



THE RELIGION OF THE DARDS IN LADAKH

vestigations into their pre-Buddhist 'Brog-pa Traditions



DATE DUE

A white rectangular sign with rounded corners is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image. The sign features the words "DATE DUE" in a bold, red, sans-serif font. Below the text is a red rectangular border, which is currently empty, serving as a placeholder for a date. The background of the entire image is a black and white photograph of a rugged, steep mountain slope. The terrain is rocky and sparsely vegetated. At the base of the slope, on the left side, there is a small, multi-story building with a dark roof. The overall scene suggests a remote or high-altitude location.

THE RELIGION OF THE DARDS IN LADAKH

Investigations into their pre-Buddhist 'Brog-pa Traditions

Rohit Vohra

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Photographs: Cover-The Lha-bdag during the five days seclusion in the cave.

Inside-Cover-Buddhist Dard village along the river Indus.

Back-Cover-Buddhist Dard household.

Inside-Back-Cover-Buddhist Dard in traditional dress.

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AUTHORS NOTE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present work was completed in 1984. In accordance with the faculty regulations of the University of Heidelberg I translated the thesis into German and hence it was only submitted in 1985. The new data collected since then and the subsequent additions to the published literature have not been considered so that the present work has not been brought up to date. This has been due to varied reasons and I hope the reader will excuse me. However I am quite confident that any new material since 1984 will not affect the main themes developed in the present work.

I would like to raise one important point for the interest of the reader concerning the comparative material from the Kalash-Kafirs used here. In the *Tarikh-i-Jammu-wa-Kashmir* there is mention of the name of Brukšal region in Chitral (Hashmatullah Khan 1939:505). It is found mentioned in connection with the invasion of Ali Sher Khan, during the 16th century, which place he reached after conquering Gilgit.

All the information regarding the original place-names from where the Buddhist Dards came have as their prefix Giliṭ as the main region. Thus we have in Hymn 6, Giliṭ phastañji, Giliṭ Ghutuma, Giliṭ sógarmé, Giliṭ Brukšal or for other such names see Vohra:1982 & 1983. However from oral information and also from the hymns it is clear that one of the most important if not the chief region-area was Giliṭ Brukšal. In the light of this co-relation of this region with Chitral one has to accordingly view the parallels drawn between the Buddhist Dards and the Kalash-Kafirs of Chitral. Or could it be possible that at the time when these migrations took place Brukšal was a part of a cultural complex which dominated a major part of this region. We have the mention of Brukšal in Tibetan manuscript of the late first millennium A.D. This early evidence needs proper investigation but I thought it essential to mention it here before the work went for publication.

I am thankful for the corrections in the english version done by Śri S. Vohra, I.C.S (Retd.), Gautam Vohra and my wife Rini who read the final version of the manuscript several times.

Rohit Vohra
Luxembourg /1989

FOREWORD

After several years of reading on Buddhism I completed my M.Phil. with a thesis on "Buddhism and Development in South-east Asia" at the Department of Buddhist Studies of Delhi University. Since Ladakh had recently been opened for travel it seemed the ideal place to visit and in the course of reading on the area I came across certain reprints of old books. Among them was also the work of G.W. Leitner on Dardistan. This work made my interest widen to an area which extended from Ladakh and North-westwards to ethnic groups with archaic customs and belief system. At about the same time I had the opportunity to meet Prof. Karl Jettmar who had just returned from Ladakh where he had been visiting the small ethnic group of 'Brog-pa Dards. In the course of our conversation I happened to mention the above book which immediately directed him to inform me about the Dards of Ladakh. They were a minority retaining traditions which had, among the other members of the same ethnic stock further westwards (Baltistan and Gilgit), disappeared to a great extent. At this time after completing my M.Phil I had started work on a UNICEF project in Ladakh. I expressed my interest on the area of the Dards to Prof. Jettmar and later towards the end of the same year received a letter from him. I was to pursue research on the 'Brog-pa Dards under his guidance and thus I proceeded on my first field trip to Ladakh. From January 4th 1979 until 30th of the same month I visited the Buddhist Dard villages.

A second field trip was conducted in 1980 (25th March to 20th May), the ticket for the air flight from Heidelberg to Leh being financed by the Südasien-Institut/Ethnologie, which led to the publication of two papers on the area (Vohra 1982 & 1983). Following the field work at mDa and Garkun a further one month was spent among the Dards of Gurais and Tilel along the Kishanganga river. A third field trip conducted in 1983 also led to the exploring of Nubra area for remains of Dards in the ancient past and the common result of the ethnographic field work is the present thesis on their religious beliefs. During this field trip, the period from 15th July to 25th August was spent among the Buddhist Dards and from 27th August to the beginning of October travelling in the Nubra area.

Field work in this area was not easy as it was the area bordering on Pakistan and permits for travel had to be obtained. Right from the earliest visit there was a lack of civil administration and no facilities available whatsoever, thus making it imperative for me to rely on help from the Army authorities without which my work would not have been possible. In 1979 a jeep track was under construction and by 1980 its completion allowed a weekly truck service from mDa to Leh.

On each occasion I carried my food provisions from Leh and accommodation was provided in one of the houses in the village of my research work. During my first visit I stayed with the village headman Tschewang Namgyal of Gyaldépa house in mDa village and became acquainted with the other villagers. I travelled to the neighbouring villages up the Hanu ravine and to Garkun and Darčiks.

Outside contact had been rare for the 'Brog-pa Dards and only with the construction of the road did it become more frequent. Earlier the 'Brog-pa Dards did visit Leh but the journey on foot was long and undertaken to barter their products in exchange for salt which the Changpa (Tib.:byang-pa) nomads brought from the desert regions of Changthang (Tib.:byang-thang) and Aksaichin.

I, with my frequent visits, soon came to be known in the 'Brog-pa Dard villages and was always able to find company. Most of the younger men spoke Urdu and thus conversation was easy though often translating their cultural concepts involved long discussions and verification from several informants was necessary. During the visits I left my baggage and rations at the place where I took up lodging and travelled to different places in search of informants. This was not an easy task as the village mDa is spread out and walking over mountainous tracks took up considerable amount of time. Then the informant would normally be busy with his work and one had to wait until he finished or often I sat around or helped him with the work while carrying out a conversation. The informants whom I sought were mostly elderly men and women and their competence in Urdu was very limited so to carry out an orderly conversation I had to go around in the village hamlet and look for a youngster who would be willing to help. The day would pass quickly and returning to the house where I was staying did not make sense so I stayed with the informant. Often in the evenings the conversation would be more relaxed and with the smattering of Urdu to the accompaniment of hand gestures the explaining of complex cultural themes would take place.

On the following day the informant would often tell me the name of another man who knew more on the area of my interests. In this manner I travelled from one day to the other visiting different informants in all parts of the village. Then once I became too tired I would return to the house of the family where I was lodging. During these travels from one informant to the other I would carry merely my notebook and eat with the household whatever they had cooked and sleep with the blankets they provided. In many respects this method of doing field work had great advantages and was particularly conducive to the 'Brog-pa Dard villages. I would arrive at the house of the informant unexpectedly and then spend the day with him in accordance with his routine. Mostly someone would accompany me from my previous informant and introduce me to the one I was supposed to meet. The major part of what I wrote down would be after a long conversation when I was alone for some while and out of the text would then emerge specific questions which ran counter to or varied from what another informant had related.

A guideline to the conducting of research work in the area was provided by the works of the authors who had visited the area in the past. The earliest visitor to the villages of the 'Brog-pa Dards was R.B.Shaw who travelled through the villages in 1877. Later G.Dainelli visited the Buddhist Dard villages and was informed that they called themselves Machnopa. Dainelli first came as a part of the Fillipo de Fillipi expedition (1913-1914) and later in 1930 he visited Ladakh once again to explore the Siachen glacier in Nubra.

Most of the European travellers, among them also colonial officials, used the route via the Hanu ravine, over the Chorbat La into Baltistan. The elderly Miss Duncan travelled via this route in 1904 and mentions that this was the most commonly used route from Ladakh into Baltistan.

A.H.Francke, a Herrnhut missionary who wrote widely on Ladakh, compiled the Hymns of the Bonoñah festival and was the first to provide the provoking hypothesis with regards the Dards in Ladakh. An improved translation of the Bonoñah hymns, along with other Ladakhi songs, was done by Anna Paalzow, to which Francke wrote an Introduction in 1929 (A.H.Francke and A.Paalzow 1929:27-35).

In 1978 Prof. Jettmar took a trip to Ladakh and wrote an ethnographic sketch of the 'Brog-pa Dards mentioning a great number of their deities belonging to the 'Live Pantheon'. He also indicated that the belief system of the Minaro was an older layer in comparison to those beliefs which are practised today (Jettmar 1979:342). The works of all these authors still remain a vital source of information for further research on the area and have been extensively used in the present work.

The basis for the present work are the rituals and the Hymns of the Bonoñah festival. The Hymns presented here were not noted and translated from a strictly linguist's point of view. A scientific treatment would require the assistance of a Tibetologist who has worked with the archaic vocabulary of the Tibetan language and is familiar with the stages of the development of the language. Not being a linguist myself the translation is rudimentary and presents only the basic contents of the Hymns.

The Hymns recorded on tape and their notations present variations of the same Hymn revealing a dichotomy between the spoken form and the form taken when sung. This dichotomy can only be redeemed when a Tibetologist familiar with the language takes up the task. Further difficulties are presented by the variations that a particular hymn can take. There are local variations from one village to the other. The list of hymns provided are not standard but present variations according to who the teacher of the hymns was and accordingly each group of students has different traditions which it follows.

Thus we have one tradition which is followed in the village Garkun and another that is retained in mDa. Though there is concordance in the major issues, it is the variations which present the difficulties.

In village mDa the most knowledgeable family carrying out the Brongopa tradition is the Chogolagpa household where the two brothers are the main performers at the Bonoñah festivities. In Garkun the two important households are Golopa, from which house also comes the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = masters of the gods) or priest, and Betepa¹ which is a very influential family in the village. The difficulty with the above informants was that they spoke very little Urdu and usually the assistance of one or more interpreters was necessary. The interpreter could not always interpret exactly what the recitor of the hymn was saying as the latter's gestures and exclamations formed the background against which further questions also arose. The interpreters who assisted varied according to the place of work. As my first objective was to find good informants the need and the choice of an interpreter had to be satisfied according to the one who was available under the prevailing circumstances.

¹ Betepa is also a name of households in Shigar/Baltistan (Hashmatullah Khan 1939:618).

Other good informants in mDa where I spent most of my time were the following:

Gangeldépa household, Tunduptsering and his son Tseringnamgyal.

Gyaldépa household, Tsčewangnamgyal and his son Sonamrin-c'en.

Miksupa household, Miskinsonam.

Čamakpa household, Nyimatsering.

Mičünpa household, Tseringnurbu.

Watolpa household, the old man Horphel who spoke only a smattering of Urdu but who had a very clear memory.

The material collected during the period of research work has been presented here in a manner so that it represents the opinion of the informants and their beliefs.² There have been parallels drawn from other cultural complexes where there is a striking similarity. These have been presented in the course of the text but do not necessarily imply any connection between the two cultural complexes. Thus in the cosmogonical and cosmological notions of the Buddhist Dards we have material presented which finds corroboration in the Kafir and Vedic Myths but this does not necessarily mean that one is derived from the other. An effort in this direction is beyond the scope of the present work. Further it is not beyond consideration that these ideas had their origin in independant developments without having ever been influenced by one another. In the case of the deity Mandē we find an appellation for god which is the same as the Kafir god Mon/Mone/Mandē. This deity among the Buddhist Dards could have arisen as a result of parallel developments and does not necessarily have anything to do with the Kafir god. As Prof. Jettmar pointed out, in Ladakh, among the Buddhist Dards, the name Mandē "eine allgemeine Gottesbezeichnung annehmen könnte." (Communicated in a letter dated 19.11.1984).

A argument has been presented by Prof. Petech who admits that Ladakh was with greater likelihood populated by the Dards and not Žaṅ-žüṅ, basing it on the information provided by the pilgrim Huei-ch'ao who travelled through the neighbouring area in 726 A.D. (Petech 1977:10). This could have a factual basis as according to the Tun-huang-Annals (Baçot Thomas & Toussant 1940-46:45) the census of Ladakh and Žaṅ-žüṅ (Mard and Žaṅ-žüṅ)³ was conducted separately in the winter of 719/720 A.D. This

² Certain aspects and religious ideas about their deities also find place in the Tibetan Buddhist pantheon. I have attempted not to draw upon the latter. I have also omitted ideas and notions available from Ladakh so that only such information is noted which the Buddhist Dards knew of pre-Buddhist religion. For example, on the Čan (Tib.:btsan) demons there is much which one can draw from the Tibetan pantheon as well as from the local traditions available from Ladakh. This would then not enable us to differentiate between Tibetan elements which have been carried on from ancient times from those adapted in recent generations. For Čan in Ladakh also see Kaplanien 1981:213.

³ The French translation at this place is not correct. Prof. Uray identifies Mard with

shows that *Zaṅ-žuṅ* and Ladakh were territorially separate at the beginning of the 8th century. Statements from the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* also lead one to the conclusion that *Lalitāditya Muktāpīḍa* (720/25-756 A.D.), towards the end of his military career, invaded the northern regions and subdued the *Bhuṭṭas* (Tibetans) then the *Daradas* and subsequently marched through sandy desert to reach *Strirājya*. During this period the Tibetans were in occupation of *Baltistan* and were threatening *Gilgit*. Thus the reference could well apply to the year 750 A.D. when the conquest of first the Tibetans and then the *Daradas* was accomplished following which he marched through the desert of *Ladakh* to reach the *Guge-Mansarovar* area called *Strirājya* (or *Suvarṇabhūmi*) in the Sanskrit literature and *Zaṅ-žuṅ* in the Tibetan annals.⁴

It is not inconceivable that the *Dards* inhabiting *Ladakh* during the early centuries of the Christian era have left survivals of their culture in the present population of the Buddhist *Dards*. In the period subsequent to the 8th century the westwards expanding Tibetan power must have exerted cultural influence on the *Dards*. There have been found, mainly in the last decade, a great number of inscriptions in the *Gilgit* and *Baltistan* areas. These *Han* and archaic *Tibetan*, *Kharoṣṭī* and *Brahmī* inscriptions date from the 2nd century B.C. to the end of the first millennium A.D. An examination of these should provide us with clues not only to the ancient language of the *Dards* but also to the ancient *Tibetan* influences. It is however premature to suppose that the *Tibetan* influence among the Buddhist *Dards* could date to those ancient times. A linguistic analysis of their hymns can help in determining the validity of such a premise. *Dr. Bielmeier*, who has seen the material, intends to do precisely this.

For the '*Brog-skad* words I have used the Transcription Table as provided in this work (see Table of Contents). This table has been adapted from *Fussman* (1972) and certain sounds have been added which were peculiar to '*Brog-skad* dialect of *mDa* and *Garkun*. The *Tibetan* words, as far as these were identifiable in *Classical Tibetan*, have been given in accordance with the Transcription System of *T. Wylie* (1959).

When using quotes from specific authors or using their ideas then the *Tibetan* transcription as used by the authors has been retained.

There are several words and names in *Ladakhi* which have only been phonetically transcribed in this work.

In the index the words with diacritical marks precede each alphabet as for example the alphabet *Ā* are noted prior to *A*.

Ladakh (Communicated through Letter dated 19.10.1984).

⁴ This I have tried to show in greater detail in the paper delivered at the IV Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies Schloss Hohenkammer from 21st to the 27th July 1985, Munich.

PART I

Introduction to the Buddhist Dards of Ladakh

A. HISTORICITY OF THE DARDS IN LADAKH

It is commonly believed that in the most ancient period the greater part of Ladakh was inhabited by the Dards (Petech 1977:5). Here it is necessary to qualify as to whether the inhabitants of *Zaṅ-žūṅ* were ethnically separate from the Daradas of the ancient Sanskrit sources, what regions of present day Ladakh constituted a part of the ancient kingdom of *Zaṅ-žūṅ* and where was located the *Mard* (Ladakh) of the *Tun-huang Annals* which bordered on *Zaṅ-žūṅ*.⁵ *Huei-ch'ao*, travelling through India en route to Central Asia in 726 A.D., seems to have a hazy knowledge of the region saying that north-east of Kashmir lie the kingdoms of Great Bolor (Baltistan), *Yang-t'ung* (*Zaṅ-žūṅ*) and *So-po-tz'u* (?). The land is narrow and small and the mountains and valleys are very rugged. There are monasteries and monks and one worships the *Triratna* (Three Jewels) and the population consists of the *Hu*. Their language, customs and clothing are very different from those of the Tibetans under whose suzerainty they live (Fuchs 1938:443-444). According to Tucci, *Hu* is the name which was originally used for 'barbarians', then for foreigners of Central Asian and chiefly of Iranian origin or language. A text of the 7th century mentions *Hu* Brahmins who are said to be of higher class, great experts in astrology and telling past and future events (Tucci 1977:58 Footnote 72). Petech is of the opinion that the *Hu* in the report of *Huei-ch'ao* could very well apply to the Dards but not to the people of *Zaṅ-žūṅ* (Petech 1977:10). I have in another place tried to show that *Huei-ch'ao* is possibly wrong in considering all three realms (*Bolor*, *Yang-t'und* & *So-po-tz'u*) as inhabited by the *Hu*.⁶

⁵ According to Petech the inhabitants of Ladakh were not the same as those of *Zaṅ-žūṅ*. Petech 1977:10.

⁶ Ethno-historicity of the Dards in Ladakh: Observations & Analysis. Paper delivered at the IV Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Schloss

According to the Chronicles of Ladakh (La-dvags rgyal-rabs:35.9-10) the new State in Western Tibet did not include Ladakh which was held by the descendants of Kesar, the hero of the Tibetan epic, while Lower Ladakh was divided into small chiefships.⁷ With the expansion of the State of Western Tibet in subsequent centuries, the Dards were pushed out, as well as assimilated. Lha-c'en Utpala of the first Ladakhi dynasty has a Sanskrit name and could well have been a Dard. His successor Lha-c'en Nag-lug built a palace at Khalatse where even today ruins of Dard fortresses and settlements can be seen.⁸ All these events must have taken place prior to the 13th century. Following this we find no indication of Dard influences though westwards of Khalatse there must have survived colonies of Dard chiefs.

Csoma de Körös published in 1832 a 'Geographical notice of Tibet' in which he wrote: "Little Tibet or Beltistan (Belti-yul, in Tibetan), is the most north-western part of Tibet. There are several chiefs The chiefs of Minaro, Hasora, etc. are the heads of some predatory tribes. In several defiles to the south, in the neighbourhood of Beltistan, there live some predatory tribes, among whom the most notorious are the Dardu people. These barbarous tribes are either of Afgan or Hindu origin" (Csoma de Körös 1832:125). This is the first mention of the Minaro chiefs ruling independantly at mDa and Garkun where the inhabitants even today claim to be descendants of the Minaro. Later, during the latter half of the second millennium A. D., came several waves of Dard migrants from Gilgit-Baltistan and settled among them.

Moorcroft, who was in Ladakh from 1820-1822, mentions that Dards raided Dras (Moorcroft 1841 Vol.II:88) and some of these Dards who live in the southern defiles of Baltistan and who must have been the neighbours of the Minaro are the same as those mentioned by Csoma de Körös.

The area inhabited by the Minaro and the Hasora⁹ must lie in the neighbourhood of Gurgurdho. Here the border between Ladakh and Baltistan was fixed after the defeat of 'Jam-dbyañ-rnam-rgyal at the hands of Ali Mir, the ruler of Skardu.¹⁰ The local name of the place where the border was fixed is Ghotthamatcho (later in the maps called Gurgurdho) meaning the 'dividing line' which separated people of the same ethnic group, i.e., those of mDa and Garkun from those of Ganoks who had celebrated the Bonoñah festival together prior to the conversion of the latter village to Islam.

Hohenkammer - Munich 1985.

⁷ Francke:1926; Petech 1977:16-17. See also Petech 1980:85-111.

⁸ For the mention of the Dard ruins see Vohra 1982:70.

⁹ (Al-Biruni), writing in the 11th century, mentions Asurah which Biddulph equates with Hasora (Asurah) or Astor (Biddulph 1880:160); Sachau's translation of Al-Biruni has the word 'Aswira'. Sachau 1910 Vol.I:207.

¹⁰ Petech 1977:34-35; For the local version as to how the border between Ladakh and Baltistan was fixed see, Vohra 1982:75-76.

B. LOCATION OF THE VILLAGES

The main road leading to the Buddhist Dard villages is from Khalatse along the river Indus. From Kargil there is another road which in 1983 was almost fully constructed and on which one travels past the village Apachi to the Hambuting La, descends at the village Lalung and then travels along the sCelmo stream, past sCelmo village, to Batalik on the banks of the river Indus.

The former route brings one to Hanuthang, at one end of the Buddhist Dard villages, while via the latter route one arrives at the westernmost end of the Buddhist Dard settlements. Here across the river Indus from Batalik is Gurgurđho which forms the north-westernmost extension of the Buddhist Dard settlement. Gurgurđho, which was originally only inhabited by Buddhist Dards from Garkun, has since the last generation come to have a majority of Muslim population as all the landless Muslim families were allocated land there. Batalik was until recently only inhabited during the cultivation season but since partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 the army has slowly developed an outpost there which provides business and other work opportunities for the local villagers. This has led to the development of a small settlement. The land at Batalik is mainly owned by the villagers from Darčiks and some by the villagers from Garkun. Remaining on the southern bank of the river Indus, that is on the same side as Batalik, and travelling up the river one comes to Darčiks. In earlier times Manṭha was settled first and lies higher up above Darčiks. It is today inhabited only during the summer months. Further up along the river Indus are Sanača I and Sanača II. Sanacha I, as is seen on the government maps, was settled partially by the inhabitants from Darčiks and by the villagers from sCelmo who, after a fight with the Muslims there, migrated to near Darčiks with whom they had had marital relations. Sanača II is also known as Sačik. In 1980 I met at village sCelmo four households of Dards still in existence but they had converted to Islam like the rest of the village.

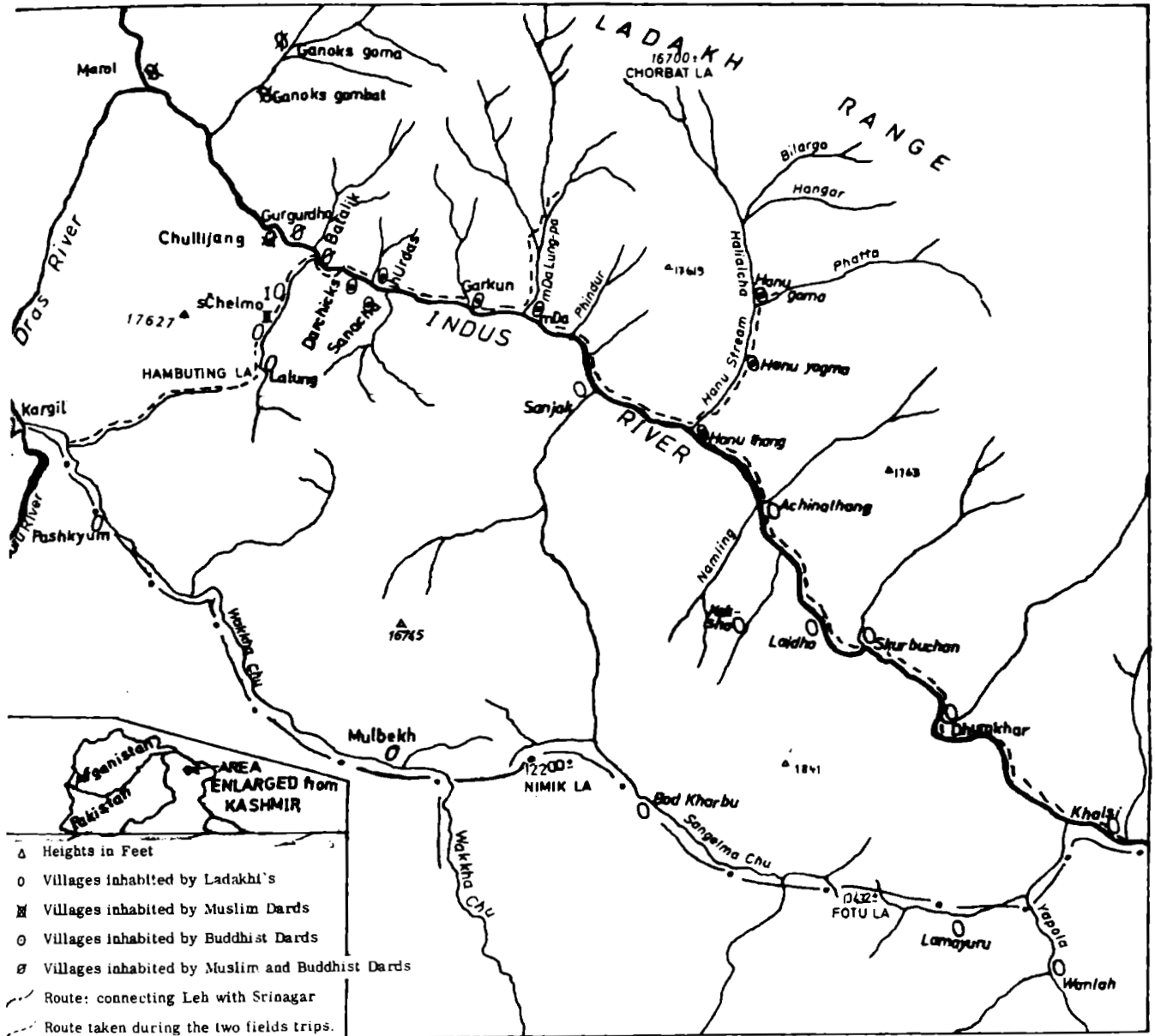
Below Batalik, on the banks of the river Indus (Batalik is located on a ridge), lies the small hamlet called Dungal with four households. On the other side of the river (north side), next to the village Gurgurđho, is the Dumbu nallah (stream) along which are settled a few households. Travelling up the river Indus, on the same side as Gurgurđho, lies the village hUrdas, perched high up on the mountain side, which has been settled by the descendants of the Garkun villagers. Next we come to Garkun, one of the three major centers of the Buddhist Dards, with its summer habitations higher up from where the stream descends. The Garkun villagers also have land and their summer residences at Yaldhoda along the mDa stream.

Next we come to village mDa with four hamlets, Lasticañce, Phindur (Balti:Byemā), Baldez (also Pardos) and Sanid. Travelling up the mDa stream one comes across several summer habitations which are occupied for a short while or longer according to the height at which they lie. The first to be approached when ascending is Dundur, then Cilgiadi, then Cumarčings which has cultivated fields. Higher up one comes to Yaldhoda

which is the largest summer settlement and is settled by households both from mDa and, as already mentioned, Garkun. Then further up on the right bank of mDa stream is Khas Khas and on the left side is Shanglo. Higher up one comes to mDa'brog ('Brogskad:Nir mDa) which is also called Uno Grung, at the place where the shepherds' huts are located. Beyond that right up to Mal Mal Khutu there are various spots with names having religious and historical associations.

Further along the river Indus one comes to Hanuthang from where one can climb up the Hanu ravine to Hanuyogma and Hanugoma. There are from Hanugoma several streams along which one comes to summer habitations with the more important one at Handan'brog. From here one can go up to Chorbat La. There is also another route going to Tébé Nallah and descending into Nubra valley along the Shyok river near the village Turtuk. It is along this latter route that the ancient migrations from Turtuk to Hanu and mDa took place. This is the total area inhabited by the Buddhist Dards in the north western corner of Ladakh.

C. MAP OF THE BUDDHIST DARD VILLAGES IN PURIG



D. MIGRATORY TRADITIONS OF THE BUDDHIST DARDS

One of the early inhabitants of the Buddhist Dard villages must have been the Minaro among whom settled later migrants from the west who belonged to the same ethnic stock. There is evidence of several such movements resulting from different causes. The migrators did not come from one place though they originated from the region around Gilgit. They settled for some time in different settlements in Baltistan and Chorbit area of Nubra before finally reaching mDa and Garkun or Hanu.

There are several sources of information on the different layers of settlers in the area. About most of them mention has been made in the previous publications. Here it would suffice to refer to them when it helps to clear the context of the new information acquired in 1983.

Possible routes of migration have been discussed by F.Drew (1885: 262,271,430-33), R.B.Shaw (1878:12), Major Biddulph (1880:46-50,155-164), A.H.Francke (1905:98-99;1977:10), Dainelli (1924;1933:240-241), Hashmatullah Khan (1939:680-686,729-738) and Jettmar (1975: 205-207, 209,250,257,314). Lately Prof. Jettmar gathered information on the migratory traditions from folklore and historical tales. I had attempted to put together the data of the above authors and in addition provided information I had collected during my field trips in 1979 and 1980 (Vohra:1982).

