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## CONTENTS

François Widemann, <i>Civil Wars and Alliances in Bactria and North-Western India after the Usurpation of King Euclatides</i> .....	9
Kalpana K. Tadikonda, <i>Significance of the Fire Altars Depicted on Gandharan Buddhist Sculptures</i> .....	29
Pierpaolo Di Carlo, <i>The Prun Festival of the Birir Valley, Northern Pakistan, in 2006</i> .....	45
Roberto Micheli, <i>Ancient Earplugs from the Bir-kot Hilltop: A Neglected Class of Ornaments from Swat, Northern Pakistan</i> .....	101
Domenico Faccenna and Richard Salomon, <i>The Sacred Area of Butkara I, Stūpa No. 27: Location Letters and Marks</i> .....	113
Domenico Faccenna, <i>Columns at Dharmarajika (Taxila)</i> .....	127
Francesca Tagliatesta, <i>Iconography of the Unicorn from India to the Italian Middle Ages</i> .....	175
Shankar Goyal, <i>The Recently Discovered Kurukshetra-Varanasi Grant of Harṣa: Year 23</i> .....	193
P. Ravitchandirane, <i>Stratigraphy and Structural Context of Arikamedu</i> .....	205
Fiorella Rispoli, <i>The Incised &amp; Impressed Pottery Style of Mainland Southeast Asia: Following the Paths of Neolithization</i> .....	235
Roberto Ciarla, <i>Rethinking Yuanlongpo: The Case for Technological Links between the Lingnan (PRC) and Central Thailand in the Bronze Age</i> .....	305
<i>Brief Notes and Items for Discussion</i>	
Carlo G. Cereti, <i>Further on the Sasanian Mint of Esfahān</i> .....	331
Massimo Vidale, <i>The Collapse Melts Down: A Reply to Farmer, Sproat &amp; Witzel</i> .....	333
Angelo Andrea Di Castro, <i>On Handles and Names: Remarks on Wrestler's Weights</i> .....	367
Alberto Cacopardo, <i>Some Findings of Archaeological, Historical and Ethnographic Interest in Chitral</i> .....	377
Pramod Kumar, <i>A Critical Examination of Dinnāga's Views on Sentence</i> .....	391
Roberto Ciarla, <i>A Preliminary Report on Lo.R.A.P. Archaeological Excavations at Prehistoric Khao Sai On, Lopburi Province, Central Thailand</i> .....	395
<i>Book Reviews</i>	
by Augusto S. Cacopardo, Robert Danieluk S.J., Maria Vittoria Fontana, Lionello Lanciotti, Luca Maria Olivieri, Enrico Giuseppe Raffaelli .....	403
<i>Books Received</i> .....	424
<i>List of Contributors</i> .....	427
<i>Table of Contents</i> .....	429

# The Prun Festival of the Birir Valley, Northern Pakistan, in 2006

by PIERPAOLO DI CARLO

## INTRODUCTION

Birir, located in Chitral District, North West Frontier Province of Pakistan (Figs. 1-2), is the name of the southernmost of the three adjacent valleys where the Kalasha, ‘the last Kafirs of the Hindu-Kush’, are currently settled. Kafir, an Arabic word meaning ‘pagan, unbeliever’, is a term historically related to the spread of Islam, referred to the non-islamized peoples as a whole – though not to Jews and Christians who are defined *Kitabi* (Prs. *abli kitaab*). It defines therefore *e negativo* a person whose religious beliefs are not those codified by the Holy Koran, with no further specification. Despite its semantic limits, the binary opposition produced by this term (Muslim *vs* Kafir) has been commonly regarded as particularly fitting for present-day Nuristan, once known as Kafiristan (<sup>1</sup>). The peoples inhabiting this mountainous area, indeed, practised

\* The material presented in this article has been gathered in the course of an IsIAO scientific mission to the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. I spent eight weeks in the Birir Valley and four in other parts of the NWFP of Pakistan. The whole mission, organized and directed by Alberto M. Cacopardo and Augusto S. Cacopardo, lasted for six months. I owe my greatest gratitude to the Cacopardo brothers for having offered me such an invaluable opportunity for my first fieldwork experience. I am indebted to them also for their continuous help in my researches: they have extensively commented earlier versions of this paper, though I remain the only one responsible for its content. My research was partially supported by a PhD scholarship funded by the Department of Linguistics at the University of Firenze. I am grateful to my PhD tutor, prof. Alberto Nocentini, for his constant support. It is impossible here to mention all the Kalasha men and women who exquisitely welcomed me in their beautiful valley of Birir. Among them I must remember Sher Bek, Sherakat, Gulistan, Erfan, Mir Badsha, Unat Bek, Baras Khan, Marek, Ala-ud-Din, Rabidjan, Sainesa, Azurma and Mayani.

(<sup>1</sup>) In fact, from a Kafir point of view, Biddulph (1986 [1880]: 127) stated: ‘there is no recognised term known amongst them to distinguish the Kaffirs collectively, as opposed to their Mussalman neighbours’. Autoethnographic data, however, suggest that ‘the Kafirs of Nuristan did have, to some extent, a sense of collective identity’ (Alberto M. Cacopardo in Azar 2006: 9-10n.). The situation is made more intricate due to linguistic attempts at establishing genetic affiliations among the languages of this region (Grierson 1919: 1-9; Morgenstierne 1961, 1973c, 1974; Voegelin & Voegelin 1965; Kachru 1969; Fussmann 1972, 1988; Strand 1973; Masica 1991: 461-63).

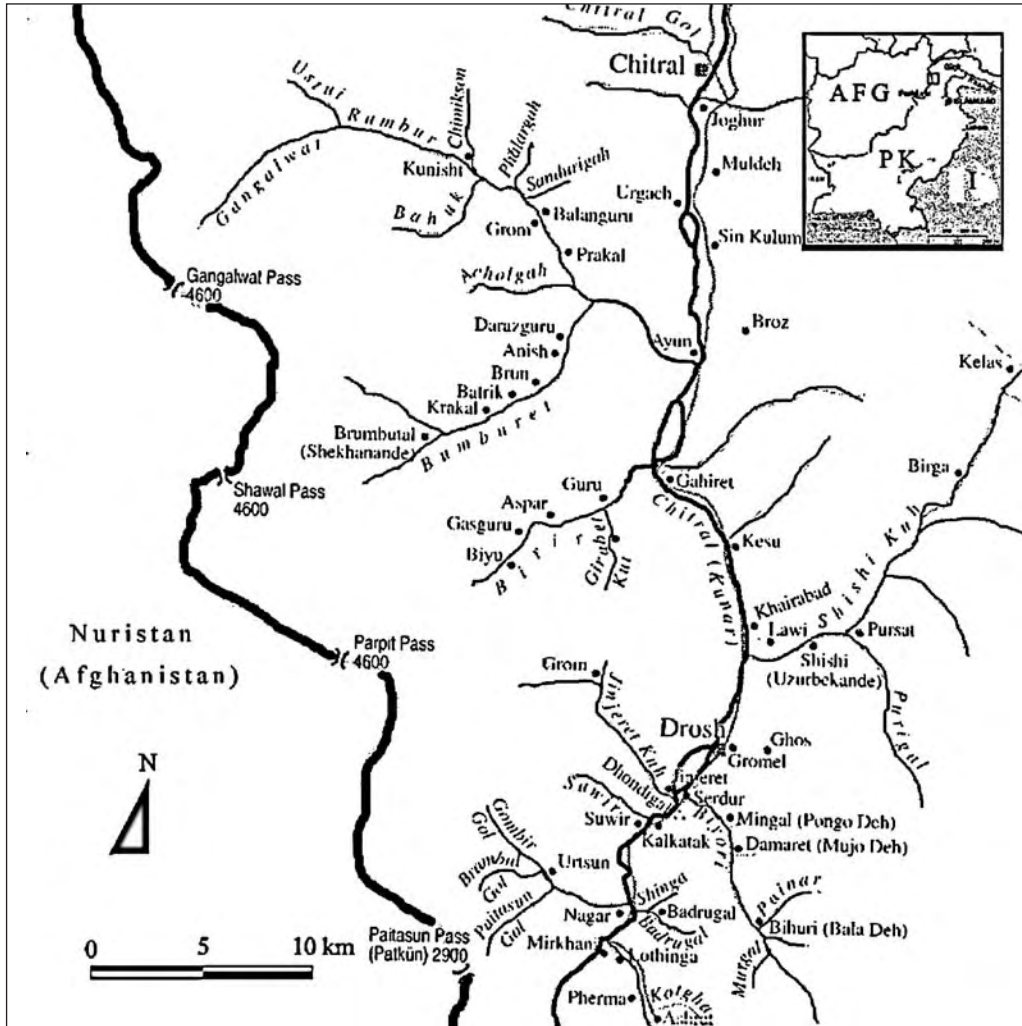


Fig. 1 - Map of Southern Chitral District (modified from Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: fig. 17; with permission of the Authors).

polytheistic religions – presumably for millennia until the end of the 19th century – whose main characteristics were no doubt very similar to one another, and which several scholars likened to the Vedic or pre-Vedic stage of Indian religion, referring to a not yet brahmanized religious stratum<sup>(2)</sup>. Furthermore, besides symbolic and ritual features, core aspects of the material culture as well as of the socio-economic structure

<sup>(2)</sup> Expressly devoted to this extremely complex problem are Fussmann 1977: 35 ff. and Jettmar 1986: 130-38. See also Siiger 1956: 31-32; Buddruss 1974; Jettmar 1974: 40-41; 1975; Lentz 1974;

characterized the peoples settled in a much larger region, that has been referred to by scholars as ‘Dardistan’ (by this term Leitner 1894 meant the land inhabited by peoples who speak Dardic, i.e. North-Western Indo-Aryan languages), as ‘Greater Kafiristan’ (Jettmar 1965) and more recently as ‘Peristan’ (Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001).

For centuries and until the late 19th century the geographical extension of the ‘Land of the Unbelievers’ had progressively been reduced by the gradual adoption of Islam advancing both from the North and the South. Close to the end of that century only present-day Afghan Nuristan and the South-Western Chitral District of Pakistan were still inhabited by people practising the ancient customs. In 1896 Abdur Rahman, Amir of Kabul, led a brief but bloody *jihad* against them: all the Kafir tribes settled within Afghan borders were thus subjugated and in slightly more than two decades they all converted to the Sunni faith (*ibid.*: 189).

The Kalasha escaped that appalling tragedy because they were settled in valleys that were under the rule of the Chitral principality, at that time controlled by the British Empire. This is the reason why the roughly four thousand Kalasha of today, settled in the valleys of Rumbur, Bumburet and Birir, are seen as the last representatives of that past world <sup>(3)</sup>.

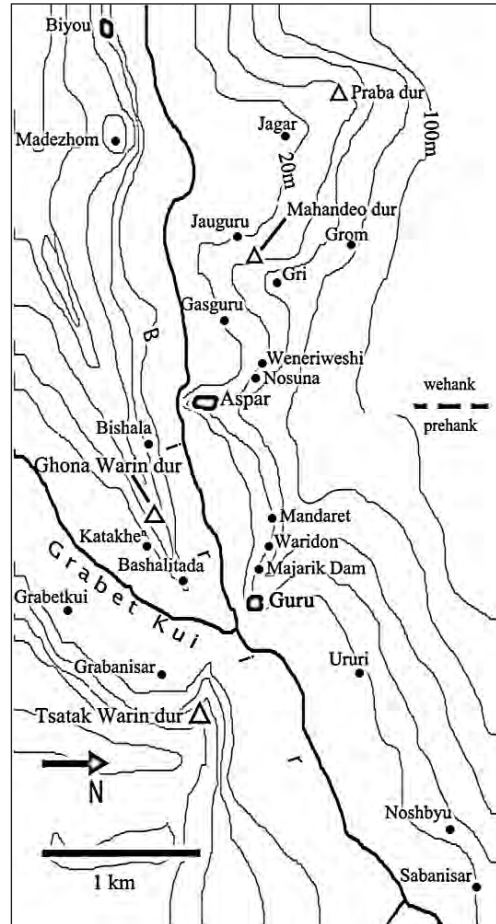


Fig. 2 - Sketch map of the Birir Valley.

Parkes 1991: 85-93; Castenfeldt 1996; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 25-28, 42-44; not scientific but interesting Maraini 1964: 242-76.

<sup>(3)</sup> In this article the use of the term ‘Kalasha’ is related to cultural and not to linguistic issues. It is worth remembering that Kalasha is spoken as a minority language in other valleys besides the three ‘Kafir’ mentioned so far, as Urtsun and Jinjeret Kui (Morgenstierne 1973a: 184-90; Cacopardo, A.M. 1991, 1996; Cacopardo, A.S. 1991, 1996; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1992, 1996, 2001: 261-77; Decker 1992: 96-106; Morch 2000). This situation is easily comprehensible if we think of early Kafir times, when at least the whole Southern Chitral was populated by Kalasha (Morgenstierne 1973a: 57-65; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 74-76, 128-31, 161-62, 169, 244; Saeed 2001: 291-93).

## KALASHA CULTURE: AN OVERVIEW

Socially structured by means of patrilineal exogamous lineages and economically based on small-scale agriculture and goat-herding, with an ever more increasing amount of families depending on wage-earners, Kalasha have been said to define their cultural identity through the *tre gh'ona dast'ur* 'three great customs': *biram'or*, *caum'os* and *alaS'ij* <sup>(4)</sup> (cf. *ibid.*: 69). The first refers to the major redistributive feast a man can give throughout his life, sacrificing a large amount of goats and offering their cooked meat to the community at large, in order to increase his prestige to a maximum degree <sup>(5)</sup>; the second represents the main festival of the Kalasha ceremonial calendar, held in proximity of the winter solstice and lasting several days; the third refers to the practice of wife elopement, the choice (or refusal) of which constitutes 'the prototypic act that defines Kalasha women's freedom' (Maggi 2001: 168).

The 'three great customs' can also be interpreted as metonymies, that is references to the fundamental Kalasha cultural attributes through naming only some elements, no doubt among the most important. Leaving apart *alaS'ij* which would deserve a special treatment that is beyond the scope of this article <sup>(6)</sup>, *biram'or* (cf. Loude & Lièvre 1984: 114-39) exemplifies several fundamental aspects of Kalasha society: it represents the importance of wealth redistribution for personal prestige and thus for rank position, as well as the centrality of rank itself in social order, a not unexpected feature in a segmentary, patrilineage-based system as that of the Kalasha <sup>(7)</sup>. The practice of *caum'os*, on the other hand, typifies the festal-ritual duties held by the entire community in order to periodically restore its purity, reaffirming its traditional roots and thus its identity. During the main ritual festivals mentioned in the literature (*zh'oshi* and *uc'au* besides *caum'os*) the entire community is usually called to invoke and worship gods or to address other supernatural beings (among which there are *s'uci* 'fairies' and *nhong* 'kind of monster') through choral

<sup>(4)</sup> I use this expression for it is suitable in a brief introduction to Kalasha culture as that required here though I did not hear anybody use it during my own fieldwork. For the kind of transcription followed in this article refer to the 'Notes on the Transcription and the Abbreviations' in the Appendix hereafter.

<sup>(5)</sup> The myth mentioned by Loude & Lièvre (1984: 138-39) connects the origin of the bell used during *biram'or* to the introduction of the god Mahandeo in Birir, on which see 'Concluding Remarks' hereafter.

<sup>(6)</sup> About this highly distinctive cultural trait see Parkes 1983; Loude & Lièvre 1984: 101-12; Maggi 2001, 2006.

<sup>(7)</sup> In Birir Valley as a rule every village is inhabited by the members of one lineage (Kal. *kam* < Psht. *qa:m* < Prs. *qaum*) named after its male founder, who lived about ten-thirteen generations remove from the present (e.g. *latharuk-naw'au* 'grandsons of Latharuk'). Individual segmental identity cannot be changed in the course of life so that, for instance, a Latharuknawau woman, i.e. a daughter of a Latharuknawau man, has to get married (Kal. *ja hik* 'to become a wife') to a man from another *kam* (almost surely resident in a village different from hers) but will keep her identity as a granddaughter of Latharuk throughout her life.

prayers, offerings and animal sacrifices. In those occasions also initiation rites are carried out. The celebrations in general seem to a European eye to be sometimes intricate, since they are made up of long-lasting and articulated songs and chants, almost always accompanied by drum beat and communal dances <sup>(8)</sup>.

