-68
(I remember having in the days of my youth passed through a street, intending to see a moon-faced beauty. It was in Temura, whose heart dried up the saliva in the mouth and whose simma boiled the marrow in my bones. I took refuge in the shadow of wall....All of a sudden, from the darkness of the porch of a house a light shone forth, namely a beauty, carrying in her hand a bowl of snow-water. I took the beverage from her beautiful hands, drank it and began to live again.

Blessed is the man of happy destiny whose eye Alights every morning on such a countenance
One drunk of wine awakens at midnight,
One drunk of the cupbearer on the morn of resurrection

---

(I remember that one night a dear friend of mine entered when I jumped up in such a headless way that the lamp was extinguished by my sleeve).

Sadi sees a good looking boy busy with his Arabic lessons

( ). The poetry is instantly attracted by his soft and sweet looks and utters the following delightful lines:

(When thy nature has enticed thee with syntax
It blotted out the form of intellect from our heart
Alas, the hearts of lo ers are captive in the snare
We are occupied with thee but thou with Amra and Said!)

---

1. Kulliyat p. 168
2. Ibid p. 166
The way he narrates the famous anecdote of Qasim shows that he did not blame the Qasim for indulging in amorous activities, rather, he had all his sympathies for the love-lorn Qasim! Let us quote a few lines from the above anecdote to enjoy the beautiful narration of the Shaykh:

(I heard that at dawn the king with some of his courtiers arrived at the pillow of the qasim, saw a lamp standing, the sweetheart sitting, the wine spilled, the goblet broken and the qasim plunged in the sleep of drunkenness, unaware of the realm of existence. The king awakened him gently and said: 'Get up for the sun has risen.' The qasim, who perceived the state of affairs, asked: 'From what direction?' The sultan was astonished and replied: 'From the east as usual.' The qasim exclaimed.)

The entire fifth chapter of the Gulistān and the third chapter of Rustān, the Shaykh describes love in all its
various, colourful aspects—so much so that it made some of his more orthodox critics to frown disapprovingly and to declare these two chapters, specially the "..." to be indecent and injurious to our morals! (The humble writer hopes that they might revise their opinion after reading the present discussion about the harmonious development of body and soul.) What the Shaykh has to say about these so-called moralists is another story:

"The recognition of the place of pleasure in the moral life brought the humanists to the defence of Epicurus whom the Middle Ages considered the philosopher of impiety. In their eyes (the humanists') Epicurus was the master of human wisdom, the philosopher who saw man in true nature...." 2

1. Kulliyat p. 365
2. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, p
Sadi too realized that to seek pleasure is in the very nature of man. So he put his faith in desires (as we have already seen and discussed) and enjoyed life with a good conscience. He wanted to cultivate the art of happiness, and wished to experience and enjoy what this world has to offer. He did not consider happiness to be 'immoral' or 'evil' as considered by most of ethicists and moralists.

To them, happiness is almost like a disease and they are afraid of it, they feel guilty when they are happy. In fact, they are afraid of happiness because they have no confidence in themselves and in their morality. They think that happiness might spoil them and damage their moral sense. They do not want to taste the pure nectar of happiness because they fear that it might intoxicate them and make them lose their sense of proportion. But our Shaykh is definitely not so faint-hearted, neither is his morality so superficial and skin-deep. He thought that being happy or unhappy has nothing to do with one's morals, and even if it has, then happiness can definitely make an individual a better human being. If one is happy and enjoy life one's outlook will be cheerful and one will be better-disposed towards one's fellow beings. Besides, he observed that God has created man to live a rich and happy life, so he must make the best of it and take the maximum out of it. He advises us to 'be merry' and to make the best use of
whatever we have:

(Property is for the comfort of life, not for the accumulation of wealth. A sage, having been asked who is lucky and who is not, replied: 'He is lucky who has eaten and sweated but he is unlucky who has died and not enjoyed.'

Pray not for the nobody who has done nothing, who spent his life in accumulating property but has not enjoyed it.

---

(Two men took useless trouble and strove without any profit when one of them accumulated property without enjoying it, and the other learnt without practising what he had learnt.

He wanted to enjoy the beautiful things in life, even if it was sometimes against the wishes of his Shaykh.

I. Kulliyāt p. 196
2. Iṣa'id, p. 196
(Despite the abundant admonitions of the most illustrious Shaykh Abulfaraj Ben Jusi to shun musical entertainments and to prefer solitude and retirement, the budding of my youth overcame me, my sensual desires were excited so that, unable to resist them, I walked some steps contrary to the opinion of my tutor enjoying myself in musical amusements and convivial meetings. When the advice of my shaykh occurred to my mind, I said:

If the qadi were sitting with us, he would clap his hands
If the muhtasib were drinking wine, he would excuse a drunkard,')

With all his conceptions of love, beauty and happiness, Sadi knew that in the emotional spectrum of man, there are some other shades too - not as pleasing but definitely as important as these, e.g. anger, hate, feeling of revenge etc. Sadi understood even this side of the human nature and did not condemn or ignore these sentiments; instead he thinks them to be a necessary part of life and some useful suggestions for the gratification of these instincts of man:

I. Kulliyat p. 117
(A youth said to his father: 'O wise man, Give me for instruction one advice like an aged person'.
He said: 'Be kind but not to such a degree That a sharp-toothed wolf may become audacious.'

(Who has power over his foe and do him is his own enemy. With a stone in the hand and a snake on a stone It is folly to consider and to delay.)

(Compliance in times of calamity is blamable. It is also said that by complaisance an enemy will not become a friend but that his greed will only be augmented. Speak not kindly or gently to an ill-humoured fellow Because a soft file cannot clean off inveterate rust)

I. Kulliyat p. 199
2. Ibid, p. 204
3. Ibid, p. 211
3. Religion:

The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy says about the religious beliefs of the humanists:

"For all its antipathy towards asceticism and theology, Humanism did not have anti-religion or anti-christian character. Its interest in defending the freedom and value of man drew it into discussing the traditional problems of God and providence and of the soul, its immortality and its freedom - discussions that were frequently concluded in much the same terms as that accepted by the medieval tradition. However, in the context of humanism these discussions assumed a new significance because they had the purpose of understanding and justifying the capacity for initiative of man in the world. This capacity was defended even in the religious sphere, for the religious discussions of the humanists had two principal themes: the civil function of religion and religious tolerance."

"The civil function of religion was recognized on the basis of the correspondence between the heavenly and earthly city. The heavenly city was
'norm' or the ideal of man's civil life, but precisely because it was, its recognition meant the commitment of man to realize, as much as possible, its characteristics in the earthly city. Religion, according to Manetti, was the confidence in the values of man's work, in the success of this work, and in the reward that man will find in future life. For a humanist, the fundamental function of religion was to support man in the work of civil life—*in political work and activity.*

The recognition of this social function of religion one of the most striking aspects of Sadi's works—a quality which makes him totally different from his contemporaries as well as his predecessors. As we have said earlier, the age of Sadi was an age of pure asceticism and rigid religion. The Iranian people because of their continuous suppression by their conquerors, specially by the Mongols, had lost their moral integrity. The whole society was suffering from a moral degeneration. The Mongols were sheer despots caring little for religion and less for morality and their reign was absolutely a reign of terror. People felt insecure and lived in constant terror and tension. They were restless and soared—soared that the axe of their ruthless emperor's
wrath might fall upon them anytime. They were miserably probing their way in utter darkness with no one to look up to who could guide them and in whom they could put their faith. This constant restlessness and mental tension made them to search for some solace which could calm their tortured and tormented souls and give them the desperately needed reassurance and strength. Thus out of sheer desperation, they turned to the thing which came most handy - religion. Disillusioned by this world, they sought shelter in the heavenly abode of that other world. Religion became the first and foremost thing in their life. Disheartened and dejected by the miseries of this world they ignored it altogether and concentrated on the 'life there - after'. This obsession with religion was a reaction, and as every reaction is, it was violent and unbalanced: In their pursuit of religion and an 'after-life', they forgot their earthly life. Religion became dogma and had no social function at all. The sole purpose of religion became to guide the human being not to live this life successfully, but to achieve salvation in that other world. They presumed that religion need not have only relation with the practical aspect of human life, neither did they believe in a rationalistic approach to religion so that it should not clash with the natural instincts and tendencies of man (making him follow double-standards in life).
Sadi was the first man who revolted against this puritanism and rigidity in religion. He realised that the religion of that age denied and discouraged man's natural social tendencies, instead, it encouraged a self-centered pre-occupation with one's own virtue and one's own salvation. In the words of that great humanist, Florence Nightingale "it (religion) has been too concerned with smuggling man selfishly into heaven, instead of setting him actively to regenerate the Earth". We see the same thinking reflected in the following verses of this Iranian humanist:

(A pious man came to the door of a college from a monastery. He broke the covenant of the company of those of the Tariq. I asked him what the difference between a monk and scholar amounts to? He replied: 'The former saves his blanket from the wave whilst the latter strives to save the drowning man.

I. Kulliyat p. 139
This preference of reason on religion, of \( \frac{\text{reason}}{\text{religion}} \) is the gist of all the Shaykh's religious beliefs. Unlike our orthodox Mullahs, he did not see any anomaly between Reason and Religion. He, like the M'tazelites, observed:

\[
\text{كل ما يدل إلى البصيرة} \\
\text{كل ما يدل إلى البصيرة} \\
\text{كل ما يدل إلى البصيرة} \\
\text{كل ما يدل إلى البصيرة}
\]

This when put in simpler words means that if the principles of religion have been conveyed to us correctly, and if our reason is sound and our judgement unbiased, then there cannot be any contradiction between reason and religion, because religion is based on reason. If there appears to be any contradiction between the two, then either that particular principle of religion has been contorted and twisted somewhere, sometime, or there is some fault in our reasoning. Thus, when there is no paradox existing between intellect and religion, then there is no harm in applying reason to religious laws and assessing and evaluating each and every situation in the light of our intellect. Therefore, we should not be too rigid and unyielding in our religious views because it is possible that in the multi-coloured spectrum of human temperament and circumstances, a religious law holds good in one situation but not in another. For example, killing someone is the most condemnable act according to our religious law;
but to a rational and foresighted man, killing a person who is harmful to the society, is commendable, and for the very reason for which it is condemned by religion - for the survival of the mankind. Sa'di upholds the same rationalistic and practical approach when he says:

(Whoever slays a bad fellow saves mankind from a calamity and him from the wrath of God.)

and further:

(Apply no salve to the wound of an oppressor of the people, he who had mercy upon a serpent knew not that it was an injury to the sons of Adam.)

Such deviations from the set path of religion the path shown to us by the Mullahs are often seen in the Shaykh's writings. He was a humanist, first and foremost, and his main concern was with the social and moral welfare of men in this world. For him the only religion was the religion of humanity (which in its turn is nothing

I. Kulliyāt p. 199
but what every religion teaches us), so he judged and evaluated every situation in relation with man and interpreted the religious (as well as moral) laws in accordance with man's welfare. His approach was purely humanistic, rational and practical. His religion was not the rigid, uncompromising, in-human and suffocating religion of the Puritans, where God is not less than a tyrant whose orders (i.e. the religious code) has to be followed to the last word, without any modification or relaxation whatsoever— one inch this side or that side and you are doomed! Sadi's humanistic heart revolted at this exploitation of man. He realised that this is not religion but pure fanaticism and he set out to break this facade and to tell people what religion is—real and true religion. He boldly declared that religion is far from dogmatic rigidity. It is liberal, human, reasonable, practicable, rational, natural and gives full allowance to man's emotions and instincts; in short, it is based on human nature and psychology. It is this religion with its refreshing shades of licentious individualism that the Shaykh advocates in his writings (and his so-called 'deviations' from popular religious belief depict, in fact, the very soul of religion). Let us now cite a few examples to drive home our point and to see the Shaykh's rational and practical approach towards religion:
It is related that a hermit consumed during one night ten mna of food and perused the whole Qur'an till morning. A pious fellow who had heard of this said: 'It would have been more excellent if he had eaten half a loaf and slept till the morning."