It must however be mentioned that the issue regarding the migratory movements is not cleared by any means and my attempt has been to bring together new material. The migratory movements and as to when they took place pose many unanswered questions. The route via Shingo-Shigar, the Déosai plains and through the Astor valley, or the route from Dras in Ladakh along the Kishanganga river and up Burzil pass to Gilgit are possible alternatives. There is also the route via the Nubra area into Baltistan along the Shyok river which was important from the very early past. The importance of this latter route is evident from the fact that the mythic lore of Chief Bongskang from Carasa (along the river Nubra) is almost identical to that of Śri Badat from the Gilgit area. Future research will uncover other Dard cultural traits which have been absorbed into the Ladakhi culture and provide the latter its particular form.

The above mentioned routes between Ladakh and Baltistan-Gilgit area are quite different from those which we find enumerated in the Hymns of the Buddhist Dards. The difference is in particular about the points of crossing at the present day border between Baltistan and Ladakh. This border was defined during the 17th century, but the crossing at this particular area is an ancient one and has significance due to the geo-physical nature of the terrain. In the Hymns this crossing at earlier times took place over the mountain passes which are not at all used today. Perhaps at that time the water level of

the Indus was higher or a lake existed from Khalatse to Kaçura in Baltistan as we are informed about in their local folklore. Instead today the route used is along the river Indus while the route mentioned in the hymns avoided the Indus at this point. The route went up the Gavis stream, then passed the Ganoks settlements and over the mountains into mDa 'brog area. It was this mDa-'brog area which was first settled as is evidenced by the numerous abandoned fields. Later the Buddhist Dards then descended down the mDa stream upto the mDa settlement as it exists today.

We must also differentiate the Folklore belonging to the time of the 'Daradas'¹¹ and the term Dard as it is used in the modern literature. The latter term relates to the migrations which took place after the 15th-16th century.

It is further not clear whether the Daradas in ancient times were an ethnic group or, at times, a racial designation. The latter would mean a broader category of population of Proto-Indo-aryan origin.

Further, one has to take into consideration the fact that 'Darada' could also have indicated a 'politico-geographical area' atleast during the latter half of the 1st millennium A.D.

I. One of the early migrations about which there are oral traditions relates the episode of the three brothers Dulo, Melo and Galo (Vohra 1982:74-75).

II. Several places from where the migrants came were listed for me (Vohra 1982:73-74). It is evident from these names that one of the main sources was the area around Gilgit. From the names mentioned and the story of their settlement it is evident that the migrants came at different times. It is however difficult to establish with any certainty the chronology of these movements.

III. The hymns of migration sung at the Bonoñah festival enumerate the route taken in the course of the migration. The hymn recorded by A.H. Francke ends with the migrants settling at Sanid which forms the easternmost hamlet of mDa (Francke May 1905:98-99). The hymn 5 of the present text clearly brings out that a dice game was played after which the decision to migrate was taken. The migratory route in this hymn does not end at mDa but the migrants (or some of them) proceeded to Leh and then to Nubra area. It is possible to see in this hymn one of the early Dard migrations through Ladakh.

IV. The traditions of migration recorded by Hashmatullah Khan certainly provide a very interesting and authentic source (Hashmatullah Khan 1939:482-779). These have been dealt with in previous publications but one must mention that they cannot be dealt with in isolation and that one must see them in the context of the whole region.

V. According to one version mDa and Hanu were settled by people of Gilgit-Saçilpa while another informant was of the opinion that these people first settled at Sanid which bears relation to the hymn recorded by Francke. The Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag= master of

¹¹ Daradas as known from the ancient Sanskrit and Classical Greek literature.

the gods) of Garkun was of the opinion that the girl Spragnur was given in marriage to the Sačilpa people and she received the area of mDa as her dowry. In the beginning the whole area belonged to the people of Garkun. Spragnur was from Garkun and along with her, her brother Gil Singé also went to settle in mDa. The lore connected with Gil Singé and Gapo possibly dates from 16th-17th century but prior to that another migration must have taken place from Turtuk in Nubra.

VI. Very detailed stories of the people of Nubra indicate that in Turtuk and Tyākshi 'Brog-pa Dards lived. Their fortification, now in ruins, was visited by me in 1983.

In the traditional lore about its inhabitants it is related that they had been driven away by the intrigue of two brothers Culli and Yandrung. The latter had come from Gilgit but according to others from Gupis, while still others claimed Bagrot. The 'Brog-pa Dards then settled for sometime with their brethren at Tébé nallah but were once again attacked by Culli and Yandrung and they finally descended over the Ladakh range to Hanu and mDa. Some of the descendants of the 'Brog-pa Dards had remained behind in Tyākshi and are even today known and distinguished from the rest of the inhabitants there. Bits and pieces of the remains from the ruined fort of the 'Brog-pa Dards, some of which consist of massive pillars of elaborately carved walnut wood, four in number, were brought down to build the old mosque at Turtuk. I photographed some of these elaborate carvings among which there is also a Swastika turned in an anti-clock direction. At the fort, I, together with the Goba of Turtuk, found an Ibex horn lying imbedded in the roof which had collapsed into the room. These large Ibex horns adorn to this day the shrines of the Buddhist Dards in mDa and Garkun.

Other stories recorded indicate that the people of Turtuk and Tyākshi were still Buddhists when Culli and Yandrung ruled there. Later when Amir Kabir and Nur Baksh came, Amir Kabir had a contest with the celebrated Tyākshi Lama (Tib.:bLa-ma) whom he defeated, thus converting the people to Islam. This conversion could have taken place during the 15th-16th century at the earliest. Therefore, the migration of the 'Brog-pa Dards must have taken place prior to this period.¹² A detailed report of the information gathered at Turtuk and Tyākshi is planned for a separate publication.¹³

VII. The phase of their folklore relating to Gil Singé and Gapo is the best remembered. Their names, however, are often mentioned in connection with traditions from a more ancient period thus causing considerable confusion. These two legendary heroes are referred to in connection with Ali Mir, the ruler of Skardu, and Señ-ge-rnam-rgyal the ruler of Ladakh. The latter helped rebuild the fortress at mDa so that the local inhabitants could protect themselves from the raids of the Balti. As mentioned, several layers of their folklore have come to be associated with the names of Gil Singé and Gapo. It is clear in many cases that the incidents belong to another phase which must have been earlier distinguished but now this distinction has been blurred.

¹² see Hashmatullah Khan (1939), for the details of the conversion of this region to Islam.

¹³ Vohra 1985 (in Print).

It is related that Gil Singé and his friend and companion, Gapo, left Gilgit with 100 men. Fleeing from the Raja of Gilgit they reached Skardu where they made a stop and paid homage to Ra Makpon (Tib.:dmag-dpon)¹⁴ of Skardu by dancing 18 Prasul.¹⁵ It is also related that on this occasion or some time earlier the Ra Makpon (Tib.:dmag-dpon) of Skardu had presented Gil Singé with a golden ring.

Gil Singé and Gapo, however, did not stay long at Skardu but travelled to Keiris Cumdesa (at the junction of the Indus and Shyok rivers) and then to Khapalu. From there they went to Thićum Gomkha and next to Gabis Cuktuq (Gavis stream) then, crossing over the pass Larapi, arrived at the meadow called Spićul Spang Stot. Upon their safe arrival at mDa 'brog they celebrated at Mal Mal Khutu which lies higher up, near the lakes from which mDa stream takes its origin. This version of the route traversed is different from those enumerated in the hymns.

Another episode relates that after rGyal Khatun was married to 'Jam-dbyañ-rnam-rgyal, the latter returned to Ladakh while his wife stayed back at Skardu. As she was travelling to Ladakh at a later stage to join her husband she made a stop at Gurgurdho where she gave birth to Señ-ge-rnam-rgyal. It is related that she returned to Skardu for some reason and Señ-ge-rnam-rgyal was looked after by an eagle. When rGyal Khatun returned from Skardu on her way to Leh she took Señ-ge-rnam-rgyal with her.

It is believed that when Gil Singé and Gapo first came to mDa a fight took place with the Minaro. They killed many Minaro and only later peace was restored. They and their men married Minaro women. There are places in mDa and Garkun where the graves of the Minaro are supposed to be located and the women forbid their children from approaching the graves.

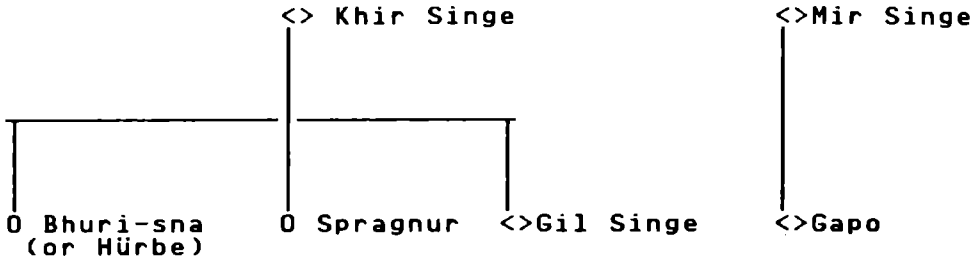
It is related that once, during the celebrations of the Bonoñah festival, the wife of Gil Singé wanted to poison his brother. It is a custom in the area that close relatives and often also close friends may drink from the same cup. By accident Gil Singé drank from his brother's cup at that very moment and died. As Gil Singé was a very respected man in the village and highly honoured, the entire village population was grieved. It is believed that from this time onwards they swore never to wear black clothes again. In sorrow they went to the stone, from where their deities are supposed to depart at the end of the festival, and threw there the festive flowers.

Another story is related about why they stopped wearing black clothes. Once there was an assembly at the court of the rGyal-po of Leh. The people from Igu (near village Martselang) arrived drunk and were ordered by the king to stop wearing trousers. The 'Brog-pa Dards arrived at the gathering late and were ordered to stop wearing black clothes. From this time onwards it is said that they began wearing white clothes.

¹⁴ In Skardu the Makpon dynasty ruled, in Shigar the Amaća dynasty and at Khapalu the Yagbu dynasty. These three were the most powerful dynasties of Baltistan during the 2nd millennium A.D.

¹⁵ Prasul are rounds of Dance associated with a certain length of melodie.

DIAGRAM I.



Genealogy of Gil Singé and Gapo.

Another version of the genealogical data is that Bihisir Singé, Khir Singé and Gil Singé were three brothers and only the latter migrated to mDa. There is some confusion as far as the genealogical data collected by Hashmatullah Khan (1939:685-686) is concerned.

Two further stories of the brave deeds of Gil Singé and Gapo were acquired separately from mDa and Garkun. Both the versions have been combined here to provide one comprehensive account.

THE BRAVE DEEDS of GIL SINGÉ and GAPO

At the time that the events related below took place the inhabitants were known as the Minaro who were on friendly terms with the ruling house of Skardu. As a sign of friendship the ruler of Skardu had presented Gil Singé on one occasion with a gold ring. The villagers acknowledged the nominal overlordship and protection of the ruling house at Skardu which was at this time powerful and exerted its influence among the petty chiefships in Baltistan and Purig.

The communications between the Minaro villages and the rest of Baltistan had been disturbed due to a war being waged by the ruler of Skardu and by the rGyal-po of Ladakh (events of the 16th century relating to the war between 'Jam-dbyañ-rnam-rgyal of Ladakh and Ali Sher Khan of Skardu). At Garkun a decision had to be made as to which side the Minaro villagers wished to affiliate themselves to. To hear this decision seven soldiers had come from Skardu.

After the events, on their way back from Garkun, the seven soldiers passed the village Darçiks. The old woman, bHuri Sña (or Hürbe), seeing the seven soldiers, shouted out to them in order to enquire about the outcome of the deliberations at Garkun. When the soldiers replied that the decision had fallen in favour of the Ladakh rGyal-po she began to dance with joy. This reaction annoyed the men from Skardu who immediately went into the village and cut off the head of the old woman and put it into the stone vessel

which contained apricot Khullak.¹⁶

When the seven sons of the old woman returned from the hunt they found the place exceptionally quiet but did not suspect anything. Only later when one of the sons wanted to drink some Khullak did he discover the head of his aged mother in the vessel. This enraged the seven brothers who soon conjectured the cause and did not delay in chasing the enemies. Soon after, in quick marches, they covered the lead which the soldiers from Skardu had. At a place called Burbuše the seven brothers from Darčiks caught up with the seven soldiers and shot them with their bow and arrows.¹⁷

Upon hearing of the sorry incident which took place at Darčiks all were grieved. Gil Singé and Gapo, the two leaders of their community, decided to go and visit the Makpon (Tib.:dmag-dpon) Raja of Skardu and sort out their differences.

On their journey to Skardu they spent the night at the house of an old woman at the village Thurgo.¹⁸ The old woman warned them of the danger which awaited them if they attempted to visit the Raja of Skardu. As it would have been very difficult for them to approach the Raja without being noticed by the enraged local inhabitants she helped them make plans as to how they should prepare their visit. She informed them that the Raja sat on the ninth floor of the mKhar-po Ce Don (Palace-Fort) and they would have to climb to the roof.¹⁹ For the purpose of climbing the old woman made them some wooden nails which she boiled in butter.

With the help of these nails Gil Singé and Gapo were able to climb up to the mKhar-po Ce Don without being discovered. When they reached the roof they saw that the Raja was not alone. He was sitting with the men of his court and eating. The plate in which the Raja was eating was large called 'esDhir'. Seeing this Gil Singé thought of the best way to inform the Raja. He immediately pulled out the gold ring from his finger, which the Raja had presented him on a previous occasion for his friendship, and threw it into the esDhir out of which the Raja was eating his food. As the Raja attempted to take the next mouthful he noticed the ring in his food and at once recognised it.

Without this method of informing the Raja they would never have acquired an audience in the face of the aroused emotions against the Minaro villagers.

Realising that Gil Singé and Gapo were somewhere in Skardu the Raja then asked his court men for their opinion as to what should be done to them. They replied in their anger that they should be killed while some of the others, in a more reasonable frame of mind, offered other solutions.

¹⁶ Dried apricots boiled in water makes an appetising, red-maroon coloured drink.

¹⁷ According to the other version only one of the seven brothers remained alive to tell the tale.

¹⁸ Gomo Thurgo and Gomba Thurgo are two villages on the government maps lying next to each other just before one reaches Skardu.

¹⁹ Compare the minaret type constructions native to Baltistan. These were constructed for defensive purposes. A good photograph in Dainelli:1924 & 1925.

Then the Raja ordered some of them to go and look for them and to bring them to the court. When Gil Singé and Gapo were brought into the presence of the Raja they were informed that since they were brave men they would be given a chance. To test their valour he instructed them to go up the Skardu gorge (Tib.:Rong) where there was a Stak (= tiger; Tib.:stag) and to kill that man eating animal. This would prove their bravery, if they were successful. As brave men should not be killed in a helpless situation, their fate would be decided in this manner. Saying this the Raja dismissed them.

Leaving the premises of mKhar-po Će Don they began to think as to how they were going to successfully accomplish their task. They once again went to the house of the old woman at Thurgo. When they informed her of the Raja's decision she asked them to get Phuskyer, a very tough wood, out of which she made six nails and boiled them in Ghee (clarified butter). These, she instructed, were to be held three between the fingers of each fist, with the sharp ends projecting outwards. When upon their approach the tiger growled they were to thrust the fists with the nails sticking out into the mouth of the man-eating tiger.

Upon reaching the Rong, Gil Singé was frightened and remained behind while Gapo went towards the tiger. Upon his encounter with the tiger Gapo thrust his hands down the throat of the tiger as he growled. The nails pierced through the mouth of the tiger and a struggle ensued. Gapo shouted for Gil Singé to come and tie the tigers mouth with the rope so that he could remove his hands. Gil Singé was however still afraid and proceeded slowly watching cautiously to see if the tiger would not swing loose. At last Gil Singé, assured that the tiger could not free himself, approached the struggling animal and tied a thick rope around the head and the mouth. In this manner holding the tiger captive they both returned triumphant to the court of the Raja.

The Raja was very pleased with their bravery and their ingenious tactic. He praised them at his court saying that no man from Skardu had dared to attempt to kill the tiger and here were two men who caught the animal alive.

Gil Singé was presented a gold box while Gapo received a piece of land in Garkun which is even today known as Gapomo.

E. SOCIAL ORGANISATION AND OTHER CONNECTED PROBLEMS

In ancient times the communal dwelling in a fortification was the rule, though temporary housing around the fields was also available. Such fortifications existed in mDa and Dar-čiks which have already been discussed in previous publications.²⁰ At Garkun there is supposed to have been a palace but the ruins shown to me looked like anything but a palace. The real fortress in Garkun lies on a ridge opposite the village settlement across the river Indus. The fortification is in ruins and does not seem to have been used for a long time. The material used are stone and rock placed scientifically so that they form a stable construction. At the mDa fort a similar method is used alongside sun dried mud bricks. The surface between the stone and rock is sometimes plastered with earth. The construction at mDa is supposed to have been last rebuilt in the 17th century with the help of the Makpon (Tib.:dmag-dpon) of Khalatse who acted under the instruction of Señ-ge-rnam-rgyal.

The fortification at Garkun is known as Minduk mKhar and appears to be older than the present mDa fort. From the top of the Minduk mKhar one has a very clear view of the entire valley so that it was well suited for defensive purposes.

I was informed in mDa that in earlier times the land (fields) was owned by the pha-spun²¹ as a whole. In each village there were several such pha-spun groups. The land rights were not in the name of individual households or families.

There was however also a three-tier division of the households in the village which was adhered to and even to this day, during certain occasions, this division is brought to life. Thus during New Year festival (Tib.:Lo-gsar) each of the three sections gathers separately and then proceeds to the festive grounds. During Lo-gsar and Bonoñah festivals the contributions of eatables are made separately by each section. During the festival Khudas-skhal, when threshing of grain is done, the food and drinks are provided by each section during a particular year. Through the rotation principle a three year cycle for the contributions is maintained.

²⁰ Shaw 1878:10; Vohra 1982:77; Vohra 1983:74-75.

²¹ A pha-spun constitutes a social association of household lineages who are duty bound to help each other through the critical events of life. A Tibetan concept which has been adapted in the different regions, where the Tibetan cultural influence spread, with its regional variations; Stein R.A., 1962/English translation 1972:95; For the usage of the pha-spun concept among the Buddhist Dards see, Vohra 1982:79-81 & 1983:75-78. For a detailed treatment of pha-spun see Vohra:1983a where I have also provided a detailed bibliography of the authors who have dealt with the subject.

In Garkun this three-tier pattern of settlement is represented by providing a name to each of the three sections which is even today in usage. When standing in the village and facing the river Indus, the extreme left section is called Tüpa, the middle one Sirčangra, and the section on the extreme right is known as Shenepa. On religious and other festive occasions, when the entire village does not gather, then the households of each section get together and celebrate. They bring offerings to the shrine of their section.²²

In mDa the section Dongstot today has 14 households, Dongskil division with 10 households has the least membership and Dongjug has 11 households. The following is the list of households in each section:

Dongstot

1. GyalDépa
2. Kolopa
3. Gharāpa
4. Cunnupa
5. Dečopa
6. Sharčüngspa
7. Dhogopa
8. Mičüngspa
9. Chogolagpa
10. Watolpa
11. Skyabapa
12. Nonphelpa
13. Chodongpa
14. Gyalčopa

²² e.g., Tü Deuha is how the shrine in Tüpa is referred to where juniper leaves are regularly changed and prayers offered to the deity.

The three-tier division of the village seems to be an ancient practice. It is conceivable that the village land and pasture grounds were owned collectively by each section and later with the increasing importance of the pha-spun the land came to be divided under that category.

Similarly with the Land Settlement Act of 1901 the land or rather the fields were registered under the names of each household as they were found distributed during that year within each pha-spun. Thus, as a result, today the fields are owned in the name of each household which represents a joint family.

The household never goes through a process of fission and in each generation a new household head, represented by the eldest son, takes over the role and so continues a process through generations. The household is represented by a house-name and the strength of the village community is seen by the maintenance of healthy and self-perpetuating households which is a concern of the whole village community.

In mDa the three sections of the village were ordered according to a three-level living pattern in the village fortification. The uppermost level called Dongstot, middle level known as Dongskil and the lowest level Dongjug. Vohra 1982:77 & 1983:74-75; The word pronounced Dong is possibly the Tibetan word for village "groñ".

Dongskil

15. Gangeldépa
16. Pholadpa
17. Bangbangpa
18. Sokpopa
19. Kashpa
20. Sambapa
21. Zigipa
22. Miksupa
23. Prapupa
24. Kotorpa

Dongjug

25. Šarčingspa
26. Makponpa
27. Camakpa
28. Billüpa
29. Sirkiangpa
30. Phorokpa
31. Tscangyapa
32. Korpa
34. Dhosupa
35. Lugboopa

In the fortification there was a further distinction made by the term 'Aruski' which literally meant 'the inside place'. In earlier times all villagers had their habitation inside the fort. The meaning was not quite clear but it was possibly used in relation to 'outside the fort' where some households also had their dwellings. The following case clearly brings out this relationship. It was related to me that Gyaldépa household had their dwelling outside the fort. The "Aruski" households used to throw their ash (= Thalba) on the roof of Gyaldépa house as they believed in this way to get rid of the evil spirit (= Shaitan) who had taken up residence there.

There are seven pha-spuns in existence today:

- Lalüşé (6 Households:1,2,3,15,25,26)
Mantho (8 Households:4,5,6,16,27,28,29,30)
dTakuré (4 Households:7,8,17,31)
Dundek (4 Households:9,18,19,20)
Ghašú (4 Households:10,21,32,33)
Düse (4 Households:11,22,34,35)
Baralzé (5 Households:12,13,14,23,24)

As evidence that in earlier times all land was owned collectively by the pha-spun, I was told that Kotor-pa household still cultivated a field which was called Dundek (or Dumdek) patr̄cōs (field ?) i.e., field belonging to Dumdek pha-spun. The field is located in Baldez hamlet.

In ancient times this communal ownership of land in the name of the pha-spun was not permanent and the land was periodically re-divided among the member households. Each household received so much land as it could plough which in turn depended upon the number of members in the household during that generation. Thus every so often the demographic necessities required that the fields must be re-divided among the member households of the pha-spun. Certain households did not have enough members to cultivate the fields and therefore did not need the land while the other households in the pha-spun had had many more births in the current generation thus requiring more land.

R.B. Shaw mentions that during his visit in 1877 the fields were under the names of the seven apical ancestors (Shaw 1878:9). The names of some of these seven ancestors are even today pha-spun names while others have amalgamated or due to other reasons ceased to exist. It was only after the 'Land Settlement Act' of 1901 that the British colonial officers registered the fields in the name of the households and this only represented the condition of landholdings as had prevailed for that generation. In other words in one stroke their old system of land distribution according to the inherent needs of the community was wiped out. They had now to follow the allocation of the number of fields registered during that year in the name of each household for taxation purposes. Thus a self regulatory mechanism of land re-distribution according to need of each household took a permanent basis. This was according to the land distribution as it stood during that year. The confusion which arose with the demise of the then existing generation and the legal disputes that arose over transfer of fields have been put on record and can be found in the Leh archives. These illustrate their adjusting to the new system of permanent ownership of land. These also form interesting reading material from other viewpoints.

To be functional the pha-spun required a minimum membership as the duties assigned to the members during the rites de passage could only then be successfully carried out. Sometimes due to unavoidable circumstances a household came to an end (Rab-čhat; Tib.:rab-chad), thus decreasing the pha-spun membership and making the unit dysfunctional. Under such circumstances an amalgamation with another pha-spun became necessary. It is this explanation which can be given for the discrepancy in the names of pha-spun recorded by Shaw in 1877 in mDa (Shaw 1878:9) and as they exist today.

I was given several other names of pha-spuns which had existed earlier and due to different reasons had merged with the ones existing today. Thus the pha-spun Takusho has merged with Lalüşē. The pha-spun Phati (or Pati) was amalgamated with Ghašú (also pronounced Gašō).²³ There was a pha-spun Thankar which merged with Dundek.

²³ The Ghašú or Gašō pha-spun is also found among the high status households in Chigtan-Purig as well as in Tur̄tuk-Nubra. The term also has its variant in the ruling class of Khapalu called Ka-čo (brothers of the chief). They formed the mounted mili-

Pha-spun names were often names of apical ancestors and particular styles of dancing came often to be associated with their name which are even today danced during the festivals. The number of rounds (Prasul) was earlier 18 but today only 3 Prasul are danced. Thus the names Gašō, Thankar, tChale, Galopa and Sumen are names of particular styles of dance as well as the pha-spun names.

Pha-spun names are often also names of places from which the ancestors originally came. Thus we have pha-spun names like Baralzépa (from Baltistan) and Brukšalpa (Gilgit area).²⁴ In the Tarikh-i-Jammu-wa-Kashmir Brukšal is also the name of a place in Chitral and later in the text Gilgit and Brukšal are mentioned together (Hashmatullah Khan 1939:505).

A further distinction in their community is made between Rus-c'en and Rusmét (Tib.:rus-med) lineages. Those with superior status were from Rus-c'en (Tib.: Ru = Bone; c'en = great) lineages and observed marital and pollution taboos against the Rusmét (Tib.:Ru = Bone; med = without) lineages. Shaw reports about the above in his paper published in 1878 (Shaw 1878:7-8). It is not within the scope of the present work to examine this interesting topic in detail. A few remarks however on the opinions put forward by Shaw need clarification. This is particularly important in the case where the term caste has been used by him since the Buddhist Dards have no such notions. Their taboos and other beliefs in the sphere of pollution might be seen as ideas which lay at the root of the caste thinking pattern of the Indian sub-continent.

Shaw differentiates between the Labdag, as belonging to the priestly caste, from the majority of the other households which belong to the Rus-c'en caste. This differentiation needs correction in the light of new material. Firstly the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = master

tary force and were the male descendents of the Yabgu rulers of Khapalu, i.e., the royal lineage.

²⁴ In this important respect the institution of pha-spun in Ladakh differentiates itself from that of the Buddhist Dards. That the pha-spun names are mostly names of apical ancestors, sometimes also place of origin, shows us its relevance in the sphere of ancestor cult and has features which are common to such clan names which have clan graveyards as well as land divided under the clan name. These exist not only in Bagrot area (Snoy:1975) but also in Punyal, north-west of Gilgit (Jettmar:1967), among other places.

Though pha-spun is a Tibetan influenced institution and shows all the features among the Buddhist Dards as are also familiar from Ladakh, it is different as far as the name given is concerned. In a far gone past (possibly during the 8th-10th century) when this institution was adapted by the Dards it was not without its having to be subservient to their ancient beliefs. Thus integrating features of the Dard household and clan organisation.

The pha-spun in Ladakh is synonymous with the name of the pha-lha. The pha-lha is the deity worshipped by the entire pha-spun at the common lha-tho. When a Ladakhi is asked as to which pha-spun he belongs to he will provide the name of his pha-lha. The name of the pha-lha is the uniting focus of the pha-spun. The pha-lha literally translated means 'father-god'. The names of the pha-lha found in the different parts of

of the gods) himself belongs to the group of Rus-c'en households, however only his household has the hereditary function of servicing the village deity. This function is taken over during each generation by the eldest son. The priestly function is only practised during the festive days (of Bonoñah, Lo-gsar and sGuñla) and it is only during this time that he has an elevated status due to the ritual restrictions and taboos observed by him. In this state of purity he performs the rituals for the village community. At all other times the Labdag is to be measured on the same footing as the other Rus-c'en households of the village.

Secondly Shaw differentiates between the Lalüşé as a separate caste which provides the Labdag, and the rest of the Rus-c'en households. Lalüşé is however not a caste but a pha-spun group. It is to this group that the Gangeldépa household belongs. The Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag=master of the gods) comes from the Gangeldépa house and performs ritual functions during Bonoñah, Lo-gsar and the sGuñla festivals. There are other pha-spun groups which provide Labdags for other occasions, like during the festivals connected with the "first ploughing" ('Brog-skad:Bhi) and the "opening of the irrigation canal during each spring" ('Brog-skad:Sontas). That means that the Labdag do not form a caste by themselves but only have an elevated status, within the Rus-c'en group, during that period when certain ritual ceremonies are performed. The pha-spun groupings have Rus-c'en as well as Rusmét (Tib.:rus-med) households as its members. All Labdag however come from Rus-c'en households but belong to different pha-spun groups.

The basket (Kilta) and rope from a Rusmét household will not be accepted in a Rus-c'en household as it would lead to pollution. The Rus-c'en use the expression "Šél kaṭik nesh pi" for themselves meaning "Pure people".

A custom observed only by the Rus-c'en was that the biggest ram of the herd, which was used for mating during winter, was kept apart and looked after with particular care and affection. After the hair was cut, a little bit of the hair below the neck was left untouched for one year. Following this period a ceremony was performed and the hair was cut and put on the roof of the house for pha-lha rGya-po.

