(Reprinted from the *BSOAS*, 1955, xvii/1)
THE POPULAR VERSE OF THE BAKHTIĀRĪ OF S.W. PERSIA—II: SPECIMENS OF BAKHTIĀRĪ VERSE

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THE Bakhtīāri texts that follow are given almost exactly as they were recorded by me in 1914. I have not attempted to alter the rather heterogeneous collection of phonetic symbols of which I made use, except in one case. I have got rid of one frequently recurring awkward symbol by using ā to represent sounds approximating to the -a- of ‘father’ and the -a- of ‘fall’ respectively. Normally it may be taken as representing the latter sound. The sound of -a- in ‘father’ occurs regularly only in a few words, e.g. bāz = Mn.P. ba’d az.

For some information regarding the sounds and the morphology of the Bakhtīāri dialect, reference may be made to my article ‘A Bakhtiari Prose Text’, in the JRAS. of April, 1930. Some further information about the sounds will be found in my ‘Phonology of the Bakhtīāri, Badakhshani, and Madaglashti Dialects of Modern Persian’, R.A.S., London, 1922, which also contains a short vocabulary.

The notes here accompanying the texts do not aim at dealing with questions of Phonetics or Morphology. They consist largely of explanations and comments which I obtained from the purveyor of the texts at the time of recording in very hasty attempts to get difficulties elucidated. There was no opportunity later for revision or further inquiry: the first World War broke out, and I said good-bye to Mullā Ilāhi and left Persia.¹

1. HISTORICAL

Jang i Dūraki o Bēhduwrwand (ba Dīrau)

[Dūraki loq.]
Andakā mudum bahār, Čašma Kavāvī.
   Mo gudum ‘ Jang nēikunē Kur i Širōvī ’.
Sar a rāk sail izanum, Bundān diārē.
   Suwār, suwārzanum, Isfandiārē.

[Bēhduwrwand loq.]
5. Sar a diz sail izanum, sahra huwārē.
   Zahmdārē tark i Nazar būr čāl suwārē.
Sar a diz sail izanum, sahra wasī ē.
   Zahmdārē tark i Nazar Hālū Masīyē.
Saidāl Bag jār izanī Gyau Mandinīna,

¹ I did not then leave Persia ‘for good’, as inadvertently stated in BSOAS., xvi, p. 542, n. 1. I was back in it again in 1916-17, but I did not again see or hear of Mullā Ilāhi.
10. ‘Bišilik i awwalī zaim Qalb Alīna’.
   Saidal Bag jār izānē ‘Gyau Mandinē šēr,
   ‘Jangē ba juriyat bukun: tīr vast ba taydīr’.
   Parzīn ē Ahmad Badal, Bāyir ba rī’s ē.
   Mandinī vanda trāt, rāh d o na dī’s ē.

[Ja’far Quli Kh. loq.]
15. Zē šumē tā dam a sūv Wazānum zanē šūr.
   Badalī šauξīzanīm, fahmit bīdē kūr.
   Badalī šauξīzanīm gīrē ba pācā
   Qarārē šauξīn a dād ba Qala Xāja.
   Saidal Bag o Mandinī xardum qūrā.

20. Ze man ē sī sad suwār justen gyagīa.
   Xānum ai, ze Bād darau, būr bukun zīn.
   Dūrakī bēfursat an. Tuxmsū wurcīn.
   Xānum ai, ze Bād darau, mōna burīdī.
   Jang a xut o A’ Qalb Ali hū bīd ki didī.

25. Zahmdārē tark i Nazar, mōna qawūē.
   Dūrakī ze rī nē irē tā qalt na būhē.
   Čār suwār ē cē gunj i šēr avēd dam a taś:
   Saidal Bag, Mandinī, Farhād e Jūn Baş.
   Jūn Baş o Sultūn Ali raxtā’s xarīdā.

30. Dīdumas min u maidūn sēras burīdā.

[Saidal Beg loq.]
   Andakā mudum bahār, čašma bun a jāz.
   Dastatē mār izinā, ustā tufangsāz.
   Mu zu Bād xātirjamūn, Kaj Buland-um.
   Rasidum ba Qalb Ali, dastā’s a vandum.

[Ja’far Q. X. loq.]
35. Sitāra zulf maxmāli, dura binā’sē.
   Burdas ē A’ Qalb Ali, wa kas na dā’s ē.
   Sitāra zulf maxmāli, dura bi gūsās.
   Burdas ē A’ Qalb Ali: tarsum farūsās.
   Sitāra zulf maxmāli, pistā anārī:

40. Čē xudas paidā na dād va Baxtiārī.

[Poet loq.]
   Nīla kul Alī Taqī ze jā wuristād:
   Rīnā kerd ba darwāza, ba Dīz nawāsistād.

[‘Ali Taqi loq.]
   Nīla kul ixuhum ham cand barārūm.
   Rikāv i narmak zanum, ze Dīz darārūm.

45. Nīla kul ixuhum ham cand gyagīnūn.
   Rikāv a narmak zanum, ba Dīz rasūnūm.
In the case of this ballad we are fortunate in having some information about the general situation and the two tribal leaders, Ja'far Quli Khān and Qalb 'Ali Khān, and also about what happened after this battle. I have a couple of prose texts which give some account of the principal events in the struggle for supremacy between the Behdārwand and the Dūraki, in which the latter triumphed, and there are two or three other, more or less obscure, ballads dealing with later battles. It will soon become apparent, however, that this information does not save us from all the difficulties that commonly attach to the interpretation of Bakhtiāri verse. Even the text is not sure. The text as I took it down from Mullā Ilāhi’s dictation differs from his version of it written in Arabic script (called here the ‘Vernac. Ms.’). In his version, lines 3–4 precede lines 1–2 of my version, lines 17–18 appear at the end of the poem, and lines 25–26, 45–46, and 49–50 are missing.