This is no other than our Shaykh!

(A hermit, being the guest of a padshah, ate less than he wished when sitting at dinner and when he rose for prayers he prolonged them more than was his wont in order to enhance the opinion entertained by the padshah of his piety.

O Arab of the desert, I fear thou wilt not reach the Ka'bah

Because the road on which thou travellest leads to Turkestan

When he returned to his own house, he desired the table to be laid out for eating. He had an intelligent

1. Gulistān - P. 118
2. Ibid, p. III
son who said: 'Father, hast thou not eaten anything at the request of the sultan. He replied: 'I have not eaten anything to serve a purpose. The boy said: Then likewise say thy prayers again as thou hast not done anything to serve that purpose."

(One night I was sitting with my father, remaining awake and holding the beloved Quran in my lap, whilst the people around us were asleep. I said: 'Not one of these persons lifts up his head or makes a genuflection. They are as fast asleep as if they were dead.' He replied: 'Darling of thy father, would that thou wert also asleep rather than disparaging people.')

This mild reproof of the old and wise father to his young captious son is directed towards all those who, proud of their own chastity, look down upon others whose attitude towards religion is somewhat casual.

Sadi wanted man to be practical and to try his best for achieving success in life. He did not believe in leaving things to fate, instead, he disapproved of those who do not struggle in life, being weak and lazy and camouflage their weakness by showing it as their faith in God, (بی‌تربیت). They say: 'What can we do when everything is in the hands of the ALMIGHTY', Sadi thought it to be a wrong interpretation.

I. Gulistan, p. III
of religion - God has not said that man should forsake his efforts and be lethargic and lazy; this is certainly no at all. What He says is that man should try his best and then leave the result to God. Sadi condemned those who have this wrong attitude towards life and inspired and encouraged them. In the anecdote of when a man saw that God gives food even to a paralysed for who could not get it herself, he stopped searching for his livelihood and confined himself to a cave, thinking that God will give him food as He gives to that fox. See how Sadi gets him admonished by the Divine voice:

I. Kulliyat p. 280
When he for weakness lacked all stamina and sense,
A voice came to his ear from out the wall:
Go, be a raving lion, you rogue!
Cast not yourself down like a crippled fox!
So strive that like the lion you leave somewhat:
How be with leavings sated like a fox?
Though a man have a massive, leonine neck,
If like a fox he casts him down - a dog is better far!
Get goods into your grip and sup with others,
Cook not your ears for others' superfluity;
Eat while you may by your own strong arm,
For in your own scale-pan will lie your effort;
Toil manfully and co-fort bring to others:
The effeminate man eats by others' toil;
O youth! Take the aged pauper's hand,
Not casting yourself down that your hand may be taken,
God will forgive that one among His servants
By whose existence mankind lives at ease
The head that has a brain will practise generosity:
The meanly-minded lack both case and kernel!
Good he will see in both abodes
Who to God's creatures brings some good.)
(The last three couplets show Sadi's socialistic approach to religion; but of this later).

The following is not less than a blasphemy in the eyes of our puritan mullahs where such mercenary thing as eating is preferred over the Divine pursuits:

(Hearing of a man of cleanly soul sprung, Knowledgeable and much-travelled, in outer Byzance, I and some travellers, desert-roaming, Made our way to behold this man He kissed us each on head and eyes and hands, Seated us in dignity and honour; then sat down himself, Saki, In gracious ways and converse, warmly he proceeded Yet was his pot-hearth wondrous cold! All night no rest or slumber did he know For tasbih and takhlil - no more did we, for hunger.

Here also Sadi's approach was purely practical. He thought that everything should be proportionate and balanced in a man's life - excess of anything, be it religion or

I. Büstân, p. 280
prayer, is not good: A man is hungry and his host, being a chaste man, keeps him engaged in religious discourse (in "الحسن و ارتقاء") without giving him food. Our Shaykh could not appreciate this lop-sided behaviour and voiced his resentment thus:

To our rationalist Sadi, the formalities of religion are not important at all, what is important is that man should be basically good and should care for his fellow beings. True and real religion lies not in the minute

trivialities of but in being kind to your fellow men:

I. Kuliya't, p. 357
In childhood I conceived desire of fasting,
Not knowing which was left yet, which was right.
A devotee, a local pious man,
Taught me to wash my hands and face;
Say first "In God's Name" as practice prescribes;
Second fix your mind; and third, wash the palms;
Item, massage your head, then rinse your feet;
And there it is, all finished in the Name of God!
The ancient village-headman heard these words
And lost his temper: 'O foul person, execrated one!
Did you not call it error to use toothpicks while in fast?
But is it right to eat the sons of men when they are dead;
Wash first your mouth from what should not be said!
Then it will be washed free of edibles!

About such self-righteous, pharisaical hypocrites
who consider these formalities to be the very soul of religion.

and about their so-called religious discourses, Sa'di says
with an amused smile:

I. Kulliyāt - p.313
(On the highway of argument the lawyers now set out, Castling about with 'Why?' and 'That we grant not'; They opened on each other wide the door of discord, And craned their necks to utter 'Nay' and 'Aye'.
So that you'd say that cocks, all apt to battle, Had set about each other, beak and claw; One, as though drunk, beside himself with rage, Another, both hands beating on the ground; Together in a tangled knot they fell, Which none could manage to unravel.

As we have said earlier, Sadi believed in the harmonious development of body and soul. Even his religious approach shows that he gave much importance to human feelings and emotions. His insight into human nature made him realise that 'fear' can never be a good inspiration for anyone and this is the reason that most of our religious orders are carried out only half-heartedly by people (because most of the religious laws are based on fear - fear of God, fear of sin, fear of punishment etc. etc.). And because of this constant fear, our religious leaders have lost their self-confidence and have become rigid, and pessimistic. They are not sure that even their good deeds will be rewarded.
On the contrary, Sādī, like every other humanist was an optimist by temperament so his religious approach was also optimistic. His God was not A Cruel Despot, but A Loving Friend who cares for men and wants them . to lead a happy life . (Sādī was not like the Asha'iras who do not include Justice in the Qualities of God and so are afraid of punishment inspite of their good deeds. Sādī's belief was more like the Mutazelites' who think God to be Just). He was confident that if a man is really good and virtuous then he need not be afraid, he will be rewarded by God. Neither did he think that one should be a recluse in order to be chaste and pious. In the preface of Gulistan, he says that once he decided to live in seclusion and to cut off his ties from this world. But soon a friend of his made him realise that this is not a healthy way to live in this world, he must mix up with people and be happy and gay.

Let us quote the Shaykh himself to enjoy his beautiful diction:

I. Kulliyāt p. 71
After maturely considering these sentiments, I thought proper to sit down in the mansion of retirement. I continued in this resolution till a friend entered at the door, but I would give him no reply nor lift up my head from the knees of worship. He looked at me aggrieved and said:

Now, while thou hast the power of utterance, speak, O brother, with grace and kindness.

This friendly reproach was enough to bring him out of his temporary melancholia. He at once realised that:

(It is against propriety, and contrary to the opinions of wise men that the Zulfiqar of Ali should remain in the scabbard and the tongue of Sa'di in his palate.

The famous anecdote of Sommat (although its historical authenticity is doubtful) clearly and boldly describes the Shaykh's unusually liberal and practical outlook. (Allow me to say that the fertile imagination of Sadi has conjured up this whole anecdote for the sole purpose of showing how broad-minded and practical one should be in life; and, whether authentic or not, it successfully suffices in conveying the Shaykh's message). It teaches us quite a few things:

1. Sadi did not see any harm in

or in behaving according to the situation, even if,

I. Kulliyat p. 71
sometimes, it clashes with one's religious ideals. We can say that he believed in a sort of (the much criticised) Taqayyah of the Shias! He gave us an extreme example of this when he worshipped the Brahman's Devta at Sommat:

(That idolkin I gave a kiss upon the hand. Curses be on him, and upon the idol-server! An infidel I became myself, in blind acceptance, for some days, became a Brahmin in the stations of the Sand.

2. One should not hesitate in killing a "..." to save one's life:

I. Kulliyāt p. 380
At sight of me the Brahmin was discomfited
A sure disgrace, to have the cat out of the bag!
He rushed away, and I upon his heels,
And down into a pit I cast him,
For I knew that if he remained alive,
He'd try to have my blood,
Having report of a malefactor's doings,
Remove his power when you first become aware.

3. The last few couplets of this anecdote are full of
invaluable practical wisdom. In the end, he summed up his
own teachings in one couplet:

(No other counsel lies in Sa'di's pages
If you dig out a wall's foundations, stand by it no
longer)

One more--and perhaps the most striking example of Sadi's
rational attitude and of his so-called deviation from
popular religious belief is where he narrates that a man saw

(I know not where I've seen, but in a book,
That someone in his dream saw the Devil;
A fir-tree in stature, a hur to see,
Light gleaming from his countenance like the sun.

I. Kulliyāt, p.236
He went up and said: "Can this be you? Is it not rather an angel, so fair? You, whose face is thus fair as the moon, Why are you, in the world, a bed-time tale for ugliness? Why has the artist in the emperor's portico Made you morose-faced, ugly and corrupt?"

Now Sadi, with a twinkle in his eyes and a mischievous smile on his lips makes the Devil retort:

Now Saul, with a twinkle in his eyes and a mischievous smile on his lips makes the Devil retort:

(Bearing which words, the Devil laughed and said; "this is not my farm, But the pen is in the foeman's palm; Their root from Paradise I overturned; Now in vengeance they depict me ugly!"

Apart from his rationalistic attitude towards religion, the religious views of Sadi, like a true humanist, were profoundly permeated by the spirit of tolerance. The concept of tolerance which has come to be affirmed in the modern world as an effect of the wars of religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth century implies the possibility of a peaceful coexistence between the various religious confessions which remain different from each other and are not reducible to a single confession. For Sadi, (as well as for the humanists) instead, the attitude of tolerance derived from the conviction of the fundamental unity of all the religious beliefs of mankind and therefore the possibility of a religious peace between each and every
religion - be it Judaism, Islam, Christianity or Hinduism. Sādī’s age was the age of rigid religion; there were different schools of thought (Hanafī, Shafeī, Ṣambalī, etc.) and each of them clung to his own set of ideals and virtues, condemning others. In such an atmosphere of non-cooperation when every one thought that the only way to Heaven was through his religion, it is surprising how a man of such modernistic ideas as Sādī could survive. He thought that every religion is to be respected and every one has a right to follow his own religion because they all are different means to reach one single goal – God. No religion can be said to be better than others because a ‘fundamental unity’ interconnects them. All this argument and tussel about religion is foolish and useless because nobody has got a right to criticise or condemn other’s beliefs — to every man his religion is the best because he is born in it and is emotionally attached to it:

I. Kulliyāt p. 351
(A Jew was debating with a Musalman
Till I shook with laughter at their dispute.
The Moslem said in anger: 'If this deed of mine
Is not correct, may God cause me to die a Jew'.
The Jew said: 'I swear by the Pentateuch
That if my oath is false, I shall die a Moslem
like thee."

Should from the surface of the earth wisdom disappear
Still no one will acknowledge his own ignorance).

In yet another anecdote in Bustan Sadi observes that for God
there is no difference between a Muslim and a pagan or a Jew
and a Christian. He loves all and wants us also to love
every one without any consideration of his caste or creed.
Sadi says that once Prophet Ibrahim called a passer-by
for lunch. When that man came and started eating without
saying "Bismillah", Khalil asked his religion and on
knowing that he was not a Muslim:

(\text{Meanly he drove him forth, seeing him as foreign
for the filthy's exorable to the pure}).

I. Kulliyat, p. 279
How look how God admonishes His Prophet for looking down upon a man and humiliating him:

(From the Maker Majestic straightway came an angel, A vesomely uttering reproof: 'O Friend! A hundred years I've given him his duly-bread and life Yet you've an aversion to him all in a moment!)

