

## One of the Common Works in Common Geography: *Pend-i Attār*

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### 1. Introduction

آنکه ایمان داد مثنی خاک را      حمد بی حد آن خدای پاک را  
داد از طوفان نجات او نوح را      آنکه در آدم دمید او روح را

*Endless gratitude is to Allah, who is above thought and imagination; he is who gives faith to a handful of earth.*

*He is who blew the spirit into Adam and saved Noah from the flood (Pend-i Attār, Couplet:1-2).*

آنکه در بند دلآزاری بود      در عقوبت کار او زاری بود  
ای پسر قصد دلآزاری مکن      از خدای خویش بیزاری مکن  
خاطر کس را مرنجان ای پسر      ورنه خوردی زخم بر جان ای پسر  
گر همی خواهی که گردی معتبر      نام مردم جز به نیکویی مبر

*The act of the person who seeks to hurt the heart is to groan in agony.*

*O son! Do not intend to hurt the heart; do not recede from Allah.*

*O son! Do not hurt anyone's heart; or you will hurt yourself. O son.*

*If you want to be reputable, mention people's names only with kindness (65-68).*

In the history of the Islamic world, there were works that were widely read and taught after the Qur'an and Hadith-i Sharif. From East Turkestan to Bosnia and Herzegovina, from India to North Africa, some Arabic, Persian and Turkish works were read, repeated, and explained in the assemblies where the public listened. While especially Rumi's *Masnawi*, Saadi Shirazi's *Gulistān* and *Būstān* and

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the *Divān* of Hafez stand out among such works in Persian language, *Pend-i Attār* is among the common works of the common geography and has been a work of great interest.

These works have evidently made a great contribution in acquiring a mature personality, strengthening the social life and establishing social peace for the nations that lived in the common geography. The persuasive, exhilarating and resolution-inducing styles of these works and others can be effective even today. However, it is a sad truth that such works which emphasize concepts such as compassion, kindness, generosity, friendship, right and justice, condemn and exclude enmity, jealousy, anger, disloyalty, stinginess, and oppression, are no longer widely read, and explained in the Islamic world as in the past.

One of the works that reached and addressed a great and common geography and was taken as an example is *Pend-i Attār* (Attār's Advice) or *Pendnāme-i Attār* (Attār's Book of Advice). This study focuses on the aforementioned work and its impact on a wide geography stretching from Europe to Central Asia. The next section provides information about the author, date of writing, copies, and editions of the work. The third section puts forward some points about the scope, content, and effect of the work. The study ends with suggestions that the work should be taught more widely, especially in Muslim countries.

## 2. Information on the Work

The presumed author of *Pend-i Attār*, a Persian verse that appeals to all members of the Muslim community, is the famous Sufi and poet Sheikh Farīd ud-Dīn Mohammed Attār, who was born in 540/1145-1146 in Nishapur and was probably martyred in the same city by the Mongols in 618/1221. Addressing especially the young people with "O Piser (O Son)" repeatedly in the work has caused it to be called *Pisernāme* and *Velednāme* (veled/walad meaning son or boy).<sup>1</sup>

In the last century, some scholars have had hesitations about whether *Pend-i Attār* was written by Sheikh Farīd ud-Dīn Mohammed Attār. According to some researchers, *Pend-i Attār* must have been written

<sup>1</sup> Fihristegān-i Nūshahā-yi Hattī-i Irān, "be kūşiş-i Mustafā Dirāyefī", Volume 6, (Tehran: Sāzmān-i Esnād and Kitābhāne-i Millī, 1391) 455-456. Here only 40 manuscripts in Iran are indicated. (456-458).

