



MOJIR-AL-DIN BAYLAQĀNI

MOJIR-AL-DIN BAYLAQĀNI, Persian poet of the 12th century, born in *Baylaqān* in *Arrān* (now part of the Republic of Azarbaijan). He was a contemporary of Khāqāni (*Khāqāni Šervāni*), *Aṭir-al-Din Aḡsikati*, and *Jamāl-al-Din Eṣfahāni*; and, as a number of poems indicate, their relationship was at times marked by verbal sparring. Mojir was also a contemporary of *Falaki Šervāni* and lamented his death in a *tarjiʿ-band* (*Divān*, pp. 375-81).

The quarrel with Khāqāni is most famously connected with a couple of short satirical poems Mojir had written on the city of Isfahan and for which Khāqāni had been partially blamed. Some poets from Isfahan, including Jamāl-al-Din, reacted to Mojir's poems by composing retaliatory short satires of their own. By writing a panegyric on that same city, Khāqāni tried to distance himself from the satires of Mojir whom he only refers to obliquely as "a damned demon," an anagram (R-J-I-M) of the letters in his name ("*div-e rajim*," *Divān*, ed. Sajjādi, p. 356, v. 8). A few lines later he complains that "the teacher got the blame" while "the fault was the pupil's" (p. 356, v. 17). This single verse, in a polemical context, may well be the origin of the long-held view that posits Khāqāni as Mojir's teacher, since no other source, including the *taḏkeras* compiled before the end of the 16th century, contains this information (Beelaert, 1995, pp. 55-57). The satirical verses quoted by *Rezāqoli Khan Hedāyat* and considered by him to be directed against Khāqāni (*Majmaʿ al-foṣaḥā* III, pp. 1819-20), are extracted from a long *qaṣida* that incidentally contains both invective and praise (*Divān*, no. 52). More importantly, they are in fact aimed against someone else with the same *laqab* of "Afzal-al-Din"



(Ābādi, introduction to the *Divān*, pp. xxii-xxiii; Zipoli, pp. 465-66). Mojir also wrote a long panegyric in praise of Khāqāni (*Divān*, no. 5; a shorter version is found in the *Divān* of Rašid-al-Din Waṭwāt, pp. 24-26, but Kandli Harisči, p. 259, has convincingly argued that the poem is Mojir's).

Mojir and Aṭir shared a number of *mamduḥs* (see below), a situation that led to some rivalry. This is indicated for instance by a *qeṭ'a* that, according to 'Awfi, alludes to a conflict with the ruler Qizil Arslān (r. 582/1186-587/1191) who, after Mojir's temporary absence, favored Aṭir in his place. (*Divān*, ed. Ābādi, no. 18; 'Awfi, *Lobāb al-albāb*, pp. 406-7).

The oldest poems in the *Divān* seem to be two *qaṣidas* dedicated to the Šervānšāh Manučehr (d. 555/1160-61; see Šervānshāhs) (ed. nos. 38 and 47); most of Mojir's panegyrics, however, are dedicated to Eldigüzid Atabegs (see *Atābakān-e Āḍarbāyjān*), in particular Noṣrat-al-Din Jahān Pahlavān (r. 571/1175 – 582/1186) and his brother Qizil Arslān, and to the Saljuq Sultan Arslān b. Toḡrīl (r. 556/1161-571/1176). A number of poems dedicated to one Sayf-al-Din Mir Arslān, who can perhaps be identified with the ruler of Darband (r. ca. 530/1136 to ca. 559/1164-566/1170) are arguably also among his earliest compositions (Foruzānfār, 1990, pp. 584-85). Some thirty other people were the recipients of his praise and his invective (a small number of his *qaṣidas* and *qeṭ'as* can be classified as *hajws*). Several of these names, in particular the addressees of the *qeṭ'as*, are unidentified and, given the scant information offered in the poems, may remain so. The long introduction by Moḥammad Ābādi to his edition of the *Divān* does not address this issue, nor does it provide a descriptive list of the identified addressees.

Mojir's voluminous *Divān* contains all the usual verse-forms: sixty-seven *qaṣidas* (many of them with multiple *maṭla's*), four strophic poems, nearly ninety *qeṭ'as*, some eighty *ghazals* (eight of them panegyrics), more than one hundred *robā'is* and more than fifty *molamma'āt*. A separate section is devoted to *šakwā'iyāt*, though it is not clear from Ābādi's edition of the *Divān* whether this reflects a manuscript tradition (on these manuscripts see below). The section contains forty poems complaining of the fickleness of this world (*donyā*), the separation from friends, old age, and want of proper appreciation.

Although the traditional claim that Mojir was Khāqāni's 'pupil' is questionable, his poems, except for the early poems mentioned above, show the undeniable influence of Khāqāni's style. In some cases this resulted in a good poem, even



though the outcome may appear as a pastiche of Khāqāni's verses. An example is the *qaṣida* with the *radif* "*sukṭa*," in which he interweaves a complaint on his personal condition with a depiction of a cold winter (no. 77; which may be a second *maṭla'* of no. 76). This influence does not, however, always lead to felicitous results. Khāqāni's imagery may be 'difficult', but a reader who perseveres will perceive that the argument falls into place. Mojir's images, on the other hand, are often far-fetched, miss an internal logic (for some examples, see Foruzānfar, p. 580, n. 4), and fail to induce the same poetic effect. Although his poems regularly appear in anthologies (see below), hardly any of them have achieved the status of a memorable 'classic'.

Apart from an unpublished edition prepared as a doctoral thesis at the University of Aligarh (see bibliography), there are two published editions of Mojir's *Divān*. Only the later edition, by Moḥammad Ābādi is a critical one. It is based on eight manuscripts of *divāns* and miscellanies or anthologies. Ābādi mentions another five, without a siglum, but they do not figure in his critical apparatus (introduction to the *Divān*, pp. lxxviii-lxxxvii.) Storey/de Blois (1994, pp. 427-28) mentions six of the manuscripts to which Ābādi gives a siglum, as well as five more not mentioned by him. Except for one miscellany dated 741/1340-41 that contains only some two hundred of Mojir's verses (Ābādi's *lām*), none of these manuscripts antedate the 16th or 17th century. Ābādi uses as copy-text a *jong* in the Lālā Esmā'il collection (Hekimoğlu Ali Paşa 669/4), which bears a *waqf* notice dated 1097/1685-86, while the manuscript itself is written in *naski* and is obviously considerably older. However, Ābādi does not use (or even mention) the oldest manuscript in which some of Mojir's poems are handed down, the unique manuscript, dated 635/1238, of Rāvandi's history of the Saljuqs, *Rāḥat al-ṣodur wa āyat al-sorur* (Paris, Bibl. Nationale, Suppl. persan 1314). Mojir is Rāvandi's most quoted poet (see Muḥammad Iqbāl's introduction to his edition, p. xxii). Apart from short quotations, Rāvandi includes six complete *qaṣidas*, dedicated either to the Saljuq Arslān or to the Eldigüzids Jahān-Pahlavān and Qizil Arslān (*Rāḥat al-ṣodur* pp. 301-27, in Ābādi's edition nos. 9, 12, 20, 28, 32 and 79). Mojir's poems are frequently quoted in many more anthologies, some of them existing in old copies, such as the well-known *Mo'nes al-aḥrār* by Moḥammad b. Badr Jājarmi, which exists in an autograph copy of 741/1341, and a manuscript of a *jong* in the Majles Library in Tehran, no. 14017, dated 695/1295-96; neither of these were used by Ābādi. These anthologies occasionally (such as the above-mentioned *jong* in the Majles Library) contain poems not included in the published *Divān*.



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