I. Kulliyat, p.27
Though he prostrates himself before a fire, 
Why hold you back the hand of bounty?' 
Tie no knots on beneficence' bond,
Saying: 'Here's fraud and here's deceit, there's
strickery and craft.' 
A poor bargain drives the learned exegete 
When he for bread sells science and humanities: 
For how should reason or Religious Law give ruling
That men of wisdom may give faith for worldly things? 
Yet you must take, for one possessed of wisdom
Will gladly buy from those who cheaply sell.'

But the most important and striking thing in Sadi's
religious attitude is neither his rational approach nor his
religious tolerance — the thing which differentiates
him from others and makes him a true humanist is his idea of
the social function of religion. It is most astonishing
how in a time when religion was considered to be something
supernatural and its sole aim was supposed to be pave man's
path to Heaven, could Sadi conceive of its social aspect.
(He was most modern in this sense, because it is a theory
propounded by later Christian thinkers and humanists). Sadi
thought that religion — at least the religion which has been
handed down to us — attaches for great importance to loving
God than to loving one's fellow man. Further more, it puts
forward as the main motive for loving and helping one's
neighbour the assurance that such conduct is pleasing to God
and will earn a substantial reward in the life here after.
This appeal to "posthumous self-interest", (in John Stuart Milts
phrase) never impressed our humanist poet. He was a practical
and reasonable man, having an extra-ordinary insight into human nature, and his way of inspiring man for doing good was much more simple and effective - he inspired man to do good not by some vague hope of getting rewarded in the other world, but by showing him its every practical advantages in this very world. He, being a humanist, was more concerned about this humble domain of men and paidless heed to the much-longed - for other world. Of course he too, like our religious reformers, advised men to help others and to make them happy, but his motive in doing so is completely different. He says:

Because:

Here he advises us to be kind and lenient to the poor not because we will be rewarded for this in Heaven, but for the very practical reason that if we satisfy him, he will work for us more heartily and efficiently. Likewise, he advises the king to take care of his people because:

(For by virtue of the people the emperor holds his crown)

He further elaborates on this:

(In bestowing office, recognize the well-endowed man, For the penniless man bows his neck)
If the king is cruel to people, Sadi does not frighten him with the punishment he will receive in the End, instead, he says:

(Do you hear of the Persians' Khusraus Who practised oppression against their subjects? That grandeur, that kingship do not endure; Nor endures that tyranny over one single peasant! See the error committed by the tyrant: The world endures, but he and his tyrannies have gone!

These examples will suffice to prove that Sadi did not approve of emotionally blackmailing man into doing good to others — instead, he wanted man to do good and to be kind to others because this will help him in living a happy life. Sadi realised that the religion which was preached and practised, was totally individualistic and had no collective or social goal. It was concerned less to relieve others' sufferings than to enhance one's own sanctity and encouraged a sort of selfish charity — men gave money to the poor and were sympathetic to them simply and exclusively for their own spiritual benefit and the welfare of the sufferer was altogether foreign to their

I. Kulliyat p. 246
thoughts. Sadi's compassion for humanity made him revolt against this selfish approach; he wanted to promote and expand the conception of 'self' and to envelope the entire humanity in this single word. He propounded that religion means not only a selfish involvement with one's own chastity in this world and salvation in the other, what it really advocates is the welfare of all the human beings in this world - and consequently - in the other, because:

This one couplet is enough to show how S'adi interpreted religion and what great importance he gave to serving humanity.

According to him only those who love and serve their fellow men will enjoy the Heavenly luxuries:

He further says:

I. Kulliyat, p. 241
2. Ibid, p. 243
3. Ibid, p. 277
Sadi believes that if one is kind to men—nay, not only to men, even to the animals, God rewards him for this:

Sadī bālaša šall kāsh yāt

One in the desert found a thirsty dog,
With naught of his life but the last gasp left;
That man of seemly ritual made his hat a bucket,
Binding his turban thereto as a rope;
At all of which the Messenger proclaimed that man's condition
As pardoned by the Arbiter of Sins!

And thus he draws the conclusion:

(For if the Truth ne'er misses a kindness to a dog,
How shall a benefit to a good man done be missed

Sadi believed that only 'ubāṣ and following the religious formalities is not enough, one must do something for his fellow men, only then can he be called a truly religious man:

I. Kulliyat p. 276
2. Ibid. p. 276
3. Ibid. p. 275
(Think not, because you've done obeisance,
You've brought a single tit bit to this Presence;
Easing one heart with one act of kindness
Is better than a thousand rak' as at every way-stage!

Before concluding this discussion, let us quote a few more examples to prove our point:

1. 

(A liberal man who eats and bestows is better than a devotee who fasts and hoards.)

2. 

(Strike the head of a serpent with the hand of a foe because one of two advantages will result. If the enemy succeeds thou hast killed the snake and if the latter, thou hast been delivered from a foe.)

3. 

(The Quran was revealed for the acquisition of a good character, not for chanting written chapters.)

1. Kulliyat, p. 200
2. Ibid, p. 199
3. Ibid, p. 209
4. Exaltation of Freedom

One of the most important factors of the humanist revival was their love for freedom: They wanted "The rebirth of a spirit that man has possessed in the classical ages and had lost in the Middle Ages—a spirit of freedom that provided justification for man's claim of rational autonomy, allowing him to see himself inviolate in nature and history and capable of making them his realm". This new-born sense of man's freedom was the most striking (and most attractive) aspect of Humanism.

The Renaissance, like the Protestant Reformation, was not really anarchical. It rebelled against unfair authority, against one set complex of ideals, habits, institutions.

Humanism which was the most important offshoot of the Renaissance shared the spirit to the full. The humanists worked hard to discredit an older authority (and in the process, they often used libertarian language too) and demanded freedom for the new education, freedom from the rule of scholasticism, freedom for the individual to follow his own mind and not just parrot Aristotle. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy says about this particular aspect of Humanism:

"The exaltation of freedom was in fact one of the major themes of humanists, but the freedom of which they spoke is that which man can and should exercise in society. The fundamental institutions

I. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy

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of the medieval world - the empire, the Church and feudalism seemed to be the guardians of a cosmic order which man had to accept but which he could not modify to the slightest degree. They worked primarily to show that all the material and spiritual goods to which man could aspire derive from the order to which he belongs; that is, the hierarchies which are the interpreters and custodians of the cosmic order. Humanism, which was born in the cities and communes that had fought and were fighting for their autonomy and that saw in traditional hierachal orders an obstacle rather than an aid to the goods indispensable to man, defended man's freedom to project his life, in the world in an autonomous way."

We are greatly surprised when we see the same urge for individual freedom in Sa'di. He was a humanist to the very core of his heart and had the same approach to life. He believed that man is a free agent of Nature and have all the capabilities of living a free life. He too, like the humanists, revolted against the authority of the empire and religion. Naturally, his way of revolting was different, but the spirit was the same -- both believed in the individual

I. Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.
freedom of man, both wanted to protest against unfair authority
both had faith in the basic goodness of man and both wanted
man to have the freedom of thought and speech.

Sa'di lived in an age which knew nothing of freedom --
that too personal and individual freedom. The Mongols were
despotic rulers and were totally different from their
sophisticated predecessors -- the Iranian kings. Their only
way of ruling people was by cruel punishment and unfair
authority. What the king ordered had to be followed -- no
one could question him, no one could voice his opinion. Apart
from this, the religious leaders of those days were also
exploiting people and giving them pure fanaticism in the name
of religion. People were like puppets in the hands of their
rulers and these religious heads had long ago lost whatever
concept of individual freedom they ever had.

In such exacting circumstances a sensitive man can
can react in two ways -- either he will become totally
lifeless, insipid and will bow to the authority, surrendering
completely; or he will become aggressive and will boldly
try -- as best as he can do to protect his freedom and to protest
against the authority.
Sa'di belongs to the latter category. He bears aloft the torch of individual freedom even in that darkness of suppression and cruelty. He wanted every man to realise that personal freedom is the birth-right of every individual. He wanted to arouse people from their age-old slumber and to inspire them to regain their lost freedom. For this, he chose not the direct, but the indirect method. He did not write treatises on the value or importance of freedom, neither did he condemn the people for not realising its worth and for not trying to achieve it — no, he certainly did not believe in these bizarre ways of today's modern reformist. He had a more subtle but much more effective way of conveying his message. He did not tell the people in so many words that freedom is not a thing which they should lose, or that they must be bold and try to cast off the unwanted authoritarianism of the empire and the religion, instead, he showed and proved this by his own behaviour. Every word he uttered and every sentence he wrote was meant to drive home the fact that he was not afraid of the authority, that he dared say boldly whatever he thought to be correct and proper. His entire personality, his whole behaviour was a challenge to authoritarianism. He himself was a living ideal of his ideology and a perfect symbol of individual freedom. To him, freedom of thought and speech was a form of resistance against the authority so he practised it; boldly criticising both the empire and the religion. Never for a
moment moment was his free and aspiring soul chained by the shackles of the political or religious law. He had drank the cup to the full, and neither the fear of punishment nor the temptation of reward could prompt him to change his ideology. One is utterly astonished, the marvellous courage, unabated confidence and untouched sincerity of this bold Shirasian!

But one is even more surprised when one sees that in spite of openly criticising their cruel atrocities, Sa'di was liked and respected by the Mongol emperors. His transparent sincerity, his fearless honesty, and his genuine concern for the humanity touched even the stony hearts of the Mongol Maniacs. Even their deceased minds could sense that here is a man who is really and truly devoted to the cause of humanity and whose criticism is neither biased nor unfair — but a healthy and frank assessment of things. They liked his honest and rational approach to life and listened to whatever he had to say. The Qasidas which he has composed for the Mongol as well as the Iranian Kings, are the best example of Sadi's exaltation of individual freedom. He has a peculiarly individual style of escrit. The Qasida has always been used for praising the patron and the poet usually applies all his art in writing it, with the result that now when one thinks of Qasida one thinks of fantastic similes and metaphors, far-fetched ideas, highly exaggerated praise of the and a very decorative and artificial diction.
(The Qasaid of the Seljuq period are specially noteworthy for this quality.) But Sa'di sings a different tone: He does not idealise his heroes, he does not use fanciful similes and metaphors, and his expression is not decoratively complicated. Instead, what does he do? He frankly criticises his heroes for their good and bad deeds. Be he a powerful Mongol king like Ankiyanun, a just and good-natured Iranian prince like Sa'd ibn-i-Abu Bakr, or a renowned man of letters like 'Ata Malik-Juwayni, Sa'di never hesitates in pointing out his weaknesses and telling him how to remedy them. His praises is always restrained and balanced, his language always sweet and simple, his tone always sincere and soft. Only a few examples from the Shaiykh's Qasidas will suffice to prove to the esteemed reader how completely different his style and approach is from the other Qasida writers. But before quoting from the Shaykh, let us first quote from Anwari and Khaqani -- the two giants of Qasida writing -- only then can the reader fully appreciate the striking difference between Sa'di's qasidas and others'.