The Behdārwand, otherwise Bakhtiārwand, were at one time probably the most powerful and the dominant tribe of the Bakhtiāri. Stories are told illustrating their violence and oppressiveness. For some time in the earlier half of the nineteenth century their chief was Ja'far Quli Khān, son of Asad Khān. His headquarters were at the famous Diz i Asad Khān, also known as the Diz i Malikān, where he was visited in 1841 (?) by Layard, who gives a most interesting account of his host and the Diz, as well as of his own experiences, in his *Early Adventures in Susiana, Persia, and Babylonia*, II, 239 ff. (1887 ed.).

Apparently at a later date, Ja'far Quli Khān decided to make a night attack on the Dūraki, another powerful Haftlang tribe, whose chief Qalb ‘Ali Khān, was then at Qal’a Khājā. Qalb ‘Ali Khān, however, received warning of the impending attack and withdrew. Ja'far Quli Khān failed to find him, and exhausted by wandering about in the dark retired with his forces to Kift i Dirau, in the Andakā district.

The rôles of the two parties were now reversed, and Qalb ‘Ali attacked Ja’far Quli and his Behdārwand at Dirau, and routed and plundered them. In this battle Qalb ‘Ali was wounded, but two of Ja’far Quli’s principal champions, Saidāl and Mandani, were killed. They are spoken of as brothers, but it is not stated whether they were members of Ja’far Quli’s family.

This ends the episode dealt with in this poem, but the contest between the tribes, so initiated, continued. The Behdārwand suffered a series of defeats, and they eventually became completely subject to the Dūraki. The struggle for power, however, continued within the victorious tribe, and after Qalb ‘Ali’s death certain of his nephews succeeded in disposing of his surviving sons and
securing for themselves supreme power in the tribe. Eventually, with the decline of the Chirlang, they became the officially recognized rulers of all the Bakhtiāri people.

Mullā İlāhi, who provided this poem, attributed ll. 1–4 and 23–24 to the Dūraki and the rest to Bēhdārvands.

(Double quotation marks below indicate quotations of explanations and comments given by Mullā İlāhi, in Persian, at the time of recording.)

1. Andakā—See Survey of India. 1 inch to 4 miles Map of Persia. Sheet No. 9 H. 1915. Long. 49° 30’ E. Lat. 32° 15’ N.

Čašma Kavāvī—“a spring in a cool place where they have picnics and cook kabābs”.

2. Kur ī Şirōvī—“at a time when no other Bakhtiāri drank wine, (H)asad Khan was notorious for drinking, and drinking to excess.” Ja’far Quli Khan himself was no total abstainer. Vide Layard, op. cit. pp. 242-3, 247.

3. rāk—“a smooth, perpendicular rock, or cliff”.

4. Isfandīār-ē—I do not know whether this should be translated: ‘it is my . . . Isfandiar’, or ‘Isfandiar is my . . .’ The -ē here and in many other places is the 3rd Sg. of the Verb ‘to be’, ‘is’.

5. Diz—“the Diz i Asad Khan”. Otherwise called the Diz i Malikūn. The word diz is used of a more or less natural stronghold. An ordinary built fort is qal’a.


8. hālā meaning ‘maternal uncle’ (Ar. Prs. ḥālā) is also used as a form of address which may be either respectful or familiar according to the circumstances.

9. Bag—variant pronunciation of Bēq. jār—“= sudā”, (i.e. ṣadā).

10. bi-šilik—so the Vernac. Ms. I recorded the enigmatic ‘išilik’. In Prs. šilik usually means ‘volley’, but here probably = ‘discharge’, ‘shot’.

12. jangē—it is difficult to explain the -ē. It is not represented in the Vernac. Ms. vast—“= bast”. Otherwise: vast = it fell. The meaning of the phrase is quite obscure to me.

13. Ahmad Badal—“Ahmad Balad. An Imamzada”. The Vernac. Ms. has ‘Balad’. Layard (op. cit. p. 251) mentions a shrine ‘Ahmed Bedal’ as lying on his route between the Diz i Asad Khan and ‘the small plain of Andakou’.

Bāyir—“Bāqir i Gandili”. The G. are a Haftlang tribe.

ba ri’s ē—glossed: “puštās”, i.e. ‘behind it’. No doubt B. was concealed behind the hedge, but is the actual meaning not: ‘in front of’, or ‘facing Mandini’?
14. "Mandini trotted past and did not see Baqir in ambush", sc. and so was shot by him (?). It is tempting to try and connect this Mandini with Layard's 'Madani'. Cp. op. cit. p. 251. But the facts given to Layard do not seem to tally with those given to me. The Vernac. Ms. spells the name, 'Māndnī'.

15. "Wazan, horse, wanders about". Wazan is a favourite name for a horse in these poems. It wandered about in the dark, presumably because the guide had lost his way.

16. badalī—"my guide and night-attacker". So badal is again a metathesis of balad. The Vernac. Ms. also has baladī. The -ī perhaps represents the izzāfa.

17. pāča—"dāman i kūh".


20. justen—"discover brothers from among 300 . . ." justen can be the Infin., but here is probably the 3rd Pl. Pret. What is the meaning? Did they look for, or find, men to join them in a do-or-die attempt?

21. xān-um—this should be Saidāl Beg, if he is the speaker of 1. 32 as alleged. Bād—Wind, name of a mare, cp. 1. 23.

22. "D. zūr mīkunand, furṣat ba mā namidahand. hamašān wardār az dunyā." 23–24. Mullā Ilāhī considered that this was said by a, or the, Dūraki, and paraphrased it: "you have killed the mare. Ai B., jang i xudat bā Qalb 'Ali hamūn būd ki dīdī: šikast xurdī, fath na kardī'.