by another person with the pseudonym Attār in the later centuries, probably in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> Iranian scientist Mohammad Rızā Şefî'î Kedkenî, who has republished all the works belonging to Farîd ud-Dîn Attār, includes *Pend-i Attār* in some of the works that are wrongly known or shown as belonging to Attār and states: "Apart from the four verses (*Mantiku't-tayr*, *İlâhînâme*, *Esrarnâme* and *Musîbetnâme*), *Dīvân*, *Muhtâr-nâme* and *Tezkiretû'l-Evliyâ*, no other work belongs to Attār... Unfortunately, some of them, such as *Pendname*, have been reprinted on his behalf repeatedly, but none of them are his works."<sup>3</sup> However, I shall briefly mention here that Sa'îd-i Nefîsî, Sayyid Ziyâuddîn Sajjâdî and other scientists, who stated that the work belongs to the famous Sheikh Attār, also have significant reasons.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout history, *Pend-i Attār* has been translated into especially Turkish, as well as Arabic, Hindi/Urdu, French, Latin, English, German, and some other languages. The work was taught as a textbook in schools in the Ottoman Empire, Iran, and India.<sup>5</sup> Probably the whole Islamic world showed interest in *Pend-i Attār* in similar ways. There are hundreds or even thousands of manuscript copies of the work in the world. Its editions are also numerous.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, this historical and cultural accumulation necessitates the researchers dealing with the work itself rather than the discussions on the author of the work.

Researchers in Turkish universities have also carried out significant studies on *Pend-i Attār* translations and commentaries made in Anatolia.<sup>7</sup> This Persian work in verse, with hundreds of manuscript

<sup>2</sup> Nazif Şahinoğlu, "Attār Ferîdüddîn", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi*, IV, 95-98.

<sup>3</sup> Attār-i Nişâbüri, *Mantiku't-tayr: Mukaddîme, tashih ve ta'likat-ı Muhammed Rıza Şefî'î Kedkeni*, [Conference of Birds: Introduction, edition and treatise by Muhammed Şefîi Kedkeni] 12<sup>th</sup> Edition (Tehran: İntişârât-ı Suhen, 1391 SH), 37.

<sup>4</sup> Mînû Fetûrecî, "Serâyende-yi Pendnâme Kîst?", *Fasl-nâme-yi Tahassusî-yi Zebân ve Edebiyât-ı Fârsî*, no.1, (1388 SH):137-162.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmed Ateş, *İstanbul Kütüphanelerinde Farsça Manzum Eserler I [Persian Verse Works in Istanbul Libraries I]* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Publishing House, 1968) 96.

Ahmed-i Munzevî, *Fihristvâre-i Kitâbhâ-yi Fârsî*, Vol. 10, (Tehran, 1386), 465-488.

<sup>6</sup> Rızâ Mustafavî-i Sebzvârî, "Pendnâme", *Danişnâme-i Cihân-ı İslâm* vol. 5 (Tehran: Bunyad-ı Dairetû'l-Maârif-i İslâmî, 1999/1377), 767.

<sup>7</sup> Kezban Paksoy, "Bursevî İsmâil Hakkı Şerh-i Pend-i Attār (İnceleme-Metin-Sözlük)" ("Bursevi İsmail Hakkı's Commentary on Pend-i Attar (Review-Text-Glossary)") (Erciyes University, PhD Thesis, 2012).

Mehmet Sarı, "Na'tî'nin Pend-i Attār Şerhi [Na'tî's Pend-i Attār Commentary]" (İstanbul University, Master's Thesis, 2016).

copies in Turkish libraries, has been translated and annotated into Turkish in verse and prose. Dozens of editions of *Pend-i Attâr* were made in various ways during the Ottoman State and the Republic of Turkey.<sup>8</sup>

The words of Muhammad Murad Naqshbandi (1203-1264/1788-1848), the owner of the Turkish commentary titled *Mâhazar*, can be cited as an example of the interest shown in this work during the Ottoman period. He narrates that he had his students read the aforementioned book more than a hundred times.<sup>9</sup> Muhammad Murad Naqshbandi notes in this work that he wrote his commentary after these lessons. *Mâhazar*, which means “ready”, “present” and “whatever present”, was published 9 times in the Ottoman period, the first in 1252/1836 and the last in 1328/1912.<sup>10</sup> For example, the Istanbul edition dated 1304/1886-1887 is 504 small-size pages.