The following households in mDa are believed to belong to Rus-c'en lineages:

1. Sambapa
2. Mičüŋpa
3. Gangeldépa
4. Zigipa
5. Gyaldépa
6. Prapupa
7. Chogolagpa
8. Miksupa
9. Katangpa
10. Kolopa
11. Šarčingspa
12. Phorokpa
13. Sokpapa

Ladakh form an interesting topic of research and reveal names of deities of pre-Buddhist origin. Many of these are deities which failed to be adapted into the Tibetan Buddhist pantheon.

In 1877 when Shaw visited mDa he reported that there existed only five Rusmét (Tib.:rus-med) households (Shaw 1878:8). If this is the case then a great number of marriages must have taken place between the Rus-c'en and Rusmét households over the past century.

In Garkun the Labdag from Golopa house was of the opinion that earlier the distinction was observed but due to frequent inter-marriages there are no absolutely pure Rus-c'en lineages left. Since then Rusmét (Tib.:rus-med) blood has also become mixed up with the Rus-c'en. He used the expression "Rus-c'en Rusmét Phalpa" meaning that "Rus-c'en and Rusmét are all equal".²⁵

According to the marriage statistics gathered for three subsequent generations from village mDa an average of 80% of the marriages are seen to have taken place from within the village. Only in exceptional cases is a marriage contracted from the neighbouring villages of Garkun, Darçiks or Hanu. This reveals a 20% of the total marriages which due to demographic difficulties must be contracted from the Buddhist Dard villages. As to the types of marriages, they are numerous and the primary marriages change their form through successive marriage alliances at later stages of the life cycle. Thus we find monogamy, polygyny, polyandry but also group marriages of varying forms. The most formal type group marriage is that of two brothers marrying two sisters where all partners have access to each other. This norm which is supposed to reflect the foundations for a successful household may change its form when in later years a further wife is brought into the house. The reasons may not merely be a younger brother's desire for a wife but several factors may be present. Some of the common reasons were the need for more children or the need of woman labour due to the death of one of the elderly women. An exceptional form of group marriage noticed was that of father and son sharing a wife. One case of such a marriage was noted in the genealogy of Katangpa household and another case was the household of Anduz where I stayed in January 1979 during my visit to village Hanugoma. Such marriages are reported from Tibet by travellers during the

²⁵ How Rusmét were intergrated into the community and became Rus-c'en can be seen from the example about which I was informed in 1980. See Vohra:1982.

²⁶ Carrasco (1959:47 & 69) , "Nonfraternal polyandry is also practised (in Tibet). Special forms are the sharing of a wife by a father and son or by uncle and nephew". See footnote 102 on p.47 and footnote 242 on p.69 for literature.

Kawakita reports from Tsumje in Napal where there exists father's brother and son sharing a wife. One explanation for this is that if the wife's age difference is not too much from that of the eldest son who is from a different mother then fraternal polyandry turns to father and son sharing a wife. Thus also the little difference in age between FyB and FeS can result in their having a common wife (Kawakita 1957:269-279).

R.Bleichsteine reports in 'Die Gelbe Kirche' (1937:13-14) about father and son or uncle and nephew having a common wife.

19th and early 20th century.²⁶ Jamo (in 'Brog-skad;Tib.:Magpa)²⁷ form of marriages are quite popular when there is no son born in a household and a husband is brought to live uxorilocally. Here it is beyond the limits set for the present work to go into the complexity of the marital alliance system of the Buddhist Dards which has been dealt with separately (Vohra:1983a).

Goldstein states that if the mother died prior to the childrens' marriage and father took another wife then in such cases father and son sharing the wife was the solution and he calls it bi-generational marriage (Goldstein:1971).

²⁷ Magpa = Bridegroom who resides matrilocally, adopted bridegroom (Goldstein 1975:817).

F. ETHNIC IDENTITY

The issue of ethnic identity of the Dards as a whole (Jettmar 1982:254-263) and that of Buddhist Dards in particular has been partially dealt with in previous publications.²⁸ Here only certain issues are examined which help to clarify the terminology 'Brog-pa' used for the Buddhist Dards by their neighbours. In local literature the term Kadim Dard is used for the ancient Dards of Ladakh. The Ladakhi use the negative term 'Brog-pa' while the Buddhist Dards distinguish themselves from the Ladakhi by calling them Sapas as they eat cow flesh and use its products. Sapas is a word with negative connotations. It was related to me that four families (three of them are Onpopa, Skidphelpa and Bodhpa) were called from Dhomkhar to Yaldhoda-mDa and all were called 'Sapas chipa'. When a cow died it was one of these families which was called to take it away. Similarly the Muslims of Purig-Chigtan are called Pirko by the Buddhist Dards. The Pirko were called for slaughtering goats and sheep.

'Brog-pa' is a term which refers to their occupational status. This appellation became current during the trading expeditions which the Buddhist Dards undertook to Leh. Aside from this there was no other contact. In fact the Dards in ancient times settled most of the villages from Khalatse to Leh along the old caravan route. These villages have lost all traces of their past heritage and are now strongholds of Ladakhi culture. However if one scratches beneath the surface one will discover archaic Dard customs which have been absorbed to form this peculiar Ladakhi culture. A glaring example is the existence, in the above mentioned villages along the old caravan route, of households whose pha-lha is 'Brog-lha' providing an indication of their 'Brog-pa' heritage.²⁹

The Buddhist Dards observe taboos against the cows and the hens and neither their flesh nor their products are consumed. This is a typical Dard characteristic and is abundantly attested to from among the Shina speaking Dards of Gilgit and Baltistan. Traces of this Dard custom can still be found in Ladakhi villages. There are households which do not consume cow meat and do not drink cow milk. Similarly hens are not kept and their eggs are not consumed. In village Cušot, not far from Leh, there is the household Watchepa which even today observes this taboo. Only in recent years the younger generation has begun to keep hens due to economic reasons and it has begun to feed tinned powder milk to the little children.³⁰

²⁸ Vohra 1983:79-80; Also for the usage Arderkaro by Shaw and later Machnopa by Dainelli for the Buddhist Dards.

²⁹ Nimmu, Tinmosgang, Achinathang, sCelmo, Lalung, Skurbuchan, etc., are villages having households which still have 'Brog-lha' as their pha-lha.

³⁰ Communicated by Nawang Tsering Shakspo on 08.08.1985 in Dossenheim. He further

The Buddhist Dards observe an elaborate system of rituals and taboos against outsiders visiting their houses. Juniper purification is widely used in this regard in order to prevent polluting influences coming into the house. These were until the recent past far more rigid so that no outsider was permitted to enter the village premises. This was for fear of pollution being caused thus arousing the anger of their deity.

The Ladakhi use the common terminology <'Brog-pa> for their Dard neighbours, irrespective of whether they are Muslim or Buddhist. I myself use in the present work the designation 'Buddhist Dards' as also "Buddhist 'Brog-pa Dards" of my past publications. They are to be differentiated from the 'Muslim Dards' who live in Baltistan and Gilgit area.³¹

For the traditions and folklore of the Dards collected from the Čhorbat area in Nubra, where the inhabitants today are Balti, I use the term <'Brog-pa Dard > .

informed that he is related to the above mentioned household therefore the case occurred to him instantly upon my enquiry but an investigation would reveal several such cases.

I have a feeling that the original inhabitants were brought from Baltistan and settled there. This statement needs to be checked and confirmed.

³¹ A further distinction is to be made with regards to the Dards of Gurais & Tilel valleys (field work done in 1980) as well as other Muslim Dard groups in Ladakh about which no new publications are available.

PART 2

Introduction to the Religion of the Buddhist Dards

The present work on the religion of the Buddhist Dards deals mainly with the Bonoñah festival as well as with the connected issues as revealed by their traditional folklore. The 'Live Pantheon' which is worshipped by the Buddhist Dards today and which has also been examined contains deities which are not present in the 'Bonoñah Pantheon'. It is this which makes the intensive examination of Bonoñah festival so vital.

In dealing with the 'Bonoñah Pantheon' and particularly the 'Live Pantheon' I have taken care not to interpret Tibetan and Ladakhi religious ideas where the beliefs of the Buddhist Dards are concerned. This has been thought essential in order to be able to differentiate their pre-Buddhist beliefs and those Tibetan influences which are archaic from ones which might have come during the last few generations.

The authors who wrote on the Buddhist Dards during the 19th and the 20th centuries, with the exception of A.H.Francke, have provided us almost no information on the Bonoñah festival.

F.Drew, Major Biddulph, R.B.Shaw and G.Dainelli's contributions have been noted in Part I of this work as well as in previous publications (Vohra:1982 & 1983). They provide pieces of information on the religious beliefs as they were practised. These concern the 'Live Pantheon' and have been included there.

Hashmatullah Khan (1939) mentions the Bonoñah festive cycle which had given cause for considerable confusion. He also mentions the traditional lore about the poisoning of Gil Singé but apart from these fragmentary pieces of information we have nothing else.

A.H.Francke's publication of 'The Eighteen Songs of the Bono-na Festival (Bono-nayi Lu Athrungsh)' in 1905 for the first time provided 14 hymns containing the Bonoñah religious beliefs. Francke however did not analyse the hymns except from the linguistic point of view. Although he noted that "the Dard mythology and particularly their cosmography, e.g., Song No.II., their system of colours remind one of the Tibetan gLing-chos" (Francke May 1905:93). The language of the songs he characterised as mixed with a great deal of Tibetan influence upon the Minaro.

Prof. Jettmar first attempted an analysis of the hymns (Jettmar:1975). He noted that the hymns deal with various themes including their cosmology. The main emphasis however was on livestock rearing and hunting and that the migration from Gilgit was ushered in

by the Ibex dance which plays an important role.³²

In Autumn 1978 Prof. Jettmar undertook a journey to Ladakh. In Leh and Kargil he interviewed Buddhist Dard informants and collected a mosaic of information (Jettmar:1979). This material pertains mainly to their beliefs as they are practised today and which I shall deal with separately under 'Live Pantheon'. Jettmar made the important differentiation between the beliefs of the Minaro who earlier inhabited the villages and those migrants who came later (Machnopa). He was of the opinion that both the migrations came from the same area, i.e., Gilgit and Brukšal.

This would mean that the Bonoñah festival also has its origin in Gilgit and Brukšal area.³³ The entire belief system of the Bonoñah practised by the ancient Minaro did not necessarily come with these migrants. At least some of these religious and cultural ideas formed part of a belief system of this region which has now survived only amidst the Buddhist Dard villages. It could have connections with the religion of the 'Daradas' of Sanskrit and Classical Greek literature. The Daradas in antiquity were spread, during a long period of time, over an extensive area and, atleast during the 8th century, occupied an area bordering on Zañ-žuñ and hence could also have occupied a part of Ladakh.³⁴ This leaves the possibility open that the traditions which are reactivated during the Bonoñah celebrations contain beliefs of the religion which existed in this area prior to the Tibetan expansion westwards during the 8th to the late 9th century.

The new material collected by me is mainly concerned with the Bonoñah belief system which is almost wholly derived from their hymns. On the whole 45 names or titles of hymns were related to me, 18 of which I was able to record. The linguistic difficulties which presented themselves in the process of the recording have been spoken about in the Foreword. For the present work I have drawn upon 16 hymns.

In contrast to the hymns collected by Francke these hymns reveal a completely different emphasis. In the hymns taken down by Francke one finds livestock rearing and hunting as the prominent themes while in the hymns recorded by me the emphasis is on their deities, their cosmology and the 'Primordial times'. I have not dealt with the numerous livestock rearing ('Brog-skad:Pajuli) and hunting ('Brog-skad:Daruča) hymns, with a few exceptions, as they provide little information on their religious beliefs.

I also collected information on the live pantheon. This material in the present work has been dealt with in the context of the information published by Prof. Jettmar in 1979. It is essential to note that this material must not be looked at in isolation and belongs as a

³² The Ibex dance, an ancient Dard cultural feature, is performed not only by the Balti, e.g., of Turtuk and Tyākshi in Nubra, but also by many Ladakhi villagers during certain festivals.

³³ Brukšal is the name of a place in Chitral. It is found mentioned in connection with the invasion of Ali Sher Khan during the 16th century where he reached after the conquest of Gilgit (Hashmatullah Khan 1939:505). This raises the important question regarding the parallels between the Bonoñah beliefs and those of the Kalash-Kafirs of Chitral as have been pointed out in this work.

³⁴ A detailed argument in this regard was presented by me at the IV Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Schloss Hohenkammer Munich, 1985.

whole to the beliefs of the Buddhist Dards. Only for analytical reasons was the division into 'Bonoñah Pantheon' and 'Live Pantheon' thought essential.

As has already been discussed in the chapter on 'Migratory Traditions' (Part I) there occurred several migratory movements in this area. Several of these migratory waves can be chronologically ordered to the turn of the 2nd millennium A.D. Many traditions of the Bonoñah appear to be of an older origin as is shown in the comparisons with ideas which are close to those of Vedic India and Central Asia.

Comparisons have however been mainly restricted to the religious ideas of ethnic groups of the surrounding region. These are the Kafirs, the Muslim Dards of Gilgit and Baltistan and the Kalash of Chitral who take on a middle position between the Dards and the Kafirs. Further comparative evidence comes from the areas of Tibetan influence, like Kinnaur and Lahul, where similar pre-Buddhist beliefs have been preserved.

In the following an Introduction to the themes in each chapter has been provided with mention of the areas from which parallels have been drawn

Section A. deals with the cosmogony as revealed in their hymns and with the cosmological ideas present in their myths. Parallel ideas are also to be found in Kafir mythology which have been drawn upon.

Hymns 1 and 2 provide us information on the origin of the world. Similar beliefs are found among the Muslim Dards of Gilgit. Both these have been compared in the context of Vedic cosmogonies.

The Buddhist Dard hymn on cosmogony relates how in the beginning there was only water and some of it froze. Dust settled on ice and soon there arose three mountains upon which grew three trees of Sandal wood. About the three mountains in their cosmogonical ideas we find clarification from what we read in the Kesar Saga. It is related that before Dongrub dies in the other world, to take birth on earth as Kesar the chief of gLing-yul, he is carried by a goat to the tops of the three mountains from where he is thrown down and he dies. Following this he is born as Kesar and along with his birth are born the 360 Lha, 360 Klu and all beings which then inhabit the earth.

Among the Buddhist Dards we find ideas about primordial times which are of interest in the context of their cosmogony. At the beginning of the Bonoñah celebrations it is related that in the primordial times the gods and humans lived together. Similar notions of communal living of all beings are to be found among the Kalash and among the Lahauli speaking the Bunan dialect. Such notions are absent from the beliefs of the Kafirs and the Muslim Dards. The Kafir myths relate about marital and sexual relations between gods, demons and humans which lead to the birth of sub-classes of deities.

Notions of the birth of sub-class of deities apart, the very idea of a sexual assault by the humans on the goddesses is the cause for the departure of the gods from the humans in the hymn of the Buddhist Dards. This separation of the gods and humans shows the first duality coming into existence. Through the departure of the gods to their land and the humans to theirs we find the hidden notion of the creation of heaven and earth.

The creation of heaven and earth also brings communal living of the primordial times to an end and gives rise to their cosmological notions. Their cosmology is represented in the myth about the 'Tree of the World' called Kořom Shiņg  dang gyuth. The roots of the tree are in the nether world, the trunk lies in the world of humans and the branches

stretch up into the heavens. Following this we find an examination of the terminology used for the three realms of the world.

The terms Lha-yul, Mi-yul and Klu-yul are widely used through the areas of Tibetan cultural influence. Hymn 4 and the several other hymns of the Bonoñah festival contain another older terminological conception which is found present in the pre-Buddhist beliefs of other areas. The Bon religious works (Bon-Chos) and the Kesar Saga (which contains gLing-Chos) are two of the religious systems which are representative of the Bonoñah beliefs of the Minaro.

Section B. provides the background for the distinction necessary in examining their socio-religious belief system. Here the traditions inherited from the Minaro, which are brought to life only during the celebration of the Bonoñah festival, are separated from the 'Live Pantheon'. The live pantheon is derived from their beliefs as they are found practised today and the deities worshipped during the annual festive cycle. The 'Bonoñah Pantheon' is strictly derived from the hymns sung during the Bonoñah festival. To this has been added subsidiary information given orally to me by the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = master of the gods) and the Brongopa (reciters of the hymns).

Basic to the understanding of the Bonoñah and the live pantheons is the notion of Purity-Impurity and the pollution which occurs constantly. During critical events in life, like birth and death, as well as in the daily life cycle, pollution is constantly occurring, causing one to be impure. This impure state must be constantly purified; it is a never-ending life-long process. A two way relationship exists between becoming impure and the consequent need to purify oneself.

This two-way relationship has to be differentiated from the one-way relationship which exists between pure and the sacred which represents the acme of purity. The Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = Master of Gods) who belongs to a pure lineage (Tib.:Rus-c'en) must purify himself prior to proceeding to the shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) of the deity. In doing so he has to abstain from certain impure foods and sexual contact. Infact he must sit in isolation from the villagers and only after taking a cold water bath proceed over untrodden path to the shrine of the deity. The Labdag belongs to a pure lineage and therefore only he can near the shrine of the deity which belongs to the sacred realm.

Similarly, in their community, the villagers are striving for greater purity through deeds like giving 'Feasts of Merit' and hence raising their status. Thus the achieving of a higher grade of purity is a movement in the direction of the sacred which is a one-way relationship. In a similar manner the Labdag, the one of pure lineage, is the only one who may service their deity.

The concept of 'Purity-Impurity' also plays a role in village life, within the households, between the households, between the pha-spun (kinship groups) and between the villagers and the outsiders. Until recently no outsider was allowed into their village premises. This provides us with an indication as to the 'Closed System' of their society. This latter aspect is still to be seen practised in the rigidity with which village and ethnic endogamy is maintained.

Section C. deals with the cycle of the Bonoñah festival. There follows an examination of the other name of Bonoñah, i.e., Chupo-Šrubla. Francke and Jettmar had attempted to

provide an explanation for Šrubla (< srus)³⁵ in the context of the harvest festival. The etymology of this term, however, remained unclear. Then come the geographical places which are mentioned in the context of the Minaro. Oral traditions of their heros Gil Singé and Gapo in connection with the Minaro and the Bonoñah festival are also mentioned.

Moreover a description of the Bonoñah festival is provided. This includes a description of the main performers and the ritual process which constitute the celebrations.

Following this there is a comparative analysis of the Bonoñah festival with similar themes which present themselves during the New Year festival of the Kalash and the Lahauli speaking the Bunan dialect.

Section D. presents an examination of the Bonoñah pantheon as it is derived from the hymns. The hymns were recorded from the Brongopa of mDa and the Labdag of Garkun.

Following the hymns which are dedicated to individual deities there is an examination of the hymns devoted to particular themes. There are hymns with a sexual theme or hymns eulogising the hunt and their pastoral life.

Section E. provides a look at their 'Live Pantheon' and the existence of their deities in the three realms of the world.

This is followed by a description of ancestor worship, followed by their religious symbols and shrines and the taboos associated with animals and varying kinds of foods which are displeasing to their deities.

Section F. contains the closing remarks in which there is also a comparison of the cosmogonical and cosmological ideas with myths from other parts of the world. Further there is an analysis of the differences between the Bonoñah pantheon and the live pantheon. This leads one to the realisation that though the two pantheons have been examined separately there is no clear-cut way of drawing a line between the two. There is much in the live pantheon which has been adapted from the Bonoñah belief system. Beyond this there is much that we do not know about the influences and beliefs belonging to their past which have been compressed into their present system.

³⁵ According to Francke the Šrubla festival is of Dard origin and the syllable Srub (= srus) means "almost ripened ears of corn" (Francke 1923:30-32). Srus = new, green, or ripe ears of grain (Goldstein 1975:1185).

A. COSMOGONY AND COSMOLOGICAL MYTHS

Ai. COSMOGONY: MYTH OF THE ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE

Every year on the last day of the New Year (Tib.:Lo-gsar) celebrations the song of the Origin of the Universe is sung (Hymn 1). This is on the seventh day called Bian and the children prepare a feast on this day for the elderly men of the village. The celebrations take place in Sharčüngspa household and the elderly guests sing to the children as to how the world was created.

Hymn 1

MĪ-YUL DANGPO (Beginning of the World)

1. How was the world of humans formed ?
2. In the beginning there was water and some ice froze
3. Some dust (earth) settled upon the ice
4. Some grass then grew upon it
5. Then arose three mountains
6. Hail, what are the names of these mountains ?
7. The first mountain is the white mountain
8. then there is the red mountain and then the blue one
9. There are three trees, what are those trees ?
10. There is the white Sandal-wood tree
11. then the blue Sandal-wood tree and the red Sandal-wood tree.³⁶

³⁶ The song recorded by A.H. Francke goes further to relate about three birds which grew upon the three trees (May 1905:95). Another version of the hymn Mi-yul dangpo (Origin of the Universe) recorded by me has the same theme but with a different sequence in which there is also the additional information regarding the three birds ('Brog-skad:Cha; Tib.:Bya). This second version is sung in praise of 'Su Malik' the legendary ruler of Gilgit in mediacval times (14th century). A complete translation of the hymn was not obtained and therefore only the text is included. See Hymn 2.

It is related that in the beginning there was only water and some ice froze. Upon the ice settled some dust and then grew grass.

Francke's version of the same hymn recorded from a Buddhist Dard at Khalatse also has the earth forming in a lake. Though in this version the influence of Ladakhi elements can clearly be seen.³⁷

In many ancient cosmogonies the universe began with water upon which a lump of earth formed. It is this solid matter floating on water which is seen as the Primordial Mound, to which is associated a sacred character, charged with the potential of giving birth to life.

In the ancient Vedic texts also we see the earth surrounded with water³⁸ or rather the earth is seen floating in the ocean (Kirfel Abschnitt.1:9-10).

There are myths dealing with the primeval waters on which the earth is resting (Gonda 1975:139 & 390). One of the most profound and coherent R̥gvedic texts include the hymns of the tenth mandala dealing with cosmogonic ideas put in a riddle form (Gonda:136-137). These paved the way for the cosmogonies and philosophic doctrines of Atharvaveda, the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣhads. Here again is the talk about the primordial waters and there exists no duality of any kind, it is all prior to creation (Gonda:136 and 138).

In our hymn 1 the primordial mound is seen floating in water, then arise three mountains of white, red and blue colour. Further grow three trees of the same colours and upon the trees are three birds. These are not high mountains but are only mound formations floating on water and exist prior to creation. The first creation occurs only with the arising of the first duality, i.e., the creation of heaven and earth as we shall see later in the text.

With regard to the three mountains representing the primordial mound it is interesting what we read in the Kesar Saga. The Saga is intimately connected with the belief system in Ladakh and that of the Buddhist Dards. It is related that before Kesar takes birth to become chief of gLing-yul, he as Donggrub in the other world,

"arrived at the foot of a mountain, and saw the goat Tsetse-ngangdmar lying there. He sprang on it. The goat was frightened, and carried him on to the summit of the three mountains. There it threw him down, and Dong-grub died" (Francke August 1901:334).

Ghulam Muhammad recorded a myth from Gilgit area about the 'Creation of the World'. It has the same theme as is related here that upon ice settles some earth. Ghulam Muhammad J.R.A.S. 1907/Reprint 1980:28

³⁷ Francke May 1905:95; 1923:8 and Footnote 3

³⁸ Kirfel 1920 Einleitung:2,10; Hertel 1924:23-25

Following this incident Kesar was born as the chief of gLing-yul. In another version of the Kesar Saga it is related that prior to Kesar's birth he cried from inside his mother:

"I shall be born on top of the three hills. Go there etc" (Francke 1905-1941:69).

Here we find the three mountains as a parallel to those in hymn 1 and despite there being no mention of the colours they represent the primordial mound.

With the birth of Kesar all the creatures of the universe are born and this event represents the beginning of the world (Francke 1905-1941:192).

Aii. PRIMORDIAL TIMES: ALL BEINGS LIVED TOGETHER

It is believed, as was related to me in mDa, that before the beginning of the world all beings lived together. The gods, humans and the wild animals were in perfect harmony with each other. The gods celebrated with the humans and they mixed with each other freely. During one festival when dances were in progress an old woman talked a young man into her conspiracy whereby he accosted one of the goddesses sexually. It is said that with this incident the anger of the gods ('Brog-skad:Lhaprak) was aroused. Henceforth the gods and the humans separated.

Hymn 3

THE COMMUNAL LIVING OF ALL BEINGS

1. In the beginning the Lord of the gods and the Raja of the humans all lived together.
2. Lord of the gods was annoyed at the wanton desire of the humans

(Thus both departed from each other)

3. This day in combination with the stars makes a good day
4. The gods and humans celebrated together a feast in Mi-desa
5. The 360 gods then returned to their land
6. The 360 humans stayed in their own land.
7. May the gods have plentiful in their land
8. May the humans have plentiful in their land
9. How good were those days of old.³⁹

Here we find their ideas of the times when all beings lived together in harmony. This way of life is disturbed as a consequence of the undue sexual desire of the humans as is clearly brought out in the story. The humans succumb to sexual pleasure and this takes place

³⁹ At first the informant (sTanzin of Chogolagpa household) told me about the verses 3 to 9. While talking about the last verse which tells about 'the good old days', he related the story about the former days when humans and gods lived together in harmony and how it happened that they departed from one another. Then he sang verses 1 and 2 of the hymn. The approximate contents of verses 3 to 8 are to be found almost in the same form in the Laskyal Hymns (Hymn 12 & 13), which are sung at the beginning and towards the end of the Bonoñah festival. It is however an open question as to whether hymn 3, noted above, is complete in the light of the response received from sTanzin about the separation of the gods and humans.

through an intrigue of an old woman. The old woman may be a deity who is the cause for bringing the primordial times to an end.⁴⁰

These same ideas are present in the belief system of the Kalash. They also believe that in the beginning all beings lived together.⁴¹ During the New Year festive celebrations (Khowar:Chitrimas; Kalash:Chaumas) drawings of shepherds, hunters, wild and domesticated animals are made on the walls of the Jestak han. Dough figures of several kinds are also prepared.

The same rituals are also performed by the Buddhist Dards during the New Year festival (Tib.:Lo-gsar) and have been dealt with elsewhere (Vohra 1982 & 1983a Ms.).

Among the Kalash there are two motifs which are important. There is the important issue of the fertility and prosperity of their livestock and then the memory of the primordial times when all beings lived together. Here it is interesting to note the memory of the primordial times or rather the reconstruction of those times during the New Year festival. Also interesting are the varying answers given as reason for the separation of the humans and the gods. One man said that humans and animals left one day, another was of the opinion that they were driven away while a third said that a fairy drove them away. But all were agreed upon the fact that they all went to a place in the mountains at the end of the Bumboret valley where they were turned to pictures in the rocks.⁴²

As to the cause of their having been driven away there exists no information. A further piece of information available is important. It is said that the end of the world will come when a trumpet will be blown and all will turn to water (Friedrich Ms.:713). Here we have done a full circle and it brings us back to the cosmogonic conception of their being only water prior to the coming into existence of the primordial mound.

As to why the primordial times came to an end, the material available from the Kalash does not provide an answer.

The communal life of the gods and humans comes to an end due to the sexual wantonness of the humans and this is the cause of the departure of the gods in the version obtained from the Buddhist Dards. The sexual act amounts to a sacrilege, whereby the purity of the sacred sphere is trespassed, causing a dangerous situation for the gods.

A myth about the birth of the god Moni, creator of the world, is related in the Text 80 of Buddruss: "She will bear a child", said the seven brothers and sent out to call the gods. The gods assembled. They called a harp player. He recited the Mandi hymn, the hymn about the creator of the world. As he spoke this the world trembled.

⁴⁰ Unfortunately I could not receive any further details on the old woman. Does she belong to the gods ? -Does she belong to the humans ? -Is it the goal of her intrigue to cause this separation ?

⁴¹ Friedrich Ms.:545-546 & 713-716; Snoy Ms.:9

⁴² Snoy Ms.:9-12; Friedrich Ms.:604-605,515,588,645-646,677.

The gods fled and went away. As they turned the goddess Kime had taken a shining boy in her hand. "The man who creates the world has come. Disperse, go each to your place", said the harp player to the gods (Snoy 1962:146).

In this myth from the Prasun-Kafirs we see how the gods go away as Moni (= Mandi) the creator of the world comes into existence.

Another version of the primordial times is the creation myth of the Red-Kafirs (Kati Kafirs). In the beginning there was only one god who created earth and fixed a large iron pillar upon it. The whole surface of the earth was full of devils and so God created another god named Mani. Mani then fought battles with the devils and killed many of them so that there was room for human beings (Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:26).

Robertson reporting about the creation myth of the Kafir god Imra provides us with a similar fable. Imra who had created fairies and demons had trouble with them and Moni, who himself was created from the breath of Imra, assisted Imra in exterminating them. One terrible fiend was dancing before god Moni. Moni removed a screw or a plug from the demons body surreptitiously and repeated the act seven times. The body of the demon fell to pieces and from the seven pieces emerged other demons who were subsequently killed⁴³ (Compare Andhaka Myth from the Ṛgveda).

