

## The Types of 'Natural Landscape' Represented in Saadi's Poetry (Reviewing the Quality Presence of 'Desert' (Sahra/Sahara) in these Poems)

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### Abstract

The first step in understanding the meaning of expressions and verses in literary texts is to find out their precise connotations and compositions that are being addressed. In this research article, the implications and concepts of the word 'Desert/Sahra' is being reviewed in 'Complete Works of Saadi' that is known as 'Koliat-e-Saadi'; In this attempt, while looking up the semantic synonyms of this word in the Persian Encyclopedia/Lexicons, the various interpretation of 'Sahara' in literary and lyric poems of Saadi has been reviewed. This study tries to represent a new glory of the word 'Sahara' (Desert) by comparing the connotations of it that have been addressed in 'Koliat-e-Saadi' with other expressions according to the Persian encyclopedia. In today's Persian language conversation, the word 'Desert/Sahara' is often associated with a place lacking water and vegetation and points to a very long and hard route; This concept in Saadi's time was pointing to a journey ending to the holy shrine of "Kaaba". While at the same time, the word 'Sahara' (Desert) in the minds of most individuals was reminding a green and grassy promenade where everyone had a desire for spending their time over there.

Here in this study, the connotations of 'Sahara' have been investigated in 'Koliat-e-Saadi' and the other associations with this word have also been considered by using the content analysis method. This article tries to deal with the conceptual and ecological differences of Iranian society, to analyze and determine the standpoint of 'Sahara' in Saadi's mindset.

The outcomes of this article indicate the differences available in Saadi's poems from landscape view.

**Keywords:** *Landscape, Sahara, Poems of Saadi.*

### Introduction

The landscape expands a wide range of meanings from general expression to geographical, regional, and local implications

(Turner & Gardner, 2015).

In a current research study, one of the natural landscapes in Saadi's poems has been reviewed, therefore, while adopting

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the word ‘Sahara’ as a key term we are looking for various connotations of this word in Saadi living time compared to our present time.

To determine the connotations of ‘Sahara’ in ‘Koliat-e-Saadi’, first, we have reviewed the literary texts and lyric poems of Saadi in which the word ‘Sahara’ has been used. To get this, while reviewing the meanings of this word in the Persian encyclopedia/Lexicons, we additionally did consider its derivatives in Saadi’s poems; it has been found that these literary words are not necessarily associated with one single implication as by classifying them other connotations were acquired.

In this study, we have tried to answer the following two questions:

- What implications has been used under the title of the ‘Sahara’ in Saadi’s poems? And,
- What are the differences between the conceptual illustration of ‘Sahara’ and the alternative expressions of this word in Saadi’s poems?

The main purpose of this article is to analyze the meanings and connotations of the word Sahra in Saadi’s living time compared to the present era. The reason for doing this research is the lack of comparative study by using frequent examples of implications in which the connotations of words in ancient times be able to compare with their counterparts at present time; this lacking deprive us of having an accurate and clear picture of terminology landscape.

The reasons for doing this research has been established based on the following presumptions: The results of this research might improve our knowledge of the landscape and help us to have a better understanding of the ‘Sahara’ position in Saadi’s poems; it also presents a clear image of ‘implications’ of this word in ‘Saadi’s time and its differences with today’s connotations.

### Literature Review

Quite a few research has been carried out about the recognition and interpretation of the natural landscape in Saadi’s poems. Amini and Mahmoudi have reviewed

the whole similar phrases in Saadi poems under the title of “The Nature in Saadi’s view” in which one of the Nature elements has shown a similarity to other adopted words. They have concluded that Nature has been used in Saadi’s works not only because of Saadi’s vibrant personality and his desire for admiring Nature but also as a means to explain his mindset (Amini & Mahmoudi, 2015).