Sheikh İsmâil Hakkî-i Burûsevî's (6 Dhu al-Qa'dah 1063 - 9 Dhu al-Qa'dah 1137/28 September 1653 - 20 July 1725) commentary on *Pend-i Attâr* (written on 17 Ramadan 1136/9 June 1724) including the Persian text has become a reference book among the *Pend-i Attâr* corpus. Sheikh İsmâil Hakkî-i's *Surh-i Pend-i Attâr* was published in

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Fatma İmamoğlu, “Muhammed Zahrî Efendi'nin Miftâh-ı Pend Adlı eseri ve Osmanlı Dönemi Pendname Geleneğini İçerisindeki Yeri [Muhammed Zahrî Efendi's Miftâh-ı Pend and Its Place in the Ottoman Period Pendname Tradition]” (İstanbul Medeniyet University, PhD Thesis, June 2018).

Serkan Türkoğlu, “Türk Edebiyatında Pendnâme-i Attâr'ın Manzum Tercümelere ve Seyyid Ali Rızâ'nın Riyâzü'r-Rızâ'sı” [The Verse Translations of Pendnâme-i Attâr in Turkish Literature and Seyyid Ali Rızâ's Riyâzü'r-Rıza], *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 22, Special Issue (2018): 671-692.

Musa Balcı, “Attâr ve Pendnâme'si Üzerine”, [On Attâr and His Pendnâme], *Akademik-Ul 2*, no. 1 (2018): 33-63.

<sup>8</sup> For the printed text, see.

M. Seyfettin Özege, “Eski Harflerle Basılmış Türkçe Eserler Kataloğu” [Catalogue of Turkish Works Printed in Old Letters], I-V (İstanbul, 1971-1979).

M. Seyfettin Özege, “Pend-i Attar (ve Manzum Terümesi)” [Pend-I Attar and Its Verse Translation], III, (1402). (Provides information of 10 editions published in Istanbul.)

M. Seyfettin Özege, “Seyfettin Özege Bağış Kitapları Kataloğu” [Seyfettin Özege Catalogue of Donated Books], Prepared by. Ali Bayram-M. Sadi Çöğenli, I-VI, (Erzurum, 1978-1989).

M. Seyfettin Özege, “Pend-i Attar”, III-IV, 171-172; V, 170; VI, 72. (Provides information on 16 editions, most of which were different from the previous catalogue and published in Istanbul and Bulak.)

<sup>9</sup> Murad Molla Şeyhi, *Mâhazar: Şerh alâ Pend-i Attâr*. (İstanbul, 1304 h.) 3.

<sup>10</sup> Özege, “Eski Harflerle Basılmış Türkçe Eserler Kataloğu” III, 994.

This work has also been published in recent years with some reductions, see Molla Murad en-Nakşibendî, *Aşk Bağından Öğütler Mâ Hazar*, prepared by İbrahim Kuntand Mehmet Ali Özkan, (İstanbul: Semerkand, 2013).

Dāru't-tibā'atīl-Āmire in Istanbul in 1250/1834, with 7+689 pages in size 23x15. In addition, the work was reprinted in 1287/1870, again in Istanbul, as 7+651 pages. It is quite remarkable that a text that is about 50 pages in size is explained by a work of this size.

In the Republican era, the translation by M. Nuri Gençosman who stated, "There are innumerable printed and written copies of *Pendname* in our country", has reached the tenth edition and thousands of copies since 1946.<sup>11</sup> For example, this translation was published in 20,000 copies in 1985 and 5,000 in 1988. In this translation published by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey, the number of couplets is 911. Today, several old or new translations of *Pend-i Attār* are enjoyed by readers in Turkey.

The Persian text of *Pend-i Attār*, which received great attention and was taught to young people in various geographical areas, has been altered several times probably because of this interest. Therefore, the number of couplets of the work appears in written and printed copies differently, such as 805<sup>12</sup>, 809<sup>13</sup> and 922 couplets.<sup>14</sup>

The publication in the form of critical text/critical edition, the main purpose of which is to identify and publish the author's own expression, is almost impossible for a work like *Pend-i Attār*, which has received great attention for centuries, has been altered, and has thousands of manuscripts and published copies. The absence of manuscripts belonging to the period close to the time when Sheikh Attar presumably lived, as well as the existence of discussions about the author of the work, do not allow a realistic critical edition study. Thus, the text prepared by Sheikh İsmail Hakkı Efendi, who tried to conduct such a study 300 years ago, should be considered important in any case. In addition, Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838) published

