

A Discussion on the Accuracy and Correctness of Attributing Khosrownameh to Attar-e Neishaburi

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Abstract

Khosrownameh or Gol -o Hermez is one of the famous poems attributed to Attar, which, unlike other fake poems attributed to him, due to its poetic order and coherence, some linguistic features, and the relative mastery of the poet, has been praised by some in a way that they consider the poem as Attar's, and put besides his four main and definite poems, "Mantiq-uṭ-Ṭayr", "Asrarnameh", "Elahinameh" and "Mosibatnameh". On the contrary, some others have rejected this attribution by stating evidence. This article deals with the stylistic study of Khosrownameh in terms of structure, language and content. The research results show that the attribution of this poem to Attar is incorrect; because there are major differences between Khosrownameh, and Attar's main works, both in terms of form and structure, also in terms of language usages in both lexical and syntactic levels, and in terms of content and theme. On the other hand, the rejection of its attribution to Attar is strengthened by the manuscript issues and extratextual study of this poem and the discovery of some historical facts.

Keywords: Attar Nishaburi, Khosrownameh, structure, language, content.

Extended abstract

1. Introduction

Attar-e Neishabouri is one of the poets whose works have been underestimated throughout the history, to the point that a large number of inappropriate poems have been attributed to him and being placed in the ranks of his four main works "Mantiq-uṭ-Ṭayr", "Asrarnameh", "Elahinameh" and "Mosibatnameh". Among the works wrongly attributed to Attar, and the subject of discussion and

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research by many researchers of Persian literature, is *Khosrownameh*. The subject of this poem is the love story of two lovers named Khosro and Gol. The poem is written like some other romantic poems as *Khosrow and Shirin* of Nezami. This poem is written fluently, and in terms of style and poetic language, it has coherence, arrangement and the ability to induce the content to the reader, and by the way, this issue has caused some people to consider it as that of Attar without comprehensive investigation. In the present study, an attempt has been made to compare the *Khosrownameh* with Attar's main works both in terms of extratextual aspect (historical and manuscript issues) and from the stylistic aspect in the three fields of structure, language and content.

2. Theoretical framework

In general, there are many differences of opinion regarding the attribution of *Khosrownameh* to Attar. Among the prominent scholars of Persian literature, Saeed Nafisi, without any doubts, recognizes *Khosrownameh* as Attar's, and believes this poem is one of the works of Attar's youth and middle life. Shafi'i Kadkani believes that the name of this poem is actually Gol and Hermez, that Hermez is another form of the Greek word "Hermes", and *Khosrownameh* is the original name of Attar's *Elahinamah*. According to others, such as Zarrinkoob, by composing a romantic poem such as *Khosrownameh*, despite the interpretability of some of its verses to mystical themes, at the end of Attar's life and after composing his four main poems, the poet's spiritual and mystical behavior cannot be justifiable. Other valid reasons have also been presented later by other researchers in rejecting the attribution of *Khosrownameh* to Attar, including Ahmad Ezzatipour in a research while criticizing the reasons of other researchers pointing to some extratextual evidence and clues, such as The names of some characters in it, and the belief that its author is a "Shia" have led to the conclusion that *Khosrownameh* is not from Attar. Among the other important researches that have been done regarding the attribution of *Khosrownameh* to Attar, is "the stylistic study of *Khosrownameh* to explain the correctness of its attribution to Attar e Neishaburi" by Teimur Malmir. In this research, it has been concluded that due to the frequency of commonalities between *Khosrownameh* and Attar's main works, its attribution to Attar is correct. In a research titled "Whose is *Khosrownameh* from?" from Akbar Nahvi, the conclusion is that this poem is undoubtedly not from Attar, and it was written in Isfahan near 600 AH, and its poet was Sheikh Attar Abu Abdullah Muhammad Mianaji (d. 619 AH). A number of other researchers have also presented their opinions regarding the correctness or incorrectness of the attribution of *Khosrownameh* to Attar e Neishabouri in various articles, but in none of these studies, the investigations have not been comprehensive, and have not led to correct conclusion.

3. methodology

In this research, an attempt has been made to investigate the attribution of Khosrownameh to Attar, both in terms of extratextual evidence, and in terms of intratextuality, i.e. stylistic issues using analytical-inferential methods.

4. Research & Discussion

In this research, the indisposition and correctness of the attribution of Khosrownameh to Attar has been investigated from two extratextual (historical and manuscript issues) and intratextual (stylistic) aspects. From extratextual analysis, it was concluded that the date of writing of the oldest manuscript of Khosrownameh is 696 AH, so it can be definitely said that this poem was written in the 7th century of hegira. Another important point that can be considered from a historical point of view in this poem is the praise of “Imam Hasan” and “Imam Hussain” (second and third “Imams” of Shia Muslims), and two Hanafi and Shafei imams by the poet, which shows that he was of the Shafei religion; and if he mentioned Imam Hanafi as well, it was because of observing the social and religious situation of Isfahan in the sixth century. Since in this era, most of the people of Isfahan were Shafi'i and Hanafi, and both clans were very strict in their beliefs and were constantly in conflict with each other. The comparison of Khosrownameh with Attar's four main works in terms of intratextual and stylistic issues indicates that, firstly, Khosrownameh was written with an almost coherent structure and with a slight difference from Attar's style in arranging the contents in his poems; With full knowledge of the ways of composing a long poem, the poet has divided and arranged the different contents of the work and has started his story. Secondly, due to the fact that Khosrownameh has the necessary eloquence and fluency to an acceptable extent, the lexical and syntactic level of the language in this poem is not much different from the lexical and syntactic level of Attar's poems, and only in a few cases we can carefully point out the differences. Thirdly, in terms of theme, this poem can be interpreted into mystical themes, so that from many of its verses, the influence of the poet from Thoughts of Ibn e Arabi, especially his most famous theory, "pantheism", is evident, while Attar puts "Oneness" in opposition to polytheism.

5. Conclusions & Suggestions

Based on the examination and comparison of Khosrownamah with the main works of Attar from two very important extratextual and intratextual aspects, the conclusion was reached that firstly, according to the date of the oldest manuscript, this poem was written in the 7th century of hegira, and secondly, despite having eloquence and coherence, in terms of structure, syntax, vocabulary, content, and theme is different from Attar's main poems.

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