Firstly, Anwari:

I. Diwan-i-Anwari, p 183
And now Khaqāni:

What an assemblage of quaint similes, bombastic metaphors, exaggerated praise and affected style! In all this grand show of the poet's art and imagination, the puts on a supernatural air and the reader begins to question the sincerity of the ' '. Now listen to the Shaykh and see what is his style of :

II. Kulliyat p. 467

I. Diwan-i-Khaqani
The Shaykh grasps the reader's attention at the very
very beginning; by the way he starts his Qasida, (that two
a qasida which was meant to be a a New Year Greeting to the
king! Instead of saying something like:

he beware the king:

The entire qasida runs on this strain with a here
and one there of the king's praise (as if to merely fulfill
the formality); like:

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1. Kulliyat-I. URFI, p. 34
2. Kulliyat p. 468
3. Ibid, p. 468
Apart from these two or three couplets, the full qasida is devoted to and one wonders how could Sa'di be so out-spoken and bold! He himself realises this and says:

A few couplets in the same strain from an eulogy of Abu-Bakr ibn-i-Sa’d:

In yet another Qasida in praise of Sa’d-ibn-i-Abu Bakr ibn-i-Sa’d, a very favourite king of the Shaykh, he extols the kings virtue in the first few couplets:

I. Kulliyat p.488
2. Ibid, p.224
3. Kulliyat P. 223
But after reciting a few lines in this strain, he says:

I. Kulliyat Sa'di, p. 223
2. Ibid, p. 224
One feels surprised at the way Sa'di boldly declares

it was the integrity of his character and the sincerity of his heart which gives him the courage and confidence to thus admonish and advise the king. A few more lines from his Bustan to show how he advises the kings to be kind and just to their people:

I. Kulliyat p.224
2. Ibid, p. 228
Who can say that these couplets have been taken from an eleventh century Mathnawi? They are so modern in their attitudes so liberal and rational in their social consciousness that they seem to have been taken from some modern book of political thought. The political ideas of the Shaykh are indeed as modern as of any political thinker of today. In a time when none could conceive of a democratic government, Sa'adi says:

Sa'adi's honesty never allows him to shower extravagant praise on his patron. Even while writing a qasida for the Mongol emperors, he does not hesitate in condemning their atrocities and telling them to be kind and generous to people and not to be proud of their riches and their power because these are all temporary. Read the following lines and you will see for yourself how Sa'adi bewares his and tells him not to give much importance to this world. The Qasida is titled “...” but there is hardly any “...” in it, the whole Qasida is devoted to admonishing Ankeyanun and frightening him with the

I. Kulliyat, p. 226
2. Ibid., p. 460
Instead, he prays to God to inspire the king to do good:

1. Kulliyat p. 462
2. Ibid, p. 223
3. Ibid, p. 224
(Even while comparing the king to Nushirwan, our poet does not forget to compare him with the august Prophet himself.) He praises the king, not for his extraordinary riches, or his supernatural bravery, but for the reason that:

He does not say like other qasida writers that he is lucky to have been born during the days of the , instead, he completely turns the tables and says:

When we go through his qasida carefully, one more fact, and a very significant one, strikes us: mostly those qasidas of Sa'di have this which are addressed to the kings, otherwise, the qasidas which he has composed for

I. Kulliyat p. 462
2. Ibid, p. 224
others are not so full of advise and Sa'di has also bestowed praise on his patrons quite lavishly. The point stands proved read the eulogies he has written for 'Alauddin 'Ata Malik Juwayni, Sahib diwan, a great historian and scholar of his times. These qasidas have all the traditional qualities attributed to this by the Seljuqui qasida writers, and the Shaykh is quite extravagant in his praise of the

Here are a few more couplets from yet another qasida, in praise of Shamsuddin Muhammad Juwayni, Sahib diwan:

I. Kulliyāt, p. 451
One is quite confused at this semblance of paradox in Sa'idi's qasidas and may well ask, 'why this contrast'? In the humble opinion of the present writer, the disparity in his style is chiefly due to the following two reasons:

1. Sa'idi is a man with a highly-developed sense of self-respect to him, lavishing undue praise on the royal patrons means self-degradation. He does not want the king to assume that even he - Sa'idi, the greatest humanist, the symbol of freedom, can lower himself so as to please the king. His dignity and self-respect never allowed him to do so. He does abhors being taken by the king as one more of their professional admirers. Thus, while addressing the kings, he maintains his dignity. His tone is always balanced; he is not like an eulogist extolling his , he is more like an elder appreciating the good qualities of his younger, but at the same time admonishing them for their weaknesses

so he is most reserved while eulogising a king.

But the case is totally different when he writes a qasida for a literary man and a scholar. They are birds
of the same feather, worshippers of the same idol, and he feels completely at ease with them. If he bestows extravagant praise on them, his self respect is not injured because in praising them, he is paying homage to the goddess learning itself.

II The second reason for this contrast is that Sa'di is a sincere and honest to the very core of his heart and possesses a deep sense of responsibility towards his fellow beings. Most of the kings of those days were cruel and there was total anarchy in the whole country. People, afraid of their rulers, dared not say a word against them, to be neither could they show their resentment and the miseries they were going through. Sa'di was painfully conscious of what was happening around him. He also knew that people do not have the courage to defy their rulers and to tell them how badly they were suffering. Sa'di, with his inherent love of humanity and his bold and courageous nature, took it upon himself to be the representative of the public feelings and to convey to the ruling authorities the real sentiments of the silent majority. He was apprehensive that the passivity of the people ainst their cruelties, will result in making the rulers all the more callous and ruthless. Sa'di wanted them to realise their cruelty towards people. Naturally, he could not be too aggressive in that time of the Mongol terrorism, so he chose
a mild but effective way: he criticised them in his poetry; sometimes addressing them directly and condemning them for their atrocities, sometimes indirectly, by saying how harmful cruelty and despotism is for the king and that by being kind to people, the king can have a stable government. The Shaykh chose the Qasida for conveying his message as because it is in qasida only that the poet addresses the king directly. Thus, Sa'di selected this particular of poetry as the link between him and the ruling emperor and this is the main reason that all his eulogies of the kings have minimum possible praise and an abundance of social and moral advices.

Sometimes the Shaykh uses the indirect method and conveys his ideas through symbolic anecdotes: He wants to say that the death of a cruel man is good for the society, see how effectively he says it in the following anecdote of the Gullistan:

I. Kulliyat p. 87
(A dervish, whose prayers met with answers, made his appearance, and Hejaj Yusuf, calling him, said: 'Utter a good prayer for me', whereon the dervish exclaimed: 'O God, take his life.' He replied: 'For God's sake, what prayer is this?' The dervish rejoined: 'It is a good prayer for thee and for all Musalmans.'

0 tyrant, who oppressest thy subjects,
How long with thou persevere in this?
Of what use is authority to thee?
To die is better for thee than to oppress men.

In another anecdote he says:

(An unjust king asked a devotee what kind of worship is best? He replied: 'For thee the best is to sleep one half of the day so as not to injure the people for a while."

In one more anecdote of Gulistan Sa' di tells us how even a trivial injustice on the part of the king, can encourage his servants to go to the extremes:

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1. Kulliyat, p. 87
2. Ibid, p. 95
3. Kulliyat, p. 95
It is related that, whilst some game was being roasted for Nushirwan the just during a hunting party, no salt could be found. Accordingly a boy was sent to an adjoining village to bring some. Nushirwan said: 'Pay for the salt lest it should become a custom and the village be ruined.

If the king eats one apple from the garden of a subject his slaves will pull him up the tree from the roots.

One more example from Bustan in which inspires the king to be kind and compassionate:

\[\text{\ldots}\]

1. Kulliyat, p. 95
2. Ibid, p. 252
(Make a prayer! said the king. 'O prudent one! For I like a needle am fettered by the thread.' On hearing which words, the bent-backed elder sharply raised a harsh-sounding cry, saying: 'God Himself is kind to the just man; Look to the forgiving and giving of God! You who never once forgave mankind—How shall you see ease from fortune?.

Sadi's love of freedom and individualism manifests itself in religious matters too and he has a distinctly individual approach towards religion. He does not follow the set and rigid rules presented to us by the Mulla. He searches for their rational justification and sees everything in relation with the welfare of man. Much has been said in this regard in the preceding discussions about the Shaykh's religion, so here we need not elaborate on this, only the following one example from the Shaykh's Kulliyat will suffice to prove the point. The Shaykh says to serve the humanity is better than...

Now there are two things which necessarily follow individual freedom: self-respect and contentment. If a
Person believes in personal freedom then naturally his ego or 'self' is highly developed and he never likes to lower and degrade himself at any cost. Another thing which individual freedom initiates is contentment; if one wants to maintain one's personal freedom and self-respect, then he must be content with whatever he has. Because the more are the desires the less is the freedom. So contentment is necessary to lead a free, dignified and balanced life.

Sa'di knew that individual freedom is impossible unless one has a fully developed concept of 'self' and is contented and satisfied with whatever he has. His Gulistan and Bustan are full of such anecdotes where he extolls self-respect and contentment. Let us make our point clear by illustrating from Sa'di's Gulistan and Bustan.

I. Self-respect:

To Sa'di, death is preferable than asking a favour from a "جکر".

I. His qasidas are the best example of his deep sense of self-respect.
2. Kulliyat, pp. 137-38
A brave warrior who had received a dreadful wound in the Tatar war was informed that a certain merchant possessed a medicine which he would probably not refuse to give if asked for. The warrior replied: 'If I ask for the medicine he will either give it or refuse it and if he gives it maybe it will profit me, and may be not. At any rate the inconvenience of asking it from him is a lethal poison. And philosophers have said: 'If for instance the water of life were to be exchanged for a good reputation, no wise man would purchase it because it is preferable to die with honour than to live in disgrace.'

(I heard that a dervish, burning in the fire of poverty and sewing patch upon patch was told by some one, 'Why sittest thou? A certain man in this town possesses a benevolent nature. If he becomes aware of thy case, he will consider it'. He replied: 'Hush! It is better to die of inanition than to plead for one's necessities before any man.')

I. Kulliyat p. 134
(A man of heart was befallen by favor, 
And was told: 'Ask what's-his-name for sugar. 
Said he: The bitterness of dying I'd prefer, my boy, 
To bearing the cruelty of a sour face."

2. Contentment:

The Gulistan and Bustan of Sa'di are so full of such anecdotes which extoll the virtue of contentment that selection has become very difficult. However, here are a few examples, picked at random from his Kulliyat:

(A sick man having been asked what his heart desired replied: 'That it may not desire anything'.

(A beggar can be sated with one dirham of silver, 
Paridun but half-sated with all the realms of the Persians: 
The custody of realm and empire's but affliction, 
The beggar's an emperor, in name only 'beggar'.

What can be a better peroration of this discussion than a quotation from the Shaykh's Gulistan itself in which he defines freedom in a beautifully symbolic way:

I. The Shaykh has devoted two full chapters to in Gulistan and Bustan. 
2. Kulliyat, p. 136 
3. Thid p. 147
(A sage was asked: 'Of so many notable, high and fertile trees which God the most high has created, not one is called free, except the cypress, which bears no fruit. What is the reason of this? He replied: 'Every tree has its appropriate season of fruit, so that it is sometimes flourishing therewith, and looks sometimes withered by its absence; with the cypress, however, neither is the case, it being fresh at all times, and this is the quality of those who are free'.

Place not thy heart on what passed away; for the Tigris will flow after the Khālis have passed away in Baghdad.

If thou art able, be liberal like the date tree, And if thy hand cannot afford it, be liberal like the cypress.
5. **Aesthetic Sense and Cheerful Outlook**:

The charm of the colourful personality of Sa'di lies in its countless facets and infinite variety. And when he projects this variety onto the pages of his literary writings, they also partake of its spectral hues. His love of beauty and his optimistic attitude towards life is one more—and perhaps the most attractive—aspect of his humanism. J.S. Mackenzie, in his Lectures on Humanism, says about this particular quality of the humanists.

"To be men, to play the game of life beautifully seemed to be their (the humanists') highest ambition. And the reason that they were so much attracted by Greece and all that is Greek was that the ancient Greeks, 'played the game of life'—to quote Goethe—more beautifully than others and their interest seemed always to lie in himself...."

The Encyclopaedia of social sciences stresses this love of beauty of the humanists in the following words:

"The humanists were one and all scholars with a great love for learning and a genuine appreciation of beauty of form and thought..."  

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1. Lectures on Humanism
2. The Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences
Orde Brinton hints at the cheerful outlook of the humanists thus:

"These humanists and artists were not going to be like the late Medieval decadants, worried and obsessed with sin, while they tried to enjoy themselves. The humanists were cheerful, optimistic, and enjoyed life with a good conscience. Theirs was to be no dreadful Dance of Death, but a cheerful Dance of Life . . . ."