The Vedic god Indra is similarly assisted by Viṣṇu to subdue the demons and thus win place for human beings to live.⁴⁴

The pantheon, myths, stories and the hymns of the Buddhist Dards do not mention the sexual union between gods and humans; nor is there any such conception with regard to demons. In this respect the belief system of the Buddhist Dards and the Kalash have common ground which differs from the beliefs of the Kafirs and the Muslim Dards.

We know about fertility cult and hunting magic among the Shina speaking Dards. The Fairies appear as young, beautiful and with blond hair, who go into union with men. They assist them in the hunt and are their saviours called Rāḥi (Jettmar 1975:220). They take the form of an Ibex or a Markhor but also appear in human form when they desire to come close to men. On the other hand it is also said that the Fairies are so pure and sacred that any thought of sexual contact is, from the very beginning, forbidden (Jettmar 1975:221-222).

The Fairies have male partners with whom they live in the highest regions. They are bigger than human beings having the form of giants and are called Yamalo.

Among the north-Kafirs there were numerous myths and fables, recorded by Buddruss, where marital unions between giants and goddesses take place. Unions also take place between giants and women. Snoy reports about how a young man kills a giant and mar-

⁴³ Robertson 1894:114; 1896:381-382; also see Snoy 1962:86-91; Jettmar 1975:82-84.

⁴⁴ Gonda 1960/Reprint 1978:236-237.

ries his daughter.⁴⁵

Furtner it is related that there is another world different from the underworld. It is possible to enter it by pulling out a small thorny tree whereby a hole is created. A girl once entered through this hole and found a house full of eatables which she quickly filled in her basket and returned home. The following day when she returned through the hole she met the house owner, a dwarf, who made her his wife and they had seven sons born to them (Snoy 1962:74).

There are other such fables with similar typology. Still other myths exist where giants pair off with goddesses (Snoy 1962:160). The goddess Disini is made pregnant by a giant (a Yusch).⁴⁶

In another text we find god Imra marrying a human girl but the mother of Imra is herself a female giant. Then we find that the wives of Imra are also witches (Snoy 1962:160). These informative tales about unions between gods, demons (giants) and human beings lead to the birth of sub-classes of the above who inherit varying qualities. Thus emerge degrees of qualitative differentiation. Jettmar is of the opinion that through these acts half-gods emerge but it is not said which tasks are assigned to them (Jettmar 1975:60). It is however clear that we have here the emergence of a gradation of deities who have attributes with different grades of purity.

Among the belief system of the Buddhist Dards and the Kalash we have no such conception of union with gods. The hymns of the Buddhist Dards provide suggestions of the indulgence of the sexual act with the deities when they are called to attend the Bonoñah festival. Similarly among the Kalash there are sexual notions which find expression during the winter festival.

These however are different from actual marital and sexual unions which present themselves among the northern-Kafirs and the southern-Kafirs.⁴⁷

The absence of these notions among the Buddhist Dards and the Kalash but the presence of cosmogonic notions of gods and humans living together, speaks for the hypothesis that different routes of development were taken up among them.

Among the Buddhist Dards the separation of the gods and humans, each to their own land, leads to the establishment of heaven and earth. The myths of primordial times among the Kafirs inform us that the gods destroy the demons in order to create place for humans.

It appears that among the Buddhist Dards a compressing of ideas might have taken place. However, what is more probable is the complete skipping over, in their development process, of the Kafir notions of sexual and marital unions between gods, demons and humans. Thus among the mentioned ethnic groups different developments could have taken place.

⁴⁵ Snoy 1962:158; Jettmar 1975:64.

⁴⁶ Robertson 1896:383; Morgenstierne 1951-53:167; Snoy 1962:79.

⁴⁷ Snoy 1962:74,79,158-160; Jettmar 1975:60 & 64.

The cosmogonic notions of gods and humans living together show us common notions existing among the Kalash. To the east of the Buddhist Dards where Tibetan cultural influence also spread we find pre-Buddhist beliefs which present the same notions of communal living of humans and gods who gather to celebrate during the New year festival. Thus among the Bunan speaking Lahulis (Asboe 1933:189) and from among the Kinnauri of village Poo (Tucci 1966:61 & 65) such notions are reported.

An explanation can also be sought for in the movement of ethnic groups in this region and the transposal of ideas. As for the Buddhist Dards, several layers of migratory movements, at different periods over a large span of time, could have been the transposing instrument.

Aiii. THE TREE OF THE WORLD

The harmonious life of the primordial times, according to the Buddhist Dards, is brought to an end through the connivance of an old woman. It is following this event that the gods depart from the communal life with humans. From among the Kalash Snoy reports that the ancestors of the Kalash and their animals were driven away from their communal life with the gods. Another informant reported that a fairy drove away the humans and the animals.⁴⁸

At the point of separation we find the instrumental role of a super-natural being. As has already been hinted upon earlier, the old woman, who starts up the intrigue leading to the separation, can also be ordered to the super-natural sphere.

With the separation of humans and the gods occurs the first dualism and this implies the creation of heaven and earth.

Here we are dealing with ideas which, with the separation, cause the cosmological notions to emerge where the different spheres, with the beings therein, are clearly defined. The cosmological notions are seen as represented in the World Tree whose different parts are seen representing the different regions of the world. The "Tree of the World" has its roots in the underworld, the trunk forms the world of the humans and the branches reach up to the realm of the gods.

In this respect we find the following myth of the Buddhist Dards instructive:

It is related that there was the tree of the world in the midst of an ocean beyond the reach of humans. This massive tree surrounded by water was called "Kořom Shiŋgé dang gyuth" (Kořom Šiŋgé rDang gYuṭh). Its roots were in the underworld (Klu-yul), the trunk grew on earth (Mī-yul) and the branches reached into heaven (Lha-yul). It was impossible to get to the tree and avail of the fruits. A pigeon used to fly to the tree and eat the seeds.⁴⁹ Once the pigeon was trapped on land and an old man took out the seeds from his throat.

⁴⁸ Snoy Ms.:9-10;

Also see Gonda 1975:115-116, relates the mythical account in the Vedas of how Indra establishes a well-ordered world by separating heaven and earth, and opening up the space between these two, so that the Sun could rise and the light and rain of the heaven could reach and fertilize the earth.

This is the first dualism and represents separation of humans and the gods. This separation is not only mentioned in the Vedas but also forms a theme in the Avesta, see Hertel 1924:34-35.

⁴⁹ The fruits are in the heavens as the branches reach there and are thus inaccessible to humans. The pigeon represents a fairy and is often seen as such.

Francke recorded the pre-Buddhist marriage rituals in which the songs sung by the Nyopas who come to fetch the bride relate about the tree of the world whose roots are in the underworld, the leaves cover the earth and the branches reach heaven.⁵⁰

From the Kesar Saga we get similar cosmological notions where the tree of the world is the "King Willow" and upon this tree walk the sons of gods and goddesses which is heard as the heavenly voices.⁵¹

The 'Tree of the World' represents the underworld with its roots, the trunk is where the world of humans is and the branches reach the realm of the gods. This is an idea familiar to the Kafir and Muslim Dard mythological conceptions.

As to the seeds being brought from this tree, Kořom Shiŋgè dang gyuth, we find similar information given by Francke. He relates that an ancestor caught a pigeon in his net and in his stomach found seven different seeds which have given rise to all the different types of grain (Francke 1923:8 & 9).

The 'Brog-pa Dards as well as the inhabitants of Hunza believe that knowledge about grains was obtained from the fairies.⁵²

In the area it is a common belief that the fairies descend in the form of pigeons. It is a possibility that we have in the Buddhist Dard myth two different concepts. One the cosmological notion and second the association of the tree of the world with the beginning of agriculture. Both notions belong to an archaic phase whereby the possibility of compressing two myths into one fable cannot be overlooked.

The myths about the World Tree also contain cosmogonical aspects. In the Vedic literature, where the "Pillar of Creation" (Skt.:Skambha) plays a role (R̥gveda III.31.12-13),⁵³ we also have the notion of a tree or pillar as the agent causing the separation of heaven and earth.

The myth of creation, recorded by Ghulam Muhammad from the Muslim Dards, relates that in the beginning the earth was enveloped in water which was frozen at some places and upon which the giants lived. The ruler of the giants called Yamlo Hal Singh, in order to create earth, became a pillar in the water and the mouse dug through the ice to bring forth earth which was spread upon the wings of a bird.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Francke April 1901:142-145 & 147; January 1902:38.

⁵¹ Francke July 1902:304-305; 1905-1941:128.

⁵² Jettmar 1960:125; Müller-Stellrecht 1973:173; Jettmar 1975:279 & 282; Robertson 1894:122;1896:410-411, reports that the Kam-Kafirs also believe that the goddess Disani is responsible for the wheat crop and takes care of it. Offerings are brought to her.

⁵³ Gonda 1960/Reprint 1978:180-181; 1975:294.

⁵⁴ Ghulam Muhammad 1907/Reprint 1980:28; Hertel 1924:23-25.

A myth of creation of the Red-Kafirs (Kati Kafirs) similarly relates about the creation of earth upon which a pillar was fixed and following the war with the devils human beings were created (Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:26).

In this latter case the notion of the pillar is symbolical and in this version the earth is already there but the humans come subsequently. As far as the tree is concerned we find the notions of the Ocean and the Tree quite well represented in the cosmogonical ideas of the Kafirs and these have been dealt with in considerable detail by Buddruss (Buddruss 1960:205-207).

Here we find the myth recorded by Robertson interesting for the concept of sexual desire exhibited by Sataram towards the tree which grew in the middle of a lake in a distant land unknown to living men. As Sataram, enamoured by the tree, approached it, he was seized with a mighty trembling and the tree burst revealing the goddess Disani in the center of its trunk. Having seen this he fled.⁵⁵

The sexual motif as is available from the Buddhist Dard myth about the separation of gods and the humans which in turn caused the separation of heaven and earth is also available from a Kati Kafir hymn. Here, similarly, we find the instrumental role of a goddess as the cause of separation. In the hymn of Disani recorded by Morgenstierne the following verse relates:

"From there (thy ?) golden stick split heaven"

as if the creation of heaven is meant. After this is related about the creation of a castle whose doors lead to different places (Morgenstierne 1951-1953:182-183).

A Prasun myth tells a similar story about goddess Disani coming forth from a golden tree which grows in Sūjum lake from where the sun is seen to emerge and cause day (Buddruss 1960:205). Here again we find creative notions as far as the Sūjum lake is concerned which, in the opinion of Buddruss, must have taken a prominent place in Kafir cosmology.

The "Tree of the World", in Kafir mythology, is seen growing out of a lake.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Robertson 1894:114; 1896:382-383; Snoy 1962:85-86, Here we are told about a giant who has taken away 6 of the 7 daughters of Kuschumai. As he is about to take the seventh one she appeals to her mother and the tree opens up to take her in. Later she gives birth to the god Moni (= Mandi). In another version of the same it is not the daughter but Kuschumai herself.

⁵⁶ Robertson 1894:116, Robertson had recorded a saga about the sacred tree whose seven branches were the seven families of brothers, while the trunk was the goddess Dizani (= Disani) and the roots were goddess Nirmali. Robertson says that the detailed record of this saga was lost in a mountain torrent; Buddruss 1960:206 & 207; Snoy 1962:84, Snoy reports from an account of a Christian missionary (1878) about the belief of Aschkun-Kafirs that a wonderful tree exists on a mountain which is protected by snakes. If a man gets possession of a piece of its wood he gets powers which attract others to him.

This saga is similar to that regarding the Sandal wood tree in India which is enveloped by snakes and of which the wood is very difficult to acquire. The fragrance of the wood is so strong that a person possessing it in a gathering can immediately be identi-

Despite the unclear and various mythical versions of the Kafirs there are elements of similarity which can be compared with the material gathered from among the Buddhist Dards. Thus we have the sexual motif which is the cause of the separation among the Buddhist Dards. Also among the Kalash sexuality is the cause. The Kalash material however does not contain any notion, atleast so far as the material available shows, about the instrument which causes the separation between heaven and earth. From among the material from the Kafirs one can point in this respect to the stick of goddess Disani from which heaven split. There is also the related myth of the trunk of the tree which grows in Sūjum lake which has a cosmological character and is comparable to the 'Kōrom Shingé dang gyuth' of the Buddhist Dards.

Aiv. CONCEPTION OF THE WORLDS

We have seen in the hymn about the Origin of the World (Mī-yul dangpo - Hymn 1 & 2) the three tier conception of the worlds. The three worlds Lha-yul, Mī-yul and Klu-yul are conceptions which are common to Tibetans, Ladakhi and the Buddhist Dards.

In the numerous hymns recorded from the Buddhist Dards we find their deities descending from Stañ Lha where they are supposed to reside. During the Bonoñah festival the deities are requested to descend to the world of humans and participate in the ritual festivities.

The following prayer recorded concerning the purification ceremony is recited prior to the festive rituals and reveals their usage of an alternate terminology for the three worlds.

Hymn 4

PRAYER

1. Lha of the Upper regions (Stañ Lha) be clean
2. Klu of the Nether regions (Yur-Klu) be clean
3. Can (Tib.:btsan) of the Middle regions (Bar-btsan) be clean
4. Stone offerings of water be clean
5. The counted stars in the sky be clean

In this prayer we find the complementary conception where Stañ Lha is the equivalent of Lha-yul, Yur-Klu represents Klu-yul and Bar-čan (Tib.:Bar-btsan) represents Mī-yul. The association of white colour for the Lha (gods), blue for the Klu (Nagas) and red for the Can (deities residing in the middle region of the humans) are also familiar from the pre-Buddhist traditions.

This complementary terminology found existing in the pre-Buddhist folklore and religious beliefs is attested to in texts ascribed to Bon religion. The pre-Buddhist beliefs are also found present in the gLing-Chos. The cosmological terms used in the Kesar Saga and in the songs (gLing gLu of Phyang and Khalatse) are representative of the conception in the prayer above.

In the song about the birth of Kesar (Phyang gLing gLu) we find him conquering the regions: 'Steñg nang Lha yul', 'Yog nang Klu yul', 'Bar nang btsan yul', and 'bDud nang bdud yul' (Francke August 1901:359).

In the Lower Ladakhi version of the Kesar Saga the last of the regions, bDud-yul, is replaced by the land gLing-yul (Francke 1905-1941:244).

Another version about the birth of Kesar describes the numerous creatures born to his mother Gogzal Lha-mo in the three realms, Stañg Lha, Bar btsan and Yog Klu (Francke Januar 1902:32). The colours associated with the three realms are white, red and blue

respectively (Francke August 1901:335). Francke, in a footnote, clarifies that for the Nether world, i.e., Yog Klu, both the colour blue as well as black appear in different texts and is due to the fact that the realm of the devil which is black is often not differentiated from the realm of the Nagas which is blue.⁵⁷

Though there is the formal three-tier conception of the cosmological world we find in their folklore ideas which prevent such a simplistic explanation. For instance in the Kesar Saga one finds the castle of the king of Hor, Pragaldé rGyal-po, hanging in the region between the earth and the sky (Francke 1905-1941:245).

Then in another Saga I recorded in Gurgurdho, the son of Kesar, rGyalu (also rGyal-bu; Tib.:royal son), goes to Hahayul by entering the stomach of a large fish which he cuts open in order to come out. Thus we find cosmological ideas which claim the existence of realms which lie outside (or within) the spheres attributed to the three worlds.

In the song (gLing gLu of Khalatse) where Kesar's wife bids farewell to him, she pleads that he should not forget her when he goes to 'Steñ nang Lha yul' and 'Yog nang Klu yul'.⁵⁸ Kesar is given food of forgetfulness in bDud-yul and thus held captive. At this time the King of Hor sends two ravens to find him a suitable wife. The ravens go in search to Lha-yul, Klu-yul, Bar-btsan and finally to gLing-yul where they find Kesar's wife and recommend her as the most suitable for the King of Hor (Francke 1905-1941:244). Finally Kesar receives Aba Dumbu's letter, via the pigeons, from gLing-yul about the chaotic state of affairs in his land and he is awakened to the trick of having been fed the food of forgetfulness. He requests a Nagi to read the letter who goes to the top of the hill Tissuru to do so from where Lha-yul, Bar btsan yul and Klu yul can be seen (Francke 1905-1941:249). After this event he returns from bDud yul to the land of gLing.

Francke in his analyses of the mythology of Kesar Saga voiced the opinion that Stañg Lha is the heaven though the literal translation would be 'the upper gods' or the 'gods above'. Bar-btsan is the earth, the land of men or Mi-yul and Yog-Klu is the underworld or the Land of the Nagas (Francke Januar 1902:34-36).

An examination of further texts will make these ideas clearer.

In the work Vaidūrya dKar-po, by the famous Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho⁵⁹ (Sañs-rgyas rgya-mc'o) who compiled Bon religious material, we find a call made to the beings of the three worlds:⁶⁰

"steñ gi lha yan gsan du gsol

⁵⁷ Francke 1905-1941:18 and Footnote.

⁵⁸ Francke July 1902 Song nr.XXVII:308.

⁵⁹ Vaidūrya dkar-po an astrological work, compare Schuh, D., Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Kalenderrechnung, 1973.

Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho was a contemporary of the Vth Dalai Lama (1679-1705).

⁶⁰ Hoffmann 1950:15 Footnote 2.

'og gi klu yan gsan du gsol
bar gyi gñan yan gsan du gsol" (Vaidūrya dKar-po II, 103a 2).

This appeal to the gods of the upper world, the Klu of the underworld and the Gñan in the middle world, in the opinion of H. Hoffmann, is a division of the world which is also present in the popular beliefs of Ladakh. These are found in the 'Tibetische Hochzeitslieder' noted by Francke in the village Tag-ma-chig and are beliefs belonging to the pre-Buddhist sphere as already pointed out by Francke (1923:15).

The examination above has shown that these pre-Buddhist beliefs are intimately connected with the gLing Chos. Here it is difficult to separate the existence of this alternate terminology of the pre-Buddhist beliefs which are found in the Kesar Saga and the Bon works.

The gZer-Myig⁶¹ biography of gShen-rab and a book of Tibetan Bonpos, was translated by Francke from a copy of the Berlin Manuscript. Hoffmann deals with the three realms as found in the gZer-Myig and with the beings existing in these realms. What interests us here is the complementarity of the three realms Lha-yul, Mī-yul and Klu-yul with the pre-Buddhist terms for the same. This does not seem so at the first look as Hoffmann notes: nam-mk'a is the sky, Bar-sñan is the realm of air and Sa-gzi the realm of earth.⁶² He is further of the opinion that in Ladakh, the upper world of the sky and the realm of the air (atmosphere) are one,⁶³ then there is the middle which is the earth's surface and the underworld is the water and the regions under the earth.

To logically follow the argument of Prof. Hoffmann in this manner would mean that Bar-snan is not the region where the humans live and thus cannot be equated with Mī-yul.

Upon closer examination of the gZer-Myig, a text used by Hoffmann, we find it relating the following:⁶⁴

"the gods of heaven (gnam gyi Lha)
the men of Bar-sñan (Bar-sñan gi mi)

⁶¹ 'Rays from the eyes of the Swastika, A precious summary of the word'

⁶² Nam mKha'
bar-snan (bar snang)
sa gzi (sa gzhi)

⁶³ The Čan (Tib.:btsan) demons in the middle realm, Bar-čan (Bar-ḥtsan), move about along the route (Tib.:btsan-lam) in the air (atmosphere).

According to my Ladakhi informants there are certain notions about the Čan Lha (Tib.:btsan-lha) deities which have a higher status in the Tibetan Buddhist pantheon.

These cannot, in the strict sense, be compared with the Čan (Tib.:btsan) category of local folklore who have a different function and are feared for different reasons, like sudden and unexpected diseases or untimely death.

⁶⁴ Francke 1926 Vol.3 Text:330 and translation p.338.

the Klu of earth (Sa'i Klu)" (gZer-Myig,IV,Fol.41b)

Here we see that humans are clearly ordered in the realm Bar-sñan. The colours associated with the three realms are white for the gods, red for the humans and blue for the Klu (Nagas).

Further in book V we read again as follows:⁶⁵

"the gods from heaven (gnam gyi Lha)
the Naga from earth (Sa'i Klu)
the human beings from the mid-kingdom (Bar-sñan gi mi)".
(gZer-Myig, V,Fol.48a, L.5 & 6)

In the hymn 4 recorded by me the middle realm, Bar-čan, is distinctly the realm where the existence of human beings is to be noted among other beings. The name 'Bar-čan' (Tib.:Bar-btsan) itself implies that the Can (Tib.:btsan) demons can find themselves in this realm. In the local belief the Can demons are seen as red and to keep them away from doing harm 'Sandoz' (Tib.:btsan-mdos) are erected and fresh blood sprinkled upon them. Often they are also painted red as then the Can demons will not enter thinking that the place is already occupied.

In the prayer recorded by me (Hymn 4) the underworld is called 'Yur' while in the text used above it has been written as 'Yog' (Tib. transcription from Vaidūrya dkar-po is "og").

The form 'Yur desh' is used for the underworld by the Kafirs.⁶⁶

In this connection it is interesting to note in line 3 of hymn 12 (Laskyal - 2) of the Buddhist Dards 'Mī-deš' is used for the world of the humans. 'Deš' has its etymology in Sanskrit and Pali where it means land or region.

Here we find of interest the songs recorded from the Bunan speaking Lahuli, sung during the New Year festival, as the same pre-Buddhist terminologies for the three realms are used.⁶⁷ On the last day while bidding farewell to the deities after the New Year festivities, the Nagas of the underworld are said to go to 'Yog 'ku'.⁶⁸ These examples show that dialectical differences exist.

Not only in Lahul but also from the songs recorded in village Poo of Kinnaur the same terminology is used for the three realms. These are the songs sung during the New Year festival.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Francke 1927 Vol.4 Text:171-172 and translation on p.213.

⁶⁶ Robertson 1894:114; 1896:380.

⁶⁷ Asboe 1933 Text of song 'A' on p.202 and translation on p.193.

⁶⁸ Asboe Text of song 'D' on p.204 and translation on p.195.

B. SOCIO-RELIGIOUS BELIEF SYSTEM

For the understanding of the socio-religious beliefs two separate spheres of their religious beliefs have been examined. Firstly the ritual proceedings of the Bonoñah festival and secondly the rite de passage, the yearly festive cycle associated with the agriculture and the rearing of livestock. The Bonoñah festival and the pantheon belong to the traditions inherited from the Minaro and are religious events which are brought to life once every three years. These beliefs belong to an archaic phase and are traditions which are kept alive through oral transmission from one generation to the other and which, however, do not affect their daily life. The yearly festive cycle and the rite de passage belong, on the contrary, to the sphere which plays a role in their daily life. The pantheon worshipped during these events has been termed the 'Live Pantheon' in order to differentiate it from the deities worshipped during the Bonoñah festival which are discussed under the "Bonoñah Pantheon".

Underlying the entire socio-religious complex of beliefs are the concepts of Pollution-Impurity:Purity-Sacred. These have been discussed first as only with this as a basis can the ritual processes enacted be understood in their proper perspective.

The religious sphere is couched in the festive cycle. Festivals are social events when the entire community participates. The social gatherings create an atmosphere which, through the performance of rituals and the singing of hymns, can best be described as religious. The social events take place at the beginning or upon the successful completion of their agricultural activities and the cycle associated with the rearing of livestock. The critical events in the life cycle of a person often may not bring the entire village community to a social gathering today. However there is reason to believe that in the past these were social events. This is evidenced in the case of marriages and the celebration of the birth of a child.⁷⁰ These were, in the recent past, cause for communal celebrations during fixed days of the New Year (Tib.:Lo-gsar) festive calendar.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Tucci 1966:82 & 102, Vers 85.

⁷⁰ Among the Buddhist Dards during the marriage the bride wore a long tunic reaching to the knees which was elaborately embroidered and had several metal buttons and cowrie shells. All brides of the village wore this same tunic.

⁷¹ The same is reported about from Hunza region, Müller-Stellrecht 1973:189-194 & 31. Also see Biddulph 1880:78; Jettmar 1975:264.

These periodic phenomena are cause for religious gatherings and can be basically differentiated from the Bonoñah festival as the latter has nothing to do with their living practices.

The Bonoñah festival is more the reactivation of a preconceived performance which has been passed down through memory and is artificially kept alive by the celebrations every three years. The hymns sung and recited during the Bonoñah festival are in reverence of times past or eulogise their deities who are appealed to in an elaborate ritualistic procedure. These provide notions of a far gone past when these rituals were actually performed and not just sung about.

In the case of the yearly festive cycle the rituals are actually performed. They are not learned processes which are sung as in the case of the Bonoñah but are performances addressed to deities who must be appeased during these periodic events or else their anger ('Brog-skad:Lhaprak) will be aroused.

Bi. PURITY-IMPURITY AND RITUAL CLEANSING

The concept of purity and the varying kinds of impurity resulting from pollution cannot be directly translated from local words. Even if this were done the comprehensiveness of these would be questionable. Here the usage of the words in the context of particular situations, through behaviour and the ascription of ideas, help to open a wider horizon.

The occurrence of pollution which implies a state of impurity is expressed with the word 'Chitu' (Chi-tu). This situation can be removed, among other ways, by cleansing oneself with the smoke of smouldering juniper ('Brog-skad:Cilgi). In doing so one becomes 'Shicho' (Šig-ču) which would be equivalent to being pure. There is another kind of purification expressed through the word 'Shigchu' (Šig-ču). This type of purification is undertaken on particular occasions like prior to sending the livestock to pasture grounds during sGuñla festival or during the Lo-gsar (New Year) celebrations. On these occasions the house is smoked with juniper and the utensils washed in water boiled with juniper branches and leaves.

Though these 'Brog-skad' concepts are helpful their wider significance can be seen when one describes events or with the ascription of these concepts to particular things.

Purity is an attribute of the environment in that all higher regions above the settlement are pure, i.e., the mountains, the pasture grounds, lakes, glaciers and the streams taking their origin from the icy waters in these regions. There are certain trees, flowers and animals which inhabit these higher regions, and even colours, which are the symbols of purity.

On the human plane purity is dynamic. There is a constant process through which pollution is occurring and regular cleansing must be undertaken. Thus impurity has to be removed throughout the life-cycle and a pure state, if not a higher level of purity, achieved. During the rite de passage, e.g., birth and death, certain persons, parts of the house and particular regions become stained by pollution. Here the affliction is relative from person to person about which we will discuss in greater detail separately. It is important to observe a particular duration of this impure state before pollution can be finally cleansed. With the performance of a purification ritual the state of impurity belongs to the past.

Through the yearly festive cycle purification ceremonies are undertaken to usher events. Purification rituals attain particular importance during festivals associated with livestock and the agricultural cycle.

During the New Year celebrations, not only every household purifies its own environment, but the entire village is cleansed. A procession of the villagers carrying burning juniper torches cleanse the atmosphere. In this way they usher in the New Year chasing away the evil and the impurity of the past year.

Purity and impurity are inherent in the male and the female relative to one another. Women are basically less pure than the men until old age when they are sexually neutral. Then in old age both are equally pure.

Snoy in his work on the Kafirs speaks of the relativity of the concept and the existence of a "spannungsverhältnis" as between two poles (Snoy 1962:226).

We find a clear division of the house into male and female spheres. A strict adherence to one's sphere must be observed and the crossing of the threshold could create a dangerous situation.

Within the village and in its surroundings there are places which should not be trespassed for fear of causing pollution.

The women are forbidden from approaching the Juniper Shrine ('Brog-skad:Cilgi Deüna) which lies at mDa-'brog ('Brog-skad:Nir-mDa;the pasture grounds).

Between the Pure and the Impure there is a two way relationship. Within the human sphere a movement between these is taking place and thus pollution is being constantly removed. Certain aspects of human life bring impurity with it and cause one to be stained with pollution. Its eventual removal is necessary for the attainment of the pure state.

When one views this relationship in the context of their deities then they are ordered into the pure sphere which is elevated to the sacred realm. No polluted person may approach the sacred sphere without having first purified himself. If one breaks the taboo then the situation could be dangerous and the displeasure of the deity ('Brog-skad:Lhaprak) could be aroused.

There is a one way relationship between those aspects of the human sphere which are considered pure and the sacred realm. This one way relationship can be seen in the enhancement of purity of the person coming in contact with the sacred realm. The priest, who takes fruit and flower offerings to the deity or sacrifices an animal and subsequently brings these offerings back to the village where he distributes them to the gathered villagers, has the power of enhancing the receivers' purity.

The shepherds who come down from the pasture grounds are seen as imbued with purity. The sweet smelling flowers from the higher valley pasture grounds are similarly associated with purity.

Thus whoever goes to the pure regions of the mountains and glaciers acquires some of that attribute. Similarly the approach of the sacred sphere of their deities, i.e., shrine (Deüha), enhances the purity of the one who goes there.