An enemy moralizing over a fallen foe is quite in order among Lurs and Persians.

"hū = hamūn".


26. "The Dūraki will not clear out from before you, till a massacre has been accomplished.'

galt = qatl.

27. gunj (i šēr)—"zambūr, big hornet".

dam a taš—"came out to meet the fire, i.e. bullets".

28. Jūn Baš—the Vernac. Ms. has both Jahān Baxš and Jūn Baxš.

29–30. Mullā Ilāhī took the -as as plur. applying to both men. "They had bought their wedding clothes.'

It seems possible that omitting the o, as does the Vernac. Ms., or reducing it to the izzāfa, we might have 'J.B. son of S.A.'

31. bun a jāz—"zēr i jāz, a kind of (thorn) tree".

32. "You who made this rifle which didn't kill, may a snake bite your hand." Cp. 1. 34.

izīnā—the i- probably belongs to mār. zīnā = zanād.


The mother of the sons who survived Ja‘far Quli seems to have been a wife called Shāhpasand.

41–42. These lines are presumably spoken by the narrator, or poet.

 nilai kul—‘= white horse with short tail, docked’.
"buland šud, raft, guroxt ; made for gate of Diz, but did not stop there."

A.T. is probably to be taken as the subject of ri-na kard and na wāstād. Otherwise the horse must have run away on its own, but in the following lines A.T. is riding a horse, probably it.

43. ixuwm hamcand—‘I value him as much as my brother’. In Bakhtiāri xāstan may mean ‘be fond of’, ‘love’.

44. rikav . . .—‘= I ride without pressing’. As the corner of the stirrup is used as a spur, this phrase practically means, ‘I scarcely use the spur’.  

44, 46. derārum, rasūnum—‘(I ride) till I pass the Diz,’ ‘marā birasānad ba diz i dīgar, jā i pānāh.’

That would mean that rasūnum is the 3rd Sg. rasūne with the horse as the subject, plus the acc. enclitic pron. -um. In that case derārum is to be similarly analysed, and the meaning would be: ‘till my horse carries me out of the Diz and brings me to another’.

48. čaynī—‘= zaxm zad’’. In contrast with vonsum (l. 34) this word does not suggest to me a gunshot wound. The Vernac. Ms. has čagnī, or čaknī, and I have also recorded forms from čagnīd- and čaknīd-, apparently meaning ‘cut’, or ‘break off’; and perhaps ‘cut in pieces’ or ‘cut in two’, in connexion with a sword.

49. nai . . .—‘H. M. had a yellow lance’. I have not otherwise recorded nai with this meaning.

mangul—‘pennon or tassel of silk tied to lance head, 3 yards long. śivar.’

Surely three-quarters of a yard is meant. It will be noted that the poet has here got into trouble with his rhymes.

In the two or three examples I have of its use, śivar seems to carry the meaning, ‘downwards’, ‘hanging down’.

Translation

The Battle between the Dūraki and the Bēhdārwand at Dirau

[Dūraki loq.]

Andakā ever springtime: the Kabābi Fountain.

I said, ‘The Son of the Drunkard will not fight’.

From the top of the cliff I look around: Bundūn is in sight.

It is my horseman and slayer of horsemen, Isfandiār.
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[Bēhdārwand loq.]
5. From the top of the Diz I look around: the plain is level.
   The wounded man (mounted) behind Nazar is the rider of the chestnut-with-a-blaze.

   From the top of the Diz I look around: the plain is spacious.
   The wounded man (mounted) behind Nazar is Uncle Masih.

   Saidāl Beg shouts out to Brother Mandini,

10. ‘At the first shot I have hit Qalb ‘Ali’.

   Saidāl Beg shouts out, ‘Brother Mandini the lion-hearted!
   Fight valiantly. The bullet is linked to fate’.

   Bāqir is behind the thorn hedge of (the shrine of) Ahmad Balad.
   Mandini put his horse to a trot, and went on and did not see him.

[Ja‘far Quli Khān loq.]
15. From nightfall to break of day, my (horse) Wazan wanders about.
   My guide and night-attack leader, your wits have become blind.

   My guide and night-attack leader clung to the skirt of the hill.
   He had undertaken to make a night-attack on Qal’a Khāja.
   Saidāl Beg and Mandini took oath on the Qurān:

20. They sought brothers from among three hundred horsemen.

   O my Khān, dismount from Bād and saddle the chestnut.

   The Dūraki are pressing us hard: Remove their seed (from the face of the earth).

[Dūraki loq.]

   O my Khān, dismount from Bād: you have foundered the mare.
   Your battle with Qalb ‘Ali is this that you have (just) seen.

[Bēhdārwand loq.]
25. The wounded man (mounted) behind Nazar is the (rider of the) grey mare.

   The Dūraki will not withdraw from before us, until there has been a massacre.

   Four horsemen, like fierce hornets, came out to meet the fire:
   (They were) Saidāl, Mandini, Farhād and Jūn Bash.

   Jūn Bash and Sultūn ‘Ali have bought their (wedding) garments:

30. I saw them with their heads cut off, on the field of battle.

[Saidāl Beg loq.]

   Andakā ever springtime: the fountain beneath the jāz tree.
   May a snake bite your hand! you master gunsmith.

   I have faith in my (horse) Bād, and my (long sword) Kaj Buland.
   I came up with Qalb ‘Ali and shot him in the arms.

[Ja‘far Quli Khān loq.]

35. Sitāra with the velvet tresses: there are pearls on her neck.

   Āghā Qalb ‘Ali has carried her off and has not given her to anyone.

   Sitāra with the velvet tresses: she has pearls in her ears.

   Āghā Qalb ‘Ali has carried her off. I fear that he will sell her.