All these definitions suffice to show that temperamentally, all the humanists were cheerful and loved beauty in every form. When we critically observe this phenomena, we see that it was born out of a reaction against the asceticism, gloom and the general pessimism which prevailed in those ages, the humanists, while revolting against the depersonalizing and dehumanizing of man also rebelled against this pessimistic and deessential outlook towards life, giving it a healthy and cheerful touch).

The cheerful outlook of S'adi is a necessary product of his humanism. As can be interpreted by the above definitions, a humanist is never dour, never sour, never bitter. Darkness never clouds his outlook. If the e is a chink in a dungeon which lets in light, he glues his eyes to that

I. Ideas and Men.
chink and forgets all about the su rounding gloom. He adores beauty and knows that beauty consorts not with gloom and darkness but dwells in sunshine, and brightness, and beaming smiles. He leaves behind the bats and the owls to get stuck in the nocturnal pitch of the neither world, and soars himself, like the sky lark, to the celestial glories of the man. And what humanist, what adorer of beauty, what connoisseur of pretty things is fit to hold a candle to that "...", that "...", that "...", that "...", that Sa' di, that Prodigal Son of Shiras, who returns like a nightingale to the rose garden of his homeland and tenders meek apology for his wandering lust in such disarming verse:

His love of beauty manifests itself in various forms. There are his innumerable lyrics in which he praises his pretty sweet-heart. Selection is made invidious by abundance. However, a few examples may be cited:

I. Kulliyat p. 450
2. Sa' di is such a worshipper of beauty that he thinks it a sin not to admire and appreciate beautiful faces:
3. Kulliyat p. 717
Then there are the poet's offerings of adoration at the shrine of Nature's Beauty. In the Persian literature, it is hard to find anything which can equal the following, and in the literature of any language it is hard to find anything which can surpass it:

I. Kulliyat p. 671
2. Ibid, p. 653
3. Ibid, p. 454
در دو تابعی که در راسته درون‌مندی‌های استان‌های نزدیک به موصل و برخی از مناطق دیگر نیز زمین‌شناسی‌های سخت‌الساز در آنها انجام شده‌اند، خواستاری‌ها و شرایط جغرافیایی، وابستگی‌های اقتصادی و دیگر عواملی که بر سطح زمین و محیط زیست تأثیر می‌گذارند، در مطالعه و بررسی این تابع‌ها نقش به‌خوبی از لحاظ علمی و تحقیقاتی استفاده می‌شود.

عملکرد و تحولات در این جغرافیای شیک در آخرین سال‌های اخیر را با استفاده از روش‌های مختلفی که شامل مطالعه و تحقیقات در این زمینه و استفاده از دستاوردهای علمی در جغرافیای ناحیه، استاثر زمین‌شناسی و تحقیقات آبیاری و تغذیه به دست آورده و نتایجی در این زمینه پیدا کرده‌اند.

نکته باید بپذیریم که، در این مورد تحقیقات علمی، به نظر می‌رسد که در این زمینه باید به اشتراک‌گذاری اطلاعات و نتایج آن در بخش‌های مختلفی از مردمان، تحقیقات علمی و تحقیقات آبیاری و تغذیه به دست آورده و نتایجی در این زمینه پیدا کرده‌اند.

از جمله این نکته‌ها، بهتر است تا برای این موارد، حضور به‌طور مداوم از ناحیه و تحقیقات علمی در این زمینه انجام شود و نتایجی در این زمینه پیدا کرده‌اند.
And again the following in which Nature's beauty serves as a setting for human loveliness and indistinguishably blends with it in colour and freshness:

I. Kulliyat p. 443
2. Ibid.
But Sa'di's description of Beauty is not the only manifestation of his love for it. He has drank the cup to the full. He is possessed with it. His body and soul are steeped in it. It spills from his pen and imbues his writings.

The case is like the case of the mystic lover (which also Sa'di was to a certain extent) who adores his Divine Beloved so that his entire being becomes a mirror for His Effulgence. Read Sa'di's big kulliyat of verse and prose from end to end and the exquisitely beauty of his writing will manifest itself in every page, in every verse, in every sentence.

About this melodious phrase of Gulistan "انزللى مرسم بلغاتي"... an anecdote makes the great Taftazani to say:

"I wish Sa'di would have given this one phrase to me and taken my entire Mutawwal from me" ! The pages of Taftazani's trustworthy biographies are silent about the truth of this anecdote, but the pages of the Shaykh's Kulliyat bear eloquent testimony to the truth of the point which this anecdote tries to make —— that point being that the works of other literary authors cannot compete in eloquence and beauty with the writings of Sa'di.
Just read these few lines from the Preface of Gulistan and decide for yourself whether they can be equalled in their magical beauty:

(Laudation to the God of majesty and glory! Obedience to Him is a cause of approach and rapture 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.)

(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.)

I. Kulliyat pp.68/73
The entire Preface of Gulistan is an exquisite piece of art, and, not even poetry, what to say of prose, can match it in its subtlety of imagination, beauty of diction, and richness of style. Mulla Jami, the Master of the Latter Days, about whom it was said...

And what did Jami rear up? Not a fresh and fragrant garden but a stuffy hat-house! Compare the following examples from Jami and the Shaykh's literary magic:

1. Kulliyat p. 73
2. Ibid, p. 75
3. Baharistan-i-Jamī, p. 3
4. Ibid, p. 55
5. Kulliyat p. 159
(His friends, who considered his position, pitied his state, gave him advice and at last confined him but all to no purpose.)

Even on the sweetness of a dainty voice Jami could not dwell without gagging and stifling it with full-mouthed bombast:

And now behold the ultimate in contrast: Sa‘di makes fun of an ugly voice — and with what felicity! Hearken to his Sanjari:

(My lord, thou hast injured me by turning me away for ten dinars from this place because where next went they offered me twenty dinars to go to another locality but I refused. The amir smiled and said: 'By no means accept them because they will give thee even fifty dinars.'

1. Baharistân-i-Jāmī, p. 48
2. Kulliyât p. 157
Or again read this about his

(Asked him what his monthly salary was. He replied: 'Nothing.' He further inquired: 'Then why takest thou this trouble?' He replied: 'I am reading for God's sake.' He replied: 'For God's sake do not read."

Or, read the following anecdotes and see how injurious ugliness was to our Shaykh's fine senses:

(I saw a musician. Thou wouldst have said he is tearing up the vital artery with his fiddle-bow. His voice was more unpleasant than the wailing of one who lost his father.)

(When the harper began to sing
I said to the host: 'For God's sake
Put mercury in my ear that I may not hear
Or open the door that I may go away.'

1. Kulliyât p. 157
2. Ibid, p. 117
A musician! Far be he from this happy abode
No one ever saw him twice in the same place.
As soon as the shout rose from his mouth
The hair on the bodies of the people stood on end
The fowls of the house, terrified by him, flew away
Whilst he distracted our senses and tore his throat.

But the

(A musician! Far be he from this happy abode
No one ever saw him twice in the same place.
As soon as the shout rose from his mouth
The hair on the bodies of the people stood on end
The fowls of the house, terrified by him, flew away
Whilst he distracted our senses and tore his throat.

But the

(My Shaykh had often told me to abandon musical
entertainments and had given me abundant advice,
I did not mind it. This night my propitious
horoscope and my august luck have guided me to
this place where I have, on hearing the perform-
ance of this musician, repented and vowed
never again to attend at singing and convivial
parties.)

It was his extreme love of beauty which made him
utter this memorable quip:

So overwhelming is his passion

I. Kulliyāt p. 137
for beauty that the glimpse of a pretty, glowing face is more rewarding to him than the riches of this world:

And the reason for composing Gulistan (which the Shaykh tells us in its preface) is not less poetic than the book itself:

(The next morning when the intention of returning had prevailed over the opinion of tarrying, I saw that my friend had in his skirt collected roses, sweet basil, hyacinths and fragrant herbs with the determination to carry them to town; whereon I said: 'Thou knowest that the roses of the garden are perishable and the season passes away', and philosophers have said: 'Whatever is
Ho asked: 'Then what is to be done?' I replied: 'I may compose for the amusement of those who look and for the instruction of those who are present a book of a Rose Garden, a Gulistan, whose leaves cannot be of whose spring the vicissitudes of time will be unable to change into the inconstancy of autumn... After I had uttered these words he threw away the flowers from his skirts, and attached himself to mine, saying 'When a generous fellow makes a promise he keeps it,'... In short, some roses of the garden still remained when the book of Rose-garden was finished.

The best compliment that can be bestowed on this magical work of Sa'di can only be in his own magical verse:

Now something could be said about Sa'di's optimistic outlook on life. This cheerful outlook is the result of his cheerful disposition. His long life was lived under the constant shadows of the Tartar Terror. A sizable part of it was passed in wandering through the ruins of the medieval Islamic society which had recently been uprooted by the invading Mongol hordes. He had penned with blood the elegy of the last Abbasid Caliph and the murdered "children

1. Kulliyat p. 73
2. Ibid, p. 503
of the Uncle of Mustafa. He had stumbled upon the stormy battle-fields of the crusades and was condemned by the Christians to dig trenches at Tripoli. But neither social revolutions nor political upheavals, neither bodily torture nor emotional shock, could alter the innate good humour and the sturdy optimism of this serene humanist. He uses the memory of that Tripolitan -trench-digging to rail his ragging wife with this delightful quip:

(Compare this with Khaqani's , where that morose grumbler writes ninety odd verses complaining about his captivity which was for less rigorous than that of Sa'di. The limit of irascibility is reached when he threatens to forsake Islam and embrace Christianity.)

The Mongol cataclysm and the destruction of the Caliphate were not subjects for levity. But even here the characteristic reaction of Sa'di is not defeatist or despairing but brave and hopeful. In such dire circumstances hope cannot be

1. Kulliyat p. 503
2. Ibid., p. 123
3. Ibid
sustained without a firm faith in the goodness of things. Not only hope and faith, but a supremely bright outlook is also needed which can discern in the surrounding destruction any vestige of promise for future betterment. (Here the term 'future' has reference to this world as well as to the next). Sa'di as a humanist possessed to the fullest extent all the three qualities mentioned above, viz., hope, faith and a bright vision. And so when he sees blood-thirsty tyranny bent upon killing and destroying the entire Muslim world, on the one hand he tries to blunt the dagger of the murderer with threats of divine retribution and on the other, he soothes the aching wounds of the Muslims with the balm of future hope. Thus, if the have weltered here in blood, then verily for them is the highest paradise as the lowliest recompense in the future world "And further in the same strain:


The point is well brought out when Sa'di's elegy on Musta'sim is compared with Khaqani's lamentation on the Khaqani was a morose man, and unlike

I. Kulliyat, p. 308
Sa'di, captivity at the hands of Shirwanshah had increased that moroseness. So when he visits the ruins of Madain and laments over the memory of the vanquished and destructed Sasanian Empire he brings forth nothing but blood and tears. In an elegy of forty-two verses not a single flame of hope flickers to relieve the tomb-like darkness of the trembling palace. Outside, the fire of the Tigris:

So much for the ruined imperial residence. Now for its imperial residents and their empire:

I. Diwan-i-Khaqani, p. 322
2. Ibid, p. 322
3. Ibid, p. 322
At the end of this poignant dirge the poet throws in something about


But this is not, this is morbidity, stark and staring. The deceased mind the poet is full of skulls and skeletons and gory dust. And his despairing imagination cannot look forward to any further redemption either, for him all hope has been eternally swallowed up by the devouring earth:


This was how Khaqani reacted to the greatest of the Iranian defeats: no faith in God's mercy, no hope of Nature's recompense; a passive resignation, a total pessimism.