This one way relationship with the sacred realm is different from the two way relationship which exists between the pure and the impure on the human plane.

The spheres of purity which are ordered to the natural phenomena are also found reflected in human society. Among human beings purity is observed in a graded system. Hierarchically ordered purity is discernable in lineages.

There are lineages belonging to the Rus-c'en (Tib.:Rus-c'en;ru = bone;c'en = great) which are more pure than the Rusmét (Tib.:rus-med;ru = bone;med = without). Marriages in

times past were restricted to each of these categories. Due to inter-marriages between the two during the past five generations there are barely any pure Rus-c'en lineages left. Few of the Labdag households in Garkun still claim to be of pure Rus-c'en lineage. The Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag=master of the gods) household is seen as having higher attributes of purity atleast during the time of his ritual performances. During these occasions he goes through ritual abstentions and purification rites.⁷²

Higher purity can be achieved through brave deeds and by the giving of 'Feasts of Merit', the latter also being related to economic prosperity. The brave deeds of Gil Singé and Gapo are eulogised in their hymns and it is maintained, even today, that only brave men can belong to the Rus-c'en lineage.

To achieve higher purity there are gradations of attributes which must be won, achieved, or aspired for and these are socially acknowledged through the giving of feasts of merit. It is not economic prosperity alone but also a parallel process of spiritual achievement through brave and selfless deeds for the community which lead to acquiring a higher status thus a higher grade of purity.

Achieving of higher purity is also arrived at through age. The celebration of Yato Grun is particularly important for those old men and women who have completed cycles of six loskor (one loskor= 12 years cycle). With this age a spiritual maturity is seen to have been achieved. This brings one into the sphere of ancestor worship.

Though the cremation of the corpse takes place outside the village and at the lower end (impure part) of the valley, the worship of the ancestors takes place within the village. The Munal is where the ancestors are worshipped on practically all festive occasions. A Munal is a crevice in the rock where the bones of the dead ancestors are placed to which offerings are made. Each pha-spun has its own Munal and all the village Munals are in the same rock which, in Garkun, is located in the center of the village.

Particularly during Mamani festival, which is solely devoted to ancestor worship, purification rituals with juniper are performed and food offered at the Munal. Each pha-spun performs these rituals separately.

On important festivals like Bonoñah dances are performed by each pha-spun. These dances are known by the name of the pha-spun. The pha-spun names are often also the names of the apical ancestors. It is in memory of the ancestors that a particular art of dancing, represented by the name, is performed.

The women never wash their faces with water as then Barkat (original charm) will go away. Here is implied the notion of the evil eye being kept away. When cleansing of the face is required it is done with juniper smoke. Since this is done over the years the faces of the women become black. R.B. Shaw who was not aware of the custom commented on the black witch like faces of the women. This attitude of keeping the original charm or the 'evil eye' away has its wider ramifications at the level of the house and the village. In order to maintain the purity of their household and that of the village certain precautionary measures are taken. This helps to preserve the fertility and prosperity thus keeping polluting influences from afflicting the house or the village.

⁷² See further on the details of ritual abstentions and purification. Also see chapter Evi. Taboos against Foods and Animals.

In the house no outsider is allowed to approach the hearth and muslim labourers who come are made to sit near the door. When tea or food is served to them their cup or plate is not taken to the hearth to be filled but the food is brought in a vessel and put into theirs.

No one is allowed to cross over the chimney on the roof top as it would be causing pollution of the hearth between which and the rear wall lies the Sa-bdag (house deity).

Similarly the village must be protected from outside influences entering it and causing pollution. When a villager goes on a trading expedition he carries with him his rations for the period that he is going to be away. On his return he must not bring these rations back into the village but must either consume them on the way or give them away to a fellow traveller. In case he is alone he must leave them outside the village premises. Prior to entering the house he must purify himself with juniper smoke and only then is he allowed to touch the utensils in the house.

Similarly, in the recent past when an outsider passing by the village wanted to meet someone from the village, he had to shout out his name and call the man to the path outside the village.

As Snoy wanted to visit the Dard village Taisot he was not allowed to enter the village. He was told that this was the wish of the protecting deity of the village. The members of the German Hindukush Expedition had a similar experience. They were very reluctantly allowed into Darel valley in 1955 (Snoy 1975:155).

When during the winter of 1876 Shaw came to mDa village he was greeted by a line of women (Shaw 1878:3)

“each holding in her hand a saucer full of burning juniper-wood from which columns of smoke ascended in the still air, uniting overhead in a kind of canopy and giving out a pungent incense-like odour”.

A similar experience is reported by Durand when he visited a Dard village in the valley of Bagrot (Durand 1899:213).

The visit of the outsider is, it appears, purified by this greeting with smouldering juniper smoke. These experiences of travellers attest to the fact that their village premises must be kept clean of any polluting influence which might enter it, for fear of arousing the anger of their deity ('Brog-skad:Lhaprak).

A very closed attitude of their belief system emerges from the above impressions whereby at every level purity must be maintained. The women preserve Barkat by only washing their faces with juniper smoke. The household fertility and prosperity must be preserved from polluting influences from outside. Thus a daughter who is married into another household cannot sit on the left side of the hearth in her natal home, where the women sit. She must sit near the central pillar of the house where the grandparents, who are thought to be sexually neutral, and young children, who have not arrived at their pubescence, sit. The daughter, it is explained, has gone through transsubstantiation and thereby worships the house god of her husband.

This attitude of a very closed belief system seems to project itself in the sphere of the maintenance of lineage and ethnic purity. According to the genealogical statistics collected for over five generations (out of which for three generations there are complete statistics for the whole of village mDa) I come to this conclusion: 80% of the marriages are done from within their own village and the rest 20%, due to demographic difficulties, from the other Buddhist Dard villages. This aspect of village and ethnic endogamy has

been dealt with separately.⁷³ Here one can only note that no straight forward explanation for the concept of Purity-Impurity is available. In the different spheres varying explanations are plausible but at the same time 'fertility' is a concept which is central to the above complex or at least intimately connected to it.

⁷³ Vohra "Ethnographic Monograph on the Buddhist Dards". Unpublished Mss. 1983a.

C. BONOÑAH: THE ČHUPO-ŠRUBLA FESTIVAL.

The first notice of Bonoñah festival comes from the beginning of this century when A.H. Francke (1905) published songs of this festival. According to the information he had received this festival was celebrated every three years (Francke May 1905:93).

Later Hashmatullah Khan (1939) wrote that this festival takes place alternately in mDa and in Garkun, then for the next two years there are no Bonoñah celebrations. In the fifth year the festival starts again in mDa and so continues the four year cycle (Hashmatullah Khan 1939:686).

These two conflicting pieces of information had led to misconceptions regarding the actual festive cycle. The information I received in Garkun village cleared the doubts about the rotation principle which underlay the Bonoñah celebrations.

The festival takes place every year but each year in a different village. The celebrations in mDa would be followed by those in Garkun and subsequently in Ganoks. Thus after a two year gap of the celebrations in mDa the festive cycle would be resumed.

The celebrations in times past were attended by all the neighbouring villagers, though the main contingent of those who came from other villages was made up of families who had kinship ties with that particular village. Some time after the conversion of the inhabitants of Ganoks to Islam the celebrations there were discontinued. As a result the triennial cycle is retained but the year when it is the turn of the Ganoks villagers to celebrate falls vacant. Thus the festival took place every year but as to why it was celebrated in the different villages no convincing answer could be found.

The traditions which are the cause of the Bonoñah celebrations belong to the belief system inherited from the Minaro. People belonging to the same ethnic stock came during the later migratory waves from Gilgit or even indirectly, after having settled for some time in Baltistan, and took up residence in the Minaro villages. The result was constant changes in the existing belief system through the later migrants.

The belief system of the Buddhist Dards as it is practised today shows only faint hints of the belief system which is adhered to during the days of the Bonoñah celebrations. The hymns sung and the ritual procedure of the events during Bonoñah, which have been retained by traditional priests, reactivates an archaic belief system and way of life.

The priestly class was a diversified group. There were the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag) who were from different families and the duties of the officiating priest was, each succeeding generation, passed down to the eldest son. In Garkun, as also in mDa, there are three different Labdag but only one of them has ritual duties to perform during the Bonoñah festivities. The other Labdag have similar functions during the annual festivals affecting their daily life, and are a hereditary class responsible for the different spheres of village

life. This latter aspect has been dealt with separately.⁷⁴

The Labdag responsible for servicing the village deity and sacrificing animals at the shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) on behalf of the villagers is also the main functionary during the Bonoñah celebrations.

Then there are the Brongopa who have been taught the hymns from memory. They are not recruited hereditarily but during each generation certain boys are trained for this profession. From among these young Brongopa under training, there are a certain number of boys who either sing hymns or play musical instruments.

There are the Lhapa who are mediums. They fall into trance and the deity is said to descend (Tib.:Lha'bab) or a communion occurs and as a result they prophecy events. There are at present no practising Lhapas and the last living Lhapa is aged.

Francke mentions that the songs he noted down were taken from a Lhapa of mDa.

These three priestly offices are comparable to those of the northern-Kafirs, i.e., the Uta, the Debilala and the Pshur respectively. They play similar roles in the Kafir society.⁷⁵

Beside the priestly class, who have been the agents for the preservation of the Bonoñah traditions, there are no others who retain memory of their ritual and traditional status.

For the understanding of these traditions there are linguistic difficulties which play a major role. Moreover change in the way of life has reduced the importance of Bonoñah beliefs. This change has been from their leading primarily a hunting and pastoral life to becoming settled agriculturists. All three professions have continued to be practised but the emphasis has been reversed.

⁷⁴ i.e., the Labdag responsible for irrigation or the first ploughing. Vohra 1982:88; 1983:73 and Footnote 83.

⁷⁵ Robertson 1894:123 ff; 1896:415-418; Jettmar 1975:121-123.

A brief comparison is necessary: In the Kafir society the Uta (Priest) are a hereditary class but not the Debilala (the hymn singers) and the Pshur (Shaman). The two latter ones are, in Kafir society, recruited in a similar way as is done in the Buddhist Dard villages, i.e., selected anew during each generation.

The Uta (Friedl 1965:12) has during occasions like birth, marriage or death no role to play and is comparable to the role of the Labdag in the Buddhist Dard villages.

The Uta has a role to play in the calendar calculations (Lentz 1939:100). Similarly, in the past the Labdag was consulted in the matter of calculating the dates for the village festivals, a function which has fallen into disuse in the recent past as a result of their using the Buddhist book (Brahstis) which regulates the dates according to the moon calendar.

Löffler (1964:136-137) has compared the religious role of the Uta with that of the priest in ancient India.

Fussman (1977:60-62) has also raised points for the comparison between the Indian caste system and a similar hierarchical order existing in the Kafir society.

Among the Buddhist Dards we find a system of ritual taboos and the complex of 'pollution-purity' which has a determining influence on the social order. In this can be

The above aspect is beyond the limits set for the present work but an examination of the term Bonoñah as well as the alternate name Čhupo-Šrubla might provide a clue to the etymological origins.

Bonoñah literally means the "Big Harvest Festival". Bono in 'Brog-skad mveda Big and Ñah is the Harvest Festival. The harvest festival in mDa and Garkun takes place every year but the big harvest festival once every three years. This region where the Buddhist villages are located is warmer than the rest of Ladakh and two crops are harvested. Thus the first crop harvested at the end of June and the beginning of July is followed by the harvesting of the second crop in late autumn.

'Čhupo-sHrubla' (Čhupo-šrubla), as this festival is also called has in the syllable sHrubla (šrubla) the name of the harvest festival of Ladakh.

According to Francke the festival Šrubla, in Ladakh, has a Dard origin. The syllable Šrub (= srus) means 'almost ripe corn ears' (Francke 1923:30-31).

Francke, and later Jettmar, tried to get behind the etymological sense of the syllable sHrubla (šrubla).⁷⁶ Jettmar is of the opinion that here we have to do with an usage of an archaic period when the grain was harvested before it was ripe as upon ripening it would fall off the ears.⁷⁷ Francke mentions that in Skurbuchan, a village bordering on the Buddhist Dard area, barley beer (Chang) made from still green grains plays an important role in the festival. This is the time when sweet smelling flowers are brought from the pasture grounds and during this festival the hymn about the origin of the world is sung.⁷⁸

The Bonoñah festival is celebrated after the second crop has been harvested and the shepherds have returned from the glacial heights bringing with them sweet smelling flowers which play a big role during the festival.

The Bonoñah hymns mention offerings of Sattu (barley flour) and thus provide evidence of the fact that the Minaro were familiar with grain and agriculture. Despite the fact that the hymns occupy themselves mainly with hunting and livestock rearing, we can see in the Sattu offerings a hint towards the early harvesting of grain, about which the second name of Bonoñah: 'Čhupo-sHrubla' perhaps provides an indicative reference. A too simplistic an explanation is here avoidable.

seen the seeds for the origin of a caste system: The "closed society" of the Buddhist Dards in respect of village and ethnic endogamy, prohibition of entry into their village premises for outsiders for fear of pollution and moreover a very organised system of ritual prescription regulating the life within the village as well as between and within each household. These are aspects which need further consideration.

⁷⁶ Francke 1923:31; Jettmar 1979:348.

⁷⁷ Jettmar 1979:348; Also see Snoy 1975 for early corn harvest.

⁷⁸ Francke 1923:30-31; Also see Ribbach (1940:149) for the song about the grains being brought from heaven.

The Bonoñah has striking similarity with the Chaumas festival of the Kalash. There is reason to see similarities in the complex of fertility cult. These are not restricted to the winter festivals of the Buddhist Dards and the Kalash but seem to have a common base of origin and spread over into the belief system of other Dard and Kafir groups.⁷⁹

The summer valley pasture ground was occupied in the ancient times by the Minaro. This region is a long stretch along the mDa stream to its source and it takes a day and a half of constant tramping to cover the area. The area's connection with the Minaro is well documented. Every spot along the route has a name, and the region as a whole is called mDa-'brog ('Brog-skad:Nir mDa). The highest inhabited area is Uno Grung where shepherds have their huts. Just beyond is a massive juniper tree which is worshipped as a shrine and called Cilgi Deüha (Juniper shrine). To the right of this tree-shrine is a hillock with massive rocks. Here are located Makpon Khanija (Tib.:dmag-dpon mchod-rtan;Skt.:Stupa) and near it is Makpon (Tib.:dmag-dpon) Shakspe and then Phoñskatu. At this latter place, which is formed like a throne, the leader (Raja) of the Minaro used to sit.

After a further climb of about half a kilometer one reaches Mal Mal Khutu where the Minaro used to dance. Just below it on the right side one can see the Yandring stream descending. This place is a large basin and climbing beyond it over a rocky formation one reaches a series of lakes. Most of the larger lakes have names. These are frozen for most of the year and they connect up with the glacier region.

At Mal Mal khutu one can see bare rocky heights rising steeply and one of them is called Panderkhor and it is said that 'Mon' turned into a stone there. The pointed rocky projection, said to be Mon, looks like an eagle sitting on the rock with its beak raised. According to my informant Rigzin Chogolagpa, at Mal Mal Khutu, high up on a rocky stone is an inscription which is of bluish colour but which I could not locate. There are many more sites connected with the Minaro but the above fit best into the present context. During my short stay in the pasture area I could bring little down on paper except for a detailed map of the region with the names of the places.

The historical phase associated with their folklore heroes Gil Singé and Gapo gives us clues as to how the new migrants came to settle in the Minaro villages. There seems to have been some resistance to them and Gil Singé and Gapo killed many of the Minaro. Peace was ultimately restored and these migrants married many of the Minaro women. This incident does not exclude the possibility of a peaceful incorporation of other migrants as we have information about several waves of migrations.

Once during the celebration of the Bonoñah festival at mDa the wife of Gil Singé intrigued to poison his brother. As is the custom in the area that close kin often drink from the same cup Gil Singé, just then, drank from the cup and died. The death of their local hero was the cause of much sorrow and weeping. The villagers went to the 'stone' where the gods are asked to depart at the end of the festival. They threw away their flowers at the stone and asked the deities to depart signalling the early end of the festival. It is from this time onwards that the number of days of Bonoñah celebrations were

⁷⁹ Jettmar 1965:109-116; 1975:266.

first reduced to three (perhaps Gil Singé died on the third day), from the original seven day celebrations, but it appears that their deities did not agree and the number of days were increased to five. Prior to this incident the inhabitants wore black clothes which they then discarded in sorrow of the death of their hero and chief and swore only to wear white clothes. It appears that it is due to this reason that Gil Singé is idealised more than Gapo.

THE BRONGOPA

As has already been mentioned Brongopa is not a hereditary class but its members are recruited anew during each generation. The meaning of the name is "the singer who sits at the head" and leads the chorus of the hymns at the festival.⁸⁰ Often groups are formed and the two groups sit facing each other in rows and sing alternately the lines of the hymns which can sometimes also take the form of question and answer.

The training of the children who are to become Brongopa begins early in life and they learn for four to five months each year. In the evening they train for five to six hours at the house of their teacher and besides memorising the hymns they learn to play the two different types of drums and the Shahanai ('Brog-skad:Surna). Later, depending upon their ability and inclination, they choose either to play the instruments or to sing the hymns.

The most knowledgeable Brongopa in mDa are Rigzin Čhogolagpa and his brother sTanzin who plays the instruments.

The Brongopa in Garkun are from Uripa and Golopa houses. The latter is also the house from which the Labdag of Garkun comes. The knowledge of the hymns is not the exclusive domain of the Brongopa. The Labdag and the Lhapa are also conversant with hymns and it is difficult to attribute to the Labdag only professional skill in servicing the deities. Infact during the Bonoñah celebrations the Labdag is responsible, on certain occasions, for checking the accuracy of the hymns sung.

These three are the most knowledgeable informants in their villages. They have also come to occupy administrative posts, e.g., Uripa, the Brongopa household in Garkun, from which the village Goba comes.

In Garkun the most famous Brongopa was a dwarf from Phaspa house who had amazing skill. It is from him that all in Garkun learnt the hymns while in mDa were Gyaltsering and his brother Tsangnurphel of Mičüngpa household who taught all the Brongopa.

The Brongopa have to observe ritual prescriptions during the Bonoñah festival. They, just as the Labdag and the Lhapa, have to wear a white wollen cap during the festivities which are given to them by the village Gopa. The Brongopa and those who play the instruments are not to sleep at home, avoid sexual contact and observe ritual prescrip-

⁸⁰ "go" of the name Brongopa means "head". The leader of the singers in Astor is called 'gopa'. Jettmar:1975.

tions. They sleep at the village Čangra ('Brog-skad:Lhaspa) where the festivities take place.

Early in the morning they take a cold bath in the stream and go to their houses to take their meals which consist of barley flour with water and dried fruit. The consumption of cooked food as well as items such as onions, garlic, chillies and salt is prohibited during the festive days. To lead the women in the singing as well as in the contests with the Brongopa is a Brongopi. During my visit to mDa the Brongopi was Gyalzum of Phorokpa household.⁸¹

LHAPA

What differentiates the Lhapa from the Labdag is that the latter only services the deities, performs the rituals and brings the offerings. The Lhapa by going into a trance is able to communicate with the deities and in this state provide prophetic answers. To the Lhapa, as well as to the Labdag, is ascribed the power to be able to see the deity as something white moving about. Dumen and Léi Nakṛn are the deities with whom the Lhapa enters into communion and in this state of trance he is believed to have the power to heal diseases and utter oracles. The fact that the Lhapa among the Buddhist Dards could utter oracles is known from earlier reports.⁸²

Shaw in 1878 was informed that the village Lhapa of mDa had ceased to perform since 12 to 15 years earlier which is when Buddhism was introduced (Shaw 1878:6). Shaw in his report, however, fails to make the important distinction between the Lhapa and the Labdag.

During my visit in January 1979 I was informed that the Lhapa was too old to perform his duties. I was however also informed that the Lhapa had to still observe the same ritual prescriptions as the Labdag and wear a white wollen cap during the festivities.

Further research is necessary to determine the role of the Lhapa in Buddhist Dard society.

In several of the hymns there are indications that the Lhapa is involved. This is particularly evident in Hymn 10 dedicated to Dumen as well as in Hymn 8 to Yanding (Vers 11 & 12). Other references to the Lhapa are indicated in the text where he communicates with a particular deity or where there is evidence that a vision through a trance is being recited.

⁸¹ Also among the Kafirs the Debulala must avoid impure places and adhere to certain taboos, Jettmar 1975:122;

Aside from the Debulal (De-vulal="Divine-hymn-chanter") the old Kati-Kafirs had the Nam-su-vulal (= "name-repetition-singer") who sang praises of their heroes and ancestors, see Palwal 1977:153.

⁸² Shaw 1878:6; Francke Mai 1905:93; Jettmar 1979:344 & 350.

The Bonoñah celebrations take place once the second crop has been harvested and the threshing is over. By this time the livestock is brought down from the higher valley pasture grounds. Those households which cultivate land in those areas have harvested the crops. Flowers of various colours with strong sweet scents are brought from the glacial heights to decorate the caps and these are just as popular among the men as among the women. The Brongopa in mDa, prior to the beginning of the festivities in 1983, warned the Goba (Gopa, village headman) and other members of his panchayat that the festival should not be delayed too much as then they would not have flowers from the pasture regions.⁸³ This shows the importance of the flowers for their deities, the participants and generally for the atmosphere they help to create.

In earlier times the date of the festival was fixed according to the course of the moon and the Labdag played a role in the calculations. The best time for the beginning of the festival was however two or three days prior to full moon as then the nights would be well lit. With the increasing Buddhist influence and education from Ladakh, the Goba has begun to consult the moon calendar in the book called *Bhrastis*.

When the date has been settled the Goba and the Brongopa go to inform the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = master of the gods) that the festival is to begin in five days. These five days are particularly important for the success of the festival. During these days the Labdag performs rituals of purification and cleanses the village atmosphere with juniper smoke thus making it conducive to the descent of their deities.

Juniper ('Brog-skad:Cilgi) wood and branches as well as juniper blossoms, which have been gathered earlier, are brought to the Cangra ('Brog-skad:Lhaspa) for the festivities. The village Cangra is surrounded by massive walnut trees amongst the branches of which the wood is stored. These have to be brought from great heights as the best wood and flowers only grow there.

THE LABDAG

Once the Labdag is informed that the festival is to take place in five⁸⁴ days he goes into seclusion and on the very evening he proceeds with a small boy as his assistant to the local stream to wash his clothes and bathe himself. The assistant is either his own son or can be the son of the second or the third Labdag. The second and the third Labdag come from different households but the same pha-spun and become officiating priests during the times when the house of the first Labdag becomes polluted. This can be, for example, due to the birth of a son or the death of a family member.⁸⁵

⁸³ Thizim Kaliman is the name of one of the most important flowers for the festivities.

⁸⁴ Earlier the Labdag used to sit in seclusion for seven days.

⁸⁵ More on this see Vohra 1982 & 1983.

The boy assisting the Labdag will bring a spoon ('Brog-skad:Thoglé) and a metal plate which are washed and later purified along with one kilo Ghee (clarified butter) and Sattu (roasted barley flour). This purification with juniper smoke is called 'Shigchu' (Śig-ču). These are the articles which are to be used by the Labdag during the five days at the shrine. Upon returning from the bath at the stream he will not enter his house any more but sit upon the roof of the house observing silence and avoiding any encounter with the villagers or the members of his own household.

The only contact person is the boy during the next days. On the following morning both will once again go to the stream and bathe and then proceed to the shrine using an untrodden path. The Labdag will now stay at the shrine for the next five days. He will light a fire of juniper and put a piece of burning coal in the large spoon ('Brog-skad:Thoglé) and this will be kept smouldering for the duration of the five days. All the time, except when he eats, he will keep leaves of juniper in his mouth and during the day stay inside the cave near the shrine and come out only during the night. His diet will consist of just one fistful of Sattu mixed with water ('Brog-skad:Khullak). This meal will be taken three times a day each time after a cold bath in the stream. He will abstain from all foods like onions, garlic and chillies. He will wear the white wollen cap ('Brog-skad:Kho) just like the ones worn by the Brongopa and the Lhapa.

The boy who assists him will commute to and from his house and bring juniper wood and leaves which the Labdag will chew. The fire kept burning with juniper wood for the five days will not only serve to purify the village atmosphere but the fragrance is also pleasing to the deities who are expected to descend during this period.

After a lapse of four days the Kotwal will bring a white kid to the house of the Labdag. This will be collected in the evening by the boy and taken to the shrine.

On the morning of the fifth day, that is the beginning of the festival, the Labdag will sacrifice the kid at a place below the shrine and remove and roast the entrails ('Brog-skad:Khašo). Meanwhile the boy will prepare 21 rotis (flat baked bread) on the fire of juniper wood. At sunrise all the women of the village will proceed to a place some distance from the shrine and wait for the assistant to descend. As the boy sees the women assembled with metal plates of smoaking juniper ('Brog-skad:Phok) he will descend with the roasted meat called Khašo and silently hand round small pieces. As the kid has been sacrificed to the deity and a piece of it been first offered at the shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) sharing in the same is supposed to bring blessings to the women.

After the ritual sacrifice the Labdag retires to the cave, out of sight of the villagers, until the end of the fifth day when they come to invite him to join in the festivities.

On the previous day the Goba has announced the beginning of the festival so all the villagers collect at the Cangra at about noon. They bring their new clothes and 5 or 7 rotis (this is called Khačhol) and the musicians play the tune Larenga (Lharenga = music of the gods).

The Brongopa who play the instruments are from Chogolagpa, Dhogopa and Phorokpa households. The ones who sing the hymns are Rigzin of Chogolagpa house, sTanzin of Gharāpa house and Anchouq of Kotorpa house. They are now asked by the head Brongopa, Rigzin, to hurry and bathe in the village stream as the Labdag is very hungry. After bathing all will put on their new clothes and proceed to the shrine to invite the Labdag.

The procession of villagers will stop playing the music some distance from the shrine. The Labdag is not to be seen as he is hiding in the cave. The musical instruments will be hidden under a white sheet of cloth as the Labdag must not see them. Rigzin will then proceed with phok (smouldering juniper in a bowl) and prior to reaching the shrine he will hide his flower covered cap under a white sheet as the Labdag must not see it. The Labdag has the very serious duty of inviting the deities through prayers and other rituals which he undertakes in the cave. These are solemn moments and he must not see the musical instruments and the caps decorated with flowers which are the signs of the merriment that is to follow during the communal celebrations with their gods.

When Rigzin is within earshot of the Labdag he will sing the Lha-gLu (hymn of the gods) and a selected number of villagers belonging to Rus-c'en families will dance before the shrine. The Labdag is very particular that the hymn is sung correctly and if there is any mistake it can result in his stoning the assembled villagers. After the hymn has been sung correctly the Labdag will emerge from the cave and run to the village Cangra ('Brog-skad:Lhaspa). The villagers will then follow and on reaching the Cangra find the Labdag performing a dance for the Lha ('Brog-skad:Lharčes) while the musicians play Prasul. Prasul is a musical tune of a certain length suited to a round of dancing especially performed for their deities. In their folklore it is mentioned that they performed 18 Prasul at the mKhar (fortification) of Ra Makpon (Tib.:dmag-dpon) of Skardu. Robertson mentions 3 rounds of dance being performed for the Kafir deities Imra and Moni.⁸⁶ Francke mentions that during the New Year festival at Khalatse Prasul is played and the young boys dance to it.⁸⁷

After the playing of three Prasul the villagers come into the Cangra ('Brog-skad:Lhaspa). The Labdag then lights a bonfire from the wood which had been collected and stored amongst the branches of the Walnut trees. After this the head Brongopa requests the Labdag to go home, put on fresh clothes and eat.

The Brongopa then form two groups each of which sits in a row facing the other. The head Brongopa seat themselves one at the head of each row. All through the festival this division is maintained intact and no member is allowed to change sides.

Certain hymns are sung alone by the head Brongopa, others are sung by all, or else the Brongopa sings the leading line while the rest repeat in chorus; still other hymns are in the form of riddles. The hymns sung on the first day create moments of anxiety and the seriousness of the situation can be judged by the fact that no one talks. No smoking or drinking is allowed at this time of the day.

The villagers then go home and eat and at about 4.p.m. they assemble once more and the festivities go on into the early hours of the morning. The Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag=master of the gods), by now having rested and changed his clothes, returns to participate. The Labdag is the one who leads most of the dances being performed.

⁸⁶ Robertson 1894:117 & 120; 1896:398 & 400.

⁸⁷ Francke 1923:28, Francke however spells it Bra-sol.

Early next morning the women bring rotis ('Brog-skad:Khačhol) with smouldering juniper ('Brog-skad:Phok) for the Brongopa who have spent the night at the village Cangra. By the time the women arrive they have already taken a cold bath in the freezing autumn morning and they now play Larenga (Lharenga = music of the gods) to which the women perform a dance.