*Cultural Differences among the Three Valleys: The Prun Festival*

The ‘three customs’ outlined above are found in all the three Kalasha valley communities of Birir, Rumbur, and Bumburet, but this fact must not lead us to consider them as culturally homogeneous *tout-court*. As a Kalasha linguistic parallel would suggest (Morgenstierne 1973a: 187-95; Bashir 1988: 33; Decker 1992: 103-06; Trail & Cooper 1999: xi; Heegård & Mørch 2004: 67-72; Heegård 2006: 11-12), the overall consistency of the ‘system’ accommodates local varieties with many aspects that are just exclusive of one or the other valley, an expected feature on linguistic grounds for illiterate societies as (was) that of the Kalasha.

As far as culture is concerned, there are many examples of such discrepancies among the three valley communities: the date, duration, content and performance of the main ritual festivals, for instance, are perceptibly different from valley to valley, and the same can be said for alimentary prohibitions, gods’ and temples’ names, with Birir being in all cases the most differentiated from the other two, who are in their turn more similar to one another <sup>(9)</sup>.

Prun festival (Kal. *pU~*, referred to as ‘Pul’ [Staley 1964] or ‘Phoo’ [Lines 1988] on the basis of an equivalent in Khowar language) is perhaps the most striking evidence of such internal differentiation within the present-day Kalashgum: it is a five-day celebration held only in the Birir Valley around the autumn equinox, and performed autonomously for its most part by the two ‘moieties’, i.e. *prehE~k* ‘downstream’ and *webE~k* ‘upstream’ (Fig. 2). It has not been described at length for fully scientific purposes up to date <sup>(10)</sup>, and, more in general, a lack of detailed ethnographical knowledge about Birir community has kept scholars from probing into the actual degree of such cultural variance. The present article, that provides a report of the downstream community celebrations in 2006, aims to contribute to fill those gaps.

<sup>(8)</sup> For Chaumos see Cacopardo, A.S. 1974: 148-91; 1985; Jettmar 1975: 379-88; Loude 1980: 126-30; Loude & Lièvre 1984: 181-330; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1989. For Joshi see Schomberg 1938: 53-67; Morgenstierne 1973b [1947]: 317-26; Siiger 1956: 24-26; 1974; Loude 1980: 79-90. For Uchau Morgenstierne 1973a: 174-75; Loude & Lièvre 1987: 196-203.

<sup>(9)</sup> On the differentiation within the Kalasha culture see Loude & Lièvre 1984: 93-99; 1987; 1991; Cacopardo, A.M. 1991, 1996; Cacopardo, A.S. 1991, 1996; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1992, 1996; also interesting Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 261-77 on Urtsun valley.

<sup>(10)</sup> Prun festival is known only from Siiger 1956: 26-27, Staley 1964; 1982: 71-76; Palwal 1974; Loude & Lièvre 1984: 76-79; 1987: 206-16; 1991: 24-37; Lines 1988: 224-32.

Before focusing on the Prun itself and on some of the seemingly most significant cultural practices encountered during its celebrations (see the following paragraphs ‘The Prun Festival of 2006’ and ‘The Last Day’), a brief outline of the events immediately preceding it will be given as an introduction to the festival (see the paragraph below).

#### SUMMER, GRAPES, UC’AU AND PROHIBITIONS

The climate of Birir is usually hot and dry during the summer. It was the 15th of September 2006 when I arrived at Guru (Fig. 2), and most of the narrow areas of the valley bottom where agriculture could be practiced were devoted to maize, the second and last cereal harvest of the year after wheat. I saw the steep valley flanks covered by evergreen oaks, a very precious resource for the Kalasha since their thorny leaves represent the major feeding source for goats during winter. I did not see any of the ‘famous’ Kalasha goatherds for they had not yet come back to the valley from the high pastures. It is there, in sites located at a height between 2000 and 4000 m above sea level, that Kalasha herdsman, practising a form of alpine transhumance, keep their flocks for months, typically from mid-May until the end of September (Parkes 1983: 114-23; 1987: 642-45).

In the lower valley villages, which I visited daily, only few goats were kept in and around houses to be milked twice per day, especially when tea was ready. Likewise I expected that also men had to be under-represented since many of them were supposed to be still living in the summer pastures, working as herdsman (*walm’oc*) or path-guardians (*pb’ondwaum’oc*) for their own family’s herd or as wage-labourers. In contrast, I could hardly notice an unbalance in the proportion of men and women in the villages.

This was probably due to a variety of reasons. On the one hand the customary co-operation in goat-herding (*pal’awi*, cf. Id. 1983: 124-43) aims also at reducing the amount of workers needed: many people pointed out, however, that the flocks themselves have generally decreased in size in recent times. On the other hand numerous men reached daily the towns of Chitral or Drosh, on foot or by jeep, to work (or to carry out not well-defined ‘small works’, Kal. *t’icak krom*), whereas some others were involved in cutting and transporting timber<sup>(11)</sup>, or in other local jobs (schools, guest-houses, shops): the increasing acquaintance with the Pakistani monetary economy, indeed, is a pan-Kalasha phenomenon, and thus the status of wage-earner seems to be increasingly common, especially outside the traditional

<sup>(11)</sup> Chitral District is renowned for its cedar and other coniferous trees, very appreciated as timber. Because of the good yield these forests can provide, rights on their exploitation often cause conflicts among local populations.

economical dynamics. One final reason is to be ascribed to my own inability to distinguish Kalasha from Chitrali (or other immigrated) men – virtually never involved in goats’ transhumance – due to their exactly identical way of dressing<sup>(12)</sup>.

Thus, from mid-September onwards, villages seemed full of life to me, the daytime scanned by children activities. In the morning, indeed, most of the children aged five to ten went to the three primary schools of the valley, whereas a much lower percentage of those aged ten to thirteen attended the secondary school; during the afternoon they played all around or worked with their relatives, while in the evening girls sang never-ending traditional, sometime childish, songs.

Women, on the other hand, were actively involved in domestic and field activities, their traditional occupations. During the summer they usually work hard in irrigating and weeding the fields, take care of the vegetables planted around the houses (mostly pumpkins and tomatoes) often in need of boys’ and girls’ help to pick fruits, whereas the harvests of the cereal crops and beans are carried out by entire families. One vegetal species only is strictly beyond female responsibility: this is grape.

Grapevines are, as known, climbing plants rarely left free to become taller than a couple of meters. The Kalasha valleys offer one of these rare cases. Here, September (i.e. almost ripe) bunches are invisible unless one looks attentively at the leafy branches of plane as well as of other high trees, because it is up there that the old grapevines have climbed. Women are likely to be never involved in picking grapes. Only boys and young men climb up to a height of perhaps more than ten meters above ground to get the bunches that will be for their most part pressed to obtain juice, then wine<sup>(13)</sup>. But all this cannot happen at any moment, people cannot autonomously decide that the time for grape harvesting has come: in that case they would be heavily fined by one of the *r’oi*.

### *The r’oi*

In mid-August a dozen elders from the entire valley meet at the shrine of the god Mahandeo (Figs. 2-4) to celebrate the *uc’au* festival<sup>(14)</sup>. We saw earlier that this is the name of one of the three main festivals performed yearly by each Kalasha valley community. In Birir, contrary to what happens in the other two valleys, Uchau is not characterized by any special song-and-dance performance, but only by an offering to the god (*s’aras dek* ‘to give juniper’, the *’onjeSTa* ‘pure’ plant par excellence for the Kalasha) followed by a communal meal in which bread, baked in the *goST* (‘winter

(12) Kalasha women, on the contrary, are dressed according to customary fashion; see Sperber 1996; Maggi 2001: 94-116.

(13) On grape and wine in Kalasha valleys see Loude & Lièvre 1987: 204-206, 211-13.

(14) Augusto S. Cacopardo, who assisted at the Birir Uchau (*uc’au*) in 1989, gave me a brief description of the event.



Figs. 3-4 - Two views of the shrine of the god Mahandeo taken on 16th September 2006. The dry-stone construction, the two protruding wooden horse-heads and the underlying rectangular hole in the middle of a plain wooden plank, where the victims' blood is thrown during sacrifices, are the distinctive features of a traditional shrine in Birir. The juniper branches placed on top of the horse heads were still rather moist since *s'aras dek* had been celebrated recently.

stable') by men in order to be pure, and the meat of a he-goat just sacrificed are served<sup>(15)</sup>.

According to Nur Bek – a middle-aged knowledgeable man from Guru who was very helpful throughout my research – during this communal meal a number of men is selected: they will have the responsibility to check, day and night, that everybody is actually respecting the prohibition of picking grapes, walnuts and pears, which starts to be effective since that very moment. These men, a sort of local police, take the title of *r'oi*: they can fine anyone who does not observe the prohibition even quite high amounts of money (I was told of a fine of 4.000 Rs., almost the double of a monthly salary of the local primary school teachers), they have to watch over the likely events of corruption of their colleagues, and will finally get an established quantity of walnuts, around six kg from each owner, as a reward for their job<sup>(16)</sup>.

<sup>(15)</sup> On *s'aras dek* cf. Cacopardo, A.S. 1974: 88-90; on the concept of pure/impure in Kalasha culture see Siiger 1956: 28; Loude & Lièvre 1980: 17-18; Cacopardo, A.M. 1985; Parkes 1987; Lièvre 1996; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 25-26, 69-71, 249-50; Maggi 2001: 45-50.

<sup>(16)</sup> That of the *r'oi* is a pan-Kalasha institution with slight local differences. In Rumbur, for instance, the *r'oi* are elected at the end of the *zh'osbi* festival, held in May, and remain in charge until September with more extended responsibilities (Parkes 1983: 82-83, 472-75; 2000: 262-63 and n.; Loude & Lièvre 1984: 85). A similar institution is found throughout Nuristan (see Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 197-99 for a detailed discussion of the problem with references to all the available literature on this institution; Azar 2006: 20-21n.).

The elders representing the downstream (*pre'hE~k*) and those representing the upstream part of the valley (*weh'E~k*) behave independently: each moiety elects its own *r'oi*. This 'administrative' division usually holds until the lifting of the prohibitions (that implies the dismissal of the *r'oi*), which happens roughly one month after the Uchau ceremony; but the upper/lower valley division, as we shall see below, plays also a great role in the Prun celebrations (see p. 53 and paragraph 'The Last Day')<sup>(17)</sup>.

Despite the fact that their election takes place at the shrine of a Kalasha god, the institution of the *r'oi* has actually little to do with religion. The inhabitants of the Birir Valley amount to about one thousand individuals, no more than one half of which still practice the traditional customs, the rest consisting mostly of Kalasha converted to Islam (Kal. *kaL'aSa shek*) and only a few families of outsiders who came from Chitral Valley (Kal. *p'atua*) or Afghanistan. While the latter do not care at all about the *r'oi* nor about any other typical Kalasha institution, and several converted Kalasha families claim their own autonomy from the traditional rules and values – mainly in the upper valley where Islam is particularly strong and visible through the presence of two of the three Koranic schools of the entire valley –, according to many people the majority of the population is united by *tiph'ak* 'agreement, harmony'. For this reason among the *r'oi* there are both Kalasha and Muslims in proportion to the actual demographic and geographic distribution of the two religious communities. For instance, in 2006 ten men were elected in the lower valley section: five were Kalasha and five Muslims. Their provenance and area of responsibility closely followed the 'geopolitics' of Birir: there were three Kalasha men from Guru (the 'most Kalasha' village), while among the three from Aspar (the uppermost and thus more islamized village of the lower part of the valley) two were Muslims.

The activities of both sections of the *r'oi* are (or should be) coordinated by the Kazis: about seven men throughout the valley hold at present this hereditary public office of 'traditional ritual expert', established by the Government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Parkes 2000: 258), poorly rewarded by the Pakistani State. The decision about the dismissal of the *r'oi* constitutes an important issue in which coordination among the Kazis is expected. Despite their supposed competence on traditional matters, Kazis seemed not to play the greatest part in the determination of such a date. Indeed Sher Bek, an elderly Latharuknawau (i.e. 'descendant of Latharuk', see n. 7 above) man from Guru, respected throughout the valley for his knowledge, but not one of the Kazis, told me that the date was traditionally fixed in relation to

(17) Geographical polarisation of 'upper valley' and 'lower valley' moieties is common in Kalasha valleys (for Rumbur see Parkes 1983: 373 ff.), and more or less clear traces of it have been found throughout the Hindu Kush, from Nuristan to the Shina areas (cf. Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 105-106). As Alberto M. Cacopardo suggests (*ibid.*) a longitudinal spatial opposition between groups was seemingly characteristic of Kafir valley communities.



Fig. 5 - 16th September 2006: The shrine of the god Great Praba, on the left, appears to be rather old: the two protruding wooden horse-heads have heavily deteriorated and the underlying plank, on which two circles have been carved, is made of stone. During sacrifices the victims are slaughtered and a fire is lit in front of it (to the right-hand side of the picture).

*sh'aru am'al*, an expression translatable as 'autumn equinox', literally closer to 'autumn o'clock'. When the sun rises over a certain point of the crest opposed to the village of Guru, between a spur of rocks and a small cluster of oak-trees, he and few other men from that village know that the time has come to dismiss the *r'oi* <sup>(18)</sup>.

This customarily happens after the celebration of a small rite, in which I unfortunately could not take part. According to Sher Bek and Nur Bek, as the news spreads two kid goats are sought to be sacrificed at sunset on that very day: as a rule the two moieties provide one kid each, offered in turn by one of the lineages. Both are offered to the god named *gh'ona pr'aba* 'great Praba' (Fig. 5), whose shrine lies close to that of the *ts'atak pr'aba* 'small Praba', which actually consists in only a rounded whitish stone. The first kid (*baty'ak* 'kid goat one to five months old') is

<sup>(18)</sup> This kind of procedure for establishing the date of a festival beginning is also followed in occasion of the Zhoshi and of the Chaumos festivals (for Chaumos in Rumbur see Cacopardo, A.S. 1974: 149-50; Loude & Lièvre: 1984: 193-94; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1989: 320; for Zhoshi in Bumburet see: Trail & Cooper 1999: 344). In Rumbur and Bumburet, however, this system is now obsolete since exact calendar dates have recently been fixed for the beginning of these festivals. The intention of doing the same in Birir, to favour the participation of foreigners, was expressed by a number of people (Augusto S. Cacopardo, pers. comm.).

sacrificed on the roof of a stable in Jagar (whose owners are men of the Bangulenawau lineage from Biyou) not far from the aforementioned shrine: its blood is then sprinkled on the fire and on the faces of the participants (a rite of purification called *ist'ongas*) and its meat is cooked in boiling water to be subsequently eaten by the adult men. The second one, instead, is sacrificed inside the sacred area encircling both the *gb'ona* and the *ts'atak prabad'ur* (Kal. *dur* 'house'), and its meat is roasted and eaten by the *'onjeSTa s'uda* 'pure boy(s)': the bones are then thrown in the fire because, using Nur Bek's words 'the bones must not remain' <sup>(19)</sup>.

## THE PRUN FESTIVAL OF 2006

### *Towards the Festival*

In 2006 *sh'aru am'al* in Birir fell on 20th September. From the following morning everybody got involved in the kind of harvesting he/she was able to carry out or admitted to help in: on the one hand women, children and girls were busy gathering walnuts from the ground after the trees were beaten with long wooden poles; on the other, boys and men were devoting their time to picking pears and grapes, climbing high on the trees to reach all the branches where the grapevines had climbed up.

In those days, as sunset approached, men and boys gathered in the winter stables in order to press the grapes in rectangular wooden boxes (Kal. *zhontr*), erected for the occasion to the exterior of a small building (cf. also Loude & Lièvre 1987: 211-13; 1991: 21-28). One single wooden plank, 20 to 30 cm thick, some 1 m wide and 3 m long, constitutes the base of the *zhontr*: several stone-slabs on which the base is put, give it both the stability and the incline needed. All along its border a furrow some 5 cm wide and 10cm deep is hollowed out in order to provide a suitable joint for the 'walls'. These, indeed, are made up of several wooden planks (some 5 cm thick, 0.5 m wide and 3 m long) piled up on their thickness, the first of which is inserted in the base. A U-shaped wooden conduit, finally, is put under the lowest end of the box's base and reaches the shed passing through a hole in the latter's rear wall.

The elders supervised the overall preparations: they were concerned with the ritual prayers, with the invocations to the gods for the good outcome of their efforts, and with the purification of the boys who shortly afterwards were to be involved in the actual pressing of the grapes <sup>(20)</sup>. This they did with their feet, squeezing the bunches that had been previously heaped into the wooden box. The juice flowed

<sup>(19)</sup> For a free translation of a myth regarding the origin of the prohibition to pick fruits and of the prayer recited during the rite marking the end of the duties of the *r'oi* see Loude & Lièvre 1987: 206-207, 209.