Similarly, other researchers in an article entitled “Interpretation of the Garden Position in Saadi’s Poetry” have dealt with the position of the garden from Saadi’s view (Farzin & Hashemizadegan, 2016). No comprehensive research has been conducted over the interpretation of ‘Sahara’ position from the viewpoint of the superior Persian Literati (Khayyam, Hafez, Saadi, Ferdowsi, and Rumi), so this research tries to deal with the position of ‘Sahara’ from Saadi’s view, to fill this research gap.

### Research Method

The content analysis method<sup>2</sup> has been adopted for this research study. The required data was gathered by using ‘Boostan & Golestan-e-Saadi’ (corrected by Gholam Hossein Yousefi, Kharazmi Publication), ‘Koliat-e-Saadi’ (corrected by ‘Mohammad Ali Foroughi’, published by ‘Hermes’) and also using “Ganjour network”; The data are presented incoming tables.

To do this, first, the alternative expressions for ‘Sahara’ were extracted from the Persian encyclopedia and lexicons, and then other words with similar connotation to it were picked up from ‘Koliat-e-Saadi’; the attempt followed by matching the old implications of ‘Sahara’ with its counterparts in current words that were identified to have close meaning to it.

### Saadi

Until now, no comprehensive research has been done on the connotation and concept of ‘Sahara’ in the valuable poems of Saadi. Saadi’s wisdom and thought due to representing the significant and unique features

have been considered here as an important point in this research study.

“Saadi is a person who cares a lot about Nature, his lively soul is unwilling to adopt the corner of solitude and embracing the mere praying” (Amini & Mahmoudi, 2015). Moreover, most of the prominent Iranian poets (Ferdowsi, Khayyam, Rumi, and Hafez), we’re kind of solitary person. Only Saadi had a dynamic social life; he was a sociable poet who was traveling and visiting the world (Shaygan, 2014) during his life.

*If I stay away from you due to my journey / I will be ashamed that I am just the low-minded Saadi  
I headed on my foot and had to return with my head/  
if I would not be caught in the grip of fate and destiny  
I am not still satisfied with the past [Ghafa]/ [but] I am going ahead and looking at the past with regret*

One of the most saying about the Saadi ‘s life according to ‘Dolatshah Samarkand’ is as follow;” He studied science for thirty years, had thirty years traveling experience and sat on the rug of obedience for thirty years too and spent 12 years as a God’s fellow serving at Saqqā-kāna (a donated holly place where water is given to the passers-by). If someone adds up these years, Saadi’s age reaches one hundred and two years, with minor exaggeration in the first few years of his life (Safa, 2010). Saadi’s words are so pleasant and amiable, and at the same time eloquent and strenuous (Zarrinkoob, 1968). Since he has been traveling for many years, it is supposed that he has been encountered many deserts in his life and his poetic view toward the “Sahara” has been formed within these experiences; The present research study is seeking to review this principle issue.

### Reviewing the Qualification of ‘Sahara’ in Saadi’s Poetry

A poem refers to the ability of understanding and comprehension. The various explanations have been provided for poem/poetry and for defining the word, it has been mentioned that it is a rhythmic and harmonic

word that conveys a meaning (Rastegarfasaei, 1995). The poets convey their special viewpoint to the audiences through their poetic space; and since people have a different mindset, each would have its unique interpretation. So, it would have resulted in the emergence of different dialects in poetry that each belongs only to one person and they will be distinguishable from each other (Khamesi Hamaneh, 2013). In the lexical order of any language, there are similar words that are used in different connotations. Comprehending the implications of such words is quiet necessary for understanding the texts. The word “Sahara” is one of those words that has been adopted in different connotations in Saadi’s poems. Some of these meanings have not been clarified so far and no research has been done on the functions of this specific word. Saadi as Persian poetry has not created the Persian language, rather he has grown up through this language. According to ‘Mohammad Ali Foroughi’ about ‘Koliat-e-Saadi’: “People of literature are amazed that Saadi has spoken our language seven hundred years ago, but the fact is that after seven hundred years we speak in the language we have been educated by Saadi” (ibid.). The present study first refers to the Persian Lexicon and encyclopedia to provide a set of concepts, that are presented in the table below, and then examines other connotations of or synonyms with the word “Sahara/ Desert” in Saadi poems (Table 1). The word “Desert/Sahara” with the implication of a recreational area has been applied in sixty-one verses of Saadi poetries as: ‘when it is day-time, joy, mirth and Sahara time...’. In these verses, the desert is considered as an outside place where consisting of greenery, vitality/merriment, flowers, hyacinth, stream, violets, and tulips. The Sahara refers to the desert as a place of solitude in the verses when Saadi says: “When the solitude of my mind draws me toward ‘Sahara’ ”; In some versus the association of garden with the word ‘Desert/Sahara’ is depicted in verses such as: ‘...Let us leave the garden and desert for others...’. The association of Sahara with the implications such