In contrast, what is Sa'di's reaction to the greatest of the Islamic defeats? This temperamentally sanguine and optimist man never loses hopes, never accepts defeat. Instead, he bravely addresses himself to make the best of a very bad job. He has to work against very great odds. It is as yet (and for a very long while to come) profitless to try for the overthrow of the Mongols so he sets for himself humer and more practicable targets. On the one hand, by understanding sympathy and reassuring praise he strives to sustain the morals of the few Muslim princes who have
succeeded by showering gold and showing pliability, to secure the friendship of the Mongols:

And again,

on the other hand, this brave soul, by his wise precepts and bold rebukes - tries to harness the Mongol Brute himself:

1. Kulliyat p. 225
2. Ibid. p. 477
3. Ibid. pp. 460-61
The second verse above has pointed reference to the notorious drinking orgies of the mongols. Likewise, the third with its mention of the siege and the ballista (سلاطين) has a special application to their cruel tactics, and admonished them in terms and language which are easily understandable to their martial minds.

In other Qasidah, the poet's language becomes stronger and his tone harsher:

I. Kulliyat p. 468-69
Surely, in a qasidah to threaten the patron with must seem the limit of rudeness and offence. But if the Shaykh was to be effective, he could not afford to be euphemistic. He was not dealing with the exquisite sensibilities of the old and refined princely order of Persia for whom the mildest and softest of pleadings like the following was remonstrance enough:

Instead, he had to harness the wild Mongols and it could only be done by means of strict chastisement and restraint. Sa'di himself hints at this in a qasida addressed to Ankeyanun:

Not only for political or social calamities, but for his personal inflictions also Shaykh has the same optimistic attitude. Read the following anecdotes and admire his capability of discerning a silver lining in every dark cloud:

I. Kulliyat p. 446
2. Ibid. p. 493
3. Ibid, p. 140
(I never lamented about the vicissitudes of time or complained of the turns of fortune except on the occasion when I was barefooted and unable to procure slippers. But when I entered the great mosque of Kufah with a sore heart and beheld a man without feet I offered thanks to the bounty of God, consoled myself for my want of shoes.)

Although most of the Shaykh’s writings have an ethical and reformatory aspect, yet they do not have even a vestige of bitterness in them. The preaching of Sa’di is not meant to hurt anyone and his tone is never harsh – instead he always have an amused smile on his lips and a mischievous twinkle in his eyes while uttering such quips:

(The teeth of all men are blunted by sourness, but those of the qa‘i by sweetness.)

Some more examples to enjoy the Shaykh’s beautiful diction and subtle humour:

(It is related that hermit consumed during one night ten mnn of food and perused the whole Qur’a till morning. A pious fellow who had heard of this said: ‘It would have been more excellent if he had eaten half a loaf and slept till the morning.’)
Sa'di says that even the wasps donot like the honey of a morose and irritable man:

(Next day he too began to trot about the world
Upon his head he'd honey, but vinegar above his brows:

But not even flies would settle on his honey

1. Kulliyat p. 317
2. Ibid, p. 317
His wife said to her husband playfully;
Bitter is the honey of a sour-faced man
Any ugly nature takes a man to hell,
From Paradise a goodly disposition comes;
Go, rather drink warm water from the channel's brink
Than cold rose-juice sold by a man of sour face
It is prohibited to taste that person's bread
Who folds his brows as though they were a tablecloth;
Make not, good fellow, matters harder for yourself,
For he of evil nature has a fortune all upturned;
Grant, then, you have of gold and silver nothing;
But can you not, like Sa'di, have a pleasant tongue

Let us close this discussion by quoting what Sa'di has himself written about this particular aspect of his writings and which is the best criticism one can offer him:

I. Kulliyat p. 216
(Most of the utterances of Sa'di being exhilarant and mixed with pleasanty, shortsighted persons have on this account lengthened the tongue of blame, alleging that it is not the part of intelligent men to spend in vain the kernel of their brain, and to eat without profit the smoke of the lamp; it is, however, not commended from enlightened men, who are able to discern the tendency of words, that pearls of curative admonition are strung upon the thread of explanation, and that the bitter medicine of advice is commingled with the honey of wit, in order that the reader's mind should not be fatigued, and thereby excluded from the benefit of acceptance; and praise be to the Lord of both worlds.

We gave advice in its proper place
Spending a lifetime in the task,
If it should not touch anyone's ear of desire
The messenger told his tale; it is enough.)
6. Compassion:

Boundless love and compassion for the humanity is such a basic point of humanism that the two terms can said to be almost synonyms. The humanists are, one and all, lovers of humanity and human being; and the entire Humanist Revival is based on this. What this revival really means is a fresh realization of man - his high achievements and higher potentialities, his independence and his self-sufficiency.

"The glorification of man was the object of humanism and this concern with man is what gives its primary meanings to the word humanism -- it is the philosophy of man, nature and human life."

Humanism's central point of interest is humanity and human being and the social, moral and spiritual welfare of man is of paramount interest to the followers of this cult. They are deeply concerned with man's life on this earth and all of their principles have one fundamental law, connecting them, together -- love of humanity. As Cyril Bibby says:

"Whatever the special characteristics of humanism in particular historical periods,

I. Humanism, by Hedas Moses
it is always interested in human potential and human welfare. It is more than a rational, intellectual attitude, for that can go with narrow interests and social unconcern. Humanism has connotations of cultural width and generosity of spirit and a great degree of philanthropy. It implies not only an intellectual interest in everything relating to humanity, but also a conviction that humanity and human being is worth caring for .......

This 'caring for the humanity' and this love and concern for the human being are the guiding forces of humanism, and as is evident from the above-given quotations, have always been the spirit behind this movement.

Sa'di too has drunk from the same cup and the pure nectar of love has intoxicated him completely. So much so that when we compare him in this particular aspect, with the 14th century humanists, we feel that their's is but a reverberating sound of the Shaykh's resounding crescendo, a wavering beam of that dazzling Sun, a small projection of that overpowering emotion. Every word he utters, every sentence he writes, and every verse he composes is deeply permeated by his love of humanity. The literature of the world, including the Persian literature, offers throughout its entire

I. Towards a Scientific Human Culture, by Cyril Bibby.
development, an unbroken and pervasive spread of humanistic utterance (In the Persian literature, examples could be cited from the national epic of Ferdowsi, from the mystical lyrics of Hafiz, from the Traveller's Narrative of Nasir Khusrav, from the Siyasat Nama of Nizamul Mulk and from the Akhlaq-e-Nasiri of نصرالله نوری). But no Persian writer (and only very few of the other literatures), is more humanistic or humane than Sa'di. The main theme of his corpus is humanity and human life — in all its thousand and one aspects. From religion to love and sex, he discusses everything with a quiet candour, analysing everything and suggesting man how to behave in different situations. His understanding of human psychology and human problems is perfect. (It is this quality of the Shaykh which gives a modern relevance to his sayings) He loves man and wants others to respect and love this Son of God. He is too sensitive for the human miseries and his heart aches at the woeful plight of man. This world is full of miseries and hardships and Sa'di -- the emotional humanist -- wants to protect man from suffering and to give him a happy and peaceful life. This overwhelming, all-encompassing love for the humanity and human being is such a prominent feature of Sadi's works and such a necessary outcome of his humanistic approach to life, that it will be superfluous and غافل از خدا to further elaborate on this topic. The rather مثال آظم کنیم and we should hearken to the Shaykh's advice (مثلاً اختیار) and give a few examples from his Kulliyat to
assert many our point. It is very difficult to select because every page of his voluminous *(P)K* is a manifestation of his deep love and compassion for humanity. However, we are citing below a few examples from his Kulliyat to enable the reader to understand and appreciate the writer's point.

I. One should not be self-centred and must care for his fellow beings:

(Such a dearth one year befell in Damascus
That friends forgot their affection;

I. Kulliyat p. 245
So stingy did heaven grow to earth
That neither crop nor palm did wet their lips;
Naught was it but the widow-woman's 'Ahl'
Whenever smoke-plume from a vent-hole rose
The trees unprovisioned I saw, like a dervish
In such state came to me a friend,
On his bones a skin of him remaining
I said to him: 'O friend, of pure temper!
What misery's befallen you? Say!
At me he thundered: 'Where's your mind?
It's wrong to ask a question when you know the answer

2. Kindness and compassion is always rewarding:

(A kind was subject to a terrible disease, the mention of which is not sanctioned by custom. The tribe of Yemeni physicians agreed that this pain cannot be allayed except by means of the bile of a person. The son of a landholder was discovered. The executioner was ready to slay the boy who then looked heavenwards and smiled. The king asked: 'What occasion for laughter is there in such a position?' The youth replied: '.... I see no other refuge besides God the most high'. The sultan became troubled at these words, and he said: 'It is better for me to perish than to shed innocent blood'..... It is said that the king also recovered his health during that week.)
3. Religion means serving the humanity:

Now that the present discussion is coming to an end, let us revise what are the fundamental qualities of humanism: An overwhelming love of humanity; a rational approach towards religion and morality; a total belief in the individual freedom of man; a keen appreciation of beauty; an unfailing optimism; and, above all, an unflinching faith in the basic goodness of man and in the harmonious development of all his instincts. These are the basic ingredients of humanism. When we turn to that Persian genius, Sa'di we find such a plethora of

I. Kulliyat p. 277
2. Ibid, p. 143
3. Ibid, p. 242
4. Ibid p. 243
humanism and such a marvellous projection of all the above-mentioned qualities, that we wonder how a poet of the twelfth century can share the ideas of the 14th century philosophers! The Shaykh of Shiraz is so 'humanistic' in all his viewpoints, that we can undoubtedly call him the 'fore-father' of humanism. The strange contemporary appeal which the Shaykh enjoys today is based on the very fact that, through his writings, he expresses attitudes which even now are not out-moded; and as long as human being and human life continue to be a source of interest, the rose-garden of the Shaykh's sayings will also go on intoxicating us by its fragrance.

In the end, let us pay homage to the humanity and to the humanist himself in his own verse:

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I. Kulliyat, p. 577
SADI AND FIRDAWSI

Compared as Humanists
CHAPTER III

Sadi and Firdausi Compared as Humanists

When after dealing with Sadi's humanism one comes to seek for his like in the Persian literature, one's efforts seem doomed to failure. The temperamental inclination of the Iranian race towards lyrical poetry and the social, political and economical necessities of singing the praise of some powerful and bounteous patron served as compulsive incentives for the writers and poets of those bygone ages to cultivate the ghazal, the romantic methanawd and the qasida. Mysticism being another creative factor, it brought about the great methanawd of Rumi and some scattered treatises on the subject. All of these dealt either with the emotional or the sordid side of human nature. None of them considered humanity in its fulness or aimed at helping it to achieve a natural and balanced growth. If some pious soul felt compassion for man's woeful plight he turned into a moralist or a sage and wrote an کتابی حاضر یا کتابی حاضر

But, in reality, the prospect is not as barren as that. One has only to turn to that infinite repository of the Persian
genius, the ~ and one will find in it such a plethora of humanism and such a host of humanists that one will gape in stupefied wonder. And, indeed, the thing is stupefying enough and wonderful enough. One sees the humanistic maxims of Gulistan followed centuries before Gulistan was even written, and the ideals of kingship and nobility as propounded in Bustan realized a quarter of a millennium before Bustan was even conceived. And, wonder of wonders, these phenomena appear where one would least expect or suspect them to be. They are met with on bloody battlefields and in global wars. Indeed, the fact is hard to swallow that the best epic of a language is its next best composition on humanism also, and that the next-best epic writer of the world is one of the greatest humanists as well. But the thing stands proof. Let us pause and consider.

The jingling resemblance between human and humane, and between humanitarianism and humanism, confuses the mind about the true significance of these words; Human is taken to be synonymous with humane; humanism is regarded to be as one with humanitarianism. But, in fact, the two sets of words have nothing in common save their commencing letters. Humanism is a natural and spontaneous bloom while humanitarianism is a product of the ethical hot-house. To change the metaphor, while humanitarianism is "the milk of human kindness" pure and unadulterated, humanism is the same thing
but with the customary aqueous dash of the milkman's bucket. Humanism does not deal with ideal but with natural human beings. And, indeed, it is better that is is so, for, while nature is all around and with us in the world, the ideal is no-where to be found except in the mind of the abstract theorist. We meet human beings with the human weaknesses and strengths everywhere; but immaculate superman are no more than the phantoms of the philosophical fancy. It is not meant that humanism denies or belittles virtue. It admits that it exists but that it is juxtaposed with evil which serves as foil to set it off to advantage.