   Sitāra with the velvet tresses and the pomegranate nipples.
40. None other like her was to be found among the Bakhtiāri.
The bobtailed grey horse of ‘Ali Taqī got up from its place.
It made for the gate: it halted not in the Diz.

[‘Ali Taqī loq.]
I love my bobtailed grey as much as my brother.
I ride it without pressing while it carries me out of the Diz.

45. I love my bobtailed grey as much as my brothers.
I ride it without pressing till it brings me to (another) diz.

[Ja‘far Quli Kh.]
Saidāl Beg and Mandīnī (with) the Frankish pistol:
They came up with Ā’ Qalb ‘Ali and wounded him in the arms.
The yellow lance of Uncle Māsih (with its) three quarters (of a yard) tassel
Glitters like gold in the midst of the booty.

2. Laments

Bēt i Amīr Quli Xān, Aurīk, Hafslang
Kūni tīp, kūni sipāh, čāder i pūs-um?
Čērīst č Bāgum kūčīr avēd ba gūs-um.
Kūni tīp, kūni sipāh, kūni farrās-um?
Rāh bidīn ba kurgyēlum bēāhan sar i lās-um.

5. Lak i bēd biwūrī, lakē ba jās-ē.
   Ma kuśīn Amīr Quli: dā’s ba tamās-ē.
   Čuyaxōr sauz o xurrum čī zāla i gā.
   Tā nēyāhē Kāi Mām Quli, ēl nēgīrē já.
   Sitāra ba āsamūn, māhī ba kāhrēz,

10. Didūyēl basī gyagū’s šau nēgīrān lēz.
   Rādum ba Šat ul Arab čār rūz gyirum já.
   Kāyazē ze Mām Nazar, niśūn ze Bāwā.
   Taš wur i bēśa binē, bēśa biāsūsē.
   Kē1 didē Amīr Qulī zē jang gurūsē.

15. Ai didū, si xātīrum ze nū bawur pal.
   Na Waznum ba rama ē, na xum ba laškar.
   Ai didū, si xātīrum zē nū bawur mī.
   Na Waznum ba rama ē, na xum ba urdī.
   Ai didū, mī’ta mabur, mī’t ne wūrhē.

20. Yē gyagū dier čē xośm gīrat nēoihē.
   Ai xudum, lūl a xudum, si hamčūnūn sēr!
   Tārīkī dam a sahar zainas ba šumṣēr.
   Ai xudum, lūl a xudum si hamčūnūn nar!
   Tārīkī dam a sahar zēnum ba šaşpar.

25. Čārbūnāt šau gīrēd ba dam i lūrē:
   Aspatē palang bixard wā kul i tūrē.
   Aspūnāt šau gīrēd ba dam i lāhē:
   Mōnātē palang bixard wā kul i māhē.
Notes

I have no information about Amir Quli of the Aurik tribe, except that his summer quarters were at Kūh i Gyerra, and his winter quarters at Qal’a Sard (Mālamir).

The accompanying translation was an attempt made by me in 1919, and never repeated, to reproduce Bakhtiārī verse in English doggerel. As it is necessarily less literal than the others, I have annotated it rather more fully.

1. kūnī— = “where is?” Apparently kū + intrusive -n- + i = è (3rd sg. = is). ku/ko has been once recorded with the meaning ‘where?’ tēp— “ = dasta i suwār”, a band of horsemen.

čāder i pās— “ = a big white tent”, i.e. European tents as used by the big Bakhtiārī Chiefs, not the ordinary black goats-hair tent of the tribes.

2. čerīšt— “ = girīa i ziyāt”.

Bāqūm kūcīr—the little Begum. “She was A. Q.’s daughter.”

3. bēāhan . . .— “that they may come up to my corpse”.


5. ba tamās-è—Glossed: “ cp. tè i rāh’s è”, i.e. is looking out for him. Ar. Prs. tam’a.

A note “māderaš muntazzir i kuštanas ast” sounds strange, but perhaps muntazzir is to be taken as meaning, ‘prehensive’, or ‘expecting’ (that he would be killed), rather than ‘awaiting’ his being killed.

7. zāla, zālu—“ = zahra”.


nēgīrē jā—“ = ārām namīgirad”.

9. kāhrēz— “ = qanāt, well”. Ar. qanāt is the word ordinarily used in Persia for an artificial underground water-channel. The Prs. word kārīz, kahrīz, is used on the N.W. Frontier of India, in the form kārēz.

10. lēz— “ = manzil, ārām”.

11. čār rūz . . .—Glossed: “ to get 4 days’ peace and quiet, to spend my life in peace”.

12. Bāwā—“ P.N. of a man, who sent sign for me to return”.

15. pal—a plait of hair. Women cut off their hair as a sign of mourning for a near relation.

19. wurāhē— = Prs. bar(mī)āyad. Glossed: “ sabz namīşawad dīgar”.

20. gyagū—a dialectal variant of gyau, ‘brother’.

22. zain-as— = zadand-ās.

24. zēn-um ba šāspar— “ = zadand-am ba gurz i āhan”.

25–7. “ lūr = lā = (a big) tang”, i.e. gorge, nullah.

čārbīn = riding animals.

26. tūr— “ = yāyi, wild”.

28. kul— “ = one-year-old horse. mā = māda, female”. So: ‘along with the 1-year-old filly’.
Translation

Lament for Amīr Quli Khān, Aurik

Where are the horsemen, where are the footmen, where is my big white tent?
Fell on my ear the sad sound of small Bigam making lament.
Where are the horsemen, where are the footmen, my servants where are they?

My sons would view their father’s corpse, make way for them, make way!