Table 1. The Implication list of word Desert/Sahra in the Persian Lexicon. Source: Anvari, 2007 &amp; Nasri Ashrafi, 2002.

The Implication list of word Desert/Sahra in the Persian Lexicon				
Desert (Biaban)	Field (Dasht)	Plain [Hamoon]	Dooms Day Desert	Sahara
Sahara	A plain area/ Desert	A plain land	Religions: A gathering place for people on Dooms Day	Desert
In Tabari Language: Refers to a far land	Built-in a plain area A people from Sahara (Dasht; refers to the south of Iran) [Traditional] Music in Iran The first money receipt by a seller[ in a day] Money Received before the main wage (deposit)	A desert without any water or green space The imagery of land/ or sea The imagery of Ground/Sky The imagery of an outside area	Conversation: The imagery of a crowded area	Out-of-town The imagery of the battlefield

as a friend, people, you, youth, belle, and finally ‘Me and You’ can be seen frequently in Saadi’s poems. An implication of this has been referred in the following verse: ‘we made a promise not to go to ‘Sahara’ without our comrades; About the time of going to ‘Sahara’, Saadi says: ‘I have a desire you can go to the ‘Sahara’ at dawn’. In similar poetry, it has been pointed to the time for heading to the desert as follows: ‘on spring, in times of sadness, at day and night times, at Nowruz (the Persian New Year), in leisure time and the morning (dawn).

‘Sahara’ by referring to a place of observation/ spectacle: ‘Everyone has left [here] to go to a ‘Sahara’ to observe something’. Sahara has been used in the context of ‘dome day’ only in two scenes: ‘Someone found himself in a desert of ‘dome day’ in his dream’, and in other verses, he points: ‘[the God] will take him to the Sahara of dome day.

The implication of Sahara as ‘love and affection’ in a line of his poetry points to: ‘I threw the story of love into ‘Sahara’; It seems, in general, it has been associated more with the concepts of ‘charming, story of love,

and something for pleasure’. Sahara, additionally has been used along with the names of people, including ‘Saluk-e Sahra Navard’ and ‘Bahram-e Sahara Neshin’(Table 2), (Fig. 1).

### Reviewing the associations of word Sahara in Saadi’s Poems

The word “Hamoon” (Plain area) has been used in seven lines of Saadi’s Poem with different connotations: I wondering why ‘Hamoon’ is not look like the sea / [He was a person] who has traveled frequently to the sea and Sahara / Neither of Hamoon and sea or mountain and welkin ... / [whether you are facing with] hamoon and mountain or stone or pebble / [Saadi by pointing to himself say he] never wrote as much as hamoon nor split the sea/ [There was a person] like the flood in behavior, similar to hamoon in practice. Which are referring accordingly to the implications as: ‘in front of the sea’, ‘traveled too much/ experienced’, ‘the whole world’, ‘neither of them’ and ‘the person who commuting the ‘desert/hamoon’.

The word ‘Badieh’, another expression for desert, has

Table 2. Reviewing the Presence Quality of the Word ‘Sahara’ in Saadi’s. Poems. Source: the authors.