There is a very strong philosophical basis for all this as well. Let us turn to the famous Triad of the Hegelian Dialectics. It comprises of Thesis, the Anti-Thesis, and the Synthesis - in simpler language, the Being, the Not-Being, and the Determined Being. Our experience knows not of a Thing per se (Being: Thesis), a thing corresponding to its ideal concept, i.e. a Thing without the admixture of its Opposite Thing (Not-Being: Anti-Thesis). What we do find in nature is always a mixture of the two, i.e. an amalgam of two exactly opposite realities (Determined Being: Synthesis). Light per se, i.e. light covering the whole range of the spectrum, is never experienced in nature; what is met with is light having a certain
The measure of that wave-length ipso facto suggests that it is not the ideal and the supreme light; that there are wave-lengths greater and lesser than it. And so with virtue. The ideal of this Thesis or its Anti-Thesis (Evil) is never experienced by us. What we meet in nature is always a mixture of these two opposites. Of course, this mixture has infinite varieties with the varying degree of the measure of each of its components in every particular and individual case. And from this very fact emanates the raison d'être both for Ethics and Humanism. As in a given amalgam the measure of virtue and evil is changeable and controllable, ethical teaching gets its justification. And as these amalgams of virtue and evil DO EXIST, we enter the realistic and attractive field of Humanism.

The Ideal Good toned down by Reality, Vice redeemed with virtue - this is the burden of Humanism, and of Firdawsi as well. There are neither angels nor devils in Shahnama, but a mixture of angelhood and devilry. At one end of this humanistic continuum stands the devilish arch-angel Rustam, and at the other the cherubic devil Piran, with a host of celestial and hellish hierarchies thrown in-between. In spite of his Jahan-Pahlavani and the heroism which that august office obligates, the stratagems to which Rustam stooped in his fight with Suhrab and Isfandyar are well known. And, despite his soldierly and deep sense of loyalty for the Kayanian Dynasty, the same Jahan-Pahlawan's occasional
bursts of rebellious anger against Kay-Kaus and Tus also need no reminder. On the other hand, the solicitation of Piran, the commander-in-chief of the evil forces of Afrasiyab, for Siyaush is also remembered with surreptitious approval by every reader of the Shahnama. The expansive, story-telling style of Firdawsi makes him unsuitable for quotation in a small essay like the present one. The reader is recommended to read the relative passages in Shahnama itself.

To judge Firdawsi as a humanist it is best to ascertain his views on the basic tenets of humanism with which we are fairly well acquainted by now.

1. Religion - Religion in humanism is not strait-jacketed formalism. It is a pliable thing, serving to promote human good and adaptable to the exigencies of time and space. Its regulating principle is reason. Let us see what Firdawsi has to offer us here. Two references will suffice.

First, we find in Shahnama the Praise of Reason put just after the Praise of God and before the Praise of the Prophet. (And, believe and like it or not, even in this reverse order Firdawsi writes only one verse on the latter topic and then passes on.) This arrangement is contrary to that usually followed by other Persian poets of the classical tradition. In these latter, the Praise of the Prophet immediately follows that of God. Firdawsi changes the order of precedence
in order to stress his conviction that for man's salvation on earth and in heaven reason is the supreme guide, and that in discovering God's will it comes first to any apostolic mission. The terms in which he glorifies reason leave his sense in no doubt:

Then as to formal conformity: Firdawsi thinks it quite unnecessary. The thing which counts is the spirit of charity contained in religion, and not its superficiality:

...(Can any critic distinguish here if the speaker is Firdawsi or the great humanist Sadi? Cite the Shaykh's famous lines:

2. Ibid, v.I, p.234
3. Huliyat p.229
4. Ibid, p.229
2. Liberty. This is yet another important article of the humanist's creed and directly follows from the preceding principle of Reason. If reason is supreme in the life of man, then he should be free to follow it in thought, speech and action. Matters, whether religious, social or political, should not restrain him from following that guiding star and from reaching the ultimate goal of his spiritual fulfilment. This principle was so important in the eyes of Ferdowsi that his whole great work is infused with it. Indeed, the best praise he can bestow on his dear country is to call it the Land of the Independent; and for him the Independent People par excellence are the People of Iran. This is very clearly borne out where he uses the phrase in contradiction to the Turks. Giw brins the letter of Kay-Kaüs to Rustam reporting the incursion of Suhrāb and dilating upon his heroic exploits.

Rustam laughs and refuses to believe it:

1. Shahnama, v.1, p.36
Mark the third line which gives the reason for Rustam's incredibility and uses the word آذرآزمان as opposed to آذرآزمان.

Shahname is the Book of Kings, and kingship demands obedience and submission. But the independence of spirit of Firdawsi's آذرآزمان is such that ever and anon it bursts the barrage and outflows the dam. Two examples will suffice. Strangely and significantly, both of them belong to the reign of Jahhâk, than whom no worst tyrant had ever ruled Persia.

I. One day the tyrant describes to the assembled nobles his dream about Faridun and asks them to explain it to him. They tremble and cower to tell the truth. But one brave soul steps forward and harangues the king in the following terms:

لا گفت پیر‌خزک ملک خواند فرخزاد
کو چمگری را کشند زوار‌خوان
پنجند هرین از چند لب فرخزاد
پر و روز در راه سر وارد پر
فرخزاد شادمانی در سر دارد
را بار که هری، است
سر به‌پایی فانی بیانی
پر یکان اندروپر سریرت و
زمر را می‌پرسیده خوانند

1. Shahnâme, v.I, p.34
2. Ibid, v.I, p.40
II. Dāhhāk makes the mubad to sign the charter of his Absolution. Suddenly Kaws appears on the scene, and after chiding the monarch in no weak terms about his brutal excesses, demands that his son's life should be spared. Dāhhāk concedes. Then he gives the Charter to Kaws and requests him to witness it. Now listen:

And then this insignificant and destitute iron-monger comes out in open rebellion and incites and unites the whole country against the foreign tyrant.

3. Personal Honour - This is intimately connected with Liberty and Freedom since it is their direct and natural product. Shāhnāme is replete with its examples and we repeatedly come across cases where any threat to its security brings about a violent and instantaneous reaction. Perhaps, one of the most grand examples is the following. Sarw Shah of Yemen seeks the counsel of his courtiers as to how he

should reply to Farīdūn's proposal for the marriage of his sons with the Yemenite King's daughters. The fearless sons of the desert reply:

4. Contentment - This is yet another blossom which adorns the humanist's flower-bed. The two chief aspects of humanism are a peace within and a peace without. This "peace within" can never be achieved without the calm and serenity of contentment. Siyaush living happily in Turan with his beloved Farangis is the happiest example of a peaceful and contented mind. Another tragic Kayanian prince, Iraj, the youngest son of Farīdūn, exposes his views on the subject to his brothers in this way:

2. Ibid, v.I, p.79
5. Sincerity — like liberty, the spirit of Sincerity also infuses the whole Shāhnāma. Ferdowsi’s word for it is استحصال، which in Persian signifies sincerity as well as truthfulness. Indeed, this truthful sincerity so possesses the poet’s mind that his verse also partakes of its quality. He has no art, for all art is untrue. Instead of the artist’s colouring brush, he holds a plain mirror in his hand. And, of course, a plain mirror can neither colour nor embellish nor distort; it can only reflect. To illustrate the difference, here is one extract each from Nizāmī and Ferdowsi dealing with a common theme — the jewels of a king’s regalia.

Nizāmī (in Sikandar-name):

Neither of the two masters employs a single simile for the pearls. But their difference of approach is apparent. To glorify the king, Nizami belittles the pearl (his peremptory orders implying that it is no better than a slave). But not so the truthful Firdawsi. He mentions it with honour for it is adorning the person of the king. Nizami in his zeal to be clever forgets that by disparaging the ornament he is detracting from the grace of the person ornamented. The pearl emerges from the ocean all right, but on its face is a blush, not a sparkle. It never pays to do violence to the truth. One point should be noted here. The reason why Firdawsi's artless sincerity is so impressive is that the reader feels sure that whatever he is getting is the truth and nothing but the truth. In other words, it is not the portrayed images which fill us with pleasure, but the realization that their portrayal is natural and true.

1. Shâhnâma, v. II, p. 94
6. Appreciation of Beauty - A humanist appreciates beauty in every shape, and so does Kirdawsi. And not only does he enjoy beauty, but he also knows the proportions which go to make a graceful form. Viewed in this light, his whole Shahnama is an exquisite piece of the modeller's art. However, that the beauty of the usual and common sort may not go by default, here follow two illustrations from Shahnama:

I. The maids of Rudaba describe her to the page-boy of Zoh:

II. Furud, the son of Suhraw, is encircled and wounded at Kolat by the Iranians. He dies in the fort, and the fair maids of the boy's court commit suicide by leaping down from the parapet well.

2. Ibid, v.II, p.120
It is doubtful if a prettier simile or a daintier verse has ever been penned by any Persian poet.

7. Practical Wisdom — Practical wisdom, ruse, dissembling, diplomacy, or what you will; it has types and types. Firdawsi was too upright to stoop to the "کرکب" variety. (And, indeed, so was the Shaykh; but occasionally he could not resist the temptation of turning a pretty quip.) But in the respectable art of diplomacy he is perfect. Suhrab is doing havoc in the Persian army. Kay-Mous sends Gim to Sistan with urgent summons for Rustam. The Jahan-Pahlawan entertains his son-in-law for three days and then starts for court. On arrival he is harshly rebuked by the king for the delay. Rustam counters this downpour of the peevish monarch's wrath with contempt and leaves in disdain for Sistan. The terror of Suhrab again seizes the court and some senior generals hurry to stop and pacify Rustam. Their apology takes the line usual on such occasions: 

"ورده شیرازی را بی‌توجهی می‌کند. مراسم خانه را با سرعت، در حالی که شانه‌ها، لب‌ها و سایر عضوهای بدن او در حال شدید دلگی بوده. اما رستم، جنگی که از آن به قوم می‌آید، نتوانسته است که به دلیل این وکالت بی‌صبری کنند. هر چه رستم به سرعت و سرراستی خود را به علی هایی که می‌پیوندند، اسکوزده، اسکوزده، اسکوزده و غیره می‌کند. اما رستم نمی‌تواند از این وکالت بی‌صبری کنند. هر چه رستم به سرراستی خود را به علی هایی که می‌پیوندند، اسکوزده، اسکوزده، اسکوزده و غیره می‌کند. اما رستم نمی‌تواند از این وکالت بی‌صبری کنند. هر چه رستم به سرراستی خود را به علی هایی که می‌پیوندند، اسکوزده، اسکوزده، اسکوزده و غیره می‌کند. اما رستم نمی‌تواند از این وکالت بی‌صبری کنند. هر چه رستم به سرراستی خود را به علی هایی که می‌پیوندند، اسکوزده، اسکوزده، اسکوزده و غیره می‌کند. اما رستم نمی‌تواند از این وکالت بی‌صبری کنند. هر چه رستم به سرراستی خود را به علی هایی که می‌پیوندند، اسکوزده، اسکوزده، اسکوزده و غیره می‌کند. اما رستم نمی‌تواند از این وکالت بی‌صبری کنند. هر چه رستم به سرراستی خود را به علی هایی که می‌پیوندند، اسکوزده، اسکوزده، اسکوزده و غیره می‌کند. اما رستم نمی‌ت
And now the crafty fox tackles the enraged lion, Gūdarz, the oldest and the most prudent among the soliciting lot, strikes this sly note:

The storm subsides as if by magic and the Jahan-Pahlawan turns right about:

8. Conformity to Nature - In the present writer's humble opinion this is the gist and the spirit and the sine qua non of all humanism. According to the humanistic theory man is neither an angel nor a beast, and it is in his interest that he should remain so. Indeed, every effort to the
contrary is doomed to failure since it aims at subverting the unshatterable nature. It is just this hurdle against which religion stumbles and falls in its bid to super-humanise the human species. Attempts of the opposite type which wish to subgrade man to a worm or worse are latecomers in the field and no one is sure about their result as yet. Humanism scrupulously avoids both these pitfalls. It lets men remain at his appointed place and tries to make him worthy of it. There is no vertical rise or fall, only a lateral expansion and spread. In this way more fulness is achieved with better balance. Man as a frisky and foolish little animal is better suited to survive and thrive in this fatuous world than he would be as a Vice-gerent of God on earth. Firdawsi knows this full well and plans his characters accordingly. After Shakespeare, Shahnama is perhaps the greatest art gallery of humanism in the world literature. Quotations would be invidious, but one has to quote. And, perhaps, the following piece taken almost at random is as good as any other.