<sup>(20)</sup> Purification is commonly achieved through reciting murmured prayers while burning juniper branches are circled three times above the boy's head. The branches are then thrown behind him.

through the small conduit into the shed, where it was first collected in a small basin on the ground, and then quickly poured by a man into some big plastic bins. These are the currently most diffused containers used for the fermentation and the storage of wine, whereas the traditional underground silos are still utilized by only a few people due to the complexity of their maintenance.

Once the job was done, the ‘pressers’ (mainly youths for their purity, but also for their resistance to running-like activities) washed their legs with fresh water brought to the stable for the purpose. A meal made of unleavened wheat flour bread (*g’uum rash’ak*) and rather fresh spicy goat cheese (*caman’i*) mixed with ground walnut kernels (*jA~*) offered by the owner of the stable, was then served to all those who were present. Two weeks later the wine was ready for consumption.

According to Sher Bek, Prun by tradition has to start between seven and fourteen days after the prohibition has been lifted. Many different reasons can influence its actual beginning. In 2006 the school calendar was of crucial importance in this respect. Since Prun’s opening ceremony consists in a female procession throughout the valley, which requires the presence of young girls (see below), and since these are generally busy with school during the week, Sher Bek thought it expedient to schedule the celebration for the coming Sunday, 1st October. In view of the fact that he was one of the most respected men throughout the valley, I felt quite certain that on that day I would have seen the beginning of Prun. I was no doubt still unaware of the complexity of the network of social relations permeating the Birir community.

On that day, indeed, some French photographers and I waited for quite a long time to see the procession. In Guru a group of girls and some women, all excited and well dressed for the occasion, were ready to join the sacred procession once it had come close to them. After a two-hour wait my fellow Westerners and I decided to go to Aspar, the village from where the procession customarily starts out. There we met some elders but they could not help us to understand why Prun’s opening ceremony was not being carried out. They told us that we had to talk to some respected women because they were the only ones in charge of the matter. We found some of these, and when Mir Badsha, a very respected man from Aspar who was willing to help us, posed them the question ‘Why are you not going to do *m’aRik k’Uek?*’ they angrily answered ‘We’re busy, too busy in the fields: don’t you see? We’re harvesting maize!’.

After many negotiations, some of which not too peaceful to my eyes, Mir Badsha obtained the promise that they would have arranged the procession for the following day. They kept their promise.

*First Day: m’aRik k’Uek ‘to pick m’aRik’ (2nd October 2006)*

*m’aRik* are small red berries, actually the dog rose (*Rosa canina*) hips, used to adorn *sob’olyak*, a kind of headgear (Figs. 6-7) of crucial importance in the girls’

initiation rite called *sob'olyak sambi'ek* 'to be dressed with *sob'olyak*', as we shall see later <sup>(21)</sup>. The Prun's first day event, as its name reveals, is probably a reminiscence of a communal harvesting of hips, seemingly no longer practised today since I saw several *sob'olyak* carefully garnished with feathers, flowers and *m'aRik* already some days earlier. In 2006 the *m'aRik k'Uek* was carried out as follows (cf. Loude & Lièvre 1987: 213; 1991: 28-29).

In the morning a few women, dressed in the most solemn way for a Kalasha woman (wearing colourful shawls and necklaces as well as the *kup'as*, the typical but progressively less used cowrie-shell headdress of the Kalasha women, embellished in that occasion with light-coloured feathers fastened on it [Fig. 8]) <sup>(22)</sup> left Aspar followed by some girls, and slowly moved downstream singing *Cirb'ana p'io*, an old sacred song especially chanted in this day. Attracted by the choral chant, several women and girls joined the group on its path, thus increasing its size. The procession went through the lower Birir Valley, walking slowly along the riverbank as far as the last Kalasha house, at about one hour walk from Aspar. From there the group, composed then of about twenty among women and girls, started to retrace its path back up the valley. It took the whole day and most of the evening for the procession to return to Aspar since, on the way back, it had to enter nearly all the houses of every village.

<sup>(21)</sup> Kal. *sob'olyak* is the diminutive of *sob'ola* 'heavy conical basket with semi-pointed base, used by men' (Trail & Cooper 1999: 273).

<sup>(22)</sup> See Sperber 1996 for Kalasha female dress and fashion.



Fig. 6 - Bishala, 6th October 2006: Three *sob'olyak* placed on a wall. Chromatic contrast, in addition to the presence of whitish feathers on the top, is obtained through the alternation of bands made up of orange flowers, dog rose hips and flowers' green stalks. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).



Fig. 7 - The inside of the *sob'olyak*: dried, thin and soft grass loosely sewn onto a framework of wicker-like hard twigs, which is the normal *sob'ola* skeleton. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).



Fig. 8 - Grabanisar, 2nd October 2006: Aktar Bibi, of the Alikshernawau lineage, is solemnly dressed for she was one of the leaders of the *m'aRik k'Uek* procession, as well as of the *Cirb'ana p'io* song performance.

The procession moved along the tortuous paths that web the villages of Birir, continuously singing the sacred chant. When it reached a house, its owners welcomed it in the veranda and arranged some refreshments for its components, mainly consisting in water, grape-juice and wine with walnuts, grapes and some bread<sup>(23)</sup>. After a short chat, the women began singing followed by the girls, who did not articulate the actual words uttered by the elders. These, in their turn, partially intertwined their singing, echoing one another at short intervals. This very fact, in addition to a fairly marked (i.e. distorted) pronunciation of the words, made it very difficult to reconstruct the *Cirb'ana p'io* lyrics.

A few minutes' performance of *Cirb'ana p'io* was executed two or three times. Some of the solo verses pronounced by the elder women, whose composition was in part extemporaneous, formed actual prayers for the well-being of the

hosting household (see below). At the end of the last performance the householders gave some offerings to the women, made principally of fruits and flour. Then women and girls, in some cases particularly gay for the consumption of wine, continued their route chanting on: they opened the door of an adjacent veranda and disappeared behind it. Their voices were audible at great distance.

The offerings collected had to be used partly that very night for a communal meal in Aspar, whereas the wheat flour was stored until the Prun's last day, when many breads had to be baked in occasion of the *sob'olyak sambi'ek* rite (see the paragraph 'The Last Day'). Characterized by the collection of the flour to be used on the last-day ceremony, and formerly also of the hips to be used on that very day for that same rite, the Prun's opening event appears as a literally preparatory stage of

(23) This wine was at least in part 'illegal', since that authorized by the *r'oi* was still fermenting in drums or in underground silos. As for bread, Kalasha bake different kinds of it, all unleavened. The simplest one is called *rash'ak* in Birir, and it can be made, as the other kinds of bread, with wheat (*g'uum*) or maize (*juwar'i*) flour (*at*). For special occasions bread can be stuffed with walnuts, chopped meat or vegetables.

the festival itself <sup>(24)</sup>. If we then consider the *Cirb'ana p'io* lyrics we can get the same impression, this time in a more abstract sense: one of personal rather than material preparation.

*Cirb'ana p'io* can be divided into two major parts: a choral refrain and a solo verse performed alternately by each of the elder women. The former had always the same shape, while the latter varied widely. The soloists typically chanted very brief verses, rarely longer than ten syllables, which were immediately followed (sometimes just obliterated) by the choral refrain (1) whose content is only very roughly retrievable.

(1) *Cirb'ana p'io* choral refrain as recorded on 2nd October 2006 in Grabanisar [file 8-19]

*Cir-b'ana p'i-o banaksh'ai roLim'aLi p'i-o Cirb'ana p'io*  
milk-(full?) drink.CP-RTM place.name place.name drink.CP-RTM rep.

According to Adina, a fairly old man and seemingly very expert in traditional matters, this refrain refers, in a strongly elliptical and 'intuitive' fashion, to the *Cirb'ana p'io* myth: one young man and his sister went to the high pastures (*roLim'aLi* and *banaksh'ai*, according to Adina, are ancient names of two summer pastures in the Suwir Valley, South of Birir), where they had sexual intercourse. Shortly after it started to rain, and the rain became a storm so they tried to escape the approaching flood climbing up a cedar tree. The water flow was so strong that it uprooted the high tree, carrying it and the two siblings' dead bodies, naked, down to the valley bottom. There all the people could see them and understand what had happened.

This story, which is told in as many ways as the persons asked about it <sup>(25)</sup>, presents the example of a strongly unethical behaviour deserving punishment (two

<sup>(24)</sup> Processions of women opening a Kalasha festivity are reported also for the other valleys. Loude (1980: 81-82 and photos on 87) reports of a similar procession in occasion of the Joshi in Rumbur Valley, though this information is not confirmed either by Morgenstierne 1973b [1947], or Schomberg 1938, or Parkes 1990.

<sup>(25)</sup> In a *n'oman nom'ek* performance, for instance, Mir Badsha stated that Rolimali was the name of that man, and that the whole event took place in the valley of Shishi [file mirbacaE6-31]. Moreover, a very similar chant is sung in Rumbur during the Chaumos' last day of celebrations (which is called *dab'u tatt'u*): 'Un uomo, nel pieno dell'estate, aveva portato il suo gregge ai pascoli alti, e con lui era andata la figliola *Chirmàla* per aiutarlo con i capretti. [...] Ogni mattino e ogni sera, quando il gregge era ancora nel chiuso, Chirmàla e suo padre mungevano le capre. Come fu e come non fu, una volta un movimento incauto o forse un colpo di vento sollevò la veste della ragazzina, scoprendo le giovani cosce e il pube. Il padre, preso da un desiderio irresistibile, durante la notte commise l'incesto. D'improvviso si scatenò un temporale tremendo [...]. Una ondata gigantesca sommerse ruggendo l'ovile, e la sfortunata Chirmàla fu travolta dalle acque. Il padre si rifugiò in cima a un abete, ma la furia dell'onda lo sradicò come un fuscello e se lo trascinò a valle diritto diritto, in posizione verticale;

siblings have sexual intercourse) and at the same time it explains the origin of the strict prohibition for women to go to the high pastures. The soloists seemed to recall the *Cirb'ana p'io* myth in some of their short performances, during which they also pronounced prayers for the well-being of the onlookers and of the house where they were being hosted <sup>(26)</sup>:

e lo portò lontano, fin dove giunge l'acqua. Per tutto il percorso I phariàn divisi in due schiere, come un celeste corteo lo seguirono cantando una canzone molto triste: "*Chirmala pùu Rolishai uk chundào*" (Per Chirmala Rolishai fu portato via dall'acqua). L'onda della piena giunse fino a un luogo chiamato *Shihinstrabbin*, dove scaraventò l'uomo a sfracellarsi contro il fianco roccioso di una montagna. Il canto dei phariàn è quello che tutta la comunità intona in questo ultimo giorno del Chaumos' (Cacopardo, A.S. 1985: 750-52). This version of the myth (see Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 141 for a very similar story recorded in Biyori) names the two people involved in the incest – Rolishai and his daughter Cirmala –, the rest of the story being more or less the same as that told me by Adina. This would imply a totally different translation of the aforementioned refrain: as for the phrase *uk chundào* as it appears in the excerpt quoted at length above, I believe it erroneous (together with its author, pers. comm.). It is much more probable that the original expression was *uchund-'aw* 'descend-PST.A.3S', 'he went down', referred to Rolishai taken down by the flood. In this perspective, *p'io* (*pìu* above) should be regarded as the postposition *pi* 'from', 'ABL', followed by the suffix *-o*, a 'sequencer'. Presuming an extended value of 'causation' for the postposition *pi* (though such an extension is not supported by any of the available grammars) the whole sentence would be translatable as 'Because of Cirmala, Rolishai went down'. Rolishai seems to be also the name of the very stable in which the original incest happened, located in the high pasture of Chimikson, pertaining to people from Rumbur Valley (Augusto S. Cacopardo, pers. comm.). This fact, together with a clearer correspondence of names with actual places and mythical actors, would suggest that this chant is original of Rumbur. Birir's *Cirb'ana p'io*, in this view, would seem in its turn to have stemmed from the former, with considerable vagueness of its exact meaning as the frequent inconsistencies encountered suggest.

The question of the origin and exact references of the Cirbana/Cirmala chant, however, cannot be considered solved at all. On Rumbur's side, Parkes (1983: 384) reports of a 'Rollishai mountain' (about which cf. also Loude & Lièvre 1984: 309), whereas Morgenstierne inserts in his *Kalasha Vocabulary* a *čbir-mala* meaning 'milk from one breast' (Morgenstierne 1973a: 95, from Siiger). Earlier descriptions of this chant in Birir, then, report that it was related to the great quantity of milk drunk by the Budalak, a practice intended to increase their strength and purity during their long stay at the high pastures (Palwal 1974: 93; Staley 1964: 198). The latter proposal would force us to recognise in its refrain, differently from what previously advanced, *Cir* 'milk' and *pi* 'drink.CP'. This last version seems to be also suggested by an account of the myth recorded in Rumbur by Loude: while the body of the man (not named) was being taken down by the flood 'les fées chantèrent "Tu as *bu de lait* aux pàturages et tu as fauté. Les dieux sont irrités et ont détruit la vallée"' (Loude 1980: 18; italics mine).

Finally, the overall confusion of the whole matter is increased by the fact that during my fieldwork no mention at all was done to the milk-drinking activity of the Budalak, and nobody was able to clearly assign a meaning to the word (or phrase?) *Cirb'ana*. Only new researches can shed further light on this very intricate issue.

<sup>(26)</sup> After the end of each line just add the above-mentioned refrain to get the actual transcription of the entire performance. The impossibility to work with the actual singers of *Cirb'ana p'io* during my fieldwork is the main reason why I am not able to translate all the words heard, many of which (as *'appo*, *kili'eRa* etc.) are never met with in the rest of my eight-hour database.

(2) *Cirb'ana p'io* solo performances recorded on 2nd October in Grabanisar [file 9-19]

1. *ch'aka b'aya 'ali ba de*
2. *ajh'ona b'aya w'asada de*
3. [not audible]
4. *t'ai siyas'at kili'eRa m'ai b'aya*
5. *tar'ikani 'appo*
6. *t'ai b'aba kay k'arik baS phan j'ai*
7. *all'elaw aCh'aRo*
8. *m'ai ja [lya]w'el j'ei barak'at*
9. *t'ai ber'u mo las'ai*

The first two lines and the fourth constitute a sort of very brief prayers pronounced in my favour (*ajh'ona b'aya*): in spite of the unclear translation of the first verse, the presence of the imperative form *de* '(thou) give' signals that the women who recited them asked an unnamed god to bless me:

- (2.2) *ajh'ona b'aya w'asa h'atya de*  
guest brother wealth to give.IMPV.2S  
'Give wealth to our brother guest'

The lines 5-9 are of a somewhat different nature. The fifth line (2.5) seems to represent an introduction to something related to *tar'ik* 'history' (from Prs. *ta'riikh*), as the following is likely to confirm:

- (2.6) *t'ai b'aba kay k'ar-ik baS phan j'a-i*  
2S.GEN. sister to do-INF part lie make-CP  
'You lied to your sister about what was appropriate to do'

In all likelihood the verse (2.6) refers to the myth of *Cirb'ana p'io*: addressed to the man of the story, the singer seems to be accusing him to have seduced his sister, with the help of lies concerning what is allowed and what is forbidden to women and to siblings <sup>(27)</sup>.

- (2.9) *t'ai ber'u mo las'ai*  
2S.GEN husband NEG leave-IMPV.2S  
'Do not leave your husband!'

The warning in (2.9), the last solo verse of this *Cirb'ana p'io* performance, is instead intended to the man's sister, in a last effort to stop her from committing a blameworthy act.

<sup>(27)</sup> In (2.6) the word *baS* 'part' follows the infinitive of the verb *kar-* 'to do': this appears to be a construction bearing a meaning of 'obligation' or 'appropriateness' (cf. Trail & Cooper 1999: 486).

It is nevertheless difficult to resist the suggestion to see it related to the practice of sexual unions with the *buD'aLak*, the former ritual core of the Prun feast. According to Marek, a middle-aged man from Grabanisar, and Baras Khan, Marek's nephew and a young English-speaking teacher who was of the greatest help during my fieldwork, this fertility-oriented ritual used to characterize Prun until about thirty years ago, when it was banned because of pressures from Islamic neighbours. The *buD'aLak*, young men who had gained a remarkable level of purity and sexual energy for their long (three-month or more) stay in the high pastures, came, disguised as male-goats, on the last night of the festival to the place where dances were being held, and began to make obscene dances.

The only direct witness is that of Staley, who described their venue into the dancing ground in these terms:

[the Budalak] were smartly dressed, with extra large feathers and plumes in their caps, and most of them had black or purple dye around their eyes. Some had a pair of horns painted on their foreheads to symbolize the ram, whose part they were taking in the festival. All had short staffs or axes, and as they danced, they held these horizontally above their heads. At intervals they took the axes in one hand only, and pointing the head to the sky, they bent over and whistled shrilly through the fingers of the other hand. (Staley 1964: 201).