No.	The Sahara Implications	The concept extracted from the Poems
1	Promenade	Out of town, greenery, merriment, flower, hyacinth, [water] stream, violet, and tulip
2	A place of solitude	Solitude
3	Garden and companionship with Sahara	Garden & Sahara
4	Accompanying someone heading to the Desert/ Sahara	friend, people, you, youth, belle, and finally ‘me and you’
5	Time for heading to Sahara	on spring, in times of sadness, at day and night times, at Nowruz (the Persian New Year), at leisure time, in the morning (dawn)
6	An observing place (spectacular scenery)	Sahara and Spectacle
7	Doom Day	The Sahara of Doom Day
8	Love and Affection	charming, story of love, and something for pleasure
9	[Associated with] People’s name	‘Saluk-e Sahra Navard’ and ‘Bahram-e Sahra Nashin’ The desert’s dweller

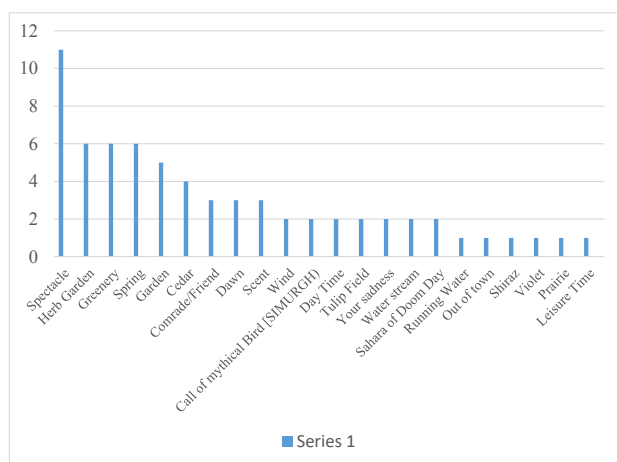


Fig. 1. The Frequency of words associated with the word ‘Sahara’ in Saadi’s poems. Source: authors.

been used in twelve verses of Saadi’s poetries under the title of different concepts. ‘Badieh’ as a place lacking water: in the Badieh the thirsty [travelers] passed away/ Like a [scorching] tree in Badieh, Saadi [is heading] with the lightning of joy / [only] The people who are on the way toward Badieh, know the value of

pure water/ Tell [him] the life of the thirsty wayfarers in Badieh is going to end/ In the Badieh the thirsty wayfarers heartily are seeking him/[God]. Or [in other lines of poems] it points to a place covered with the ‘Khar-e Moghilan’ [the Egyptian thorn]: [Addressing Badieh as a person, the poet says] hey Badieh [who you are bringing us the distance], we [as wayfarers] are not fearing at your thorns/ I was not [really] among the thorns of Badieh [It didn’t hurt me since I was eager to see you/]; and in other lines, Badieh has used as a place has simplified the difficulties [of the way heading to God]: [the wayfarers] will simply commute thousands of Badieh [because of their desire for heading to their beloved one]; [The presence of ]Thousands Badieh in [our way] is easy to commute [when I am eager to see you], or ‘it is better heading to Badieh than sitting down in vanity, and [in other lines the poet use it] as a lonely place: ‘I am not the only person who is alone in this passionate way of Badieh; or ‘The travelers/ wayfarers who wandered in this Badieh;

Moreover, there are frequent expressions of ‘Dasht’ (as a Plain area) in twenty lines of Saadi’s poems that its association with ‘mountain’ can be seen: The heavy raindrops (Jaleh, soft drops than rain in literary) was pouring on the mountains and plains (Dasht); or Dasht as a commuting place: I have heard ‘Jesus’ appeared in Dasht;

