



MONJIK TERMEḌĪ

MONJIK TERMEḌĪ, ABU'L-ḤASAN 'ALI B. MOḤAMMAD, a Persian-language poet of the late 10th century.

TermeḌĪ's name, Monjik, is probably derived from *monj* "honeybee," as in one distich he calls himself small like a *monj* and refers to his poems being as sweet as honey: *Har čand ḥaqiram soḵanam 'āli-o širin / Āri 'asal-e širin nāyad magar az monj* (Although I am humble, my word is excellent and sweet / Yes, sweet honey can only come from a honeybee; Monjik TermeḌĪ, p. 39, *bayt* 301). Little is known about him. In the latter half of the 10th century, TermeḌĪ was a panegyrist of **Āl-e Moḥtāj** (Čaġānid) rulers in Transoxiana, during a period that roughly corresponds to the years intervening between the presence of **Daqiḳi** and **Farroḳi Sistāni** at their court.

The two major rulers praised by Monjik were Abu'l-Moḥaffar Aḥmad b. Moḥammad Čaġāni (in two *qašidas*: Monjik, pp. 3-4, *bayts* 32-42; pp. 15-20, *bayts* 141-85) and Abu Yaḥyā Ṭāher b. Fażl Čaġāni (d. 991) (in three *qašidas*: pp. 6-7, *bayts* 54-62; p. 10, *bayts* 99-106; pp. 21-22, *bayts* 192-99). Two other Čaġānid notables who were praised by Monjik were Abu Moḥammad 'Abbās (probably Ṭāher b. Fażl's brother: see Edāreči Gilāni, p. 187; Monjik, p. 5, *bayts* 48-53) and Abu'l-Moḥaffar 'Abdollāh b. Abu 'Ali Aḥmad (Abu'l-Moḥaffar Aḥmad's uncle: see Nafisi, p. 1264; Monjik, pp. 11-13, *bayts* 111-27). Monjik was contemporary of many master poets in the court of Čaġānids, including Daqiḳi, Badi' Balki, Labibi, Farroḳi, and even Ṭāher b. Fażl himself. Šahid Balki satirized Monjik in a distich quoted by Wafā'i in his *Farhang* (p. 36), which is similar in rhyme with two satirical distichs of Monjik quoted by Asadi in *Loġat-e fors* (p. 272). It



seems therefore likely that these two distichs of Monjik (p. 14, *bayts* 139-40) probably refer to Šahid. Monjik was also satirized in two distichs by an anonymous poet named Borqa‘i (Monjik, p. 29, *bayt* 252; p. 59, *bayt* 405), which are the only surviving sources to bear his name. In some memoirs and anthologies, Monjik is credited with being a harp-player (e.g. see Awḥadi Balyāni, p. 3874 and Hedāyat, p. 1176).

According to Nāṣer Kōsrow in his *Safar-nāma* (p. 9), the *divāns* of Monjik and Daqīqi were extant in the 11th century. Of Monjik’s *divān*, however, only some fragments have survived in poetical anthologies and biographical memoirs (*taḍkeras*), dictionaries, and other literary prose works. Poetical anthologies such as *Lobāb al-albāb* (‘Awfi, 1906, II, pp. 13-14; idem, 1956, pp. 252-53), *‘Arafāt al-‘āseqin* (Awḥadi Balyāni, VI, pp. 3874-83), *Haft eqlim* (Rāzi, III, pp. 84-86), *Ḳayr al-bayān* (Sistāni, p. 138), *Majma‘ al-foṣaḥā* (Hedāyat, V, pp. 1176-80), and anthologies still in manuscript (e.g., Yağmā‘i, pp. 116-18; MS. 2446, pp. 642-44; MS. 53-D, pp. 437-41) include some complete poems rather than fragments, including some *qaṣidas*, the longest of which contains forty-five distichs. Other sources, such as *Loğat-e fors*, *Tarjomān al-balāga*, *Ḥadā‘eq al-seḥr*, *Al-mo‘jam fi ma‘ā‘ir-e aš‘ār al-‘ajam*, *Šaḥāḥ al-fors*, and *Farhangs of Qawwās* (see [FARHANG-E QAWWĀS](#)), *Wafā‘i* (see [FARHANG-E WAFĀ‘I](#)), *Awbahi*, *Ḥosayn Enju* (see [FARHANG-E JAHĀNGĪRĪ](#)), *Soruri* (see [FARHANG-E SORŪRĪ](#)), *‘Abd-al- Rašīd Ḥosaynī* (see [FARHANG-E RAŠĪDĪ](#)), and *Šo‘uri*, contain some single distichs.