The clear allusions to their newly acquired sexual power were thus accompanied by an overall stud-like appearance. This was not reached only through dressing: according to many people the Budalak used also to mime the most explicit gestures – a loud smacking of lips – that studs typically do when engaged in courtship<sup>(28)</sup>.

Then, every woman who had previously had problems in getting pregnant and desired to solve them was given (or just went by herself) to one of the *buD'aLak*, so as to obtain his pure and strongest seed through sexual union. At the same time, the existing literature informs us that the *buD'aLak* were completely free to choose and possess any woman they desired, and 'no man was allowed to object; on the contrary, the visit by a Budalak meant great honour for the house selected by him' (Jettmar 1975: 392). When I asked Marek and Baras Khan about this issue, their embarrassed smiles looked like an indirect confirm of this past custom<sup>(29)</sup>.

<sup>(28)</sup> *buD'aLak* are also mentioned in Palwal 1974; Jettmar 1975: 392-94; Loude & Lièvre 1984: 76-78; 1987: 213-17; 1991: 29.

<sup>(29)</sup> Analogous rites have been recorded in the past throughout Dardistan 'Land of the Dards', i.e. of the Indo-Aryan language-speaking communities of North Western India. Cf. Jettmar 1975: 394; 1965: 110-12 (*non vidi*); Loude & Lièvre 1984: 77n.; 1987: 216-17. From the material collected by the Cacopardo brothers in Urtsun Valley, we know that the Budalak were present there, even though the festival in which they performed shows not to be perfectly coinciding with the Prun (Cacopardo & Cacopardo 2001: 266-75; Azar 2006: 38n.). Cf. also 'Concluding Remarks' hereafter. Despite my informants' assurances, I cannot be absolutely sure of the actual absence of similar (hidden) rites in Birir. But see Staley 1964: 198-99 for a story related to the Budalak 'actual decease'.

Turning back to the *Cirb'ana p'io* lyrics, in the light of the Budalak rite the verse (2.9) could be seen to constitute an exhortation meant for women not to get 'emotionally involved' with any of the Budalak. This hypothesis would also seem to agree with what I previously proposed on the 'preparatory nature' of the *m'aRik k'Uek* ceremony: in this verse, indeed, we could see an example of the 'personal preparation', achieved through a warning intended to advise women about the risks inherent to the ritual-functional unions with the *buD'aLak*. Suggestive as it might be, this proposal has no objective basis since I was not able to submit it to the singers' judgement. Its original value, however, is likely not to be fully retrievable any more in consideration of the fact that the *buD'aLak* rite is no longer practised.

Much less doubtful is the provenance of the women involved in the first-day ceremony. Whereas the girls belonged to many different lineages, the women were in different ways linked to the Alikshernawau lineage, whose components are concentrated in the area of Aspar (see 'Concluding Remarks'). The elders who led the procession throughout that day amounted to three: two were married with men from the Alikshernawau *kam* and the other, portrayed in Fig. 8, was one of its direct members (Kal. *jam'ili* 'agnatic kinswomen'). Significantly enough, out of the dozens living in Guru, only one woman joined the procession when it approached that village (Fig. 2): her name was Mayani and she also belonged to the Alikshernawau *kam*. I shall return on this point later on, after several other consistent data will have emerged.

### *Two (Three) Evenings of Rejoicing*

On the next day (it was Tuesday, 3rd October) activities went on as usual: several families were still gathering walnuts or picking grapes. Nevertheless, from every corner of the valley one could hear groups of girls relentlessly singing *Cirb'ana p'io*, while many women put the finishing touches to their daughters' *sob'olyak* or attentively inspected cupboards to find their own festive dresses.

Many men had told me, in the previous days, that there is usually a gradual build up of the climax of participation to the festival, so that the first evening, and maybe also the second, would have been attended by only a few people. I could not imagine, however, that the first evening could go completely deserted as it ultimately went.

Turap Khan and Nur Bek told me that the day of *m'aRik k'Uek* is customarily followed by three evenings during which all the lower valley inhabitants collect in the dancing place adjacent to the hamlet of Bishala, while those from the upper valley meet in Biyou. In those places both communities perform chants and dances for several hours accompanied by the rhythm supplied by two different double-headed drums, hung at the two drummers' shoulders: the *wac*, hourglass-like in shape, small and played only with bare hands, and the *da~'u*,



Fig. 9 - Bishala, 6th October 2006: Players of the traditional double-headed drums. The man who is playing the *wac* is Turap Khan, often cited in the article. Nobody is specifically entitled to be a drummer, so virtually anyone can play the drums. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).

larger and struck with one hand and a stick (Fig. 9).

In the first of these three evenings neither the drums nor all the people who were supposed to gather in Bishala for singing and dancing turned up on the dancing ground. Only a few girls, who had come with us from Guru, sat on a log and sang several times a rhythmically Chitrali childish song with Kalasha lyrics. 'It is the Alikshernawau who are in charge of the organization of the dances, so it is their fault' I was told by Turap Khan later, when I returned back home<sup>(30)</sup>.

The first-night's fiasco – at least to my eyes – induced Turap Khan to bring the drums to Bishala from his own village of Guru on the following evening, in order, he said, to avoid further delays in the beginning of the celebrations. When we arrived at the dancing ground the singers were already grouped standing under a big plane-tree (forming what Kalasha call *magl'is* lit. 'assembly'), while women were dancing in chain around them and two drummers were playing vehemently. They were performing a *d'ushak*, which together

with *ca~* and *drazha'ilak* is one of the most typical genres of song-dance-rhythm performed during Kalasha communal festivals.

This and the following festal evening, 4th and 5th October respectively, were structured in exactly the same manner: chants and dances were performed in a continuous sequence of *d'ushak*, *drazha'ilak* and *ca~* (not necessarily in this order) for about four or five hours, until around midnight<sup>(31)</sup>, and neither sacrifices nor worshipping or redistributive events took place<sup>(32)</sup>.

<sup>(30)</sup> Loude & Lièvre 1987: 213-14, as well as Palwal 1974: 93, describe a different calendar, in which the first and the second night are characterized by a sort of 'private' dances in Aspar, thus presumably performed only by Alikshernawau lineage components. I shall come back to this point in 'Concluding Remarks'.

<sup>(31)</sup> At the end of the second evening's celebrations Adina, one of the most experienced elders in oral art performance, was very upset for, he said, the dances stopped too early. It was half past midnight.

<sup>(32)</sup> It is worth denouncing here that the first evening's celebrations were heavily disturbed due to the ignorance of a self-defining 'ethnocétologue' (in French), by the name of François-Xavier Pelletier.

At the end of the last evening's dances I witnessed a heated quarrel between Turap Khan and a young Bangulenawau man from Biyou. Downstream elders were seemingly discussing about the next-day celebrations, when a red-haired man irrupted shouting against the whole crowd. Their reactions made the situation rapidly evolve and it was about to become violent when several men intervened and cooled down the quarrellers. The young man from Biyou was lamenting the fact that the upstream (i.e. his own) community had celebrated the three festal evenings one week earlier. This, as I was told later, was mainly due to the lack of coordination in the decisions of the Kazis. The lad accused Turap Khan in particular, whose father Saidan Shah is a Kazi as well as a very respected man throughout the valley, of having no concern for the unity of Kalasha people. No doubt such display of animosity must have been due also to other frictions between the lineages or the two valley communities: I was not able, however, to gather sufficient information on this subject.

At any rate on the following day, when both the upstream and the downstream communities met at the village of Gri, the young man was absent as well as many other men from Biyou: they had probably decided to boycott the festival in protest.

### Spatial Displays of the Actors and the Behaviour of Dancers

Since those two evenings, as most of the following day, were characterized solely by a continuous sequence of song-and-dances, it seems appropriate to focus our attention on these cultural practices in this and in the following section (see also the Appendix). It is not possible here to go into great detail as far as the analysis of texts is concerned: this will be the core subject of a forthcoming article (Di Carlo, forthcoming).

During the long-lasting events I witnessed, at the end of one of them the choice of the genre that had to be subsequently performed was solely up to the singers, and sometimes an agreement was reached only after several minutes of discussion (see Appendix). The choice had to fall on one of the three principal genres: either *ca~*, or *d'ushak* or *drazba'ilak*.

The singers' and drummers' spatial display (Fig. 10) remained unvaried throughout their performance, independently of the genre executed <sup>(33)</sup>. The former

He carelessly pointed his powerful lamp on the singers' and dancers' faces for hours, and planted himself in the middle of the singers' circle or along the dancing chain trajectory, so that many participants grew shy and ceased to celebrate Prun. This man evidently never worried about the possibility of being badly chased away by the Kalasha community: unfortunately, in fact, Kalasha are sometimes too gentle towards westerners (Kal. *angr'is*) and have become more and more tolerant towards such behaviours since these are not as rare as it would be desirable.

<sup>(33)</sup> It is maybe useful to remind the reader that nobody is specifically entitled to be a drummer, a singer or a dancer. Everyone is potentially free to perform in the three available ways (or not to perform at all). It is a fact, though, that those who were expected to sing actually sang (the most expert men from different lineages) and those who were expected to dance indeed danced (women and girls always, men only during *ca~* and sporadically elsewhere). The majority of men who had played drums, finally, did not take part in either dances or songs.

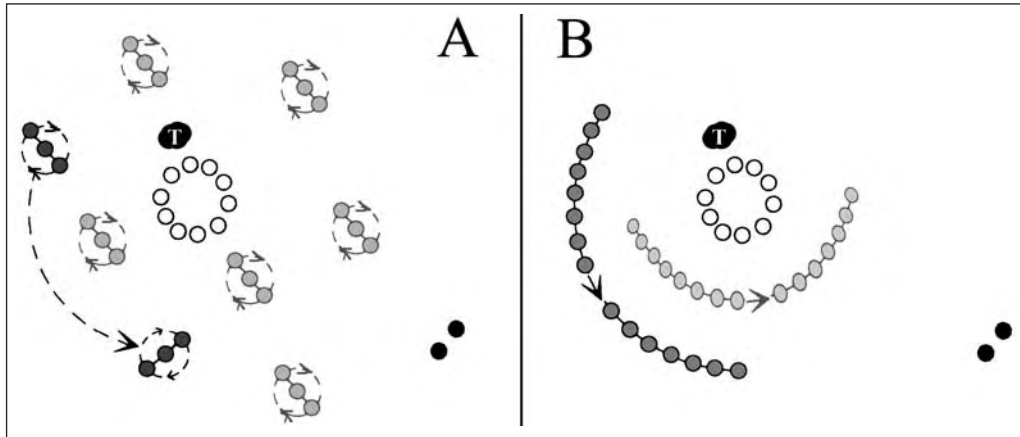


Fig. 10 - Schematic representation of the principal ritual actors within the dancing ground of Bishala during *ca~* (A) and *d'ushak/drazba'ilak* (B). Empty circles = singers; black circles = drummers; grey circles = dancers; T stands for 'tree'. Opaque elements might also not occur.

gathered forming a small circle at the foot of one of the big plane trees shading the flat dancing ground of Bishala. Depending on the kind of song and on the quality of its singer, the amount of onlookers around the core singers could number from four up to twenty people, among whom I saw many youth and women almost never involved into the actual singing. The *magl'is* components amounted to a number variable from four up to twenty people, depending on the kind of song and on the quality of its singer. On the other hand drummers, invariably two in number though in continuous rotation due to the highly tiring duty, stood several meters away from the circle of singers.

As for the dancers<sup>(34)</sup>, even though all dances took place in the same area encircling the *magl'is*, their spatial display varied depending on the kind of tempo beaten by the drummers. The *ca~* dances were performed by groups of two to four partners of either sex, rarely mixed, each circling with their arms their fellow's hips or shoulders (Figs. 10a and 11): they pivoted several times in both senses and then shifted quickly to a new spot where they would repeat the same pivoting. Only occasionally men engaged in solo dancing, would brandish a staff (in all probability the present-day substitute of 'dancing-axes') while rhythmically hopping with feet kept close to the ground. Then, since *ca~* are characterized by an increasingly faster rhythm, it was quite frequent to see groups breaking loose before the end of a dance because one of their components was exhausted.

<sup>(34)</sup> On Kalasha dances see also Parkes 1994: 164-72 and Jettmar 1975: 369-71.



Fig. 11 - Bishala, 6th October 2006: Middle-aged and elder women dance a *ca~*, solemnly dressed with *kup'as* and red, yellow and white necklaces. The groups, made up of three to four women, move counter-clockwise. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).

The *d'ushak* and the *drazba'ilak* are much less animated styles of dance, performed almost exclusively by women (Figs. 10*b*, 12). Dancers in both cases form one or two long chains, composed by people linked shoulder to shoulder, which move counter-clockwise around the *magl'is*. Whereas during *drazba'ilak* the dancing consisted only of a very slow, swinging, side-ways step, *d'ushak* had a much livelier tempo: to keep the rather high speed of the circular motion, people were required to execute an ample and fast lateral excursion of the left leg towards the right side, accomplished by maintaining the former always behind the right leg <sup>(35)</sup>.

<sup>(35)</sup> To get an idea of the two dances' diverse speed one needs to think that the *d'ushak* chain took half a minute to conclude one round, whereas the *drazba'ilak* one took several minutes. In the *d'ushak* I saw there were no traces of any 'confrontation dance', a characteristic moment in their performance previously described by P. Parkes (1994: 168). Since during the 2006 Chaumos this 'confrontation dance' was in fact performed (A.S. Cacopardo, pers. comm.) I must conclude that its absence during Prun was due to the scarce participation of men to the dances.



Fig. 12 - Bishala, 5th October 2006: Women are dancing a *d'ushbak*, forming two parallel chains and moving counter-clockwise around the singers gathered at the foot of the plane-tree. Note the light-coloured shawls, used also to cover their heads and faces: both the material and its use recall the neighbouring Muslim women's customs. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).

Their vocal behaviour adds one further criterion to distinguish these three genres from the dancers' point of view. During *ca~* men whistled vehemently and often cried out emotional vocalisms like 'yayy'a!?' or 'ba!', while women droned on sustained high notes. The latter is the sole vocalism emitted by the *d'ushbak* chain, while during *drazba'ilak* the dancers carefully listened to the song executed in the *mag'is* which they were then supposed to repeat in an extremely slow fashion during the exchanges of eulogies (here referred to as *n'oman nom'ek* 'to name the names', on which see below and the Appendix). This task was never clearly fulfilled but once, when one of the singers (Mir Badsha) joined the dancers' chain so as to guide their performance towards a precise reiteration of the song's lyrics<sup>(36)</sup>. In all the other cases, the supposed 'slackened repetition' was in fact a confused and

<sup>(36)</sup> In that case the song had been proposed by SadO~, an old and very respected man from Bumburet. The likely intention to honour such important guest had probably moved Mir Badsha, one of the most endowed singers of Birir, to lead the dancers' chanting in order to ensure a good outcome of the whole performance.

almost unarticulated sequence of long vocalisms, in which one could hardly recognise parts of the original lyrics. The length of a *drazba'ilak* (usually beyond five verses as long as 17, 24 or 31 syllables), and its being in most of the cases an *ex novo* composition, must help us to understand that the 'slackened repetition' is no doubt a very difficult task to fulfil. Moreover, most people besides those involved in the dances did not generally have a complete and instantaneous comprehension of the lyrics: it was indeed quite common to discover that, with few exceptions, the large majority of the participants did not understand the content of the song.

#### Oral Art: *d'ushak* and *drazba'ilak*

The Kalasha equivalent of 'song' is *gbO~*, but not all the three types of poetic performance mentioned so far are defined as such by the Kalasha themselves. In their opinion, while *ca~* is essentially considered a dance (Kal. *nat*), only *d'ushak* and *drazba'ilak* are actually *gbO~*. The tempo of the drums, the pace of the dance, and the length of the compositions constitute what can be called the 'macroscopic differences' between *d'ushak* and *drazba'ilak*. The overall event structure is, on the other hand, pretty much the same in both genres, composed by a rather fixed sequence of alternated solo and choral performances, and thus it will be treated as one <sup>(37)</sup>.

Two main units, indeed, basically compose the typical oral art performance. As to the first, a singer intones a song (either original or traditional) in a very ornamented style that, for the sake of convenience, will be labelled here as 'style A'. He/she, then, leads the choral repetition of the chant, at the end of which this solo-choral sequence is repeated. Then, the singer recites the song for the third time in a different, less ornamented and more sharply articulated style of speech: according to Danok, a knowledgeable middle-aged singer, this third, clearer repetition is intended to help the *magl'is* and the overall listeners through a better understanding of the song lyrics <sup>(38)</sup>. A final choral repetition closes the first part of the event.