In these lines, the poet speaks of different groups of people as ‘Jesus’, the ‘Throne of Solomon’, ‘thief’, and ‘poor’ people. The plain (Dasht) is also seen in association with the word ‘Door’: ‘they came into the ‘Deir’ (convent) through the door and from Dasht (plain area) and Kooy (a local area) route. The word is also associated with a place around: ‘Come to wonder what you will see around the plain area (Dasht). It has also been used as a ‘palm field, somewhere around the south of Iran; and finally, it has been associated with other various expressions as mentioned incoming poetries: ‘The thorn of Love Plain (Dasht) looks like a flower and a pleasant/fragrant plant (Reyhaneh)/ or on other verses: ‘I have heard that ‘Junayd of Baghdad’ (A Persian Mystic) in the plain of Sanaa (was ...); ‘Suddenly, the God of that plain ...; The interpreted expression related to these verses are;’ The plain of Love’, ‘The plain of Sanaa’ and ‘The expanded plain’ accordingly. The word ‘Biaban’ (a place lacking water; desert) has been used in 35 verses of Saadi poetries to express implications as: ‘a place without any water or vegetation’; ‘He was burning like a thirsty man’. The association of ‘Biaban’ (Desert) and ‘dying’ has come in verse as: ‘we died in his (pointing to God/beloved one) desert. The ‘prey of desert’ (Seid-e Biaban) has come in expressions like: ‘The Kaaba/ Kaaba of his beloved one, to him is like a prey come out of dessert. The ‘Biaban (Desert) has associated with the expression of a dangerous place as well: ‘... Unless they take the dangerous desert routs’. The desert of love (Biaban-e Eshgh) has been used in verses to convey the meaning of the desert route that has got simplified because it ends to the ‘Kabba of Love’ (Haram-e Eshgh). Biaban (desert) has been

used in the meaning of ‘the corner of solitary’ in Saadi’s poetries: ‘... I have heard the comrades have taken the desert rout’ [are heading to it]. The other expressions that are associated with ‘Biaban/desert’ according to Saadi’s poetry are according to lines like: ‘it is only desert (Biaban) and darkness, come to me my ‘full moon’ (Ghore-e Mahtab) or by moonlight/ or ... he has fallen in the desert of ignorance (Gheflat)/ and other similar connotations that points to the expressions like: ‘desert and darkness’; ‘taking the desert route’; ‘hardship situations and fearing at fall to sleep in the desert’, ‘the desert of ignorance’, ‘the giant of desert’, ‘the time of hardship/ the day of lest’, ‘the presence of Goore-khar (zebra) in the desert’, and ‘the rain’, ‘coldness’ and ‘flood’. The word ‘Biaban’ has come with the other words as ‘Biaban-Navard’ [refers to a person who commute the desert’ in poems like: ‘A desert commuter (Biaban-navard) is looks like a ship on water’. Biaban has been associated with the mountain in Saadi’s poetries like as: ‘until we didn’t suffer the mountain and desert...’ that points to the concept of ‘suffering/hardship’ (Fig. 2), (Table 3).

## Conclusion

In the present research study, the differences in mindset and ecological aspects of the Iranian people have been reviewed by addressing the word ‘Sahara’(Desert) both in Persian lexicons/encyclopedia and the Saadi’s poetries. The word Sahara/desert has expressed other meanings in addition to its common implications which are being referred today; by reviewing the valuable poetries of the Persian poet, “Saadi Shirazi”, many of these expressions have been found and evaluated in detail.

Many of these expressions that have been found in Saadi’s poetry by reviewing the target word, had the original meanings such as ‘plain’, ‘herb garden’ and ‘promenade’; therefore, we noticed that Saadi’s purpose of frequently repeating this word in his poems is usually to picture a pleasant and joyful view.