<sup>11</sup> The edition used: is Feridüddin Attar, *Pendname*, (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Printing House, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> There is also the Persian text in the verse translation of Hasan Şu'ûrî Efendi (1105/1693). See. Aişe Handan Konar, "Hasan Şu'ûrî Efendi's *Pend-nâme-i Attār* Translation-Text and Review", (Boğaziçi University, Master's Thesis, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Fatma İmamoğlu, "Muhammed Zahrî Efendi'nin Miftâh-ı Pend Adlı eseri ve Osmanlı Dönemi *Pendname* Geleneğini İçerisindeki Yeri" [Muhammed Zahrî Efendi's *Miftâh-ı Pend* and Its Place in the Ottoman Period *Pendname* Tradition], 77. (The whole text is used in the study).

<sup>14</sup> Şeyh Feridüddin Attār-ı Nişâbü'rî, *Pendnâme ve Bisernâme: Tashîh ve mukaddime-i Ahmed Hoşnivoîs (İmâd)*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Tehran, 1376 SH).

the Persian text of this work in Paris in 1819 with translation and analysis.<sup>15</sup> This publication also attracted attention in the scientific world and was published in different formats.<sup>16</sup> It is possible to note that there are important differences between these publications and other editions. The commentaries written for the book in different countries and languages also contain important information about the countries they were written in.

### 3. Scope and Content of *Pend-i Attār*

*Pend-i Attār*, like all our classical books, begins with gratitude to Allah and praising the Prophet, and discusses the rules and habits that should be learned especially at a young age and applied throughout life. The information gathered for the benefit of the individual and the society is naturally based on religious sources and the experiences of the Muslim community. Therefore, the preferences of the societies and the historical development process should not be ignored while reading the work. The work is also an etiquette book. Thanks to this feature, *Pend-i Attār* is mentioned among the books of advice (*nasihatnâme*), policy (*siyâsetnâme*), and ethics.

The advice provided in the work about the individual is crucial and meaningful. It should not be forgotten that these couplets were taught in every geographical area in the Islamic world for centuries in order to ensure that children gained various habits. In the modern world where countries, languages and even dialects are intentionally separated, this tradition of reading and benefiting from *Pend-i Attār* has almost disappeared.

Some of the subjects that constitutes *Pend-i Attār* can be listed as follows: bad personality traits such as anger, jealousy, telling lies, backbiting, hypocrisy, selfishness, arrogance, stinginess and cruelty, and virtues such as doing favors, valuing people, counting one's blessings, being moderate, being patient, valuing knowledge, being kind, ignoring worldly concerns, and being just.

<sup>15</sup> Farîd-ad-Dîn 'Attar, *Pend-Nameh: ou Le Livre des conseils* (The Book of Advice), trans. and ed. by Silvestre de Sacy, (Paris: Debure, 1819).

<sup>16</sup> An edition as an example: Peyâm-i Âşinâyî *Pendnâme-i Attâr-i Nişâbûrî*, (Tehran: İntişârât-i Emîr-i Kebîr, 1377).

For example, some verses about being captive of and dependent on worldly values and sense of self are as follows:

هر که او از حرص دنیا دار شد	بیگمان از وی خدا بیزار شد
چون شتر مرغی شناس این نفس را	نه کشد بار و نه پَرَد در هوا
گر بپر گویش گوید اشترم	ور زهی بارش بگوید طائر م
چون گیاه زهر رنگش دلکشاست	لیکطعمش تلخ و بویش ناخوشاست
گر به طاعت خوانیش سستی کند	لیک اندر معصیت چستی کند
نفس را آن پَه که در زندان کنی	هر چه فرماید خلاف آن کنی
نیست درمانش بجز جوع و عطش	تا که سازی رام اندر طاعتش

*Allah will undoubtedly be annoyed by a person who is greedily worldly.*

*Take this soul as an ostrich; it neither carries a load nor flies in the air.*

*If you tell him to "Fly", he will say "I am a camel"; if you put a load on him, he will say "I am a bird".*