At this point the second part begins: while the dancers' chain continues to move in the proper fashion, one of the *magl'is* components takes a staff and, brandishing it in the air (Figs. 13-14), begins to shout short sentences in a style identical to that used in the third repetition of the song by the solo singer (here labelled as 'style B'). The components of the *magl'is* express their agreement and incite the performer with shoutings like '*Sab'aS! sheb'e~!*' 'Bravo! Like that!' after each ending sentence <sup>(39)</sup>.

<sup>(37)</sup> Analogous practices in Rumbur Valley show only slight differences, mainly in the behaviour of men during *ca~* performances (cf. Parkes 1994: 164-72).

<sup>(38)</sup> In the light of what I stated before, this repetition has great importance for the dancers in *drazba'ilak* performances.

<sup>(39)</sup> In *n'oman nom'ek* performances metrically more marked formulas are more frequent in the last portion of the 'verses', seemingly in order to signal the end of the utterance thereby introducing the choral appreciations. Cf. Appendix and Di Carlo, forthcoming.



Fig. 13 - Gri, 6th October 2006. Women dancing in the *drazba'ilak*-style around the *mag'lis* during the performance of a *n'oman nom'ek*. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).

Extemporizing on the basis of a formulaic repertoire, the performer (I only saw men, but women are said to be free to do it) 'names the names' (Kal. *n'oman nom'elle*) dedicated to the singer, a panegyric obtained through the memory of the singer's male ancestors' names and their deeds (some examples are in the Appendix to this article). At the end of every *n'oman nom'ek* <sup>(40)</sup> the whole *mag'lis* again chorally repeats the initial song. Contrary to what happens to soloists who perform their song in what I have called here 'Style A' and 'Style B', the song choral execution never changes from one repetition to the subsequent. On the other hand, *drazba'ilak* and *d'ushak* choral repetition styles are kept clearly distinct (see Di Carlo, forthcoming).

<sup>(40)</sup> The poetic genre itself has not any special name in Kalasha, being referred to by the use of the 3.SG finite expression [*se*] *noman nomelle* '[he.FAR] names the names'. For the sake of convenience I have arbitrarily chosen to adopt here the formula *n'oman nom'ek* to refer to the poetic genre, where *-ek* is the morpheme indicating the causative infinitive.



Fig. 14 - Bishala, 6th October 2006: Mir Badsha is brandishing his unique metal staff during the performance of a *n'oman nom'ek* in honour of Mayani, one of his *jam'ili* 'agnatic kinswoman' (to his left). She had sung an original *drazba'ilak*, and this rather exceptional female performance (only two throughout Prun) probably explains the unusual number of women surrounding the *magl'is*.

To sum up schematically the event structure common to *d'usbak* and *drazba'ilak*:

- 1) solo singer intones a song (original or traditional) in ornamented style (style A);
- 2) *magl'is* repeats the song (specific choral style);
- 3) solo singer repeats the song in style A;
- 4) *magl'is* repeats the song (specific choral style);
- 5) solo singer repeats the text of the song in a less ornamented style (style B);
- 6) *magl'is* repeats the song (specific choral style);
- 7) one out of the *magl'is* components makes *n'omak nom'ek* (style B);
- 8) *magl'is* repeats the song (specific choral style);

...

Though the sequence 7-8 above is to be considered potentially infinite, I did not record any event in which the *n'oman nom'ek* individual performances were more than four. When, at the end of the choral singing, nobody started a new *n'oman nom'ek* the event had come to its end.

As far as differences between *d'usbak* and *drazba'ilak* are concerned, the length of the compositions and their metrical articulation are no doubt two fundamental aspects. *d'usbak* is shorter and faster than *drazba'ilak*, which is considered the most solemn kind of song and whose composition difficulties reveal, to the eyes of the Kalasha people, the actual stature of a poet/singer. In spite of the fact that in both genres verses are made of the same metrical units (at least regarding quantity of syllables, on which see Di Carlo, forthcoming), *drazba'ilak* verses are intoned in a much slower fashion, so that singers are forced to break them, and often to break words as well, in order to draw their breath.

ca~

Despite the fact that the Kalasha people do not consider *ca~* to be a 'real' song, but only a dance, we shall see that it seems to provide us with the most interesting insights into the (original) significance of Prun festival. An example of *ca~* will prove useful to better evaluate the actual validity of this claim.

(3) First half of a *ca~* recorded on the third evening (10.04.2006) at Bishala [file E7-31]

(3.1) *buD'aLak 'i-w-o 'ita m'ai b'al-as mish'ari*  
 budalak come-3S.P/F-RTM come.CP 1S.GEN crowd-OBL.S mixed  
*b'i-u*  
 become-3S.P/F  
 'Budalak will come, and then he will mix with my crowd'

(3.2) *buD'aLak 'i-w-e p'iSTau k'irik uDR'U~*  
 budalak come-3S.P/F-RTM after snow dust  
 'Budalak will come, then a snow-dust (will raise)'

(3.3) *buD'aLak 'i-w-o m'ai gamburig'er laCh'a-l*  
 budalak come-3S.P/F-RTM 1S.GEN flowers',garden step.on-3S.P/F  
 'Budalak will come, he will step on my meadow full of flowers'

(3.4) *buD'ala-g'Uak m'ai pind'uri bronz gamburig'er*  
 budalak-children 1S.GEN round meadow flowers',garden  
*b'aw-aw*  
 become.PST.A-3S.PST.A  
 'The offspring of the Budalak, my round meadow has become full of flowers'

(3.5) *buD'ala-g'Uak 'i-l-e sb-'ala maj'am tr'u-a-i*  
 budalak-children come-3S.P/F-RTM INTNS-up.there Majam grow-CAUS-CP  
 'The offspring of the Budalak will come, after having made the Majam up there grow'

(3.6) *k'irik uDR'U~ s'e-ta b'al-as mish'ari b'i-u*  
 snow dust that.REM-TOP crowd-OBL.S mixed become-3S.P/F  
 'Snow-dust, he will mix with the crowd'



Fig. 15 - Bishala, 4th October 2006: Majam Khan, Kazi of Ururi, is performing a solo verse during a *ca~*.

(3.7) *buD'ala-g'Uak 'i-w-e m'ai pind'uri bronz puR-'i*  
 budalak-children come-3S.P/F-RTM 1S.GEN round meadow fill-CP  
 'The offspring of the Budalak will come after having filled my round meadow'

(3.8) *buD'aLak 'i-w-e to jag-'ai*  
 budalak come-3S.P/F-RTM that.REM.ACC.S look.at-IMPV.2S  
*ajb'ona parwan'a*  
 guest moth  
 'Budalak will come, look at him you moth my guest'

During the performance of this *ca~*, the *magl'is* was composed of six men, four of whom sang at least one line and none uttered two solo verses consecutively. These very brief solos were interconnected by group performances: besides interspersed clapping (Fig. 15) and scattered loud incitements as '*yayy'a!*' or '*ca~! ca~!*', a choral '*bobobobo!*' typically followed the soloist's cry, while a drone introduced to the new one.

During the performance, singers were accompanied by a very fast tempo. Let us compare two of the preceding verses – (3.5) and (3.6) – to see if the prosody of *ca~* reflects this highly rhythmical context. The comparison is proposed through a double transcription, where the examples marked with 'a' represent attempts to render the actual speech chain, with no word breaks since these are not audible, while those unmarked are 'normalized' transcriptions, from which contextually derived forms are excluded <sup>(41)</sup>:

<sup>(41)</sup> The kind of 'discourse transcription' employed here is to be considered still an empirical one. I noted a stress < ' > where I heard it, and put < \_ > where I heard a very long (extended) vowel. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish whether the long vowel is also stressed or not. In these examples I

- (3.5a) *b'uDalag<sup>U</sup>a gil<sup>e</sup>sh<sup>o</sup>alamaj'amtru<sup>d</sup>*  
 (3.5) *buD'aLak k'Uak 'ile sh'ala maj'am tr'uai*
- (3.6a) *k'iriguDR<sup>U</sup>~set<sup>ab</sup>'alasmish'arib<sup>i</sup>u*  
 (3.6) *k'irik uDR<sup>U</sup>~ s'eta b'al-as mish'ari b'i-u*

We can first notice that these two verses, uttered by two different men (namely Majam Khan and Mir Badsha), seem to share a common metrical structure. If we consider that the ultra-short vowels (represented by letters in superscript) cannot behave as syllable nucleuses, and thus that both lines are twelve-syllabic long, we obtain that stress falls invariably on the syllables 1, 4, 6, 10, 12, leaving unaccented an ample portion of the chain (three syllables from 6 to 10).

Since a very light (secondary) accent on the seventh syllable is however perceptible, we can posit a slight *caesura* at the end of the sixth syllable. This would lead us to see these verses as made of two identical six-syllabic *emistichs*, composed by an accented/unaccented syllable sequence (that is a trochee) followed by two unaccented/accented ones (iamb). I do not intend to claim here a fix metrical structure of *ca~*, but an overview of the whole database available seems to suggest that at least the beginning and the end of *ca~* verses tend to conform to a rather fixed rhythmical shape: even in verses longer than those seen here in fact (in my database I have verses as long as 17 syllables), the sequence one trochee – two iambs seems to be characteristic of both the first and the last six syllables.

The rhythmical cadence in any case does alter the ‘normal’ accentuation of words. For instance, in (3.5a) we see *b'uDala[k]* instead of the expected *buD'aLak*, and *il'e* for *'ile* < *'iwe* (where *VwV* > *VIV* is a regular development of Kalasha syntactic phonology). These alterations seem sometimes to forbid comprehension to people who are not trained in song composition and recitation. Baras Khan, already cited, seemed too young to take part to the *magl'is* activities during the 2006's Prun: he found it difficult to parse (3.5a). He ultimately reached the conclusion that the first part of that verse had to be *buD'aLak k'Uak gil'ei* (instead of the correct *buD'aLak k'Uak 'ile*), but he could not give me any explanation of the word *gil'ei* save for a doubtful translation as ‘long wooden piece’, never confirmed later by any other informant. It is very likely that we see here a consequence of the fact that he had not recognized the voicing *VkV* > *VgV*, perhaps because it occurred together with a stress displacement (and a vowel prolonged and slightly distorted:  $-e\# > -e^{\#}$ ) so that ‘normal’ *'ile* had become ‘poetic’ *il'e^{\#}*.

This is no doubt a good example of one of the most widespread consequences of the rhythmically conditioned prosody typical of all the three genres we have seen so

have tried to keep an audible stronger air ejection distinct from a weaker one. It is also important to note that stresses are here to be intended as ‘the strongest stresses’, since the absence of secondary accentuation is far from being ascertained in the cases proposed, as it shall be seen later. See also the ‘Notes on the transcription and the abbreviations’ in the Appendix hereafter.

far: the reduced accessibility to the utterances' actual meaning. In *ca~*, composed by short isolate verses, it is mostly the formal alteration of an element that obstructs its comprehension, while in *d'ushak* or *drazha'ilak*, longer and more articulated, the same difficulties can also be caused by the use of a special lexicon or of highly metaphorical and elliptical speech.

As to the use and content of metaphors, however, we can make some interesting remarks for *ca~* too. The central role of the *buD'aLak* is strikingly evident. He is referred to as an individual in the act of stepping on a meadow full of flowers, whose owner is the singer himself (*m'ai gamburig'er* in (3.3)), of 'mixing' with a crowd (*b'alas mish'ari* in (3.1) and (3.6)). In (3.4), (3.5) and (3.7), instead, the reference seems to be addressed to the Budalak's progeny, that is the product of previous sexual intercourses who seem to have made the singer's round garden (*pind'uri bronz*) become full of flowers in (3.4); in (3.5), moreover, they are said to have increased the population of Majam, the mythical region to the West of Birir whence Suashai (Kal. *sU~aS'ai*), the ancestor of many of the present-day lineages in Birir, came more or less fifteen generations ago<sup>(42)</sup>; in (3.7), finally, the Budalak's progeny is said to have filled the singer's round meadow. It is also remarkable the allusion in (3.8) to the Muslim bystanders metaphorized as 'moths' (*parwan'a*). This metaphor can be explained either by the similarity between the moth's and the Muslims' typical light-coloured dresses or, alternatively, in the light of one very common *topos* in Persian poetry, that of the disciples around the master, or the princes around the king, seen as the moths around the fire (I owe to Alberto M. Cacopardo this last suggestion). In this last perspective the Kalasha would seem to consider themselves the 'fire', around which the Muslims gather like 'moths' during festivals to satisfy their curiosity.

This is one of the extremely frequent occurrences of fixed formulas in *ca~*: it can be said that *ca~* verses are almost totally made up of these formulas, which in turn are very frequently encountered in Kalasha poetic discourse in general. The flowers represent kinswomen, the round meadow the household, while the crowd (*bal-* being used mainly to indicate 'army') and the 'mixing' would stand here as

<sup>(42)</sup> I am grateful to Alberto M. Cacopardo who brought to my attention two earlier mentions of Majam in the literature. In Robertson (1974 [1896]: 58) we read: 'The Pittigul Valley [...] runs down from a ridge traversed by a road called by the Kàfirs the Manjam Pass, which leads to the country of the Lutdeh people [i.e. Kati]'. In Scheibe (1937: 338) we find 'Mažam' referred to the same Pass cited by Robertson. In this view, the fact that Suashai 'had come from Majam' could represent an indication of his route to Birir ('through the Majam Pass'), thus only suggesting a rather vague Western origin. At any rate, the reference here to the myth of Suashai evidently collides with the tradition collected by Loude & Lièvre (1987: 215-16): according to it Punjapao, the founder of the Punjapaonawau lineage of Biyou and in no way related to Suashai (nor to Majam), was the man who first introduced the *buD'aLak* practice in Birir. Nur Bek, indeed, told me that Punjapao was a representative of the Kalasha already settled in Birir at the time of the arrival of Suashai. In his words Punjapao was a 'Pakistani Kalasha', opposed to Suashai who came from Majam, otherwise called 'Arabistan'. Cf. also Loude & Lièvre 1984: 324.

explicit allusions to sexual group unions. It is not unlikely that the formula *k'irik uDR'U~* translated as 'snow-dust' (in (3.6))<sup>(43)</sup> has something to do with the semen emission, despite none of my informants explained it in such terms. It is quite clear that all these verses help us to reconstruct in one way or in another the original tenor of the feast, undoubtedly focused on sexual union and hence reproduction.

Finally, *ca~* is a fixed genre as to its shape, while its contents depend on the occasion. It is indeed performed also in the other major festivals of the Kalasha ritual calendar, and if we compare *p'U~ani ca~* ('Prun's *ca~*') lyrics with that of the *caum'osani ca~* ('Chaumos' *ca~*'), it becomes clear that *ca~* conveys the core argument of the feast itself. During Chaumos, the longest and most complex festival held yearly around the winter solstice, Kalasha worship the descent to the valley of a god, who is believed to live for the rest of the year in the heights<sup>(44)</sup>. Thus *caum'osani ca~* verses regularly begin with the verbal phrase *d'ewa 'ile* 'god comes'<sup>(45)</sup> parallel to the Prun's *buD'aLak 'ile* 'Budalak comes'. One additional argument, if ever needed, to be sure of the fact that the essence of Prun was defined by the Budalak rite (I shall come back to this point in 'Concluding Remarks').

#### THE LAST DAY

The following day, 6th October, all the lower valley community met in Bishala at around ten in the morning. On the preceding evenings, the ceremonies had been attended by less than one hundred people, whereas that morning I presume there were at least two hundred persons: women, children and the most important elders from the lower Birir Valley were actively involved in the performances, while numerous youths from the other two Kalasha valleys and many Muslims stood around the dancing ground together with a dozen European tourists and some self-defined scholars.

<sup>(43)</sup> See Morgenstierne 1973b [1947]: 320 for another doubtful occurrence of this metaphorical formula.

<sup>(44)</sup> His name in Rumbur is *balumah'in* and he/she – since it is a bisexual supernatural entity (Cacopardo, A.S. 1985; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1989; 2001: 73) – is believed to reside for the rest of the year in the mythic country of Tsiam according to some, or, according to others, in the Bashgal Valley; in Birir, where Balumahin is absent, there are however specific references to the descent of a visiting god not only as we have seen in the Chaumos' *ca~* lyrics, but also in at least one ancient chant – sung also in Rumbur – which is an explicit invocation to the coming deity addressed as *b'idra kal'en*. The people of Birir consulted on this point seemed to be rather uncertain about the name of this divinity (A.S. Cacopardo, pers. comm.).