5. Cut as ye list the willow shoot, another will spring in its place.
   But slay not Amīr Quli: his mother yearns to see his face.
Chighakhor so green and gay is now as ox-bile bitter, sad.
Till Qaid Mām Quli comes again, the tribe can ne’er be glad.
The stars in the heavens above, and the fish in the streams below,

10. And the sisters weeping their brother lost, no rest can ever know.
To the Shat ul ‘Arab I took my way, four days to rest me there.
   But summons and token find me still, to tarry I may not dare.
Lay ye fire to this jungle. Let it burn, till it be burned away.
   Who has e’er seen Amīr Quli flee from out the affray.

15. O sister mine, for my dear sake cut from your head the plaits again.
   My Wazan is not with the herd, nor I among the fighting men.
   O sister mine, for my dear sake yet once more shear your tresses fair.
   My Wazan is not with the herd, nor in the camp am I found there.
   Nay, do not cut those tresses fair, they will not grow anew.

20. No second brother such as I will fall again to you.
   Ah me! Ah me! Woe, woe is me, for one so lion-hearted,
   Slain by the sword while still ’twas dark, ere yet the night departed.
   Ah me! Ah me! Woe, woe is me, for such a manly wight.
   Slain by the mace, in darkness drear, he fell ere yet ’twas light.

25. Straight at the entrance of the glen night came down upon your steeds.
   Upon your horse and wanton colt a leopard falls and feeds.
   Straight at the entrance of the gorge upon your horses fell the night.
   Your mare and foal a leopard slaying devours them in his might.

3. Love

Bēt i Mard o Zan (az farāq i han dīgar gufta sūda)
   Kan kan e mālā, na mandē kalāhē:
   Julāzē sisambulē lak i giyāhē.
   Ramadār ba ram rivē, miśdār ba šīlūē:
   Manzil i düstum amrūz Haud i Nū ē.

5. Haud i Nū o Gūrišōm, Astō i Bardi:
   Na mandē tū ba dilum zê dardimandi.
Bēl kih bibārē bārā ba Čulwār:
   Ter kunē zulf i siyāh ba gardin i yār.
Wurkišūd šaulār, zēd war Au Čulwār:
10. Xál a sauz, tikka spēð wur yak izanan zál. 
Wurkišid šaulár, jist wur ū bard wur į bard:
Tikka spēð, xál u sauz, wa halqa zard.
Ärkalla ba jum jum ē ze war i talmít:
Mōnātē yayaś birō, dundāl bikunum sīt.

15. Rag rag ē Munār, igirum gūš i gāata,
Dast vanum ba gardanat, būsun tē̂âta.
Rag rag ē Munār, gyerum yāl i mōnāt ;
Dast vēnum gardanat, būsun do lauwūnāt.
Rahdum ba rohī rohī, wā diārē Šīmbār :

20. Bēō i Sarhūnī, į thrilled ba ñendār.
Čaśma i Sarhūnī harif i zanūnī :
Jaring a pyāla, jang ē doōarfinē.
Čivil i Tārāz, barf i Dūl i Ambār,
Iškana rēz ikunē ba gardan i yār.

25. Xam xam o čam čam pēt (a) sar a Aurāz.
Kumēt i kurra maiyār, bi činit kunum nāz ?
Mālamīr, mulkas namār, dēm kālas farāwū :
Berzīger tūm bis na vand, ba mu ē tēvwū ?
Zār i mārūn bā nū i gandum i nū !

30. Dūstakum ba sarhad ē, nāstā izanē dū.
Zār a mārūn bā barf i dīn i dastum !
Na xurum, dast nēinuhum : ahd wā tū vaznum.
Zār a mārūn bā au i kih tū iyārē !
Kad i tō bārīk, tāv i mašk na dārē.

35. Ai čivil, tū bū ma dē, mu zi bū tū sērum :
Misum ē bū dādanat, ba gyremsērum.
Zulf i yārum wā čivil girau bastan :
Rāhdan e Qāzi, čivil i sīkastan.
Zulf i yārum wā čivil girau nīhādan :

40. Rāhdan e Qāzi, čivil iśkinādan.
Yārakum Kift i Čerī kerda haiyāhē :
Čāl a kauk didūmē zēr i kamāhē.
Dūstakum Kift a Čerī kīšīda hūwē :
Čāl a kauk didūmē zēr i zerūwē.

45. Čaśma Dizdārūnī sardiś zē Millī ē :
Kauk i xu̲ ̲ āwāz ze Čīft i Čerī ē.
Āśnidūm, dūstak, saxsē riʾtē būsi :
Andūh i mīn u dilum Bāzuft pūsī.
Āśnidūm, dūstak, lau-at kanda tauri :

50. Hūfēst ē Tūf i Kamā rēsīte ba Maurī.
Andūh i man a dilum pur ē Andakāhē :
Nīm manas Zarda, pārsangas Dilāhē.
In this love poem (of which it is possible here to reproduce only the first half) the main situation is the separation of the lovers. The hot weather has come and the girl has gone off with the tribe to the Cold Country (yêlêq, sardsêr, or sarhad). The man has been left behind in the heat of the Warm Country (garmêr), along with others, to harvest and store the spring crops. He is a new hand; it is his first experience of this. He follows the Beloved in thought up the tribal way from Chulwêr to the snowy Cheri Pass, and over it to the open pastures of Sûrau, lying at a height of about 8,000 feet.

The poet makes considerable use of the form of dialogue, between the man and the girl.

A number of the places mentioned can be found, with some variations of spelling, in the 4 miles to the inch map of Persia, Sheet 9.H., squares B. C. D, 3 and 4. These are: Andakâ, Chulwêr, Haud i Nû, Munâr, Shîmlûr, Târâz, Mauri and Bâzuft. 'Kuh Kaleh Dulla' may perhaps be equated with Dilâ, and ' Kuh i Zard ' represents Zarda (Kûh). On Sheet 9.L. the Cheri Pass will be found; and ' Shûrâb ' is the Persian equivalent of Bakhtiari Sûrau.