The next assembly at the Cangra ('Brog-skad:Lhaspa) takes place after sunset when the heat of the day has abated. They begin with the singing of hymns after which the festivities continue late into the night when different hymns are sung to the accompaniment of music and dance. Hymns with sexual connotations are sung and accompanying dances are performed. Singing contests are held between two parties, one of women led by the Brongopi and the other of men, where often obscene questions and answers are exchanged. Men are allowed to kiss the woman they like and the husband or the father is not to take offence. This is an action which is in harmony with the mood created by the festivities.

No outsider is allowed into the village premises during these days as the village atmosphere has been cleansed and it must not be polluted. This taboo is most rigidly observed for fear that the deities will not descend or, if they are thought to have done so already, that they will be annoyed. The anger of the gods is expressed by the term Lhaprak (the pronunciation Lhatrak was also noted) In times past this taboo was observed with great rigidity at all times and not just during the Bonoñah festivities. Similar taboos are reported from among other muslim Dard areas as well as from among the Kalash.⁸⁸

There is no standard list of the hymns sung during the Bonoñah festival. I was able to collect two lists of the hymns from mDa, a third from Garkun and a fourth, though incomplete, is provided by Francke who first published the Bonoñah hymns. All the lists of the hymns show certain common features while certain important hymns are either missing or restricted to one particular list. I was able to record on tape as well as note down a certain number of hymns and in doing so was made aware of the fact that there are often several versions of one particular hymn. If one counts all the different hymns in all the lists then one comes to a total of 45 different hymns. To this must be added the varying versions of many of the hymns. This by no means exhausts the totality of the oral tradition present in the hymns. However the Brongopa of both mDa and Garkun were of one opinion as to the total number of hymns, i.e., 21,⁸⁹ which are sung. They can be divided under the following categories: 11 Lha-gLu (or Laglu) and 5 Daruča (Hunting) and 5 Pajuli (shepherds') hymns.

⁸⁸ Vohra 1982:86 and Footnote 29b.

⁸⁹ Note the number < 21 > in the case of the rotis prepared by the boy assisting the Labdag at the cave prior to the beginning of the festival. < 21 > also occurs in the hymn dedicated to Yanding (hymn 9).

Here below is a list put together as the most representative of the four lists.

LIST OF THE HYMNS

Nr.1-5. Daruĉa-(Hunting) hymn

Nr. 6-10. Pajuli-(Shepherds') hymns

Nr.11-21. Lha-glu (hymns of the gods):

Nr.11. Yanding

Nr.12. Mandē

Nr.13. Dumen

Nr.14. Cholo ting

Nr.15. rGyal Dusa (also: Mor-ki Khanlak)

Nr.16. Mī-yul dangpo

Nr.17. Lha-skyal (or Laskyal)

Nr.18. Léi Nakṛn

Nr.19. Sutren Lhatren

Nr.20. Loto Moto (or Tangsé le Tangser)

Nr.21. Sokthi

There are varying themes dealt with in the hymns. There are hymns sung to their deities appealing them to descend and participate in the festivities. There are riddle contests, gambling and races. There are still others exhibiting mental or physical strength between men and women as to who possesses greater knowledge or more effective formulas. These are believed to produce beneficial results and to generate, or to set in motion, useful power. In this atmosphere is an emotion, a feeling of achieving a unity with their past represented by the power attributed to their ancestors. The people are absorbed. The texts are recited in a sing-song manner, stories are told about the brave deeds of notable ancestors and hymns dedicated to them. The pleasures of the Shepherd's life or the hunter's skill are eulogised and these also contain details of their ancient rituals.

The first and the fifth day, when the deities are invited to participate and later requested to depart, are days of great tension and anxiety. The Brongopa believe that the singing of the Bonoñah hymns should not be done at any other time. I had the occasion to realise the firmness of this belief. In 1983, when it was the turn of the Bonoñah celebrations in mDa, I requested the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag= master of the gods) at Garkun to recite some hymns. After reciting for a short while he suddenly started perspiring and discontinued as he feared the deities. The Brongopa of mDa underwent a similar experience. At first he very reluctantly sang the hymns but stopped as soon as he began to tremble and perspire. He felt a weakness in his knees and his legs. It was clear that they were imparting something which they were not supposed to do.

The end of the celebrations on the fifth day is when they sing a hymn requesting their deities to depart to their land. They hope that the deities enjoyed celebrating with the humans in their land (Tib.:Mī-yul).

To initiate their departure two of the junior Brongopa stand facing each other with the raised palms of one touching those of the other so as to form a doorway ('Brog-skad:Dar). The Labdag passes through this doorway and starts the spiral dance followed by the Brongopa and the rest of the villagers each holding the other round the waist. In this manner, dancing and meandering in the form of a spiral, the whole column proceeds to the "Stone" just outside the village Cangra where they request the deities to depart from the land of the humans. The stone is considered to be the contact point between the two worlds. The Labdag puts his foot on the 'Stone' thus signalling their departure. According to another informant the Labdag kicks the stone. During my visit the Labdag merely put his foot upon the stone.

After this event their daily life takes on its regular course which had been interrupted by the humans to celebrate the primordial times with their deities.

Ci. COMPARISON OF THE RITUAL THEMATIC IN BONOÑAH WITH THE NEW YEAR FESTIVAL OF THE KALASH AND LAHUL

The New Year celebrations of the Kalash, called Chaumas (Khowar:Chitrimas), and those of the Bunan speaking Lahulis provide interesting material for comparison. The Bonoñah festival has certain basic themes which run through the celebrations. The material on the Lahulis speaking the Bunan dialect is scanty and therefore the emphasis will be on the Kalash (also called Kalash-Kafirs and the Black-Kafirs). Some comparative material from Kinnaur, the neighbours of the Lahuli, has been added and strengthens the arguments in favour of the latter.

It will be noticed that those themes of the New Year festival which are general and find their echo over a wide area but have nothing in particular to add to the Bonoñah, have been avoided or when relevant in a specific case mentioned only in passing.

Also I have included only those parallels which were substantial to the Bonoñah ritual theme. There are equations about which there was insufficient information available to me. These have been dealt with marginally.

A.i. It is a belief common to the Buddhist Dards, the Kalash⁹⁰ and the Lahuli (Asboe 1933:189) that in Primordial times all beings lived together. As is apparent from the discussion on cosmogony there is the belief that sometime in the prehistoric phase all beings, in particular gods and humans, lived together. This state of affairs came to an end due to differing reasons and the world of humans was separated from that of the gods. Since those times the gods assist the humans and are offered prayers during festivities to descend and participate in the celebrations.

In Kinnaur district, at the village Poo, gods and humans celebrate together during the New Year festival by dancing around a central pillar.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Friedrich Ms.:511,515,588,645-646,675-677,713-716,755; Snoy Ms.:3,16-17; Jettmar 1975:379,398-410.

⁹¹ As Tucci reports "It is evident that these songs and festival are connected with fertility rites and betrothal ceremonies, in which also the equation of the place where the dance takes place with the cosmos, enhanced by the presence of the central pole (Sumeru), is clear. ... The festival is a gathering (adsom) of those who participate in it, but also of the gods protecting the territory, divided into the three usual groups: lha, gñan, klu" (Tucci 1966:61).

He further reports "The place, on account of the ceremony, has been transformed into a reflection of the world, in its spatial-temporal equilibrium, but, as a consequence of

In the Primordial times there was the absence of all duality or the distinction between good and evil. The first important dualism was the creation of heaven and earth, i.e., the separation of gods and humans to their own worlds.

The festivities attempt to reconstruct these Primordial times. Through the ritual prescriptions, the celebrations reveal their belief system from an archaic past preserved and reactivated during Bonoñah.

A.ii. Ritual purification is undertaken. The village atmosphere and the households are cleansed and purified with juniper smoke and the dishes are washed in water boiled with juniper (ritual purification called Shigchu).

In this manner the deities can descend from the sacred realm and participate in the festivities.

Polluting influences from outside are strictly prohibited from entering the village premises. Ritual purity and pollution taboo is also strictly maintained between the households within the village⁹² and in particular by the priestly class.⁹³

A.iii. Dough figures as well as drawings are made in the Lahuli houses⁹⁴ and in the Jestak hall among the Kalash⁹⁵ in an attempt to reconstruct the imagery of the Primordial times.

Similarly among the Buddhist Dards dough figures and drawings on walls, pillars and balcony are made as a part of the fertility cult. These figures consist of wild and domesticated animals and it is their communal existence which is seen being relived during the festive days.⁹⁶

The dough figures and drawings are also made with a belief that they will influence the fertility of humans as well as domesticated animals. There are also symbols made for the prosperity of the household and a fruitful harvest.⁹⁷

the ritual itself, it has been transferred on top of rGyal ri - Sumeru itself, above the temporal-spatial relation" (Tucci 1966:65).

⁹² For the Kalash see, Siiger 1956:23 & 30; Snoy Ms.:3,8 & 20; Jettmar 1975:370-371 & 383-384. For the Bunan speaking Lahulis see, Asboe 1933:195;

⁹³ Among the Kalash, Snoy Ms.:20; Friedrich Ms.:689.

⁹⁴ Asboe 1933:191 & 195.

⁹⁵ Friedrich Ms.:633,644-645; Snoy Ms.:9-12; Jettmar 1975:381; Siiger 1956:23.

⁹⁶ For the Kalash, Snoy Ms.:9.

⁹⁷ Bunan speaking Lahulis see, Asboe 1933:189-195; For the Kalash see, Siiger 1956:23; Snoy Ms.:9,27.

From among the Buddhist Dards I was able to take down some drawings which are reproduced in Plate I.

A.iv. It is during the winter months that the pairing of their livestock takes place. A similar system of beliefs must have been true for the humans as well if the data on the Buddhist Dards and that from Hunza⁹⁸ provides reason for supporting such a belief, as it is related that, until the recent past, all marriages among the Buddhist Dards and in Hunza community were performed on a particular day during the New Year festivities. Similarly among the Buddhist Dards the birthday celebrations of all the children born during that year were conducted on another day of the New Year festive calendar.

Among the Kalash, on the eighth day the wild animals believed to have been living in the stalls are driven away in a ceremony. To the accompaniment of this event a song is sung which has the basic content that "now the wild animals have been chased out and they cannot have sexual contact with the livestock".⁹⁹

Among the Buddhist Dards sexual hymns are sung while other hymns have the form of riddles sung between groups of men and women. These are supposed to release forces and heighten the atmosphere of the festive gathering. Dances with sexual movement are performed in order to create the same effect.

The Buddhist Dards sing a hymn with sexual connotations addressed to their deity Yanding (hymn 9).

Among the Kalash similar notions are present and the deity Balumain is said to be the one who taught human beings the sexual songs.¹⁰⁰ Sexual rites are also seen performed with their deities (or rather their representatives) in order to attain greater purity.¹⁰¹

During the Kalash ceremony, before the Pure party (representing the 7 Mahandeo) are accosted by the impure party, the latter sing the words "that they have been in the village and had intercourse with the women and now they shall do it to them from behind".¹⁰²

Both among the Buddhist Dards and the Kalash there is very strict adherence to the principle of purity. Thus these religious performances are only to be witnessed by the villagers. The hymns and the songs are secret and not revealed to an outsider. Besides this an ethnic purity is maintained by the Buddhist Dards and precaution is taken against any polluting influences from outside.

⁹⁸ Jettmar 1975:264; Muller-Stellrecht 1973:31,189-194; Biddulph 1880:78;Vohra 1982:90.

⁹⁹ Snoy Ms.:12; Friedrich Ms.:613; Jettmar 1975:382.

¹⁰⁰ Friedrich Ms.:628,639-640,648,667,678-679,691,694,746; Snoy Ms.:6,8,14,15,24,26; Siiger 1956:23; Jettmar 1975:373,386.

¹⁰¹ Friedrich Ms.:675,677-679,688-689; Jettmar 1975:355,386.

¹⁰² Friedrich Ms.:666 ff,673; Snoy 1962:25; Jettmar 1975:385-386.

B.i. The significance attached to the Tok-tree among the Kalash is reminiscent of the sentiments attached to the Juniper tree ('Brog-skad:Cilgi Deüha) in the pasture grounds (Uno Grung a part of Nir mDa) by the Buddhist Dards. The Kalash lead a procession, of males only, to the Tok-tree. This procession of men carrying lighted torches culminates in animal sacrifices to their deity.¹⁰³

It is said that in ancient times the Bonoñah festival was held at the pasture grounds and that the Minaro Raja sat on a stone throne called Phoñskatu near the juniper tree. This Juniper tree is known as Juniper Shrine ('Brog-skad:Cilgi Deüha) and the women are forbidden to approach it. Not very long ago massive Ibex horns surrounded it. These have now been removed to a place higher up where there is a smaller juniper tree. This transfer was done to protect the shrine from polluting influences. Earlier no strangers were allowed to come near the place but today Muslim labourers come from Chigtan area to cultivate the fields during the summer months.

The great number of rites performed at the Tok-tree among the Kalash cannot be compared with what little information we have from the Buddhist Dards but it is conceivable that similar rites were held at the Juniper Shrine during the times of the Minaro. The rites however, sexual rites¹⁰⁴ included, are amply attested to in the hymns of the Bonoñah festival.

In Lahul there is a procession of lighted torches to the sacred Juniper tree (Asboe 1933:200) which is the residence of a fierce deity demanding bloody sacrifices and here the offerings of "rai-gen" are scattered (Asboe 1933:191). After the torch procession the Lahuli dance around a bonfire and sing a song cursing the evil King of Kardang who ruled in ancient times.

These motifs of the New Year -Winter- festival are common over a large area. We find this cultural complex documented from among the Muslim Dards who celebrate the Cilli festival (Müller-Stellrecht 1973:24-26), among the Buddhist Dards and also among the Ladakhi who have absorbed these archaic cultural traits common to the Dard ethnic groups. The myth from Nubra (village Carasa) of the Co Bongskang (King Donkey feet)¹⁰⁵ who ruled in very ancient times and the lore related about him is identical with that of the ancient ruler of Gilgit, Śri Badat.¹⁰⁶

B.ii. The functions of the various Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag=master of the gods) among the Buddhist Dards are several and some of these can be compared to the hereditary functions of the Kalash clans.¹⁰⁷ During the Bonoñah festival the Labdag who performs

¹⁰³ Snoy Ms.:19,24; Friedrich Ms.:678-679,688-690,691-692; Jettmar 1975:371-372.

¹⁰⁴ Among the Kalash Friedrich Ms.:639-640,648,589,665-666,670-679; Snoy Ms.: 23-24; Jettmar 1975:384-386.

¹⁰⁵ (Vohra:1985 in print;1985a:247-256)

¹⁰⁶ Müller-Stellrecht 1973:252-259; Jettmar 1975:200,240-244,252, 262,259.

the rituals and leads the procession of the spiral dance while bidding farewell to the deities can be compared to the function of the man from the Rashid clan who leads the spiral dance of the Kalash (Friedrich Ms.:636-637a).

Just as among the Buddhist Dards a different Labdag from a different pha-spun is responsible for inaugurating the sowing of the crop, so also among the Kalash this function is performed by a member of the Ladoschi clan.¹⁰⁸

Among the Lahuli, the Labdag, who is the keeper of the village deity, performs the ritual arrow shooting while dressed in black and dances to the accompaniment of the drum beat (Asboe 1933:196). In Nubra as well as in other parts of Ladakh the priest, also called Larbdag (< Labdag, < Lha-bdag), offered bloody sacrifices in earlier times to the village god at the Lha-tho. This practice has been discontinued in most parts of Ladakh due to Buddhist preachings to the contrary and the Larbdag today only changes the juniper leaves at the village Lha-tho during the New Year festival (Tib.:Lo-gsar) (Vohra:1985a).

B.iii. The spiral dance of the Kalash during the New Year (Chaumas)¹⁰⁹ and the Spring festival (Joshi)¹¹⁰ are quite similar in their ritual motif when compared to the Buddhist Dard spiral dance during Bonoñah.

The spiral dance takes place on the last day of Bonoñah. During this dance the deities are requested to depart from the land of the humans where they participated together in the festivities.

In Lahul, at the end of the New Year celebrations the gods are dismissed with a prayer (Asboe 1933:195).

Towards the end of the New Year festivities among the Kalash a dancing procession descends in a spiral movement from the pasture area, where the Tok-tree stands, to the village. Each man holds the one in front at the hips and they dance on the roof of the goat stall and then at the dancing grounds, proceeding in a sinuous procession of dancers (Snoy Ms.:26-27).

During the spring festival of the Kalash the same spiral dance takes place but in this men and women are bound to each other by means of rings made of branches of a particular tree. They are led by a man from the Rashid clan who hereditarily performs this task and in this meandering dance they proceed to the Malosch. Here they throw down their rings and then gather them up again and from then on these are seen as blessed and sacred. If

¹⁰⁷ The Labdag (priest), Brongopa (singer of the hymns) and the Lhapa (shaman) of the Buddhist Dards can also be compared with the similar offices in the Kafir society, namely Uta, Debilala and Pshur. These offices in the Kafir society are also comparable to the priests in Vedic society. See footnote in chapter C.

¹⁰⁸ Friedrich Ms.:590,663,687-688. In Krakal village, however, the Rischidi (Rashidi) clan are seen as the descendants of the Ladoschi clan, see pages 769,772-773; Snoy Ms.:18; Jettmar 1975:365,368,393.

¹⁰⁹ Snoy Ms.:26; Friedrich Ms.:694,635-637; Jettmar 1975:386.

¹¹⁰ Morgenstierne 1947:247; Friedrich Ms.:737-737b; Jettmar 1975:389.

during the spiral dance a person breaks the chain by losing the hold on the ring of the next person then it is believed that he or she will not find the way to the other world after death.¹¹¹

This motif about the breaking of the chain has the same significance for the Buddhist Dards during their spiral dance at the end of the Bonoñah festivities. The villagers are led by the Labdag. They start by going through the symbolic door ('Brog-skad:Dar) made by the two junior Brongopas with their outstretched hands holding each other. Through this door all proceed, following the Labdag in a meandering labyrinth, dancing to the music towards the 'Stone'. It is here that their deities are bid farewell by the humans after the celebrations and requested to go to their own world. The 'Stone' where the Labdag places his foot, and symbolically bids them depart, is seen as the contact point between the world of the humans and that of the gods.

From among the Kinnauris, in village Poo, it is reported that the village assembly ground (Dog ra) "is not only the projection of the universe in its extension, divided into four glin, but it is also the projection of the three spheres of existence; that is why, when the dance takes place, the steps of the dance are dedicated first to the gods, then to the btsan and then to the klu; the big 'stone' is evidently the axis mundi, which represents the link, the connection between the three layers of the world (vv.85-86)".¹¹²

B.iv. Among the Kafirs there is the belief in the sacred hole and if one looks down it one sees the nether world and dies immediately. Horses were sacrificed at this place.¹¹³

A myth from Urstun (Muslim Kalash) relates about the god Gish (Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:27-28) who appeared as a crippled old man and found the villagers ungrateful except for a woman who had only one son. He prophesied to the latter the destruction of their village. He told the woman that after the destruction she should look for his stick and wherever it was found a Malosch (alter) should be built which was accordingly done. Here we have the motif of the stick being found at the place from where god Gish in the form of a crippled old man went to the other world.¹¹⁴

The Malosch is a word in Khowar language (in Kalash:Dur)¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Friedrich Ms.:737; Jettmar 1975:389

¹¹² Tucci 1966:65, 103-104.

¹¹³ Robertson 1894:118; 1896:393,380.

¹¹⁴ This is similar to the above mentioned sacred hole of the Kafirs which is the connecting point to the other world where there was in Kushteki, of the Prasun Kafirs, a temple.

¹¹⁵ Malosch is 'Alter' in the Khowar language and its equation in the strict sense with the Kalash word 'Dur' is incorrect as the meaning of 'Dur' is 'House'.

In context of the Malosch the word Dur is always used together with the name of their deities, e.g., Mahandeo-Dur or Virin-Dur.

This 'God's-House' consists of a square brick construction with a large carved wooden board on top of it. The board has a hole in the center behind which figures were earlier located.

It is conceivable that this was the representation of the connection to the other world.¹¹⁶ It is beyond this hole that the deities lived. At the end of the Kalash New Year festival the deities are asked to depart.¹¹⁷

The Malosch has the same significance as that of the 'Stone' among the Buddhist Dards at which their deities are said to depart.

This concept of the door to the other world is of great significance as at this place the celebration of the festival, i.e., the relived Primordial times can be brought to an end.

C.i. We have seen that in the creation myths there is the cosmogonic conception of there being only water in the beginning.

Ghulam Muhammad, writing on the folklore of the Gilgit area, shows how the earth was brought forth from below the ocean by a mouse who then spread it upon the wings of a bird.¹¹⁸

In the Vedic literature we find a parallel myth where there is only water upon which moved the creator in the form of wind. He finds a lotus leaf and dives under the ocean and brings forth earth which he spreads over the leaf creating the world.¹¹⁹

Johannes Hertel's work "Die Himmelstore im Veda und im Awesta" provides interesting grounds for furthering the discussion which has arisen from the material on the Bonoñah and the Kalash New Year festival.

In the Vendidad (II, 20ff.) we find that two gatherings take place, one of the gods and the other of humans. Ahura Mazda declares the forthcoming of winter as punishment for the sinning humans. (Hertel:34). The coming of winter is seen as the end of the golden epoch.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Morgenstierne 1973:122 -Malosch (Mal'os) = Alter, Sanctuary; 1973:98 -Dur = House, Room; Siiger 1956:1 & Footnote; Snoy Ms.:4; Friedrich MS.:570; Jettmar, 1975:361-362,390;

Leitner 1880:145 -reports about the 'Stone' from among the Bashgal Kafirs, which reminds one of the 'Stone' of the Buddhist Dards, where the deities depart to the other world.

¹¹⁷ Friedrich Ms.:590,579-580,683-684.

¹¹⁸ Ghulam Muhammad J.R.A.S.:1907/Reprint 1980:28.

¹¹⁹ Hertel 1924:23-25; Only one version of the creation myth has been taken for comparison. A wider comparative scale from Vedic literature is beyond the scope of the present work.

C.iii. J. Hertel argues in his introduction that the planetary bodies are the door to the heavens. To quote from the text:

"Daß Sonne und Mond die durch Zerschmettern des Steinhimmels entstandenen Himmelstore sind, läßt sich schon für die indo-arische Zeit nachweisen" (Hertel 1924:8).

The vault of the heavens has as its door the sun, moon and the stars. This has been dealt with in considerable detail (Hertel 1924:44-56) but for our purpose the Apri hymns of the R̥gveda are important. The oldest of these hymns belong to pre-Vedic times (Hertel 1924:57) or to the early Vedic period (Gonda 1975:104) and deal with animal sacrifices. Here the alter or place where the sacrifices are made is thought of as the door to the heavens as opposed to the heavenly bodies (Hertel 1924:60). The deities are seen to be descending at the place of offering (Hertel 1924:61).

Here we cannot refrain from seeing an analogy with the Malosch where offerings are brought and animal sacrifices conducted. It is supposed to be the door to the other world through which the deities come and one is not supposed to look down it for fear of death. The Kafir believe in the hole where horses were sacrificed and from where the way led to the nether world. Similarly there is the Buddhist Dard belief in the descent of their deities after a white kid has been sacrificed. The stone where the deities are requested to depart is seen as the door leading to the world beyond the land of humans.

¹²⁰ Hertel 1924:21 and Footnote 2 & pages 36-37.

D. THE BONOÑAH PANTHEON

The Bonoñah pantheon is exclusively derived from the hymns sung during the triennially celebrated festival. There are other coincidental pieces of information on the Minaro or geographical identifications with the times of the Minaro which are also often mentioned in some hymns.

The deities of the Bonoñah pantheon have no place in the daily life cycle where a completely separate set of deities are worshipped. These deities are brought sacrifices and offerings and have been dealt with in detail in the chapter 'Live Pantheon'. There are, however, elements of the Bonoñah pantheon which have found a place in the 'Live Pantheon' and thus continue to be worshipped. There are other archaic elements which have been adapted into the belief system as it is practised today but it is extremely difficult to sift them out. In the present state of our knowledge there are several reasons which prohibit this clear cut division though it has been taken recourse to for analytical purposes. The first reason is that the Minaro traditions, as they are available today, have a mixture of several versions of dialects from the Tibetan and other languages like Minaro and 'Brog-skad. Secondly the hymns are so extensive and so many in number that it would take much more time and linguistic experience than was available to me. Moreover the hymns are not identical and there exist several versions. Different Brongopa taught the oral traditions as they received them and developed them with possible local variations. There also occurred an exchange of these traditions through change of residence to another village and thus there was coexistence and synthesis of traditions from different villages. There are a number of hymns which are exclusive to each village tradition despite the concordance on the majority of issues. Only a comparative assessment of the different traditions of the Bonoñah hymns would bring greater insight. The third and most distressing fact is that a number of the elements of the oral traditions are not understood by the local people themselves. A few of the older men understand these but may not live long and there exists the difficulty of communicating with them which makes progress very slow.

It is therefore realistic to examine first the Bonoñah pantheon as it is revealed to us from the celebration of the festival as well as from the hymns which are sung during these days. All religious elements which reveal themselves outside the days of the Bonoñah festivities have been included in the 'Live Pantheon'.

The Bonoñah festival is a complex of beliefs kept alive by the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag=master of the gods), the Lhapa and the Brongopa. These professional functionaries in the Buddhist Dard society transfer the knowledge orally from one generation to the other. The profession of the Labdag is hereditary while the Brongopa are recruited from certain Rus-c'en families and hence the full knowledge is restricted to only a certain circle of households. The knowledge of the hymns is secretly guarded, not being revealed to any outsider. Thus there is a danger of these traditions being lost due not

only to the fact that the knowledge is restricted to a small circle of households but that the younger generation is not interested in it as a consequence of new influences from outside. Thus it is most probable that these old traditions will go with the older generation to the grave.

The deities of the Bonoñah pantheon are seen as descending from 'Stañ gi Lha' (Ladakhi: 'Sten' means 'up').¹²¹

The deities are not seen as having their residence at a particular place but each is specifically called upon to participate in the festivities from their abode above.

Deities of the Bonoñah Pantheon

1. Baša and Roše
2. Léi Nakṛṇ
3. Mandē
4. Como Mandi
5. Yanging
6. Dumen
7. Rong Lha-c'en rGyal-mo
8. Rong bya-mo Lha-mo
9. Gola rGya-po

In many of the hymns we find the concept 'Khuda' to whom greetings are sent while worshipping their deities.

This name is also used among the Kalash.¹²²

Khuda in Zend and Sanskrit finds a common etymology, meaning 'Self-giving' (Skt.: Svadatta).¹²³ Further in the hymns there is the usage Khuda jü. It seems likely that here 'Khuda-jü' means 'Greetings to Khuda'. 'Jü' is a common Ladakhi word for 'Greeting'.

1. BAŠA and ROŠE

It is said that Baša and Roše are two deities who remained behind when all other deities were allocated their functions. These two did not take their place in 'Sten gi Lha' as opposed to the other deities but it is not clear at which place they are supposed to have

¹²¹ The Ladakhi word Stañ or Steñ (= up) is pronounced 'Styañ' in the Hymns. Also see Koshal. S., Ladakhi Grammer, Delhi 1979.

¹²² Friedrich Ms.:776 (Kurze notitzen); Jettmar 1975:338,341. "Khuda-mo" and "Khuda-Peri" are also known from Hunza.

¹²³ Steingass 1892/Reprint 1975:448; Vullers 1885:660.

remained behind.¹²⁴

2. LÉI NAKRN

Léi Nakrn along with Čomo Mandí is seen as the ruler of all the deities. The specific function ascribed to Léi Nakrn, in mDa and Garkun, is that of an oracle prophesying future events through the medium of a Lhapa. It appears that 'Nakrn' is one of the ancient Dard deities worshipped from the times when they had populated the greater part of Ladakh.¹²⁵

Léi Nakrn is referred to with several titles in the Buddhist Dard villages. There are several hymns dedicated to Léi Nakrn in which we find these titles used. He is called Mašo Nakrn (glorious Nakrn), Léi Nakrn Co (Léi Nakrn the Chief), Hari Léi Nakrn (here it is uncertain whether names of two deities, i.e., Hari and Nakrn are fused into one), Rin-c'en Nashi Nakrn (Lovable Nakrn), and as Léi Nakrn rGyal (Léi Nakrn the King).

The two hymns dedicated to Léi Nakrn (Hymn 5 & 6) are two versions of the same with minor variations. The general context of the Hymn deals with a dice game following which the migratory route from Gilgit to Ladakh is enumerated. All five hymns deal with the route of migration but each is dedicated to a different deity, for example one is dedicated to Čomo Mandí.

In the oral traditions brought in connection with this migratory route we hear that the three brothers Dulo, Galo, and Melo, prior to their migration,¹²⁶ went to the roof top of the Gilgit Rajas fort (mKhar) where they played a game of dice as related in this hymn. I suspect that there was the fusing of two separate traditions which come from two separate periods of time.