<sup>(45)</sup> The excerpt in Morgenstierne 1973a: 41 is no doubt related to Chaumos, and not to Joshi as suggested by the author.

The song-and-dance performances were formally identical to those of the previous evenings: the *magl'is*, composed now by 'all the best singers' as everybody told me, conducted the ceremony, as usual, through the continuous negotiation of song genres sequencing.

The crowd of onlookers and the presence of all the important men from the lower valley, as well as of some prominent elders from the other two Kalasha valleys, made the dances more intense to my eyes. In fact, they perhaps did not meet the expected standards since several singers overtly criticized in their compositions the scarce participation of the local youth, as well as of Rumbur and Bumburet Kalasha guests, to the communal ceremonies (one example is given by the *d'ushak* reported in the Appendix).

While performing one of his songs, Saidan Shah received a first *cap'an* from some women and few minutes later a second one from a different group of women. The *cap'an* is a long coat made of very bright, gold-like coloured material, roughly sewn for the occasion. It is given for special reasons: on one hand Ala-ud-Din, a young teacher of the Gilasurnawau lineage, told me that one decisive factor for its attribution is to be identified in a recent mourning; on the other Marek, Baras Khan and Turap Khan claimed that it represents only a sign of special appreciation and honour <sup>(46)</sup>.

Dressed with *cap'an*-like coats were also a dozen girls, aged about seven, who, after more or less three hours of song-and-dance performances, were involved in the *sob'olyak sambi'ek* rite (cf. Staley 1964: 200; Loude & Lièvre 1987: 216; 1991: 30, 37; Lines 1988: 230-32). A large group of people gathered on a side of the flat area of Bishala, nearby the dancing ground. One man brought a big amount of *g'uum rash'ak* and a large plastic bowl filled with fresh goat-cheese (Kal. *caman'i*): he took some breads piling them up, put a handful of cheese on the top, folded the pile and distributed it to each of the girls, who were helped by their closest relatives to store it by their own chest under their dress.

While surrounded by a pressing crowd of curious people, the girls' mothers took care, with their expert hands, of the *cap'an* perfect fitting by adjusting the waist belt (Kal. *p'aTi*). They also checked any other detail relevant to the overall special elegance that their young daughters had to show in that solemn occasion (Fig. 16): those who possessed them used also characteristic accessories, like crossed belts typical of ancient Kalasha times (Kal. *katarm'and*) or special necklaces (Kal. *gaDuL'ei*). If wearing these accessories was highly appreciated but discretionary, putting *sob'olyak* on girls' heads was not. As its name reveals (*sob'olyak sambi'ek* 'to be dressed with *sob'olyak*'), the rite they were getting prepared for is focussed upon this kind of hat, whose importance has been noted above (see pp. 56-57 and Fig. 16-17).

<sup>(46)</sup> Loude & Lièvre 1987: 200 state that *c'apan* is a '[...] robe qui symbolise la gloire d'un homme généreux ou, en l'occurrence, d'un beau parleur'. Cf. also Morgenstierne 1973a: 92; Loude 1980: 25; Trail & Cooper 1999: 55.



Fig. 16 - Bishala, 6th October 2006: In the centre a young girl is wearing her *sob'olyak*, surrounded by other young girls dressed in the same manner, with *cap'an*-like coats, *gaDuL'ei* and other colourful necklaces.

Few minutes after the distribution of breads and cheese, all the girls were brought to the dancing ground and the drummers started to beat a fast tempo. Girls began to whirl while smiling, evidently confused by the big crowd surrounding them. Parents were clapping and cheering, urging them not to stop their whirling. Suddenly several boys came, caught the *sob'olyak* and ran out of the dancing ground towards the upper valley, followed by whistles and joyful shouts from the multitude of onlookers. They engaged in a race whose results I was not able to ascertain. Some of the girls did not get their *sob'olyak* 'stolen', perhaps because they were dancing too far from the starting point of the race. Thus, probably to save the rite significance for them too, some of their kinsmen compassionately grabbed their headgears and fictionally ran in the same direction of the real race.

Girls were astonished and confused by the whole event; parents were satisfied and some of them were wondering if their daughter's *sob'olyak* would have been brought back. This fact was of the greatest importance because the same rite had to be performed three more times along the way from Bishala to Gri, and one last time



Fig. 17 - Bishala, 6th October 2006: A muslim girl behind a *sob'olyak*, staring at the preparations of the pagan rite.

on the dancing ground of the latter where the downstream and the upstream communities had to meet.

Before setting out on this trip of some 1.5 kilometre, the singers gathered again at the usual place and a *ca~* was performed. After that the multitude of people began to move off towards Gri and split into two groups: the larger one took the 'main road' (suitable for vehicles), the other, composed by all the families involved in the *sob'olyak sambi'ek*, reached the river and climbed up the course of the river. The rite of stealing the headgears while girls were dancing was performed twice in two different places along the riverbanks, and a third time at mid-height between the riverbed and the cliff of Gri (Figs. 18-19). During these three repetitions of the rite the headgears were no more stolen, but only raised symbolically by the girls' closest relatives.

When the two groups who had left Bishala joined again in Gri the people from the upper valley had not come yet. There was a rather unpleasant atmosphere all around, perhaps due to the fact that the inhabitants of that village, all converted to



Fig. 18 - 6th October 2006: Girls' relatives walking along the path that leads from the river to the hamlet of Gri. The fourth performance of the *sob'olyak sambi'ek* rite (Fig. 19) will be carried out at the foot of the trees in the centre.

Islam since several decades, did not like to host any 'Kafir' ceremony in their territory<sup>(47)</sup>.

The fifth and last performance of *sob'olyak sambi'ek* for the lower valley community began. Young boys again ran inside the circle of the twirling girls, caught their headgears and ran away, climbing up on the steep rocky hill that dominates the village. Within a few seconds they were hardly visible in detail from the dancing ground. Only the *sob'olyak*, being red-coloured for their decoration of hips and flowers, could be seen lined up on a grey rock.

Several minutes later, the group of women and girls from Biyou came. They performed the rite in the same manner and then mixed with the downstream female group.

<sup>(47)</sup> It must be noted, however, that the Kalasha have already accepted a heavy compromise some thirty years ago. They were forced to change the place where the final phase of Prun is performed because a mosque was built by the local population in the former holy dancing ground, a flat area not far from the present one.



Fig. 19 - 6th October 2006: Young girls are twirling on a fast tempo beaten by the drums, surrounded by their friends and relatives on the fourth performance of the *sob'olyak sambi'ek* rite.

A new *magl'is*, composed by men from both the upper and the lower valley <sup>(48)</sup>, was formed in the dancing ground. There they performed a short sequence of only a couple of songs. At the same time, a large group of women and girls went away from the flat, round open space, walking on a very narrow path which ran, as usual in Kalasha valleys, on the rim of a water-channel. They disappeared in the thick holly-oak forest.

About twenty minutes later, after Sagdar, Kazi of Aspar, had worked very hard with words and short wooden branches to convince some young converted men to respect the Kalasha tradition, the procession of women reappeared. The *magl'is* interrupted its activity and silence fell all around.

<sup>(48)</sup> There were very few men from the upper valley, and this, as I have stated already, is probably in connection with the quarrel previously mentioned. At the same time however, according to Nur Bek, the fact that the upper Birir community is currently suffering from frequent conversions to Islam is the main reason for their increasingly weak motivation to celebrate customary rites together with the lower valley 'stronger Kalasha'.



Fig. 20 - Gri, 6th October 2006: One woman of the Alikshernawau *kam*, covered with a brownish cloak, is closely followed by three kinswomen, walking slowly on the ridges of a small water-channel shaking holly-oak branches: they are the leaders of the sacred procession which will end with the *Gac* song performance. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).

The women were walking very slowly; each one of them held in her hand a holly-oak branch and was shaking it gravely. Only one of them, the leader of the procession, was almost completely covered by a dark-coloured cloak that hid her body and face (Fig. 20). They gathered at the foot of a big walnut-tree (Fig. 21) and, still shaking the branches, started to murmur a chant whose lyrics were not articulated. At the end of the chant every woman threw her holly-oak branch towards the tree.

The song was referred to as *Gac* ('secret'), and by tradition only Alikshernawau women know its lyrics. While it can be easily hypothesized that this rite is connected to the reproduction cycle (as the *Prun* as a whole), none of my informants was able to further specify its meaning. When, some days later, I asked an Alikshernawau old woman for clarifications, she simply answered she could not reveal anything about the song, which had to remain totally secret. She showed to be extremely proud of this Alikshernawau special knowledge.

The women had again dispersed throughout the dancing ground when the *magl'is* once more began to sing, but after a few songs the festival was over. It

was six in the afternoon and many men who had participated to the song-and-dance activities were now exhausted by the long ceremony, which had lasted for more than eight hours, interrupted only by the transfer from Bishala to Gri.

People slowly moved towards the narrow paths that led back home, after having danced and feasted following the old, 'Kafir' traditions. Within a few minutes the dancing ground at Gri became deserted. From the mosque of that village the local muezzin began chanting *maghrib*, the sunset prayer.

### *Concluding Remarks*

In the light of what reported so far, some remarks on *Prun* festival as well as on its significance for the Kalasha 'culture' internal variance can be attempted.



Fig. 21 - Gri, 6th October 2006: The group of women, still shaking holly-oak branches, assembles at the foot of a big walnut-tree located on a side of the dancing-ground to sing the *Gac*. The white arrow indicates the procession leader, the only one who supposedly articulated the actual words of the sacred chant. (Photo by Alberto M. Cacopardo).

To begin with, the reference to the Prun as the ‘grape harvest and festival’ (Turner 1966: 472 = T8339<sup>2</sup>, surely from Morgenstierne 1973a: 132), ‘the harvesting festival’ (Palwal 1974) or ‘the autumn wine festival’ (Cacopardo, A.M. 1991: 308) should no doubt be revised. In fact the data at my disposal, which amount to almost ten hours of song and *n’oman nom’ek* performances besides my own participant observation, do not provide any explicit or metaphoric reference to wine. It is perhaps not meaningless in this regard that wine was not consumed publicly throughout the Prun of 2006. Most people, of course, actually drank some glasses of it at home or in some relative’s or friend’s house before the dances took place; others temporarily disappeared during the celebrations in order to honour some invitations. This was, however, the evening’s *leitmotiv* during my entire stay in the Birir Valley.

The fulcrum of the festival, instead, has to be recognized in the Budalak rite whose centrality, already suggested in the existing literature, is further clarified by the analysis of both *Cirb’ana p’io* (see subparagraph ‘First Day’) and *ca~* lyrics (see

above). This view is also corroborated by a rather clear parallelism: in roughly the same days in which Prun is celebrated, i.e. when the *buD'aLak* used to disguise and act ritually as studs (Kal. *bushb'ira*), these animals are effectively garlanded with juniper branches and let free in the corrals, ordinarily out of their reach, in order to mate with the she-goats who have just come back from the summer pastures. In addition both the Budalak and the studs share the same prolonged isolation from female individuals, even though the two practices show not to be perfectly specular since *bushb'ira* are never brought to summer pastures where, on the contrary, *buD'aLak* used to stay at least throughout the summer. In the light of these facts the relationship between the fundamental procedure of goats' mating and the Budalak rite is far from being doubtful<sup>(49)</sup>. It is, in my opinion, a remarkable instance of what Peter S.C. Parkes once stated in very clear terms: 'Goat symbolism recurs on every level of Kalasha culture' (Parkes 1983: 96).

The forced changes that the enactment of Prun had to undergo in the last decades have no doubt affected the original motivation for its celebration, which, according to many, has presently become scarce. Notably then, as far as communal prayers, sacrifices or just mentions of deities are concerned, none of these has been observed throughout the festival save for the case of the *Gac* (see paragraph 'The Last Day') and in the short invocations uttered during *Cirb'ana p'io* performances. This shows to be consistent with what reported by Morgenstierne who, on the basis of the material collected in 1929, already noted that during the Prun festival, which he called 'přū-nat', 'no prayers are said' (1973a: 175). Whoever was consulted on this point invariably answered that during Prun no sacrifices but only two rites were carried out, the *sob'olyak sambi'ek* and the *Gac* itself, both of exclusive female pertinence. The former is an initiation rite that apparently does not mark any particular stage of a girl's life, since it is too premature to represent the beginning of puberty, but could be in some connection with marriage politics; at the same time, though, its very performance, where young men steal the preciously embellished headgears of innocent girls dancing and then engage in a race, ensures us that it does possess an evident connection with courtship and reproduction. The *Gac*, on its part, albeit murmured and thus un-analyzable, offers us the same clear appearance of a reproduction-related ritual mainly in consideration of its exclusively female components. There can be indeed few doubts on the factual ties between these rites and the Budalak one, since together they seem to have formed a once 'complete' reproduction ritual, i.e. involving both male and female individuals of the community.

Once the reproduction-related side of Prun has progressively faded (though some evidences suggest that it could be still performed in secret), can we discern in its enactment any other feature besides those, like the promotion of group cohesion, common to all the Kalasha festive practices?

<sup>(49)</sup> See Loude & Lièvre 1987: 216 for a myth confirming this parallelism.

In this perspective it is noteworthy that in many phases of this festival there seems to be a special connexion with one and the same lineage. The Alikshernawau women, indeed, are the sole who know the *Gac* lyrics; the women forming the *m'aRik k'Uek* procession are either Alikshernawau or wives of Alikshernawau men. Furthermore, though I failed to verify their present-day practice, the first two festive nights of the lower valley moiety were celebrated in Aspar (Palwal 1974: 93; Loude & Lièvre 1987: 212-13), the Alikshernawau 'stronghold' <sup>(50)</sup>.

It is then from several *n'oman nom'ek* performances that we can obtain further relevant information in this respect <sup>(51)</sup>. For instance Shahara, an old and renowned singer belonging to the Gilasurnawau lineage, while honouring Mir Badsha, the most prominent Alikshernawau man, said [shaharaE3-31.052 / .053]:

(4.1) *sbe~h'e~ 'asta ne pail-'an t'ai yar zbe barab'ar*  
 in.this.way also NEG know-P/F3P 2S.GEN friend and equal  
 'Your friends and fellows do not know these things too...'

(4.2) *shun'eli pU~ t'ai gaRiL'o sb'i-aw-o*  
 Prun.epithet Prun 2S.GEN tradition be.INAN-P/F3S-RTM  
 '...the *shuneli* Prun is your tradition'

While the first line is not unlikely to refer to what the singer stated previously (not reproduced here), the reference of (4.2) and its meaning are doubtless: Shahara, a Gilasurnawau man, clearly asserted that the Prun is an Alikshernawau lineage's tradition (*gaRiL'o*).

Of the same tenor the words of Goarnment, a middle-aged man of the Razhuknawau lineage, during one of his *n'oman nom'ek* dedicated to Mir Badsha, reported in its entirety in the Appendix [government E12-31.007]:

(5) *manj'ar manj'ar-una sb-'ia rushp'unc zbe koshan'i t'ai*  
 generation generation-LOC INTNS-this.S.NOM ritual and feast 2S.GEN  
*m'uCa sb-ay'a m'ai aw'eri k'ui //*  
 possession INTNS-here 1S.GEN beloved valley  
 'Generation after generation these very ritual and festival (have been) your possessions, here in my beloved valley'

<sup>(50)</sup> In addition Turap Khan, already cited, told me that the Alikshernawau men had to provide firewood and drums for the festival, even though this assertion could also show to be scarcely significant for our present issue in view of the fact that Aspar is very close to Bishala: in this view the Alikshernawau men's duties would result to be pragmatically, rather than customarily, determined.

<sup>(51)</sup> A rigorous scientific presentation would require the reproduction of the texts in their entirety. This is impracticable due to reasons of space. The texts will be hopefully available on the TITUS Project Website (URL <http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/indexe.htm>) before than in Di Carlo, forthcoming).

Such Alikshernawau ‘ownership’ is stressed, in more or less the same terms, also by other singers (namely Danok and Waimalik in my database), and by Mir Badsha himself who declared *sh’ia m’ai shun’eli pU~* (‘this is just my *shuneli* Prun’) in one of his *n’oman nom’ek* performances [mirbacaE6-31] <sup>(52)</sup>.

Finally we must consider another excerpt of a *n’oman nom’ek* dedicated to Mir Badsha by Goarnment [government E7-31.017]:

- (6) *o shurasi’-O jag’ai de shun’eli pU~ t’ai baS’ara*  
 oh Shurasi-ADJ look-IMPV.2S RTM shuneli Prun 2S.GEN old.HUM  
*gUak gbo~-n*  
 child say-P/F.3P  
 ‘Oh descendant of Shurasi, look, people say “the *shuneli* Prun is a son of your old age”’

Here Goarnment, according to Danok and Nur Bek, referred to the fact that Prun (*shuneli* is an untranslatable epithet specific of Prun festival) was formerly associated with a *kam* whose name nobody was able to remember. After this lineage died out, several generations ago, the Alikshernawau lineage succeeded it in holding this ‘special relation’ with the Prun’s celebration <sup>(53)</sup>.