Moḥammad Dabirsiāqi (1955 and 1972) and Gilbert Lazard (1964) were the first to collect and edit the extant fragments of early Persian poetry. In 1991, Aḥmad Edāreči Gilāni (pp. 196-216) and Moḥammad Modabberi (pp. 218-251) published two new edited collections of the verses surviving from Monjik as well as the other leading Persian poets. Subsequently, some newly found verses of Monjik were published by ‘Ali Ašraf Šādeqi (pp. 289-95) and Ehsan Shavarebi [Eḥsān Šavārebi] (pp. 10-12). The last effort to collect and edit the poems of Monjik was that of Ehsan Shavarebi, which led to the publication of a reconstituted version of Monjik’s *Divān* from his remained poems. Altogether, 410 distichs are gathered in this edition, about 50 of which are newly found. Among these poems, 170 distichs are found singly, and the others are mostly part of some *qaṣidas*, chiefly in the metrical forms of *možāre‘*, *mojtaṭ*, *hazaj*, *motaqāreb*, and *monsareḥ* with the exception of two distichs that belong to a *maṭnavi* in hazaj (Monjik, p. 26, *bayts* 239-40).

Monjik, in most of the memoirs and anthologies, is mentioned as an



outstanding master among the early Persian poets. His fragments contain some usual themes of early Persian poetry, namely description of nature, love, eulogy of wine, wisdom, panegyrics, and satire. He is, however, mostly known for his satires (both *hajv* “lampoon” and *hazl* “jest”; cf. Behzādi Anduhjerdi, pp. 31-32), as witnessed by the reference in Suzani Samarqandi’s *divān* in which he compared himself with Monjik in satire: *Man ān kasam ke čo kardam be hajv goftan rāy / Hezār Monjik az piš-e man kam ārad pāy* (I am the one that if I decide to satirize / A thousand ones like Monjik would be at loss; Suzani, p. 93). We do not know the persons who are addressed in the satires of Monjik, but the word *k̄vāja* is frequently seen in his poems, especially in the satires, for example in the following verses concerning the meanness of an unknown *K̄vāja*:

*Gugerd-e sorḡ k̄vāst ze man sabz-e man parir,
Emruz agar nayāftami ruy-zardami;
Goftam ke nik bud ke gugerd-e sorḡ k̄vāst,
Gar nān-e k̄vāja k̄āsti az man če kardami?*
(Rāzi, p. 376; Monjik Termeḍi, p. 25, *bayts* 225-26)

The day before yesterday, my beloved asked me for red sulfur [philosopher’s stone, *lapis philosophorum*].

If I do not find it today, I will be “yellow-faced” [ashamed].

I said to myself that it was good that the request was for the philosopher’s stone;

For what would I do, had I been asked for bread from the Master’s [*K̄vāja*] table?

His panegyrics are also of a great importance, as his fellow-citizen poet, Adib Ṣāber-e Termeḍi (see [ADĪB ṢĀBER](#)) points out in dealing with Ṣahid and Monjik’s poetical output (Adib Ṣāber, p. 382). Monjik was one of the first Persian poets to replace *tašbih* “simile” with *este’āra* “metaphor” (Ṣafi’i Kadkani, p. 347). He also utilized many novel *kenāyas* “periphrasis” and *eḡrāqs* “exaggerations,” which brought him success in satire.



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