I travelled up this route from Chulwêr to Sûrau in the year 1908, but my memory of it is mostly very vague, and the notes which I must have made at the time are not to be found. This is also probably the route followed by Merian Cooper, the author of Grass, in 1924.

Some 20 lines of the full text of this piece will be found scattered about in the first poem of Zhukovsky's collection, entitled 'Mâli Garmesir'. The wording of the lines is often not identical.

1. Kan kan—Glossed: "general loading up, bâr kardan i 'amûmî'. By another authority explained as: harakat i îl. The literal meaning may rather be ' breaking up ' of camp. Cp. kandan, kan-, ' to strike (a tent) '. But the word may also have some onomatopoeic value suggesting ' noise ' and ' bustle ', which Zhukovsky gives as secondary meanings.

2. julâzê—' = judá az, yêr az, juz '.

sisambul—a kind of grass or herb (giyâh, 'alaf), probably of no value. It seems probable that the word represents the Prs. sisambar, ' wild thyme '.

lak—a blade (of grass). The Neg. na is probably to be understood before lak. It does not occur in the Vernac. Ms., but from another source I have recorded the line as: ' Na lik è sisambulè, na lik è giyâhê '.

3. ramadâr—Glossed: " mâyûndâr '', man in charge of mares.

ba ram—Glossed: " ba ta'jîl, ba tundî, mirawad ''. 

ba sklû—" = sklûx = in crowds, in confusion ''. Prs. sklûx = ' commotion, disturbance '.

6. tû—Glossed: " = strength, power ''. This would seem to correspond to Prs. tâb, which occurs as tâv in line 34 below. But why tû and not tau?

7. bêl—" = Prs. bigûzâr ''. Actually represents Prs. bi-hîl.
10. *tikka spēd—tik* = 'shin, shank of leg'. -a is probably either the *iżāfa*, or the initial vowel of *ispēd*.

_wur yak išanān zāl_*—Glossed: "zāl = *uxt*", and the meaning was given as: "bāham xaxi *gāsān* (match)", "bāham juft". (*uxt* = 'of two things bearing a close resemblance to each other'—Ham.). On this basis, the meaning may be: 'go well together'. *Zāl zēidān* usually means 'to lament, cry out'. The meaning 'to glitter' was also attributed to it.

12. *halqa zard_*—Glossed: "anklet—yellow". *zard* may be 'brass'. Zhukovski seems to render it as 'gold ring', which is improbable, if taken literally.

13. *zē war i_*—A common expression. Here glossed: "on account of, because of, Prs. *az baskē"", and "= az *ziyādi i talmīt".

_talmīt_*—Glossed: "bedding, clothing, etc. on which a woman rides, viz. *xurjān*, 2 cushions, 2 *lihāf*, with cover (*māsta?*) and *tang*". Here it obviously denotes 'animals ridden by women'.

15. *rag rag ē M.—ē M.* is noted as being the Genitive. _rag_ is glossed: "= kamar" (cliff). But _rag rag_ (or _rag_?) here and elsewhere is also glossed as "= winding road or track" (in hills), "single track in difficult country".

Possibly the idea here is, 'a narrow track winding up cliffs, or precipitous face of hill'. Zhukovski gives 'regrege' as an Adj. meaning 'veined'. (Cp. Prs. _rag_).

19. *rohi rohi_*—Glossed: "roh roh, rūhrūhī, i.e. *bālā i hama kōh*". _roh_ seems generally to mean 'the top of a hill'. Elsewhere we have also _rōh i mumāra_, 'the top of the minaret'.

20. *riśa zaid ba_*—This notion occurs elsewhere. I do not know what its significance is.

21. *harīf i_*—The meaning of this is obscure. The word is presumably Ar. Prs. _harīf_ = 'rival, opponent', 'fellow-worker', 'mate'. The only notes I recorded are: "Many women collect at", and on another occasion, 'friend' followed by 'water is scarce in spring: women quarrel over it and beat each other over the head with bowls'.

I am inclined to think that the ordinary Bakhtiāri would regard _harīf_, which is not a commonly used word, as meaning: 'sought after, frequented by,' 'beloved of', 'the cynosure of', or something of that sort.

23. Tāráz is the name of a mountain, and Dūl i Ambār is the way leading up to it. _dūl_ was here called 'a steep gorge', and _ambār_ is a 'barf-ambār', i.e. a storage-pit for snow, here doubtless used metaphorically.

25. *xam xam*, and _ćam ċam_*—both mean 'zigzagging'.

_pet_*—Glossed: "= bālā". There is a word _pet_ corresponding in meaning to Prs. _pić_, which would here mean much the same as _xam xam_. Here 'up' is implied.
Auráz—I was told is the "Proper Name of a very high mountain". Zhukovski takes it as a common noun corresponding to Prs. afraz, and meaning 'height', 'summit', 'top'.

26. bi činit—" = Prs. ba-ci-(az)-at = for what of yours?" The -n- is intrusive. Glossed: "You give me no child, how, or why, am I to flatter, pet, you?"

28. Glossed: "If the cultivator has not sown it, what fault (taṣīr) is it of mine? I am all right, if you will sow me".

29. bā—" = bāsad, bād".

30. nāštā—Glossed: "nahār na xurda dúy mīzanad". In Mn. P. nāštā is ordinarily used with the meaning 'breakfast'.

31. din i dastum—Lit. 'behind my hand'. Glossed: "barf kih pahlūm ast".

38. šikastan—Trans. or Intrans. ? In Bx. iskinādan is ordinarily used for the Trans., as in line 40.

It is understood that the dispute was in regard to their respective perfumes.

In this couplet another version has:

... girauna bastē:
... čivil šikastē.

which seems better.

41. haiyāhē—The reciter was of opinion that she shouted out so effectively that she was heard in the garmsir.