The consistency showed by all the data presented so far makes it difficult not to recognize that the Alikshernawau lineage really does possess fundamental prerogatives on the Prun festival, a characteristic that had never been noted so far <sup>(54)</sup>. In other words, the Prun festival appears to be a celebration bound to the identity of a single lineage, the Alikshernawau one. Apart from the specific case, it is just the one-to-one relation between a festival and one single lineage that appears to be as clear as surprising in the Kalasha culture.

But to a deeper analysis this fact is not unexpected as far as Birir is concerned. In many local oral traditions, indeed, it is very common to find one-to-one relations between lineages and gods or rituals: for instance, the god Warin is said to have been

<sup>(52)</sup> The fact that also Saidan Shah, one of the Kazis and the most respected man of the valley belonging to the Latharuknawau lineage, pronounced the same sentence cannot modify the significance of Mir Badsha’s claim: whereas Saidan Shah was performing his *n’oman nom’ek* to Sado, the already cited old and highly regarded guest from Bumburet Valley, Mir Badsha was involved in honouring another man from Birir, namely Major Khan of the Changanchainawau lineage. Hence it is highly probable that while Saidan Shah displayed his ownership of the Prun as a *bir’ila* (adj. ‘from Birir’) opposed to a *m’omola* (adj. ‘from Bumburet’) and not as a member of the Latharuknawau lineage, Mir Badsha stressed the same fact in front of another *bir’ila* just because he is a descendant of Aliksher.

<sup>(53)</sup> The reference to Mir Badsha as a ‘descendant of Shurasi’ is justified by the fact that Aliksher was one of the seven (or eight) sons of Shurasi: Shurasinawau is a hyperonym indicating a cluster of present-day lineages, as a whole called *d’arak* in Rumbur (Parkes 1983: 373).

<sup>(54)</sup> This was probably not expected (thus perhaps not looked for) since the majority of the data available on the Kalasha culture have been recorded in the Rumbur Valley, where a comparable distribution of ritual duties among single lineages or any kind of association of the latter with specific rites or festivals seems to be absent or highly marginal (Parkes 1983: 378 n. 1).

brought to Birir by a now extinct lineage, akin to the present-day Changanchainawau who, for this reason, have recently funded the restoration of the shrine of *g'ona war'in* (Fig. 22; A.S. Cacopardo pers. comm.); the same can be said for the god Mahandeo, whom two Punjapaonawau (Rani, Gabaroti) and two Razhuknawau men (Shobo, Tsipak) are said to have brought from present-day Nuristan (Danok) <sup>(55)</sup>; the god Praba reportedly came from Majam with Suashai, father of Shurasi, apical ancestor of the Shurasinawau <sup>(56)</sup>; finally Bangule, apical ancestor of the Bangulenawau lineage from Biyou, is believed to be the son of Bhangabangi, a semi-divine entity who later became a god by the name of *grim'un* <sup>(57)</sup>. These myths give the impression of an extremely fragmentary social context, characterized by a sort of 'private deity' for each lineage.



Fig. 22 - The shrine of the god Great Warin (Kal. *gh'ona warind'ur*; see Fig. 2) has been rebuilt very recently. Despite the overall traditional structure, both the horse-heads and the underlying wooden plank document a rather new style of carving, work of local Muslim craftsmen.

The same suggestion could be gathered by other facts, in part already seen in the previous pages. The first is that all of my mentors – who were men and women of the Latharuknawau and the Gilasurnawau lineages, resident in Guru and its neighbourhood – showed the same 'ritual ignorance' in making no mention of the first phase of Prun celebrated in Aspar by the members of the Alikshernawau *kam*. Secondly, the valley of Birir is said to have been occupied by lineages and individuals of different provenance <sup>(58)</sup> (n. 42 above; cf. also Schomberg 1938: 194-95; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1996: 309), showing, also in this respect, to be totally different from Rumbur where all the lineages descend from one man, Adobok.

<sup>(55)</sup> In my database the Alikshernawau are often indicated as 'owners' of its shrine since they rebuilt it few generations ago. This myth is also referred in Loude & Lièvre 1984: 138-39 with only slight differences.

<sup>(56)</sup> A slightly different version of the myth is to be found in Loude & Lièvre 1987: 214.

<sup>(57)</sup> Schomberg (1938: 202-203) and Hussam-ul-Mulk (1974: 82) collected a different version of the same myth.

<sup>(58)</sup> This presupposedly original higher degree of dishomogeneity in its population could perhaps also show to be in some sense pertinent to the more clear-cut coincidence of lineages and villages in Birir if compared to that of Rumbur (Parkes 1983: 375).

One last consideration should be added. Among the place names cited during the linguistic events recorded throughout Prun, Shishi Kui (Fig. 2) was mentioned ten times (in six different texts performed by five singers), Urtsun twice, Jinjeret Kui once, as is the case also for Nagar (a village close to the mouth of the Urtsun Valley) and Kalkatak (called *bU~as'ar* in Birir), while neither Rumbur nor Bumburet were mentioned at all <sup>(59)</sup>. These data fully meet what the Cacopardo brothers noted in the 1990's: they have indicated that in many respects the converted Kalasha communities of the 'Eastern Area' (Shishi Kui) and of the South (Jinjeret Kui, Urtsun) of the Kalashgum were more tightly linked to Birir than to any of the other two Northern valley communities of Bumburet and Rumbur (Cacopardo, A.M. 1991, 1996; Cacopardo, A.S. 1991, 1996; Cacopardo & Cacopardo 1992, 1996). The celebration of Prun itself seems to have been peculiar of this area (Id. 2001: 275; cf. Azar 2006: 38n. for a Kati parallel of the Budalak rite) <sup>(60)</sup>, a hypothesis corroborated by the fact that the information gathered by Abdul Khaleq, a middle-aged knowledgeable man from Krakal in Bumburet Valley, confirm that the Budalak were absent in his valley (e-mail 18-7-2007).

At any rate the data presented above allow, in my view, three conclusions: 1- contrary to the present scholarly tendency, Rumbur's community cannot be taken as representative of a Kalasha 'standard', for the differences with that of Birir are too many not to keep these two varieties clearly distinct within the Kalasha culture; 2- the culture of Birir is perhaps the last representative of a formerly more widespread, and possibly more ancient (cf. Cacopardo, A.M. 1996: 266), variety of what today we define 'Kalasha culture'; 3- the celebration of Prun itself, or of analogous festivals, seems to have drawn a 'cultural border' within the Kalasha world, dividing a Southern region (Urtsun, Jinjeret Kui, Shishi Kui and Birir) in which it was practised, from a Northern one (Bumburet and Rumbur) that ignored it.

No doubt further researches are needed to ascertain if also the seemingly more fragmentary social structure of Birir, where lineages are probably defined also in relation to activities of the ritual sphere, has to be associated to the Southern Area in opposition to the Northern one, or if it represents a 'more ancient' feature of the Kalasha culture as a whole.

<sup>(59)</sup> A few places located in Bumburet were obviously named by Saidan Shah in his *n'oman nom'ek* in honour of Sado, a man from Bumburet.

<sup>(60)</sup> In addition, Danok in one of his *n'oman nom'ek* [danok E13-31.014] remembered that Prun was celebrated also in Shishi Kui.

## APPENDIX

The following pages are intended to provide an example of a typical *gbO~* (song) performance. The event proposed here has been recorded on 5th October 2006 [file 27PRUN, mirbacaE12-31, government E12-31, adina E12-31]. In the middle of the evening celebrations, Mir Badsha sang a *d'ushak* of his own composition. Its lyrics, referred to that evening's specific context, show that Kalasha singers are able to extemporize their performance even in song composition, and not only in panegyrics (*n'oman nom'ek*). After the canonical three repetitions of the song, both soloist and choral, first Goarnment then Adina perform their *n'oman nom'ek* in honour of the singer.

Since the texts reported here are meant only to help the reader to picture the overall structure of this kind of linguistic event, they are only parsed and freely translated. In so doing most of their content will unfortunately result not to be fully understandable: the elliptical expressions typical of *n'oman nom'ek* performances, indeed, would require many comments to be unfolded and contextualized, and these in their turn would require an unusual amount of space for an Appendix to an article. In Di Carlo (forthcoming) I shall try to fill this gap.

The texts were formerly transcribed and translated in Birir, with the kind help of Danok, Nur Bek, Mir Badsha, Turap Khan and Baras Khan. Further examinations of the recorded material have revealed some inconsistencies in what the Kalasha informants had told me. I tried my best to keep the transcription adhering to what I actually hear, and the translation not far from what I had been told. Extemporized poetic discourses, indeed, often lack for their nature the phonetic clarity and the semantic explicitness that one would expect from daily (unmarked) linguistic behaviour.

Since my grammatical analysis of Kalasha is not complete yet, the morpheme definitions below should be considered as temporary, though they rarely show to be inconsistent or not explicit also in the light of the rest of the linguistic studies on Kalasha language.

### *Notes on the Transcription and the Abbreviations Used*

For typographical convenience texts are transcribed following only in part what Masica (1991: xv) calls the 'Standard Orientalist' transcription. The principal differences are: 1- all the capital letters express a retroflex articulation save for < G > = voiced velar fricative (on retroflex vowels in Kalasha see Heegård & Mørch 2004); 2- < sh > represents the voiceless dental sibilant, < zh > its voiced counterpart, but one consonant followed by < h > must be considered aspirate; 3- < y > represents the palatal approximant and < w > the voiced labiovelar approximant; 4- the voiceless velar fricative is expressed by < x >. The letter < c > represents the palatal affricate as it does in the 'Standard Orientalist' transcription. Since thorough studies on Kalasha syllabification are still lacking, stress is marked by the symbol < ' > in front of the stressed vowel and not, as in IPA, in front of the stressed syllable.

Square brackets signal that the text enclosed is reconstructed and hypothetical. The double slash < // > represents the end of the 'verse', typically followed by general approbation during *n'oman nom'ek* performances. The numbers on the left end express the timing of the utterances and of the different phases of the linguistic event as they appear in the files of my database.

Abbreviations (based on those used by Bashir 1988)

ACC: Accusative Case	OBL: Oblique Case
ADJ: Adjectivizer	OPP: Oppositive
ANIM: Animate	REL: Relator
COM: Comitative	P: Plural
CP: Conjunctive Participle	P/F: Present/Future
DIR: Direct Case (whether NOM and ACC coincide)	P/F.CONT: Present/Future Continuous
EMPH: Emphatic	PCL: Particle (sometimes a Topicalizer)
GEN: Genitive Case	PST.A: Past Actual
IMPV: Imperative	PST.HRS: Hearsay Past
INANIM: Inanimate	PURP: Purpose
INTNS: Intensifier	REM: Remote
LOC: Locative (Case)	RTM: Rhythmical Element
NEG: Negation	S: Singular
NOM: Nominative Case	SEQ: Sequencer
	VIS: Visible

#### TEXTS

00.00 The components of the *magl'is* begin by discussing which kind of song to perform next.

03.15 After many negotiations and some aborted starts, Mir Badsha is asked to sing a *d'ushbak*. He starts off.

03.18 *t'u-ta o shun'eli pU~ a-kboj-i shax'or shic'in ush'ik //*  
 2S.NOM-PCL oh epithet Prun PST.A-call-PST.A.2S sugar shicin flower  
 'Oh shuneli Prun, you called the sweet flowers of *shicin*'

03.44 *sh-ay'a d'ay m'ai aw'eri k'ui uchund-i kaw'a 'asta*  
 INTNS-here REL 1S.GEN beloved valley descend-CP where also  
*b'ula ganag'an //*  
 become.PST.HRS chaos  
 'Once descended as far as here it was chaos everywhere'

03.56 *sh-ay'a m'ai-t'aDa i t'ai gand'uryak m'ai kay 'asta*  
 INTNS-here 1S.OBL-near come.IMPV.2S 2S.GEN good.smell 1S.OBL to also  
*d-el olaL'eee //*  
 give-P/F.3S olaleee  
 'Come here just close to me (so that) your scent comes to me as well, olalee'

04.20 Choral repetition

05.28 Soloist repetition in 'style A' (Cf. p. 69)

06.23 Choral repetition

07.13 Soloist repetition in 'style B'

07.50 Choral repetition

08.05 Goarmnt takes his staff, everyone says *Sab'aS* 'bravo!'. Some more room is made for him along the ring of the singers. While the dancers go on moving in chain around the *magl'is*, after few seconds of concentration Goarmnt begins his *n'oman nom'ek* in honour of Mir Badsha.

08.27 *t'u-ta o gb'oriloS m'oc-aw titani'o~ o alekshi'er-naw'au //*  
2S.NOM-PCL oh brave man-among bird oh Alekshier-grandchild  
'Oh warbler bird amongst honourable men, oh thou descendant of Aliksher'  
*'ujak kay a-m'atr-i t'ai j'ip-ani mon n'ade-o sangb-'ai*  
true REL PST.A-say-PST.A.2S 2S.GEN tongue-ADJ word RTM-RTM listen.to-CP  
*sb-'ia c'una kalash'um //*  
INTNS-this.S.NOM all Kalasha.people  
'You said the truth; all this Kalasha people listened to your own words'

08.50 *o gb'oriloS moc alekshi'er-naw'au jag-'ai n'a-e o yar barab'ar*  
oh brave man Alekshier-grandchild look-IMPV.2S RTM-RTM oh fellow same  
*jag-'ai de-'o /*  
look-IMPV.2S IMPV.INTNS-RTM  
'Oh honourable man, descendant of Aliksher, look! Oh (my) fellow and equal, look!'  
*sb-'ala she~he~m'i kay k'ar-in rushp'unc zbe kosban'i //*  
INTNS-that.VIS.S.ACC like.this-INTNS REL do-P/F.3P ritual and feast  
'They celebrate the ritual and the feast in just that way'

09.05 *alekshi'er-naw'au t'ai m'uCa anjam 'a-aw*  
Alekshier-grandchild 2S.GEN possession peace come.PST.A-PST.A.3S  
*jag-'ai n'a-e sb-'ia c'una kalash'um //*  
look-IMPV.2S RTM-RTM INTNS-this.S.NOM all Kalasha.people  
'Descendant of Aliksher (through) your possession/power peace came (to) all this Kalasha people'

09.20 *alekshi'er-naw'au jag-'ai d'e-o manjar manjar-una*  
Alekshier-grandchild look-IMPV.2S IMPV.INTS.RTM generation generation-LOC  
*sb-'ia rushp'unc zbe kosban'i t'ai m'uCa-e sb-ay'a*  
INTNS-this.S.NOM ritual and feast 2S.GEN possession-ABL INTNS-here  
*m'ai aw'eri k'ui //*  
1S.GEN beloved valley  
'Descendant of Aliksher look! Generation after generation this ritual and this feast (have come) from your hands (lit. possessions) here, in my beloved valley'

09.42 *t'ai w'awa-u C'otuk n'ade gb'ora awann'O p'ay-ta*  
2S.GEN grandfather-POSS.2S Chotuk RTM white Awannu go.CP-PCL  
*sh'ara-mung'ai k'aDa t'u-ta alekshi'er-naw'au //*  
markhor-hunt do.PST.HRS 2S.NOM-PCL Alekshier-grandchild  
'Your ancestor Chotuk (having) gone to the white Awannu hunted the markhor'