For instance, the word “Sahara/Desert” is associated

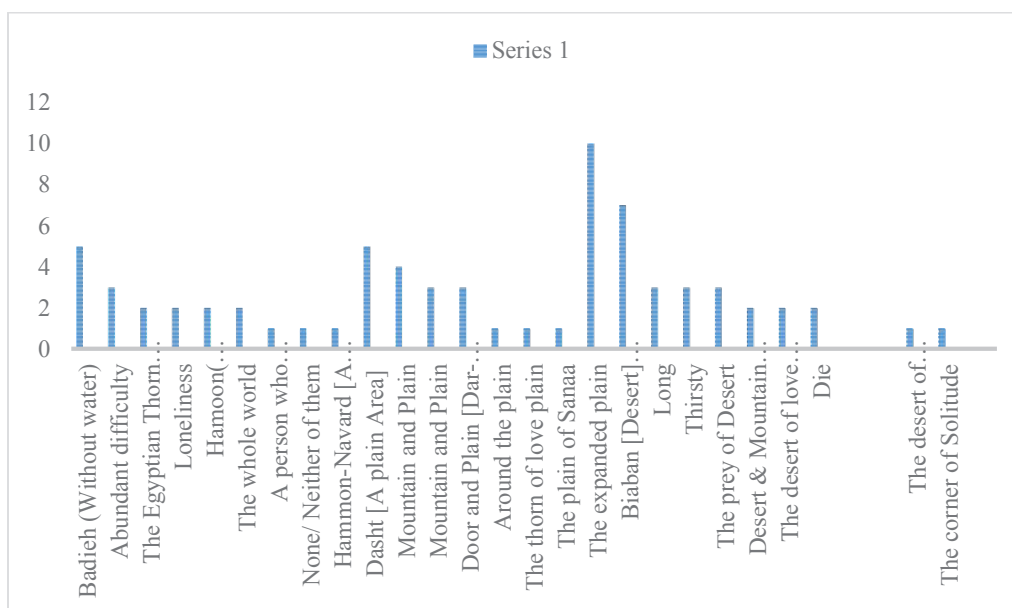


Fig. 2. The frequency of implications as 'Badieh', 'Hamoon', 'Dasht' and 'Biaban' [the different connotations of desert] in Saadi's Poems. Source: authors.

Table 3. Reviewing the quality of desert presence in Saadi's poems with implications of Biaban. Source: authors.

The Expressions of Biaban	Implications of Desert (Biaban)	Dasht	Badieh	Hamoon
Desert and Darkness	Thirsty	Mountain and Plain	Without water	In contrast meaning with sea
Heading to Desert	Long	Plain (Dasht)	Having the Egyptian thorn	Expressing a person who has traveled around the world (experienced)
Hardship and fear	terminable	Door and Plain (Dar-o Dasht)	Facilitating the hardship	The whole world
The desert of Ignorance	Die	Around the plain	loneliness	None/ Neither of them
The giant of desert	The Prey of Desert	The thorn of 'Love Plain'		
The day of Lest The presence of zebra	Dangerous	The plain of Sanaa		
Rain, coldness, and flood	The desert of love	The expanded plain		
Hardship	The corner of solitude			
	The desert commuter (Biaban-Navard)			
	The desert and mountain			

with recreation, like a refreshing garden, where they were used to spend their leisure time there in the morning or the springtime. It should be pointed that in some of his poems, there were different connotations for the word 'Biaban', with its common expression as "Sahara/Desert" in Saadi's poetry; For example, the word "Desert" is associated with a place of hardship or sadness. This word portrays the corner of solitude, the desert of ignorance, hardship, and darkness, which in some poetries of Saadi, commuting the desert is considered as an indication of a difficult path. Another expression for word 'Sahara' according to the Persian lexicons was the word 'Hammon'; in these poems, it is associated with a person who has traveled frequently around the world, as an experienced one; or has been used in its contrast meaning with sea and sometimes pointing to the whole world. The word 'Dasht' is of another expression for 'Sahara' according to the Persian lexicons, that has been used nearly with similar implications in 'Saadi's poems'; and finally the word 'Badiéh' is another implication of 'Sahara' that has been addressed in Saadi's poetries, associated with a place without water, that is known by 'Khar-e Moghilan' (the Egyptian thorn; implying a hardship situation).

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