



ĠANĪ (ARTICLE 1)

ĠANĪ, pen name of Mollā MOḤAMMAD-ṬĀHER KAŠMĪRĪ (1630-69), one of the most celebrated poets of Kashmir who wrote in the Indian Style (*sabk-e hendī*). He was a pupil of another famous poet from Kashmir, Shaikh Moḥammad-Moḥsen Fānī (q.v.; d. 1081/1670-71), through whom he met many other poets including Šā'eb and Kalīm. Although he is frequently mentioned in the biographical sketches of poetical anthologies (for a list of these see *Ḳayyāmpūr*, II, p. 673), little is known about his life apart from a couple of frequently repeated anecdotes illustrating the poet's unworldly outlook and disdain for court patronage (NasĀrābādī, p. 445; Tikku, 1971, pp. 106-7). Ġanī's *dīvān* was collected by his disciple Moḥammad-'Alī Māher (d. 1678), himself a poet of some distinction, and Lāla Malek Šahīd, another Kashmiri poet. It is said that in the process of editing the *dīvān*, about four-fifths of the extant poetry was discarded as being too difficult, producing a selection of 20,000 verses out of over 100,000 verses (Lōdī, p. 163). This severe pruning for the sake of clarity has meant that in some cases only a single verse survives from an entire ghazal. The *dīvān* includes *ġazals*, *robā'īs*, chronograms, and a few *matnawīs*, including one in the manner of a *šahrašūb* (a usually homoerotic poem describing a youthful artisan) about a young barber and bloodletter.



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