- 10.00 *gb'ona kat'ar-ta tar'a b'ist-i 'aLa gho~-n*  
 big dagger-PCL there.REM throw-CP come.PST.HRS say-P/F.3P  
*day 'ujak kay law-em o tu l'atharuk-naw'au //*  
 P/F.CONT true REL lie-P/F.1S oh 2S.NOM Latharuk-grandchild  
 'There, people say, a big dagger was thrown, am I lying or saying the truth oh thou descendant of Latharuk?'
- 10.17 *t'ai h'uTali db'am-ai 'ita se 'anga*  
 2S.GEN high residence-LOC come.CP that.REM.S.NOM remembering  
*h'uLa-e gb'ora gb'ona kat'ar rokts-'i-o gb'o~-i //*  
 become.PST.HRS-RTM white big dagger forget-CP-SEQ say-CP  
 'Once arrived at your high residence he remembered and said "I forgot the great white dagger"'
- 10.28 *t'ai aw'eri k'ui shun'eli pU~ shi-'ada-e /*  
 2S.GEN beloved valley epithet Prun be.INAN-PST.HRS-RTM /  
*witras-ik-w'ew uST-i t'ai w'awa-u*  
 dawn-come.INF-during stand.up-CP 2S.GEN grandfather-POSS.2S  
*C'otuk rab'i k'aDa-e jag-'ai de sh-ay'a dr'iga*  
 Chotuk departure do.PST.HRS-RTM look-IMPV.2S RTM INTNS-here long  
*bir'iu k'ui web'E~k-a day //*  
 Birir valley upstream-OBL REL  
 'It was (the time of) the shuneli Prun in your beloved valley. Your ancestor Chotuk stood up at dawn and left, look, towards the upstream of this long valley of Birir'
- 10.43 *gb'ora awann'O-una p'ay sapr-'ai to aL-'ey-e*  
 white Awannu-LOC go.CP find-CP that.S.REM.ACC there.VIS-ABL-RTM  
*d'esba 'ia ne sar'i 'asta [t'ai pind'uri bronz o*  
 far this.S.NOM NEG gather.CP be.PST.HRS 2S.GEN round meadow o  
*alekshier-naw'au]//*  
 Alekshier-grandchild  
 'Gone to the white Awannu (and) found that (dagger) not far from there, (he) joined your round meadow o descendant of Aliksher'
- 10.53 *sha-tar'a-aw t'ai w'awa-u C'otuk m'atr-i 'as-au*  
 INTNS-there.REM-ABL 2S.GEN grandfather-POSS.2S Chotuk say-CP be-P/F.3S  
*m'ai d'ita khur-'ik kaw'a sh'i-u se gb'ora*  
 1S.GEN brave leg-DIM where be.INAN-P/F.3S that.REM.S.NOM white  
*awann'O //*  
 Awannu  
 'There your ancestor Chotuk said "My strong legs, where is the white Awannu?"'
- 11.08 *s'e-o t'ai w'awa-u h'ast-as kamand'i*  
 that.REM.S.NOM-SEQ 2S.GEN grandfather-POSS.2S hand-GEN archer(?)  
*t'i-o-e tre p'uRi k'au-ta sha-t-aL-'ay*  
 become.CP-SEQ-RTM three full year-PCL INTNS-REM-there-LOC

*g'ala-e t'u-ta o alekshi'er-naw'au //*  
 go.PST.HRS-RTM 2S.NOM-OPP oh Alekshier-grandchild  
 'Then your ancestor, (having) become a skilled archer (?), stayed (lit. went) there for  
 three entire years, oh thou descendant of Aliksher'

11.20 *sh'-ala she-h'e~ t'ai w'awa-u unar'i kay*  
 INTNS-that.VIS.S.ACC like.this 2S.GEN grandfather-POSS.2S skill do.CP  
*'as-an-e alekshi'er-naw'au sh'-ia t'ai 'uST-ik*  
 be-P/F.3P-RTM Alekshier-grandchild INTNS-this.S.NOM 2S.GEN stand.up-INF  
*nis-'ik //*  
 sit.down-INF  
 'In that way your ancestor possessed those skills (?). Descendant of Aliksher, this is  
 your very hospitality (lit. your stand-up and sit-down)'

11.30 *'onja-o t'u-bata bil'eng-as d'ae 'ujak kay a-m'atr-i*  
 now-SEQ 2S.NOM-OPP be.heard-P/F.2S RTM true do.CP PST.A-say-PST.A.2S  
*n'a-e kaw'a 'asta h'aw-an ganag'an //*  
 RTM-RTM where also become.PST.A-PST.A.3P chaos  
 'But now you are being heard, you told the truth: "Everywhere they have dispersed  
 chaotically"'

11.45 *t'ai h'atya-ta wa-ts ti sh'i-u sh'-onja-o kaw'a*  
 2S.OBL to-OPP easy become.CP be.INAN-P/F.3S INTNS-now-SEQ where  
*'asta ganag'an t'i-o-e arm'an a-Ch'in-on t'u-ta*  
 also chaos become.CP-SEQ-RTM love PST.A-cut-PST.A.3P 2S.NOM-PCL  
*o alekshi'er-naw'au //*  
 oh Alekshier-grandchild  
 'It has become easy for you, in this very moment it is chaos everywhere: they broke the  
 magic (lit. love), oh thou descendant of Aliksher'

11.55 *loT m'ondr-o k'ya-bata d-ek n'a-e pruST kay k'ar-a*  
 great word-RTM what-OPP give-P/F.1P RTM-RTM good do.CP do-IMPV.2P  
*sh'awak tamash'a ///*  
 pleasure entertainment  
 'What else can we say? Go on celebrating with joy as you have done so far!'

12.05 Choral repetition of Mir Badsha's *d'ushak*.

12.37 Adina takes his staff, the rest of the *maglis* expresses its approbation as usual. Then  
 Adina begins his *n'oman mom'ek* in honour of Mir Badsha.

12.43 *S'abaS-ta t'ai h'atya-e gh'oriloS m'oc-aw titani'o~ o*  
 bravo-OPP 2S.OBL to-RTM brave man-among bird oh  
*alekshi'er-naw'au //*  
 Alekshier-grandchild  
 'Bravo to you, oh warbler bird amongst honourable men, oh thou descendant of  
 Aliksher'

- 12.56 *w'awa trumux'an zbe aleksbi'er waxt a-sh'i-is n'ade*  
 grandfather Trumukhan and Alekshier time PST.A-be.INAN-PST.A.3S RTM  
*w'awa trumux'an zbe aleksbi'er sb-emi ar'un*  
 grandfather Trumukhan and Alekshier INTNS-this.P.DIR tradition  
*ujb-'ala na //*  
 repair-PST.HRS RTM  
 'It was the time of (your) ancestors Trumukhan and Aliksher. Trumukhan and Aliksher restored the tradition'
- 13.09 *'onja t'u-bata 'ama piSTy'ak kay tb-aw hi-k baS /*  
 now 2S.NOM-OPP this.S.ACC after REL keep-ADJ become-INF part  
 'But now you would like to preserve this (tradition)...'  
*jaw'ap 'ari-e ne jhon-'al-as h'atya k'ya*  
 answer do.PST.A-PST.A.2S -RTM NEG know-AGENT-OBL to what  
*gh'o~-i c'it-i-o h'aw-aw t'ai shax'or jaw'ap //*  
 say-CP think- CP-SEQ become.PST.A-PST.A.3S 2S.GEN sugar answer  
 'You said (lit. made an answer): "What is (this) for who does not know?". Your sweet words (lit. answer) came after many thoughts'
- 13.21 *Sumber-'aw jaw'ap sb'i-u sb-'ia g'amba*  
 before-ADJ answer be.INAN-P/F.3S INTNS-this.S.NOM gamba  
*ush'ik to gamb'uri kbundi-'el n'ade ay'a i m'ai-t'aDa*  
 flower that.REM.S.ACC flower call-P/F.3S RTM here come.IMPV.2S 1S.OBL-near  
*gh'o~-i //*  
 say-CP  
 'The word (lit. answer) of the ancient times is "The flower of *gamba* calls the flower saying" come here close to me'
- 13.33 *sb-'ala jaw'ap k'ura kay 'as-au k'ya zaman'a-ani*  
 INTNS-that.VIS.S.ACC. answer who do.CP be.ANIM-P/F.3S what period-ADJ  
*a-sh'i-is n'ade-o 'onja 'asta sangh'al-ik de jag'ai //*  
 PST.A-be.INAN-PST.A.3S RTM-RTM now also repeat-P/F.1P RTM look-IMPV.2S  
 'Who pronounced those words and which period was (then)? Look, we repeat (it) still today!'
- 13.43 *s'e-ta bar'o a-sh'i-is a-m'atr-an*  
 that.REM.S.NOM-OPP epoch PST.A-be.INAN-PST.A.3S PST.A-say-PST.A.3P  
*t'ai gand'uryak m'ai 'asta d-el //*  
 2S.GEN good.smell 1S.DAT also give-P/F.3S  
 'It was that time (when) people said "your scent comes to me" '
- 13.52 *m'ai 'asta kro~una 'as-ini n'ade ajikh'an-a zbe kawazb'ek-a*  
 my also ear-LOC be.ANIM-PST.A.3P RTM Ajikhan-OBL and Kawazhek-OBL  
*waxt kalaS'um shi-'ada-e moc bbr'ink-ik*  
 time Kalasha.people be.INAN-PST.HRS-RTM man sell-INF

- shi-'ada*                      *sha-tar'a* //  
 be.INAN-PST.HRS INTNS-there.REM  
 '(These words) were also in my ears: (in) the time of Ajikhan and Kawazhek the Kalasha people were, the men were sold (as slaves)'
- 14.08 *ja 'asta ne sawz 'asta-e paCb'ani kay moc b'uT-ila*  
 wife also NEG good be.PST.HRS-RTM secret do.CP man send-PST.HRS  
*tar'a m'ai ja kay m'atr-a n'a-e sb-'ia*  
 there.REM 1S.GEN wife to say-IMPV.2P RTM-RTM INTNS-this.S.NOM  
*kawazb'ek h'oma bbr'ink-iu del //*  
 Kawazhek 1P.ACC sell-P/F.3S P/F.CONT  
 '(One) wife was very worried (lit. was not well). Secretly some men were sent to her. Say to my wife "this Kawazhek is selling us!"'
- 14.24 *So bas 'asta tem d-'ai-o p'iSTaw-o pal'a-ik gbo~-n shax'or*  
 six day also time give-CP-SEQ after-SEQ flee-P/F.1P say-P/F.3P sugar  
*shic'in ush'ik /*  
 shicin flower /  
 'They say "After six days we will flee, sweet flower of *shicin*"'
- 14.38 *aL'eLa buch'um p'ay h'eman c'ila shi-'ada-e ra n'O-a*  
 over.there up go.CP winter cold be.INAN-PST.HRS-RTM cedar under-LOC  
*p'ay bas h'uLa jag-'ai //*  
 go.CP day become.PST.HRS look-IMPV.2S  
 'Gone up on the other side of the valley, it was the cold winter, gone under a cedar-tree they passed the night (lit. it became the day), look!'
- 14.49 *sb-'ia j'a-as kawazb'ek-ta d'esba nis-'iu sb-ay'a*  
 INTNS-this.S.NOM wife-GEN Kawazhek-OPP far sit.down-P/F.3S INTNS-here  
*'asta-o jag-'ai //*  
 be.ANIM.PST.HRS-SEQ look-IMPV.2S  
 'Kawazhek was sitting (lit. sits) far from this women (lit. wife), he was just here look!'
- 14.57 [*atr'a k'ya k'ar-is day*] *ay'a m'ai s'enda i osh ne*  
 there.VIS what do-P/F.2S P/F.CONT here 1S.OBL near come.IMPV.2S cold NEG  
*k'ar-iu gb'o~-ta-e ogoo'eegin mon S'aT-ila tar'a //*  
 do-P/F.3S say-PST.HRS-RTM reciprocally word start-PST.HRS there.REM  
 'She said 'What are you doing there? Come here close to me, it is not cold'. There they had a talk one another'
- 15.09 *sha-tar'a w'axt-una shi-'ala jaw'ap sang'a-li 'as-an-e*  
 INTNS-there.REM time-LOC be.INAN-PST.HRS answer repeat-CP be-P/F.3P-RTM  
*ah'E~-ai juw'an-ta sha-tar'a //*  
 Ayun-ADJ youth-OPP INTNS-there.REM  
 'In that time some youths from Ayun have told this story'

- 15.19 *'onja-o t'u-bata-ta tb-'ai [b'eSar gum kb'oj-i-e]*  
 now-SEQ 2S.NOM-OPP-PCL keep-CP very.abundantly wheat look.for-CP-RTM  
*sbun'eli p'U~-as tb'ar-a dy'e-i //*  
 epithet Prun-OBL on-LOC put-CP  
 'And now you sought and stored a lot of wheat, (in order) to put it on the *sbuneli* Prun'
- 15.28 *us'uly-ani k'arun 'ar-i alekshi'er-naw'au suw'el jaw'ap-o*  
 rule-ADJ custom do.PST.A-PST.A.2S Alekshier-grandchild prayer answer-SEQ  
*tb-aw b'i-k-as baS jaw'ap sh'i-u jag-'ai //*  
 keep-ADJ become-INF-OBL part answer be.INAN -P/F.3S look-IMPV.2S  
 'Descendant of Aliksher, you celebrated according to the customary rule. Prayers and stories must be kept, look it is (itself) a story!'
- 15.38 *sh-'isa gb'O~-as-bati afs'us nak 'as-ik n'a-e*  
 INTNS-this.S.GEN/OBL song-OBL-PURP sorry very be.ANIM-P/F.1P RTM-RTM  
*m'ai gb'oriloS m'oc-aw ne jh'on-iu 'ama shax'or j'ip-ani*  
 my brave man-among NEG know -P/F.3S this.S.ACC sugar tongue-ADJ  
*mon //*  
 word  
 'We are very sorry for this song. Among my honourable men nobody knows these sweet words'
- 15.51 *w'awa-u matawal'i zbe mers'i nibi-'ala-e*  
 grandfather-POSS.2S Matawali and Mersi come.out-PST.HRS-RTM  
*w'awa-u kokamb'ek-o atr'a t'ai b'uTali dham //*  
 grandfather-POSS.2S Kokan Bek-SEQ there.VIS 2S.GEN high residence  
 'Your ancestors Matawali and Mersi were born, and your ancestor Kokan Bek, (all) there in your high residence'
- 16.02 *am'ani m'uluk-a kosh gamb'uri 'asta w'awa-u*  
 Amman Mulk-OBL pleasing flower be.PST.HRS grandfather-POSS.2S  
*kokamb'ek n'ade mers'i-a matawal'i-a [cir'inig-an] abb'at*  
 Kokan.Bek RTM Mersi-GEN Matawali-GEN flocking.bird-P.DIR peopled.place  
*b'uLa t'ai maCh'erik mU //*  
 become.PST.HRS 2S.GEN bee hive  
 'Your ancestor Kokan Bek was the favourite of Amman-ul-Mulk. Mersi's and Matawali's flocks became huge in your beehive'
- 16.20 *w'en-aw kya m'on-ta d-em n'ade tar'a sh'i-u*  
 upstream-ADJ what word-PCL give-P/F.1S RTM there.REM be.INAN-P/F.3S  
*wendariweshi-ai se 'uST-ik nis-'ik //*  
 Weneriweshi-LOC that.REM.NOM stand.up-INF sit.down-INF  
 'The words I am pronouncing are words of the upper valley. There, in Weneriweshi, is that great hospitality'
- 16.31 *ek dar'im-ai bi alekshi'er-naw'au n'a-e nis'iru nis'iru*  
 one pomegranate-ADJ seed Alekshier-grandchild RTM-RTM generation generation

*unar-m'an n'ade //*

skill-ADJ RTM

'The descendants of Aliksher (are like the) seeds of a sole pomegranate. Generation after generation (they have become) skillful'

- 16.40 *se w'axt tasi-m'i-som log'is n'ade 'onja-aw*  
that.NOM time that.P.REM.OBL-EMPH-COM was.kept RTM-RTM now-ADJ  
*w'axt to she~h'e~ sh'i-u p'asb-ik d'ae k'ya*  
time that.S.REM.ACC in.this.way be.INAN-P/F.3S see-P/F.1P RTM what  
*fatuk'i ne sb-'asa t'ai 'uST-ik nis-'ik //*  
scarcity NEG INTNS-that.S.VIS.OBL 2S.GEN stand.up-INF sit.down-INF  
'In that time (the tradition) was kept by themselves. Today we see it like this: your hospitality has not decreased at all!'

- 16.55 *b'eS-as th'ar-a beS th-'iman 'ita sb'i-u*  
abundance-OBL on-LOC abundance be-PRTCP.PST.CONT come.CP be.INAN-P/F.3S  
*n'e-ta rh'om-ani fatuk'i ne-o sb-'asa t'ai*  
NEG-PCL poetic.activity-ADJ scarcity NEG-SEQ INTNS-that.S.VIS.NOM 2S.GEN  
*khanEduk'au //*  
political.activity  
'Abundance upon abundance has been coming (to you). And your poetic activity has not decreased, as well as your political activity'

- 17.09 *sb-'onja-o db'eRik th-'ai uST-'aw*  
INTNS-now-SEQ knees keep-IMPV.2S stand.up-PST.A.3S CP  
*sb-'asa t'ai karataw'ar oLaL'e ///*  
INTNS-that.S.VIS.NOM 2S.GEN honour olale  
'And now cross your legs, your honour has stood up!'

17.15 Final choral repetition of Mir Badsha's song.

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