42. čāl—Glossed: "nest in the ground".


44. zerū—Glossed: "zarū = gīna = katīra". A thorn bush that supplies gum tragacanth.

45. Č. i Dīzdārūni—is said to be at the foot of the Milli, which is a mountain.

46. ze—another version has bi. Čīft is a frequent variant for kīft.

49. taurī—Glossed: "a boil on the lip that comes at time of fever". The subject of kanda is probably lau-at, the meaning being: 'has thrown out, or up', 'erupted'.

50. hūfīšt—Glossed: "šadā i āb".

Tūf i K.—"P.N. of place near Au i Anārī".

tūf—" = water striking against rocks, waterfall". Elsewhere tūf was given as meaning 'foam'. There may be a connexion with tuf, 'spittle'. Mauri—is the name of a tribe of the Haftlang, also of a locality and stream, vide map.

rēsistē—Glossed: "joins the Mauri". rēsīstan is a secondary formation from rēz- the Pres. Base of rēsīdan = Prs. rīxtan.

52. nīm man-as—Glossed: "half a maund of it is equal to all Zarda".
The Pastcd Lovers

Translation

The Parted Lovers

[Man loq.] The camps have broken up and departed, not a crow has remained:
Save for the sisambul, there is not a blade of grass.
The man with the herd (of mares) is hastening along, the shepherd is all in confusion.

My Friend’s halting-place to-day is at Haud i Nū. 5.

Haud i Nū and Gurishôm, Āstān i Bardi.
No strength has remained in my heart, owing to grief.
Let the rain rain down at Chulwâr,
And moisten the dark locks on the neck of my Friend.
She pulled up her trousers and struck into the Chulwâr stream:

10. The green tattoo marks and the white leg go well with each other.
She pulled up her trousers and leapt from stone to stone:
The white leg, and the green tattoo marks, and the yellow anklet.
Arkalla is a queue from the multitude of mounted women:
Drive your mare along slowly, that I may sing you a song.

On the track up Munâr I shall lay hold of your cow’s ear,
I shall throw my arms round your neck and kiss your eyes.
On the track up Munâr I shall lay hold of the mane of your mare,
I shall throw my arms round your neck and kiss your two lips.

[Woman loq.] I went along the hill-tops: Shimbâr is in sight.

20. The willow of Sarhûn struck its roots into the chenâr.
The spring of Sarhûn (is) the object of rivalry of the women:
The clashing of bowls: there is a fight among the girls.
The chivil of Târâz: the snow of the Dûl i Ambâr:
It breaks and sheds itself on the neck of the Beloved.

[Man loq.] Winding and winding on up to the top of Aurâz:
A bay mare bearing no foal, for what am I to make much of you?

[Woman loq.] Mâlamîr, its land is well-watered; it has unwatered cultivation too in abundance.

(If) the cultivator has not sown it, what blame rests on me?

[Man loq.] May the bread from the new wheat be snake-poison to me!

30. My Friend is in the Cold Country and is churning buttermilk, not yet having broken her fast.

[Woman loq.] May the snow at my hand be snake-poison to me!
I will not taste it, I will not touch it: I have given you my pledge.
May the water that you fetch be snake-poison to me!
Your waist is slender, you have not the strength (to carry) the
water-skin.

35. O chivil, give out no fragrance. I am sick of your perfume.
I am in the Hot Country, when you give out your perfume.
My Friend’s tresses and the chivil made a wager.
They went to the Qazi: they defeated the chivil.
My Friend’s tresses and the chivil laid a wager.

40. They went to the Qazi: they vanquished the chivil.
On the Cheri Pass my Friend raised a cry,
‘I have seen a partridge’s nest under a kunā bush’.
On the Cheri Pass my Friend raised a shout,
‘I have seen a partridge’s nest under a thorn bush’.

45. The Dizdārūnī Spring, its coldness comes from the Millī:
The partridge with its pleasant note belongs to the Cheri Pass.
Friend, I have heard that someone kissed your face:
The grief in my heart has covered up Bàzuf.
Friend, I have heard that a boil has broken out on your lip.

50. The splashing (waters) of Tūf i Kamā have flowed into the Maurī.
The grief in my heart fills up Andakā:
Half a mauud of it is equal to Zarda, Dilā is (but) a make-weight to it.

4. SATIRICAL
‘Arīza i Lur (i Baxtiārī) ba Šāh (i Qājār)

Yak mardi ixom āqil o rindāna, mardāna, jallāna,
Berē xizmat i Pādisāh rīš dū-dindāna,
Zamīn būsē, kuna arz kih ‘Ai Pādisāh rīš dū-dandūna,
Tū zè šahr avēdē sī cē kār?

5. Žē Alwand, žē Meiwand, žē dumbāl i Kèrwand,
Če iz kāh, če iz jō, cē čerīdī ? cē burīdī ?
Hāl i raiyat na raśīdī, susan i kas na ṣunīdī.
Tamām az ban o sēsta naqd kerđī ba kīsa.
Biruvum māl i Lurē sahāv i haft hašt è kurrē,

10. Kih na tarī ba sagas čix bikunī, ba xaras pix bikunī, ba buzas yix bikunī.
Biruvum pā arzin i sad man i tāh,
Ar arra bāšad buwurum gurz o šumāγè,
Żē saris tā ba dīnas no girrē bāšad,
Binuhum ba sar i dūšum, bixurūšum, bidurūšum.