The dice game, the Brongopa explained, is played on a board on which are placed pearls. Depending on the game there may be 3, 4, or 7 pearls placed the maximum number being 12. The dice is thrown by the player and accordingly the pearls are moved. The

¹²⁴ To my question as to where Baša and Roše remained behind I got no reply.

¹²⁵ In the month dangpo of the Buddhist calendar a festival is celebrated at the village Mašo. Here the deity Mašo Nagran is said to descend and the Lhapa in his trance prophesies events like the coming of a war in the future. This festival was a famous event in times past and Mašo village was visited by the Ladakh rGyal-po for consulting the oracle, i.e., for the occurrence of war in the future. Educated Ladakhi know about the belief of six of these deities which came from Kham in east Tibet. There are two Nagran (Ladakhi: Nag = black; ran = pure) and two Chag-ran (Chag = iron) who are in Mašo (Matho) village. Then there is Ser-ran (Ser = gold) in Stog and hYu-ran (hYu = Turquoise) in village rGya.

¹²⁶ Also see, Vohra 1982:74-75.

dice has on it the numbers 2 to 6 and at the place where 1 is supposed to be there is a cross. This game is played even today by the Buddhist Dards on a board drawn on the ground and using stones instead of pearls.

In hymn 5, 'Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo', we find that Léi Nakṛn has a protective spirit called Boṅryus. It was related to me that first the game was played for a gold box, then a large turquoise and lastly for a red stone (possibly a coral). Once these had been won they bet for a second time and this time the game was played for land. Having lost again they took their departure from Gilgit eastwards to Ladakh.

In his work 'Das Würfelspiel im Alten Indien' Heinrich Lüders deals with an analysis of the dice game in considerable detail from ancient source material. In the work Vidhura-panditajataka (Lüders 1907:4-5) we find an ancient retention of a dice game which provides several parallel themes as are sung about in the hymn dedicated to Léi Nakṛn.

In the above Jātaka the dice game is being played between the King of Kurus and the Yaksha Punnaka who challenges the King. In our hymn the game is played between the Chief called Ṭurmik Co and the deity Léi Nakṛn rGyal.

Just as Léi Nakṛn rGyal has a protective spirit, Boṅryus, representing his mother, so also in the Jātaka the King of Kurus. The goddess who is the protective spirit of the King of Kurus stands in the relationship of a mother to him and helps him positively in the dice game.

Moreover, the theme in the Jātaka of the spreading of a carpet and the placing of a silver board with a precious stone as a bet recurs in the hymn Léi Nakṛn in which, too, a carpet is spread and a copper board with two objects such as a gold box and a large turquoise stone as bet are placed.

A transposal of the ideas represented in the Jātaka by the Buddhist missionaries who travelled through the Gilgit region en-route to Central Asia is plausible. It is however equally plausible that the authors of the Jātaka and the creators of the Bonoṅah hymns acquired these ideas from a third source common to them. The proof of the presence of Buddhism in the Gilgit area is available from the period between 5th to the 8th centuries A.D. Reports of Chinese pilgrims, monastery (near Shigar, Baltistan)¹²⁷ and stupa ruins (from where Gilgit Mss. were recovered), rock reliefs and carvings, among which the one from Naupur is particularly imposing, and carved Jātaka scenes and rock inscriptions present ample evidence. All these relate to us the existence of a flourishing state religion with intercourse between Central Asia and India. The Tibetan expansion in the 8th century first up to Baltistan and later to Gilgit led to the suppression of Buddhism which is attested to by the deposition of the Gilgit Manuscripts in a stupa.

¹²⁷ Information from Prof. Jettmar who visited the place on two separate occasions.

Hymn 5

HONG LEKHA BURYON YA LIJYO

1. Today is a good day, Hong lekha Buryon ya lijyo¹²⁸
2. A day of auspicious stars
3. On the roof of Boñryus¹²⁹ palace
4. On the upper most part of the roof
5. A copper playing board was spread
6. Pearls were spread on it in a circle
7. Sandal wood pieces were placed in a circle
8. 'Numen'¹³⁰ stone was taken in hand
9. Conchshell dice thrower was taken in hand
10. A box of gold was set aside for a bet
11. The Conchshell dice thrower was shaken for the winner
12. The gold box was won
13. The dice thrower was shaken by Léi Nakṛn rGyal
14. A Turquoise stone was placed as a bet
15. The Conchshell dice thrower was shaken for the winner
16. The Turquoise stone was won
17. The dice thrower was shaken by Turmik Čo rGyal

Following this dice game there is an account of the route traversed during their migratory movement eastwards towards Ladakh.

There is a total of five hymns dealing with the migratory route. The beginning of each of these hymns is different and each dedicated to different deities.

18. Hail and rain is falling
19. Snow, water and slush
20. Ice, melted snow and slush
21. Look down and dont look down

¹²⁸ Every line of this hymn ends with the phrase 'Hong lekha Buryon ya lijyo'. None of my informants could tell me the meaning of this line. 'Hong' is an exclamation. The word Buryon is also present in hymn 15 where it is the name of a mountain. Does it represent an appeal to the mountain? We actually know of "Buryon" in the Buryon Kanrai kwar which has its source near the petra (Aornos), the Ilam itself, and runs into Barandu which later flows into the Indus (Tucci 1977:54-55).

¹²⁹ Mother of Léi Nakṛn and his protective spirit

¹³⁰ Blue stone with gold spots

The departure is believed to take place towards the end of the winter months. Most of the expressions used in the lines 18-21 are in the language of the Minaro (see the 'Brogskad text'). The translation here is therefore only an approximate rendering of the real meaning.

22. Going down the Gilgit-Brukšal stream
23. Going past the dancing place in Gilgit
24. Going past the palace window of the Chief of Turmik
25. Baša - Bišo¹³¹
26. Shakar Cundab¹³²
27. At the dancing place near the Skardu fort
28. Gar Singé¹³³
29. Then going past Skardu, Shigar and Chambrojim
30. Kéiris¹³⁴
31. Parkutta¹³⁵ is compared to the sky
32. Shiri Tingpe¹³⁶
33. Going past a camping ground
34. ...Banka¹³⁷
35. Reference is made to the greenery of Khapalu
36. Continued reference to Khapalu¹³⁸
37. Reference to a temporary stop at Khapalu
38. On the roof of the palace

¹³¹ Baša is the name of a place along the river Indus. It lies south of the confluence of the Turmik stream with the river Indus. The Turmik stream descends from the Haramosh range.

¹³² Name of a village. Not identifiable on the maps available to me.

¹³³ Gar Singé, a ridge south of Indus and towards west of Skardu.

¹³⁴ Kéiris is the place where the river Indus is joined by the river Shyok flowing down from Khapalu.

¹³⁵ Parkutta, like Skardu and Shigar, was the residence of a local Chief near the Chiefdom of Kharmang.

¹³⁶ A village on the river Indus between Kharmang and Marol.

¹³⁷ 'Banka' is a word meaning 'Waiting place'.

¹³⁸ Khapalu was an important Chieftanship during the 2nd millennium A.D. which probably also played an important role in relationship with Khotan in the period anterior to that.

39. Gavis Juniper...¹³⁹

40. Reference is made to a grove of blue Juniper trees near abouts Gavis.

In the Story of the Creation of Shigar (Schuler:1978) one finds that the people coming from Gilgit, Hunza and Nagir came via the Baše river. Here we find the migrants going past the palace (fort) of Turmik Co which must lie on the stream with the same name.

Both the streams, Baše and Turmik, descending from the Haramosh mountains, join the river Indus not very far from each other. Hence in the Story of the Creation of Shigar we have the description of an alternate route.

The rest of the route in this hymn follows the course of the river Indus through Baltistan into Ladakh. There is reference to the most important settlements en route which, atleast during the 2nd millennium A.D., became important centers of power. When not united against a common enemy they often fought wars against each other.

At Gavis the migrants seem to have gone over the mountains of the Ladakh range. That they did not travel along the river Indus, which at this point forms a formidable and almost untraversable gorge, is evident from the fact that the next stop is mDa-'brog, i.e., the higher pasture grounds close to the place from where the mDa stream originates. It is possible that there was a lake at this place along the Indus as is related in the ancient folklore regarding this particular stretch of the Indus (also see F. Drew:1875).

41. Reference is made to mDa-'brog ('Brog-skad:Nir mDa)

42. Skí šur¹⁴⁰

43. Reference made to the celebration of a big festival

44. Dancing at the festival caused dust to arise

45. Reference to the festival

46. The beautiful flowers called Krandal

These lines celebrate the arrival of the migrants at the pasture land at mDa-'brog. Lines 40 & 41 are sung by two persons, each singing one line, commemorating their arrival.

Skí šur, which is referred to in hymns dedicated to their deities, is the place where the Minaro celebrated the Bonoñah festival.

The next three lines tell us that the festive celebrations were big (= čin) and the festival (= Khrom)¹⁴¹ is cause for dancing which causes dust (= maika) to rise. Then there is the praise of the beautiful flowers growing which indicates that their arrival occurred during the late spring or summer months when the higher pasture grounds are a myriad of colourful flowers.

¹³⁹ Gavis is a stream which joins the Indus close to the Ladakh-Baltistan border.

¹⁴⁰ A particular place in mDa-'brog which is often found mentioned in other hymns as well.

¹⁴¹ In Tibetan: Khrom = Market

47. 1000 of their members proceed to Dras
48. Their arrival at Mulbek and the possible mention of the Maitreya statue.
49. At Kharbu the wind made the sound Gor-Gor
50. Their arrival at Yuru Singé zGañs¹⁴²
51. Their arrival at a small field at Teya
52. Their arrival at a rocky-stony place at Tinmosgang
53. Journey to the Juniper grove at Hemis Śukpa
54. Arrival at the blue Juniper village
55. Their journey to 'Basgo-Cow-head'¹⁴³
56. They reach Leh where there is a stone
57. Going past Shey at not a very good place
58. At Sakti the Minaro gave food

Here we see that the migratory movement does not stop at mDa as is the case with the hymn recorded by Francke in which the migrants stop at Sanid (a hamlet of mDa).

A 1000 Minaro proceed to Dras. The route being followed is the old caravan route from Kashmir to Leh. They go past Mulbek to Kharbu. However this is not the Kharbu which lies on the right bank of Dras river where the population even today speaks a language related to the Shina of the Dards.

Then they proceed to Yuru Singé zGañs. This is the old name of the place which is today called Lamayuru and which was, in the Buddhist Dard folklore, where the first and original temple stood.

The journey continues to Teya, lying on the caravan route between Khalatse and Tinmosgang. Further halting places are where juniper groves are located. Their arrival at Basgo where a Cow's head (Bamgo = Cow-head) is supposed to be buried in a stupa. Further their arrival at Leh where there is a stone and their memory of a game played which required the lifting of the stone.

They go past Shey village which is said to be 'not a very good place' (= šang). Later their arrival at village Sakti where food is taken and from where, as we shall see, their journey proceeds to Nubra. This route to Nubra was the one used by the caravans in the past as it remained open for the longest period during the year as opposed to the route via Khardung La.

59. En route to Nubra past a deep gorge
60. Crossing the waters over a 'hanging bridge'
61. They arrive at Nubra, at a green-grassy place
62. Green vegetation of the Blue village
63. Arrival at a natural spring (Durtsé Chumik)

¹⁴² The old name for Lamayuru according to sTanzin of Čhogolagpa household. Possibly also the name of an ancient shrine there.

¹⁴³ It was related to me that in Basgo there was a Stupa containing a Cow-head in accordance with the hymn.

64. The leader of the Minaro sat at a high place called aŌphoni Styañbu

Here we find their route over the deep gorge and they cross the river by means of a hanging bridge made of twigs (= Chugalđam). Their arrival at Nubra is greeted by greenery. The Buddhist Dards see all shades of green, emerald and blue green as blue and no separate term exists for these colours.

They arrive at a natural spring called 'Durtsé Chumik'. There are watersprings on the caravan route to Yarkand and one of these springs is even today called 'Burtsé Chumik'. There is reference to 'aŌphoni Styañbu' which is a high place, perhaps a ridge in Nubra. It is also referred to in the hymn dedicated to Dumen (Hymn 10) where the deity is seen descending on 'aŌphoni Styañbu'. Here we find a clear recollection of their travel to Nubra. Several stories of local folklore, recorded from Carasa and other villages in Nubra provide an insight into traditions which have also been recorded from the Gilgit Dards.

65. White Sattu (roasted barley flour) is brought as offering

66. White Milk offering is brought

67. Red-eyed goat is brought as offering

68. Čokor raskyes¹⁴⁴ is brought as offering

69. Small round rotis (leavened bread) are brought as offering

After singing this hymn of migration to their deity 'Léi Nakṛn' offerings are made in honour of the gods. All their deities are now thought to be assembled to celebrate this festival with the humans.

70. Deities of Lha-yul do not sit here but depart to Lha-yul

71. Did you not like this place, did Mī-yul not appeal to you

72. May the gods have food in Lha-yul

73. May the humans have food in Mī-yul

3. MANDĒ

Mandē is perhaps the most important deity in the Bonoñah pantheon. This is the only deity which has found a place in the 'Live Pantheon' as the protector of the livestock and is worshipped for the prosperity and fertility of the herd. This role of Mandē is also dealt with separately in the live pantheon.

Here it is worth stressing the importance of the hymn 'Mandē Sho' which is the only hymn recorded up to now containing no elements of Tibetan language and which is sung in 'Brog-skad. The hymn describes the small field where their deities assembled with the

¹⁴⁴ A goat with straight horns.

humans. Food is cooked and the names of all their kin are mentioned as witnessing the event. The kinship terms used are the same as those in everyday use.

A.H.Francke recorded the hymn on the 'Migration of the Dards' (Francke May 1905:98) which appears to be a mixture of three hymns. One of these hymns is related to Mandē as is evident from the lines 20-25 of the Migration hymn. The following is the reproduction of Francke's text:

Text

20. Hō hāyón māshrōn mandēdē mādē mandēshin
21. Trityón málmal
22. Mandēdē mandēshin
23. Hō kēyón málmal
24. Mandēdē mandēshin
25. Hō kēyón málmal.

Translation

20. O, we honour the Mandēde mande mandēshin (gods)
21. Let us dance (on this) place,
22. O Mandēde mādēshin!
23. O, this little field (is) the place,
24. Mandēde mādēshin!
25. O, this little field (is) the place!

Here we see that the context of these lines is the same as the more lengthy version of the hymn 'Mandē Sho' (Hymn 7). The lengthy formulation 'Mandēde mande mandēshin' is possibly the form used while singing the hymn.

The deity Mandē plays a major role in the Kafir pantheon. The way the name is pronounced takes varying forms from valley to valley. This variation is also caused by the differing dialects. Robertson (1894:114) was the first to inform about the deity 'Mon' in his report of 1894.

Morgenstierne later analysed the variations from different areas and the dialects of the Kafirs (Morgenstierne 1951-53:164).

The following variations are available:

- Urstun: - Mōne, Mōṅyo
- Brumotul: - M'ōne
- Ashkun: - Mādē
- Waigal: - Mādē
- Kam: - Moni, Ksul-Mōn¹⁴⁵
- Prasun: - Ksūlū-M'āndī
- Kalash: - Kūsala-Mahandēu

¹⁴⁵ meaning 'Mon the Wise'. The terms from Kam-Kafirs are those of Robertson.

On linguistic grounds Morgenstierne suggested that the name is probably derived from Māndē < Mahā(n)deva.

Later Edelberg in his article on Paruni (Prasun) myths and hymns encountered the forms Māde (Edelberg 1972:61) and Mān (Edelberg 1972:80) but also found the usage of the form Māndē (Edelberg 1972:72,81), as had been suggested by Morgenstierne.

This hypothetical proposition of Morgenstierne that these variations were derived from 'Mandē' found proof not only in Edelberg's report about Mandē being a separate form but also in what was first reported to Jettmar in 1978 in Ladakh by the Buddhist Dards. They informed him of their deity 'Tsang Mende' (Jettmar 1979:348-350).

The following year I was able to collect more data on the deity from a number of informants from the villages Garkun and mDa. These informants confirmed the fact that the pronunciation of the deity's name was 'Mandē' and that 'Tsang' (also written tZang; Tib.:bzang) was an auspicious prefix which is common in the Tibetan pantheon.

Morgenstierne's suggestion that Māndē was to be derived from Mahā(n)deva¹⁴⁶ makes us look at the term in the ancient Indian context. Mahādeva is found in ancient Indian religious texts; it is often used as a title and even as a term of reverence for gods which could indicate an analogous usage for Mandē among so many varying ethnic groups.

As a compound Mahā is derived from Mahanta (Great) and added to deva it represents the Great-god which in the cults of Viṣṇu and Shiva came to be used as a title for these deities and in particular in connection with Shiva.¹⁴⁷

In Kinnaur we find deities whose names have connection with the Hindu religion but many of these deities also have a local name. Thus we find that one of the most important deities, Bhima Kali, is called 'Mone' in village Kamru (Deuster 1939:81).

In Kafir mythology Mandē takes birth from the breath of Imra¹⁴⁸ and then we also learn that he was created at Imra's command and that his mother is Kumrai.¹⁴⁹

In the myths collected by Buddruss and analysed by Snoy we learn that the birth takes place from the daughter of Kuschumai while in another version Mandē is born from Kuschumai herself (Snoy 1962:85-86,146).

In another myth the goddess Disni is made pregnant by a giant but the father of Mandē (= Moni) is not known, while in another version birth of the deity Mandē takes place after Kuschumai becomes pregnant when she hides in a tree while fleeing from a giant who urinates on the tree (Snoy:160-161).

¹⁴⁶ Morgenstierne 1951-53:164; Jettmar 1975:344,357.

¹⁴⁷ Gonda 1960/Reprint 1978:85,255; Jettmar 1975:83,102.

¹⁴⁸ Robertson 1894:114; 1896:381 (Kam-Kafiren); Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:28 (Red-Kafiren from Urstun).

¹⁴⁹ Morgenstierne 1951-53:186 (a hymn from Urstun).

The mythology of the Kafirs has a three-tier division of the world, Urdesh (the world above), Michdesh (earth) and Yurdesh (nether world)¹⁵⁰ and the Urdesh constitutes seven heavens, the highest being called Il-Münj.¹⁵¹

In another myth the Sudschum lake is said to be the land of Mandē (Snoy 1962:78) while according to other information the lake Kermang Sur on the way up to Munjan has links with the deity Mandē (Edelberg 1972:40).

In other mythic versions Imra is the creator of all things in heaven and earth¹⁵² but the creation of human beings and even the world is credited to Mandē (= Moni).¹⁵³

In fact the numerous Kafir myths existing about Mandē (= Moni) can be broadly said to emphasise two major themes:

a) The fight of Mandē against the demons at the command of Imra¹⁵⁴ which reminds one of the Vedic lore where Vishṇu is the helper of Indra in subduing the demons and protecting the humans.¹⁵⁵ This latter role is also ascribed to Mandē who upon subduing the demons creates place for humans (Snoy 1962:91,133).

b) The other major theme is the release of the Sun and the Moon through the efforts of Mandē (= Mandi) who has to kill the giant whereupon there is light.¹⁵⁶ Jettmar has already commented upon the widespread usage of this theme.¹⁵⁷

However what is further interesting in both of these themes is that we find cosmological notions expressed, as for example, the place on earth being created for the humans and the release of the celestial bodies, both of which are representative of the 'creative mythic lore'.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁰ Robertson 1894:114; 1896:380 (Kam-Kafiren).

¹⁵¹ Buddruss 1960:206; Snoy 1962:72,148 (Prasun-Kafiren).

¹⁵² Robertson 1896:381; Snoy 1962:126,131.

¹⁵³ Snoy 1962:133; Morgenstierne 1951-53:186, Hymn-II.

¹⁵⁴ Robertson 1894:114,119; 1896:382; Morgenstierne 1951-53:172-174; Snoy 1962:151; Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:26; Buddruss 1974:31-33; Jettmar 1975:82-83.

¹⁵⁵ Gonda 1960/Reprint 1978:236-237.

¹⁵⁶ Snoy 1962:86-88; Robertson 1896:385-387; Jettmar 1975:84-85; Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:29-30; Buddruss 1974:32-33.

¹⁵⁷ Jettmar 1975:85-86; Buddruss 1974:35.

¹⁵⁸ In a Saga about the creation of the world from Altai in south-Siberia we find a motif which is similar to the one we have dealt with above. The Altai myth relates about a fight which takes place between the demons (Erlik the devil) and the human god

MANDĒ ŠO

1. This is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē de Mandē Šé
2. This is the place of worship, grandfather and the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
3. This is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
4. This is the place of worship, grandmother and the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
5. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
6. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, father and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
7. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
8. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, mother and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
9. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
10. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, uncle and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
11. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
12. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, aunt and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
13. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé

Mandy-Schire who with the help of God in heaven defeats the devil. Only after this all is created upon earth (Dähnhardt 1907:5).

The deity Mandy-Schire from Altai sounds like the deity Mandē-šé of the Buddhist Dard hymn (Hymn 7) and their functions in the creation of earth are also comparable to the Kafir myths.

¹⁵⁹ This hymn is wholly in the language of the Minaro. Many of the words could be translated and compared with the vocabulary given by Francke. Some of the words like 'Purmo' as in this text remain untranslated. This hymn is comparable to the last five lines of the "Song of Migration" (Francke May 1905: Song.VI, lines 20-25). It appears that this song about the migratory route recorded by Francke is a fusion of three hymns. The major part of the text can be fitted into the hymn-V "Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo" recorded by me. Only the last five lines of Francke's song of migration do not fit into the hymn but are possibly an addition of the Lhapa who was Francke's informant.

The kinship terminologies used in this hymn are the same as those currently in use.

14. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, brother and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
15. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
16. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, younger brother and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
17. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
18. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, sister and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
19. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
20. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, younger sister and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
21. Bread was cooked, this is the small field of worship where the gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé
22. Bread was cooked, this is the place of worship, affines and gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē Šé¹⁶⁰

5. ČOMO MANDÍ

Čomo Mandí is said to be, along with Léi Nakṛn, the ruler over all the deities. The title Como stands for queen (Co = Chief) and clearly shows the female aspect of the deity. The deity is most likely to be seen in conjunction with Mandē who embodies the male aspect. Infact it is only in the male form that this deity is found worshipped among the various Kafir ethnic groups. Though the parallel form, Mandi, is available from among the Prasun-Kafirs, it is not female but represents a male god.

Como Mandí was mentioned to me in connection with a hymn which is sung in praise of her and belongs to the group of hymns dealing with their migration from Gilgit via Baltistan to Ladakh (see Hymn-V).

5. YANDING

The name of the deity Yanding was also pronounced by some of my informants as Yandring.¹⁶¹ It is this latter version which was noted by Francke. From the hymns recorded by Francke we find No.V of his collection dedicated to Yanding exclusively

¹⁶⁰ The even numbered lines in which the 'kinship terms' occur can also be translated as follows:

"this is the place of worship O'father, and the gods assemble, Mandē dé Mandē Šé"

¹⁶¹ According to Kačo Sikandar Khan, of Sanjak village, Yasha Yanding refers to the first human (Urdu:Insan;apical ancestor).

while the hymn No.VI (Francke Mai 1905:97-99) also mentions Yand̄ing but as stated earlier seems to be a mixture of two or three hymns.

During my field trip in 1980 one very detailed version of the hymn dedicated to Yand̄ing was recorded. In 1983 I was able to pen down another version of the hymn to Yand̄ing which is a bit shorter but equally interesting.

In these hymns to Yand̄ing we see that this is the only deity to whom sexual connotations are implied. Though other hymns have erotic context these do not deal with deities and are sung to create a heightened and potentially loaded atmosphere.

The mDa stream takes its origin from the glacial heights of the Ladakh range. Here two rivulets join to form the mDa stream. These two rivulets are called Banding Bar and Yand̄ing Bar (Ladakhi:Bar = rivulet). The name Yand̄ing most likely goes back to the ancient times when these higher regions, now merely summer habitations, were inhabited by the Minaro.

The elder brother of the present Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag=master of the gods) of Garkun, who is an old man familiar with their traditional lore, informed me that a place above Gilgit was also known as Yand̄ing. I have not been able to identify this place on the maps as yet.

Hymn 8

YAND̄ING

1. Yand̄ing where did you come from?
2. Came like the clouds in the sky
3. Came down like lightening to the middle realm
4. Came down like thunder in the sky
5. Came down like a hailstorm of pearls
6. Came down upon a field requiring 18 pairs of Oxen to plough it
7. Came down like the smell of incence
8. Came down like the smell of Gul-Gul incence
9. Came down upon a field of white wheat
10. Came down upon 18 pairs of Elephants, the precious one
11. Came down upon Oxen yoked with Nyomn,¹⁶² the precious one
12. Came down upon Oxen yoked with hooks of Coral, the precious one
13. Came down upon Oxen held by a Silken rope, the precious one
14. Came down with a rope of Fish skin, the precious one
15. Came down with Juniper-wood ploughing stick, the precious one
16. Came down with an Iron plough of magnetic strength, the precious one
17. Came down with Sandal-wood for ploughing, the precious one
18. Came down with a Conchshell handel, the precious one

19. The blanket covering Yand̄ing was better than the sky

¹⁶² A dark blue stone with gold spots. Compare the pronunciation 'Numen' in Hymn 5, Vers 8, from another informant.

20. The blanket covering Yanding was better than the earth
21. The pillow of Yanding was more white than the snow
22. The carpet of Yanding was the softest of them all

Yanding had in this manner taken birth or descended. All the gods sent the following goods.

23. Papa and Sattu given at birth was sent through the air for Yanding
24. Papa and Sattu given at birth was sent but some got stuck on the trees so less reached Yanding
25. Food sent through the water did not all reach as some had got stuck in the gorge and so less reached Yanding
26. Elderly women and the relatives carried the food given at birth, so all reached Yanding

Hymn 9

HONG YASHA YANDING

1. Hail Yanding, how did you come into existence
2. Hail lovable Yanding, how did you come to Styañ gi Lha
3. We did have communion,¹⁶³ Is that not so Yanding
4. Hail Yanding, how did you come down and as what did you descend
5. Hail Yanding, how did you descend from Styañ gi Lha
6. We did have communion, Is that not so Yanding
7. Hail Yanding, came like the fragrant smoke of Gul-Gul incence
8. Hail Yanding, came like the white milk
9. Hail Yanding, came like white Sattu (roasted barley flour)
10. Hail Yanding, came like Cokor raskyes¹⁶⁴
11. Hail lovable Yanding, went to Panka che¹⁶⁵ on a camel over sand, 7 times 3 (= 21) thousand feet marched but no marks were seen
12. Hail lovable Yanding, went to Kharmang¹⁶⁶ over sand and the queen had 7 times 3 (= 21)¹⁶⁷ thousand prayers and washed in water, still did not clean

¹⁶³ "Tansé the le tansé" implies sexual movement; Francke May 1905:98, Song.VI,line.6 & Song.IX,line.4.

¹⁶⁴ Wild goat with straight horns.

¹⁶⁵ A place above Nurla. Nurla lies approximately 10 kilometers from Khalatse, along the river Indus, on the way to Leh.

¹⁶⁶ A village in Baltistan on the banks of river Indus prior to it being joined by Shyok river. It was the seat of a Chief during the mid-2nd millennium A.D. and there is an imposing fortress. For the Photograph of the fort see, Dainelli:1925.

DUMEN

Dumen is one of the important deities and the hymn below is sung on the first day after the hymn Laskyal-I. The importance of the descent of the deity can be seen from the fact that the hymn is sung by the Brongopa alone. There is another hymn dedicated to Dumen called Ser-lai Dumen. Unfortunately I could not record this hymn. as at this time the Labdag from Golopa house in Garkun began to tremble and perspire thus discontinuing the recitation.

Dumen along with Léi Nakṛn are the deities with whom the Lhapa enters into communion and in his state of trance he heals diseases and utters oracles.

In this hymn Dumen is seen descending in the form of Čokor raskyes¹⁶⁸ or riding upon one. The descent of the deity is seen to take place upon aÖphen Styañbu, which I was told was like a stone chair upon a ridge in Nubra.

Hymn 10

DUMEN

1. This day and the stars combine to make a good day, Hail to thee Dumen
2. Dumen where and how did you come into existence ? Hail to thee Dumen
3. Dumen is settled in Styañ gi Lha, Hail to thee Dumen
4. Dumen how did you descend ?
5. Dumen came like the fragrance of Gul-Gul incence
6. Dumen how did you descend?¹⁶⁹

The deity is seen descending

7. Offerings of Ghee (clarified butter) and Vegetables are brought
8. Hail to thee Dumen, Dumen how did you come ?

¹⁶⁷ 7 times 3 (= 21) is a number familiar for usage in shamanistic seances. Also see for Bagrot Dard area, Snoy 1975:199 & 206-207;

In these hymns dedicated to Yanding and the next one to Dumen it appears that an entire ritual is being performed. These are only sung about, now days, during Bonoñah. There are also hints that the descent of the deity is visualised by the Lhapa in these ritualistic hymns during his trance.