*Its color is heart-warming, like a poisonous herb; but its taste is bitter, and its smell is unpleasant.*

*If you invite him to obedience -to Allah-, he acts lazy; but in committing a sin he is quick.*

*It is more correct to put your soul in prison and to do the opposite of whatever it commands.*

*Its cure is only hunger and thirst; so you subdue him into obedience (214-221).*

Gratitude, science, and reason are interestingly mentioned together in the work:

شکر ناکردن زوالِ نعمتست	بهره شاکر کمالِ نعمتست
علم را بی عقل نثوان کار بست	بیش بیعقلان نمی باید نشست
بیخرد دانش وبالست ای پسر	علم مرغ و عقل بالست ای پسر
هر که علمی دارد و نبود پران	از طریق عقل باشد بر کران

*Not being grateful will destroy your blessings, he who is grateful will enjoy his blessings to the fullest.*

*Science cannot be used without reason; one should not sit with fools.*

*O son! Science without reason is harm; science is the bird; the reasons is the wing. O son!*

*A person who has knowledge but does not fly will stray from the path of reason (364-367).*

He offers advice to the rulers of all times with the concepts of sultan and justice:

میلِ او سوی کم آزاری بُوَد	هرکهر افرِ جهاندارى بُوَد
تا ز عدلش عالمی گردند شاد	عدل باید پادشاهان را و داد
سود نَکُند مر وُرا خیل و سپاه	گر کند آهنگِ ظلمی پادشاه
باشد اندر مملکت شه را بقا	چون که عادل باشد و فرّخلقا

*The desire of the person who has sultanate majesty is not to hurt the people.*

*Justice and mercy are necessary for sultans; so that he makes the people of the world happy.*

*If the sultan intends to oppress, his entourage and army will not benefit him.*

*If he is just and respectable, the sultan will be permanent in the country (98-101).*

*Pend-i Attār*, which has been read for centuries, ends with the following couplets:

هرچه حکم تست از آن خرسنده‌ایم	گر بخوانی ور برانی بنده‌ایم
کین نصائح را بخواند او بسی	رحمت حق باد بر روح کسی

*Whether you call or dismiss, we are your servants; whatever your judgment is, we're fine with it.*

*May Allah's mercy be on the soul of the person who reads these advices repeatedly (900-901).*

*Pend-i Attār* contains advice for the inner peace and success of the individual, and the security and welfare of the society. The book, which brings together hundreds of pieces of advice for mature people and a safe society, names and explains the values that the Muslim individual and society should have. Although the era and conditions are thought to have changed, the book is still beneficial in many ways today. The commentaries written for the book in different countries and languages also contain important information about the countries they were written in. The commentaries written in Ottoman Turkish for *Pend-i Attār* in previous centuries provide valuable sources.



#### 4. Conclusion

*Pend-i Attār* (*Attār's Advice*) is one of the works that reached and taken as an example in a large geographical area from the Indian peninsula to North Africa, and from East Turkestan to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In all this great area, books of advice, ethics, and politics, including *Pend-i Attār*, were all available in common written languages, Arabic, Persian or Turkish.

*Pend-i Attār* in Persian was taught in schools in the countries of this geographical area until the last century. Maybe even today, in some places where lessons are taught in the traditional way, this work preserves its place among the students' books. Hundreds of translations, commentaries and publications have been made on *Pend-i Attār* in many countries in the West and East for several centuries.

Although there have been different opinions expressed in the past few years about the author of this poetic work, which has been known for centuries to be the product of Farīd ud-Dīn Attār's pen (d. 618/1221), the book's gaining popularity in a very wide geography for centuries and having been used as a textbook for young people carry a meaning beyond these discussions.

*Pend-i Attār* provides advice for the inner peace and achievement of the individual, and the security and welfare of the society. The book, which contains hundreds of pieces of advice for a safe society and mature people, points out the values that the Muslim individuals and the Muslim society should hold. Although a long time has passed since its writing and current conditions are different, the book continues to offers guidance in many ways even today.

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