Kay-Kaus has not yet nominated Kay-Khusraw as his heir, but most of the nobility desire and hope that he would do so. Tus, being himself a member of the royal family, wants otherwise. Gúdarz gives a reception in honour of Kay-Khusraw which Tus does not attend. Now let Firdawsi
take up the story.
But better counsels prevail, the shah intervenes, and the momentary effervescence of these fiery old men passes away. The reader should judge if the great heroes of this great Iranian epic behave like the Wise Men of the East or like a bunch of unruly school-boys.

**Firdawsi and Sadi Compared**

Now that we have become acquainted with Firdawsi as a humanist, let us see how he compares with Sadi in the same field. Both are realist, and not idealist, except that each of them deals with reality in his own personal and particular way. (A discussion of these personal and particular ways of theirs will follow later on.) For example, to be chivalrous and nothing but chivalrous to an enemy is the ideal. But to check chivalry from becoming a hazard to self-preservation is practical prudence. Both Sadi and Firdawsi subscribe to this latter view. The Shaykh writes in his Gulistan:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{بِرَزْعَةَ رَحِيمَةَ مَرِيدُ زَلْنِكمُ نَمْلُ وَحَمَّامُبَوْرُ نُجَيَّمُهَا}
\end{align*}\]

(Do not pity the weakness of a foe because when he gains strength he will not spare thee.)

And in Shāhīnāme we find Suhrab meeting his untimely death just because he had disregarded this important principle.

1. *Kulliyāt-i-Sā'dī*, p.199
The positive converse of this negative rule is that even a fool is fair to circumvent a deadly enemy. Sadi says in Bustan:

"He who is a foe to himself makes his life a task for his friends".

And Isfandiyar escaped not his noose.

The foeman can be skinned as occasion serves:

Conciliate him, them, as though with a friend!

In Firdawsi the encounter of Rustam and Isfandiyar carries this same burden. Realizing himself to be no match for the redoubtable Kayanian prince, the astute Jahan-Pahlawan plays foul. And in choosing his particular brand of foul he despises not even the most mortal sin of the Iranian mythology. (Mark now Isfandiyar mentions it thrice in his accusation of Rustam):

1. Kulliyat-i-Sadi, p.199
2. Shāhnameh, v.III,p.359
3. Ibid, v.III p.305
It was said earlier that both Sadi and Firdawsi subscribed to a common humanist ideal but that their modes of expression were different. Since Sadi is not only a student of human nature but a thinker as well, we find in him both abstract principles and concrete illustrations from life. But in Firdawsi's mentality—the active and the practical dominate the meditative and the conceptual. So there is little of theory and abstraction in him; there is only application and realization, which means that in Sadi the exposition of his abstract views is direct while in Firdawsi it is indirect. Sadi propounds his humanist principles as principles with plainness and cogency, while in Firdawsi they are not expressed as principles at all but can only be inferred indirectly from the way in which he tells his story and the manner in which he makes his characters to act and to re-act. We may call the one a theoretical and the other a practical humanist. The following comparative extracts from the two will help to clarify as well as to illustrate the point.

I. The Theme: A good king should cherish and reward soldiers.

Its expression as principle by Sadi:

I. Kullmat. p. 284
(when a courageous man one time shows hardihood,  
His rank should be advanced;  
A second time his heart he'll set on perishing,  
And have no dread to fight with God!)

The Realization of this Conception in Firdawsi

(the Conception itself being left out to be inferred by the reader).

Kay-Kusraw ascends the throne;

1. Kulliyat-i-Sadi, p. 264
2. Shāhnāme, v. II, pp. 79-81
The Conception (Sadi):

Treat pleasantly your troops in days of ease,
That they may be of service in hardtimes.

The Realization (Firdawsi):

1. Kitab-i-Sadi, p.264
And in this manner, Kay-Khusraw bestows prize after prize on his generals each of whom voluntarily and with alacrity offers to undertake some dangerous task proposed by the king. The point to note here is that the prizes are given before the performance of the assignment. It is doubtful if Sadi's precept of

\[
\text{(Now is the time to kiss your warriors' hands - Not when the enemy's begun to beat his drums!)}
\]

could find a handsomer application. And mark the grace with which Firdawsi sublimates the whole scene. A cynic may regard the matter as sordid business based on simple self-interest; a king seeking the help of the brave generals to fight his enemies and a soldierly nobility desiring to add to its worldly fortunes. But, in fact, it is not so even in Sadi's verse (کنون دست مردان از) there is a lot of difference between self-interest and Enlightened self-interest. And what to say of Firdawsi? Benevolent generosity and chivalrous sacrifice are competing with each other in an out-bidding match. There is no "Self" here; and if there is any, it is that which carries the potent name of

1. *Kulliyat-i-Sadi*, p.264
Self-Regarding Sentiment the spur of all that is good and noble and sublime in man. We should be in great error if we called it like the cynic a "sordid business". We would still be amiss if we confused it with Sadi's simple humanism. The rather it is the Manly Humanism of a manful and stalwart genius.

It may be useful to devote a few words more to what has been called here, for want of better terms, the Simple Humanism of Sadi on the one hand and the Manly Humanism of Firdawsi on the other. Simple Humanism may be said to operate when a man behaves like a man, i.e. naturally, and realizes that it is better for him to do so, and knows that he is doing so. Thus there is an adducing of reason and a consciousness of conformity. But Manly Humanism neither reasons nor acts; it simply acts as nature prompts it to do. Since it is not attributable to any apparent motive it is purer, and since it is not self-conscious it is more spontaneous, than Simple Humanism. Let us again turn to Sadi and Firdawsi for illustrations.

I. The theme is "کفایت", Penalty - The evil-doer deserves, not mercy, but punishment condign to his evil.

Says Sadi: "کوئی کسی کردن ضرانت کپردن یک مردانه
(To do good to wicked persons is like doing evil to good men.)"

1. Kulliyat, p.32
And again:

Here is the perfect Didactic Doublot; the Precept and its justification: So unforgiving to, or destroy, the evil-doer, for its benefits are so and so and so. It is all human nature, and so it is all humanism. But so far it is only that which we have called Simple or Elementary Humanism. And now for its other variety, viz. Manly Humanism, let us turn to Firdawsi, the subject being still.

The love-and-hate complex of his step-mother, Sudaba, banishes Siyasush to Turan where he ultimately gets killed by the order of Afrasiyab. The murdered prince's god-father,

1. Kulliyat, p.199
2. Ibid., p.
Rustam, kills Nūdāba in revenge. Now let us hear Firdawsi speaking:
خواهش من سرایه و موها
نرسی بر تن انفرضتی
کوک‌تیکی و دلیلی
که کیست از فنگی
که کو کن از هر که
cو یکی که می‌زند
سپاسی مرزدانی شاید
جان انگیزشی دان ترای
نداد این باک حرازمان
فرمیده برده مراکم
تیمی مرتفع از مرکز اوی
سوی کاخ در لابهام
ور چرخه سرایه شک
گر در مرزهای خور
خب مرا که دو مراکما
بخشی مرکز کا وسی سان
بخشی چه سرایه ایکارادی
دلو نیز مرز مرزادی
با مدلگه جا با کوک و در این مرزهای دو در شیاد
هم شوران با ونی مورد
پر از لثم مرکب که
مبنای سه گون زمگی
سیم کم نامیده رحیمان
بخشی کا رگم‌دار بر نوز
کو کدو کم را خر نوز
هم بر مدلگه بر نوزی
توغتله ایرانسرای بر خوش
This is neither penalty nor punishment, but raging retribution and dire doom. Firdausi lets loose a ferocious fury to burn down the criminal. Let others seek motives and justification in the ashes.

2. The Theme — and as no one can outdo Saddi in felicitous brevity, so let us quote him verbatim:

And why? Because

(Increase the standing of your intimates, For perfidy will never come from one you've cherished)

And in the same strain:

(Whenever a servant of yours grows old, Forget not the claim of his years to support)

These again are the twin raison d'etre of the didacticist: the maxim and its rationale.

Now let us turn to Firdausi. The Iranian army, under the leadership of Rustam, returns from a highly successful campaign against the Chinese Shahqan and the Turanian Afrasiyab.

1. Kulliyat, p.230
یکی چهارم از صنایع نفت و گاز، و تولید و انتقال پیکرهای نفت و گاز، به سیر در حال کاهش است. این موضوع به‌طور کلی به سه عامل تعلق گرفته: 

1. کاهش تقاضا در بازارهای جهانی
2. کاهش قیمت نفت و گاز
3. کاهش مصرف انرژی در صنایع کشورهای توسعه‌یافته

این عوامل کاهش اقتصادی کشورهای نفت‌محوری را در پی خواهد گذاشت.
It is not like a king receiving his generals in audience, but like a family re-union. The most aged star of this gal axy is Godara, and so this old one's craving for food is the greatest. He cuts short the royal queries and requests for refreshment. The amused indulgence shown by the Shah to the Doyen of his Imperial court and the laughing rejoinder are perhaps the sweetest part of this sweet scene which constitutes one of the manifestations of Firdawsi's humanism.

Examples like this may be multiplied from Shahnama, but the difficulty lies in their extent. They would mostly be descriptive scenes and, therefore, of necessity, lengthy and unsuitable to be reproduced in a brief discussion like the present one. Indeed, the best proof that Shahnama is one of the best studies in humanism is the Shahnama itself. As Firdawsi says:

As Firdawsi says:

Notwithstanding all that has been affirmed earlier in this essay, Firdawsi also sometimes indulges in theoretical doctrinizing, and once he does so with such earnestness and poignancy that the great Shaykh incorporates it verbatim in his BUSTAN:

(From Firdawsi (he of pure birth,
On whose pure dust be mercy!),
'Afflict not the ant who drags grain along
For life he has, and sweer life is pleasant).

1. Kulliyat, p. 278
The lines deserve to be made the motto of the Wildlife Union for Wild Life Preservation. But, on the whole, this mode of diction was not natural to the great epic writers. It needed a mastery of epigram which was denied to the garrulous old dihqan. The salons of Daru‘e-Salam and the gay boulevards of Shirez were better suited to cultivate that sophisticated wit than the rugged uplands of Tus. A glance at the Counsels of Ardashir I to his son, Shapur, and comparing them with Sadi’s similar utterances will prove the truth of this assertion.

**Kirdawal 2**

1. کا جمع dạyمان لود کر گر اوست
2. آرچد بکروشئئ درعی اوست
3. نامه نابلسی سومگر دان
4. مادر نادر ناخ نش بیان
5. جپنیل یار دین گذر
6. دود کشیتا بیکو گرخور

**Sadi**

1. مراحات دهقان لن از کرتشک
2. کرمن دورکشئئ ل کرک کار کر
3. بیکرم غربت
4. گر کان احراز
5. خیر میں نگو گرم
6. وکرم چمک

1. Kulliyat, p.278
2. Shāhnāme
The race is drawing to a close: the end of the course, as well as of this essay, is in sight. It has been an exciting heat and a close finish. Of course, the Shaykh is the winner, but does not Mirdawal deserve a consolation prize?