15. Ba tai māl neyāhīm.
Xum o hālū’m Hamza, Śirāli o Pīrāli,
Nūn i balit xarda, hörūlī o pörtōlī,
Kūtāh kad, wartang, ba dast i hamēi sang,
Bigirīm sar a rāh i Śirāz, hama humdil o humrāz,
Notes

Who was the Qajár king to whom this is supposed to have been addressed? Fath 'Ali Shah? And was the author a Bakhtiari? The language is not convincing. The type of rhythm used has not been found in any other poem recorded from the Bakhtiari. It seems to consist of short runs of rhyming phrases or single words. In the Vernac. Ms. it is written as if it were prose, except for line 21, which is made into a couplet.

1. rindāna—Glossed: " = zering". Prs. rind is a word with some variety of meanings. The commonest is perhaps ' clever rogue'.

jallāna—Glossed: " = ta'jil-kār", meaning, I suppose, 'swift in action'. Perhaps the idea here is a 'hustler'.

5. ěrēdi—The simple Trans. instead of the Causative, which a note gives as ěrēnd-. The Bx. would be cārni-. ěrēndi would not have rhymed with buriči.

7. rasidi—Cp. Prs. rasidagī, 'investigation', 'paying attention to'. Cp. also Haim s.v. rasidan (9).

8. ban—Glossed: "a tree with fruit like pistachio, but smaller".

sēsta—Glossed: " = hawthorn (?), white flower, small red or white berries, thorny".

9. biruwum—Glossed: "i.e. I shall take bast in", (i.e. sanctuary).

10. cix, pix, yix—These exclamations are used respectively to drive away the animals mentioned.

11. tāh—Glossed: "rīśa i daraxt. ki wazan i rīśa-as sad man bāsad".

12. gurz—(a heavy stick) "with head covered with leather".

čumāy—(ditto) "without leather covering; lighter".

14. bidurāsum—" = nihib, tašar, tūp—bikunum". (To browbeat, intimidate.)

15. Glossed: "we shall sit out on hills".

17. hőrtöli o põrtöli—" = nāfaham, wahšī; bā-šujā'at".

18. wartang—Glossed: "(narrow) kARBAS MĪpūSAND". Cp. Steingass s.v. bartang = 'a narrow kind of cloth'.

21. bikišōnim—Glossed: " = az bālā pāyin bēārīm. kīSōndan: kīSān-".

Translation

A Letter from a Lur to the Shah

I want a man wise and crafty, manly and active,
To go and present himself before the King with the forked beard,
And kiss the ground and say, 'O King with the Forked Beard,
You have come from the city—for what purpose?
5. From Alwand, from Maiwand, from the back of Karwand,  
Of straw and barley what have you grazed and what have you cut?  
Into the state of your subjects you have not inquired, to what they say  
you have not listened.  
Everything (even to the wild berries) of the ban and sēsta you have turned  
into cash in your purse.  
I shall go to the camp of a Lur who has seven or eight sons (and take  
refuge with him).

10. So that to his dog you cannot say "chikh", nor to his donkey "pikh",  
nor to his goat "ylkh".  
I shall go to the foot of a wild almond tree, whose roots weigh a hundred  
maunds.

And if there is a saw, I shall cut a club and cudgel,  
Which from the top end of it to the bottom has nine knots.  
I shall put it over my shoulder and roar out and threaten.

15. We shall not come nigh the camp,  
I and my mother’s brother(s), Hamza and Shīrālī and Pīrālī,  
Who have fed on acorn-bread, and are savage and fearless,  
Short of stature, (we are clad in) narrow cotton cloth, and each (of us)  
has a stone in his hand.  
We shall hold up the road from Shiraz, all of one heart and one secret  
purpose,

20. (To wit) that when the Daughter of the King comes by that road,  
We shall pull down the trousers from her buttocks, and with blandish-  
ments make her sit down.  
(And) this deed will be pleasing to God!'

5. MISCELLANEOUS  
_Bēt i Balūt kih Lur Gusfah ast_  
Balitum bigirē, buzum bizoīhē,  
Kalg i dū'īm yak igrē, minnat i Xudoi ē.  
Baliti kāl, balit ai, kašk i sā sā :  
Har kē dārē na xurē, ḥūnas igrē(v) bā !

5. Baliti kāl az kul kulāwa sar daravērd :  
_Her Lurē wā jilt i buland bālā saras avēid._  
Lur i dūy-xarē mast  
Zeīd ba sarum, qūlī ze sarum vast.  
Rāīšum ba wālā, burdum dara wālā.  

10. Avērd bālā sarum kārd i jūn-sitūnā,  
Iškamum dard, deravērd lās i nāzināna.  

Notes  
1. _balūt—Prs. balūt_, the holly-oak tree and acorns, It covers sparsely the inner  
(limestone) ranges of the Bakhtiyārī country, at elevations, I should think,
between 4–5,000 and 7–8,000 feet. The long, oval acorns are very large. In time of scarcity they are ground into flour after prolonged treatment to get rid of their more unwholesome constituents. But, despite the poet, no one in my experience professes to like this kind of emergency food.


5. *kul kulāwa*—Glossed: “*acorn cup*”. Further, under 1. 8. “*qūlī = ku-lāwa; piyāla*, shepherd’s cap”. But what then is the meaning of *kul*?

9. *wālā*—Glossed: “*tumba* (i.e. Prs. *tobra*), a cloth bag slung under the arm for acorns”.

*dara wālā*—“*darra bālā = tang i bālā = sar i tang*”.

Translation

*The Song of the Acorn*

May my oak tree bear fruit and my she-goat bring forth young!

When my ground acorns and buttermilk come together, thanks are due to God.

Ripe acorn, O acorn! Dried acorns ground down:

He who has and eats not, may his house perish!

5. The ripe acorn pushed his head out of the acorn-cup:

Every Lur came at him with a long stick.

A buttermilk-drinking, drunken Lur

Struck me on the head; the cap fell off my head,

He threw me into a bag,

10. (And) carried me off to the top of the gorge.

He brought down on my head a murderous knife:

He ripped open my belly, and tore out my tender body.