¹⁶⁸ A type of wild goat, probably refers to a Markhor. Čokor raskyes I was informed have straight horns as opposed to those of the Ibex which are curved almost in a semi-circle.

¹⁶⁹ This could be a reference to the vision of the Lhapa who in trance lives the procedure and mutters sounds.

9. Dumen descended like Čokor raskyes,¹⁷⁰ Hail to thee Dumen
 10. Dumen came down at a \bar{O} phen Styañbu¹⁷¹

7. RONG LHA-C'EN rGYAL-MO and
 8. RONG BYA-MO LHA-MO

Rong Lha-c'en rGyal-mo and Rong bya-mo Lha-mo are two deities about whom nothing else is known other than that they appear in the hymn Mor-ki Khantak (also known as rGyal-dusa). This hymn is almost entirely in Tibetan. The games Bardi and Chagos and perhaps few other words might be of non-Tibetan origin.

The only definite character of the two deities is that they are deities of the gorge. Deities named after mountains, valleys or dangerous gorges are familiar from the Tibetan pantheon (Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956:221-224) and often have a pre-Buddhist origin. These pre-Buddhist deities which have found a place in the Tibetan pantheon belong to the gzhi-bdag category.

Hymn 11

MOR-KI KHANTAK (also called rGYAL-DUSA)

1. Behind the houses of Mor-ki Khantak,¹⁷² 100 kings of the gods collect, Rong-bya-mo¹⁷³
2. The deep deep deep gorge, of rGyal-mo Rong-lha-ce Lha-mo¹⁷⁴
3. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 Lon-po¹⁷⁵ collect
4. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 Lon-mo collect
5. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 Fathers collect and make wollen thread
6. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 Mothers collect and prepare wool
7. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 Youths collect and shoot arrows
8. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 Girls collect and beat the wool

¹⁷⁰ The sentence can also be translated as "Dumen descended riding upon a Čokor raskyes

¹⁷¹ Rocky defiles in Nubra beyond Rong čhurgyud. where a seat is supposed to exist. Compare Hymn 5, Vers 64.

¹⁷² Mor-ki Khantak is the name of a village.

¹⁷³ Name of the goddess of the gorge. 'Bya' in the language of the Minaro is a mouse.

¹⁷⁴ This is rGyal-mo (Queen) goddess of the gorge.

¹⁷⁵ A Ladakhi title given to an official who is incharge of a district in Ladakh and Lon-mo refers to the wife.

9. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 boys collect and play Bardi¹⁷⁶
 10. The deep deep deep gorge, 100 girls collect and play Čhagos¹⁷⁷

9. GOLA rGYA-PO

Gola rGya-po is said to have Léi Nakṛn as its Lha. The shrine of Gola rGya-po is located in mDa fortress which is now in ruins.

The Rus-c'en group of houses in particular worship Gola rGya-po who is referred to as the Lha of the royal household.

There are a number of geographical locations which are said to have a sacred character and most of them are also places connected with the memory of the Minaro. First mention must be made of *Phoṅskatu* which is recounted in the hymn dedicated to Léi Nakṛn (Hymn 5). *Phoṅskatu* was translated to me as "Bent Stone" and at Unogrung in mDa-'brog shown as the place where the Raja of the Minaro used to sit. Beyond Hanugoma, which is the highest settled area in the Hanu ravine, and up along the Phatta Lungpa (Phatta stream) there are some summer residences where also there is a place called *Phoṅskatu*. In Baltistan as well there is a place called *Phoṅskatu*, located above the village Mendi,¹⁷⁸ which is associated with the birth of Kesar (Jettmar 1979a:327).

Skíšur is another place which is mentioned in several of the hymns and is located not far from Cilgi Deüha and *Phoṅskatu*. *Skíšur* is the place where the migrants first celebrated their arrival at mDa-'brog, as is mentioned in Hymn 5, lines 41-46.

Čilgi Deüha (Juniper Shrine) has already been mentioned as the shrine lying in the pasture grounds (Uno Grung) and has been compared with the 'Tok-tree' of the Kalash.

It is believed that the Minaro celebrated the Bonoñah festival in its proximity, though it is conceivable that only part of the Bonoñah rituals could have taken place there as it is, even to this day, forbidden for the women to approach the Cilgi Deüha.

Mal Mal Khutu lies approximately one kilometer above Unogrung where the above mentioned places are located. It is near Mal Mal Khutu that the streams Yangding Bar and Banding Bar originate and join to form the mDa stream. According to local belief the Minaro used to dance at Mal Mal Khutu and a circle can still be seen as a mark of their

¹⁷⁶ Bardi is a game played with the knee bones of the goat.

¹⁷⁷ Čhagos is a game played with pieces of shell.

¹⁷⁸ Mendi is apparently an ancient settlement as it is also mentioned in the Text of the Hymn 6, "Hari Léi", Line 16.

presence.

The fields cultivated today and the shepherds' huts lie at the lower end of Unogrung and even further below. Between Unogrung and higher above up to Mal Mal Khutu one finds terraced fields and remains of walls two to three meters in diameter which have long since been deserted. Rigzin from Chogolagpa house who accompanied me to the area claimed that these deserted fields had belonged to the Minaro.

At Mal Mal Khutu there is a large grassy basin where the horses graze. All around rise steep rocky walls enclosing this basin through which the small streams flow. One of these rocky projections is known as *Pander Khor* where 'Mon' is supposed to have turned into a mark on the stone. I was informed that Mon played the Lharenga (music of the gods). He was overjoyed and in his excitement he touched the stone and himself was turned to a mark on the stone. The Minaro used to celebrate Bonoñah at Mal Mal Khutu and it is the stone Pander Khor at which their deities are seen to depart at the end of the festivities. This is the route to the other world.

Beyond Mal Mal Khutu lie four large and several smaller *lakes* (*Tib.:tsho*). The four larger lakes are Lang Tso (where a Bull is seen), Chotutmo Tso, Choringmo Tso and Ganesha Bara Tso. These lakes are considered sacred and access to them is almost impossible. However if one does reach them he is considered imbued with purity upon his return. Beyond these lakes are the glacial heights of the Ladakh range.

In this entire area of mDa-'brog I noted several other names which are of interest with regard to the Minaro. Some of them have been mentioned earlier, others need further research.

Di. MAJOR THEMES AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE HYMNS

The hymns of the Bonoñah festival provide the main focus of events. Aside from a few sacred hymns, singing is a communal affair. There are riddle contests, various forms of dancing accompanying the different hymns and other exhibitions of mental and physical strength among men and between men and women. There is gambling and horse racing as well as contests as to who possesses greater knowledge of their traditions or more effective formulas. These activities are believed to produce beneficial results and to generate, or to set in motion, useful power.

In this atmosphere there is an emotion, a feeling of achieving unity with their past, represented by the power attributed to their ancestors and their deities who are seen to participate in the festivities.

The participants themselves are almost reticent about the details of the ceremonious performances. The people are absorbed. The texts are not always sung, but rather, as in other traditional societies, recited in a sing-song manner.

Stories are told about the deeds of certain notable ancestors to whom hymns are dedicated. The pleasures of a shepherd's (Pajuli hymns) life are eulogised¹⁷⁹ and the art of hunting is described in detail along with the offerings brought to their deities following a successful hunt (Hymn 15, Daruča hymn).

Hymns devoted to the deities are like the recitation of rituals being performed. Perhaps they are a memorised form of actual performances in the ancient past. Many hymns give indication of a Lhapa being in trance who has visions of the deities descending.

These are attempts to gain access to the gods and to gain merit.

The deities are believed to descend like vapours of perfumed incense and upon gigantic fields. The cloth covering the deity is of unimaginable size. The deities are seen in the form of a sacred animal called Cokor raskyes (see Hymn 8, 9 & 10). There are a category of hymns called Laskyal (see Hymns 11 & 12) which are sung on the first and the last day ushering in the festival and ending the celebrations. In these the deities are invited to participate and at the end of the festivities asked to depart and thus restore village life to its normal course.

Hymns are sung about the creation of the world (see Hymns 1 & 2). These have been dealt with in considerable detail and reveal motifs which cannot be seen in the context of the Buddhist Dards in isolation. In Hymn 2, a version recorded only in 'Brog-skad, about the 'Creation of the World', we find dedication to "Su Malik" who was the 14th century ruler of Gilgit. This mention is not incidental as we find in the 'World Creation' myth from Gilgit parallel motifs which have already been dealt with in chapter Ai. Several songs were noted from Turtuk and Tyākshi in the Chorbat area of Nubra, where in ancient times 'Brog-pa Dards lived, and in these again we find mention of the same

¹⁷⁹ see Francke May 1905:Hymns X - XIV.

famous ruler Su Malik.¹⁸⁰

These hymns and songs must be seen in connection with the "Migratory movements" in this area. Hymn 5 and 6 deal with ancient routes of migration and in these we find the names of oasis like settlements, on the banks of rivers and rivulets, developed in the course of the migratory movements eastwards to Ladakh. Some of these settlements were later to grow and become major chiefships which, during certain periods under powerful rulers, exercised control over large territorial units.

The above mentioned "Migratory hymns" lead us to Ladakh which, during the earliest times, was occupied by the Dards. The route traversed in the hymns leads us through central Ladakh and then north over the hanging bridge to the greenery of Nubra. The mention of Durtsé Chumik (Hymn 5, line 63) refers to a natural spring of which there are plenty in Nubra. On the caravan route over the Sassar La and beyond there is one such spring called Burtsé Chumik.

As far as the Buddhist Dard community of villages is concerned there exists material on the different migratory waves and the routes taken by these. The opinions of the various authors have been dealt with in previous publications.¹⁸¹

During my visit to Nubra I was told in the villages Turtuk and Tyākshi about how these villages were settled in the ancient times by 'Brog-pa Dards. I was shown high upon a hill a fortification called mKhar Mang, with water canals and a pond for storage, which was inhabited by them. I ascended the hill along with the village Goba and saw the settlement which constituted ruins of small rooms spread over a dangerous rocky area of about the size of five football fields. Some of the rooms had a hole in the ground for the storing of provisions. In one of the holes were found pieces of bones after digging one meter. There was one room of which the walls were intact but the roof had collapsed. While I was busy digging the hole, where the bones had been found, the Goba pulled out a large Ibex horn from amongst the stones of the collapsed roof. Such Ibex horns adorn the shrines of the Buddhist Dards (Vohra:1982 for the photograph).

As for the fort it is related that two brothers, Culli and Yandrung, came from the west¹⁸² and by means of a trick were able to capture the fort of Turtuk¹⁸³ causing the 'Brog-pa Dards to flee to the neighbouring settlement of Tébé Nallah (Tébé Stream). Many of the people of Tyākshi who had conspired with Culli and Yandrung remained

¹⁸⁰ These songs were noted in autumn 1983 at Tyākshi and need to be worked upon. The informant was a close friend of the ruler of Khapalu and they had spent their youth together about which period he recounted incidents. It was during my visit there that the aged ruler of Khapalu died. My informant heard this on the radio and was much grieved.

Chorbat area was given to a single line of descendants of the rulers of Khapalu and the present Goba from Turtuk claims to be the descendant from this line. As proof he showed me their genealogy which I was able to pen down.

¹⁸¹ Vohra 1982:72-76; 1983:68-71.

¹⁸² Several names of places were related, e.g., Gupis, Gilgit & Bagrot.

¹⁸³ Detailed version of their traditional lore was recorded which shall be published separately.

behind and their descendants are still known as 'Brog-pa. Later Culli and Yandrung drove away the 'Brog-pa Dards from Tébé Nallah as well, whereupon they had to migrate over the Ladakh range and settle among their brethren in mDa and Hanu. Around 15th and 16th centuries the villages of Turtuk and Tyākshi were converted to the various sects of Islam.¹⁸⁴

The hymn about migration recorded by Francke is incomplete as the enumeration of the route starts from near the Turmik stream at the village Bašo (Francke Mai 1905:98). One of the hymns, recorded by Francke, tells about the departure of the migrants and refers to their Chief Gil Singé who lived at the turn of the 16th to the 17th century. It appears that several layers of their traditions have not been differentiated.

Several of the hymns have a sexual motif and serve to create an atmosphere conducive to the spirit of freedom in the festivities. Hymn 14 called Cholo Ting has the dice (Cholo) descending from the upper regions (Staṅ gi Lha) in a manner similar to the descent of their deities Yandṅing and Dumen. Milk and Sattu are brought as offerings and the descent is portrayed as an auspicious event. It is a hymn sung by two parties, one comprising men and the other women. The men ask the price and the women always seem to name too high a price. This two sided riddle of questions and answers works towards heightening the sexual atmosphere. The end of the hymn shows the extreme degrading nature of the entire exercise and reveals to the participants the true nature of things through their own act.

The sentence "Tansé the le tansér me na Yandṅing" in hymn 9 was explained to me as the hymn reciter asking "Did we have sexual intercourse, Is that not so Yandṅing". The actual meaning however is not so lucid and the expression cannot be so translated as it implies only sexual movement.

Francke translates the same sentence in three separate hymns with three different meanings. Thus in Song 5, line 6 and Song 6, lines 3,6,8, and 10 (May 1905:97-98) the same phrase is translated as "Is not this a pleasure ground, O Uncle" and "Is that not, then a pleasure ground, O gods" respectively.

Then in Song 9, line 4, he translates it as "Show, then Oh Show (love)!" (May 1905:100). The first two references in Songs 5 and 6 are to their deity Yandṅing. The same reference is also made to Yandṅing in the Hymn 9 (Vers 3 & 6) recorded by me. The reference in Song 9 from Francke's text is of particular interest. It was explained to me as being particularly erotic and this was one of the reasons why I was not given the contents. It was called variously 'Loto Moto' and 'Tansé le Tansér'. Francke noted this hymn and provides the heading to it as 'Love One Another'.

¹⁸⁴ There were several stories recorded about the contest between Sayed Amir Kabir Hamdani and the Tyākshi Lama (Tib.:bLa-ma) resulting in the latter's defeat and the consequent conversion of the people to Islam. Later I also noted stories about the conversion of the Tyākshi people to the Nur Baksh sect.

For other details about the conversion of Gilgit and Baltistan to the various sects of Islam see Hashmatullah Khan 1939:633-634,643,663-673.

The other important themes are *Hunting* and *Life of the shepherds in the pasture grounds*. The hymn 15 recorded by me deals in particular with the art and skill of hunting and the rituals adhered to after a successful hunt.

A great number of Daruča (Hunting) and Pajuli (Shepherds') hymns are sung which form an integral part of the Bonoñah festivities. A great many Pajuli hymns are available from those recorded by Francke.¹⁸⁵

It is beyond the scope of the present work to examine the numerous hymns and songs recorded by Francke from the other parts of Ladakh.¹⁸⁶

A comparison of the themes and motifs occurring in them with those of the hymns of the Buddhist Dards and the songs available from Baltistan would provide an indication as to the numerous influences which have played a role through historical times. I am aware, as I have pointed out in the introduction, that an examination of the hymns will be complete only when a linguist familiar with the developmental stages of the Tibetan language takes up the task of examining them. Here a selection of particular hymns would be economical and meaningful. Three of the Brongopa provided me with three separate lists of the Bonoñah hymns and there are a number of hymns which are specific to each list despite the overarching accordance.

Such an effort would only then be particularly helpful when the hymns are not only noted down and recorded but what is important is to be able to see the hymns sung with the accompanied gestures in the context of the Bonoñah festivities. In this manner not only is the singer known, and the point where he is replaced by a chorus, but the context of the ritual performance is also relevant as it throws light on the content of the hymn. Another aspect relevant for analysing the hymns is when they are observed sung in the context of the 'Live performance'. Also many of the hymns have expressions, exclamations, Interjections and sounds which cannot be translated into words through an informant but understood only in its enaction.

Hymn 12

LA-SKYAL-1

1. This day and the stars combine to make a good day
2. This is the day for the three stars to come out, three friends get together
3. We three will go to Nindum¹⁸⁷
4. 360 Lha have assembled, Hail thee

¹⁸⁵ May 1905 Song Nr.III and IV (Daruča Songs) and Songs Nr.X-XIV (Pajuli Songs).

¹⁸⁶ There are a great number of songs recorded by Francke some of which relating to gLing-gLu have been dealt with in this work. There are collections Francke made from Ladakh and Lahul which were not even translated while others were only hectographed in a few copies and are therefore difficult to acquire.

¹⁸⁷ A mountain near Chigtan.

5. There should be plentiful in the land of the Lha, greetings to Khuda
6. There should be plentiful in the land of the humans, greetings to Khuda
7. We three friends will go and sit at Phoṅskatu,¹⁸⁸ Hail thee
8. There should be plentiful in the land of the Lha, greetings to Khuda
9. There should be plentiful in the land of the humans, greetings to Khuda
10. We three friends will go and sit at Śukpa sgum¹⁸⁹
11. There should be plentiful in the land of the Lha, greetings to Khuda
12. There should be plentiful in the land of the humans, greetings to Khuda
13. We three friends will go and sit at Lha-'brog¹⁹⁰
14. 360 humans have assembled, Hail thee
15. Those who do not have children, the Lha give them children
16. Those who do not have wealth, the Lha give them wealth
17. Those who do not have water, the Lha give them water
18. Those who do not have clothes, the Lha give them clothes

Hymn 13

LA-SKYAL-2

1. This day and the stars combine to make a good day
2. It is the first half of the month and a full moon day
3. The Lha and the humans got together and made a feast in the land of humans
4. 360 Lha now return to Lha-yul (Land of the Gods)
5. 360 humans stay in Mī-yul (Land of humans)
6. May the Lha have plentiful in Lha-yul
7. May the humans have plentiful in Mī-yul
8. May the Klu have plentiful in Klu-yul (Land of Nagas)

Hymn 14

ČHOLO TING

1. Hail Čholo ting, how did you come and what was your origin ?
2. Hail Čholo ting, how did you descend from heaven ?
3. Hail Čholo ting, came down like the fragrant smoke of Gul-Gul incense

¹⁸⁸ Phoṅskatu, a rock shaped like a throne where the Raja of the Minaro is supposed to have sat. It lies in the upper reaches of mDa-'brog in the area called Unogrung.

¹⁸⁹ Śukpa sgum ('Brog-skad:Čilgi sgum). Reference to Čilgi Deüha, a large juniper tree regarded as a shrine, located just below Phoṅskatu in Unogrung at mDa-'brog.

¹⁹⁰ Just below Phoṅskatu and Śukpa sgum is pasture land and here it is being referred to as the "Pasture of the Gods". It is also called Ski šur, a name for this area in mDa-'brog occurs in several of the hymns.

4. Hail Cholo ting, came down like drops of butter
5. Hail Cholo ting, came down like white Sattu (roasted barley flour)
6. Hail Cholo ting, came down like white milk
7. Hail Cholo ting, came down like Cokor raskyes (straight horned mountain goat)

Here onwards (Verses 8 to 46) the hymn is sung alternately by two groups, one of women and another of men.

8. Hail Cholo ting, what would be a good price
9. Hail Cholo ting, 100,000 jigs man
10. Hail Cholo ting, mamjes lai mamjes¹⁹¹

By the time Vers 46 has been reached the price has decreased to one jigs man.

47. Hail Cholo ting, what would be a good price
48. Hail Cholo ting, Cowrie jigs man
49. Hail Cholo ting, not so much - not so much
50. If you give me a gold box still I would not agree
51. I would not even give you a box of grain
52. Your penis is like a dogs penis
53. Your vagina is like a bitch's vagina¹⁹²

Hymn 15

DARUCHA (Hunting hymn)

1. In the evening/ Manyor¹⁹³ on the mountain Buryondi/ bring Stones to fall/ that is a good sign

¹⁹¹ "mamjes lai mamjes" = "not so much - not so much"

¹⁹² *Remarks:* Verses 1-7 are sung by all. Verses 8-49 are sung alternately by a chorus of men and that of women. The women name the price and the men decline to accept the quoted price. Beginning with 100,000 jigs man the price is reduced to one Cowrie which is also refused by the men in Vers 49.

Then the lines 50-53 reveal the earnestness of the situation when the women feel defaulted against and abuse the men. What had been a joke until Verse 49 turns into an insult. Mamjes: the part 'mam' implies a negation, also see mamding and mamdak in hymn 9, line 11 & 12 respectively. The term jigs man probably refers to a weight-measure: also compare Balti man, a weighing instrument, notes in Vohra:1985.

¹⁹³ Manyor = Ibex and Markhor -a common term. Compare Mayoro a term in Shina, Index in Jettmar:1975.

2. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ one sees from a distance the wildgoats clearing the snow and making a place to sleep/ that is a good sign
3. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ one sees the wildgoats open their mouths and eat grass/ that is a good sign
4. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ one sees the droppings of the wildgoats/ that is a good sign
5. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ one sees the wildgoat urinating/ that is a good sign
6. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the hunters spread out for the hunt/ that is a good sign
7. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ Hogspa¹⁹⁴ goes for a hunt/ that is a good sign
8. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ dog accompanies the hunter/ that is a good sign
9. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the dog¹⁹⁵ accompanies the hunter/ that is a good sign
10. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the wood of the arrow is red/ that is a good sign
11. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the bow is golden in colour/ that is a good sign
12. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the point of the arrow is sharp/ that is a good sign
13. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the arrow is pointed/ aim has been taken/ I hope it strikes
14. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the arrow hit/ made a big hole/ that is a good sign
15. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the knife is raised/ that is good
16. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the skin is removed/ that is good
17. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ all the hunters assemble/ that is good
18. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the shot of the Hogspa struck/ that is good
19. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the dogs have assembled/ that is good
20. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the dogs have assembled/ that is good
21. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the golden bow is good

¹⁹⁴ Hogspa means a good shot, probably referring to a Minaro

¹⁹⁵ Two terms used for the dog thus line 8 & 9 as well as 19 & 20 are repeated: KarméKhedō in 'Brog-skad and Tumburu Khukur in the language of the Minaro. Compare the word 'Ku-ra' (Dog in Žaň-žuň Language), E.Haahr 1968:26. I am thankful to Prof. Jettmar for pointing out the latter.

22. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the point of the arrow is sharp/ that is good
23. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the meat is roasted/ that is good
24. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ dough dumplings with ghee (clarified butter) is good
25. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ grain with ghee is good
26. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ white milk is good
27. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ white Sattu (roasted barley flour) is good
28. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ turnip is good
29. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ red flower is good¹⁹⁶
30. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ roasted meat is offered to their deity (Bethé čan)¹⁹⁷
31. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ dough dumplings with ghee are offered to their deity
32. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ grain with ghee are offered to their deity
33. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ white milk is offered to their deity
34. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ white sattu is offered to their deity
35. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ Turnips are offered to their deity
36. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ red flowers are offered to their deity
37. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ roasted meat/ do you eat or not ?
38. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ roasted meat/ has every one got enough ?
39. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ Huru¹⁹⁸ is good
40. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ Papa¹⁹⁹ is good
41. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ Huru is offered to their deity
42. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ Papa is offered to their deity
43. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ with the fingers the food is mixed in the dish

¹⁹⁶ 'Fox tail flower' according to Francke May 1905:104.

¹⁹⁷ Bétché-c'an is either a deity (or deities) or a prayer.

¹⁹⁸ Huru is a dish made with roasted barley flour cooked in hot water to form a dough which has an intoxicating effect when warmed and eaten the following day.

¹⁹⁹ Papa is a thick porridge consisting of roasted barley flour cooked in water.

44. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ with the fingers and the thumb it is taken out
45. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ with the closed fist and the thumb it is prepared
46. In the evening/ Manyor on the mountain Buryondi/ the food prepared in the fist is eaten

E. THE LIVE PANTHEON

As mentioned earlier the 'Live Pantheon' has been devised as a separate entity in this work for analytical purposes. In this manner one is able to distinguish the "Bonoñah Pantheon" as well as establish similarities and its continuity into the present day beliefs in practise. The live pantheon consists of a large number of deities though most of them, like Sumal Lha-mo of Lha-yul and Cangmakhan bdag-po of Mī-yul, who are appealed to in the hymns for the fulfilment of particular wishes, remain mere names to us and nothing more is known about them.

More detailed information is only available on those deities who are worshipped during the yearly festive cycle.

Most of the main deities have shrines dedicated to them. They also have particular functions assigned to them while others are merely feared and must be regularly appeased with bloody sacrifices. It must be emphasised that the clear cut distinction into deity or demon is not always tenable as several of them have an overlapping character. Others may have hierarchically differentiating status or be classed as semi-gods and/or as semi-demons.

Some of the deities are revered only locally while others are worshipped universally among all the Buddhist Dard villages.

In the following chapters are listed the deities and demons in accordance to the realm they occupy: Lha-yul, Mī-yul and Klu-yul. To this must be added the Ancestor cult. The pha-spun groupings of the Buddhist Dards are named after an apical ancestor or the name of the place from where they originally immigrated.²⁰⁰ The households (between 4 and 8) who belong to a common pha-spun are duty bound to provide assistance to each other, in a similar manner as the pha-spun in Ladakh, during rite de passage. However in Ladakh the households who belong to a common pha-spun worship a common deity (Tib.:Pha-lha) whose name and the Lha-tho are the binding factor. This aspect is in opposition to the pha-spun names among the Buddhist Dards who have no such pha-spun deity.

The Buddhist Dards have preserved the names of two pha-lha deities and each of them has a Lha-tho devoted to their worship. Their worship is however not restricted to a pha-spun but their shrines are visited by the entire village and they have thereby attained a higher status within the Ancestor cult.

It must be noted that the live pantheon deserves much greater attention than has been the case in this work. This is mainly due to the fact that the main concern of the work has been the Bonoñah pantheon. A fuller investigation of the live pantheon would have

²⁰⁰ Voñra 1982:80 ff; 1983:75-78.

required far greater resources as were available to me. It would moreover require a detailed study of their numerous festivals through the year thus entailing an extended period of field work.

In the following chapters are listed the deities and demons in accordance to the realm they occupy: Lha-yul, Mi-yul and Klu-yul.

Ei. DEITIES AND DEMONS OF LHA-YUL

Lha-yul inhabited by these deities and demons may be supposed to have several layers where different sub-classes of these deities and demons reside. Lha-yul is also known by the term Stañ-Lha (Ladakhi:Stañ = up;Koshal:1979).

1. Sringmo Lha-mo
2. tZang Mandē
3. Gang-si Lha-mo
4. Ser-lha rGya-po
5. Basandar Lha-c'en
6. tZang-dan Lha-mo
7. tZang-man rGya-po
8. dPal-ldan Lha-mo
9. Thongs Lha
10. Banju Lha
11. Pju Lha
12. Usha-la Lha-mo
13. Sumal Lha-mo
14. aDre Pari
15. Den-pho (male) and Jinji-mo (female)

1. SRINGMO LHA-MO

Sringmo Lha-mo is the principal deity and is worshipped throughout the Buddhist Dard villages. She has a shrine dedicated to her in all the villages and is feared as a demoness who must receive animal sacrifices. However the cow is taboo to her. The villagers do not touch the animal or consume its products for fear of offending their deity ('Brog-skad:Lhaprak), though the bull is used for cultivation purposes. During the summer months, when not in use, the bull remains in the pasture grounds while in winter he is allowed to roam the village alleys. No special care is taken as in the case of all other domesticated animals. The excess cows are exchanged with the Muslim villagers from Purig. Shaw reports that the women in particular stay away from the cow and use a forked stick to remove the calf from the mother (Shaw 1878:5).

We find Sringmo Lha-mo also being brought in connection with the Kesar Saga whose descendants, according to the Chronicles of Ladakh, inhabited Ladakh prior to the rule of the first Ladakhi dynasty.

In Garkun I was informed that the deity Sringmo Lha-mo was one of the 360 deities born at Kesar's birth among the numerous other creatures. I was also told that Sringmo Lha-mo was the wife of one of the 18 Agus of the Kesar Saga. In the Kesar Saga recorded by Francke we find that upon Kesar's birth several beings were born (Francke 1905-1941:70). As to the birth of the 360 deities we come to know about them upon Kesar's departure to the north to kill the giant (Francke 1905-1941:102).

Further information given to me in this connection was that the shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) of Sringmo Lha-mo lies to the north of Garkun. North-west of the shrine is gLingsurusgang of No-čo Bamar who was the younger brother of Kesar.

The following story was related about the burning of gLingsurusgang and then the killing of No-čo Bamar at the water mill ('Brog-skad:Yunda).

The field notes with the detailed version of this Saga as well as other traditions were lost while crossing the river Indus over 'cradel bridge' (Jettmar 1978:64 ff.) or 'Pully bridge' as it was known locally.

It is related that the army of the King of Hor had come and taken away Kesar's wife, Co-čo Dugu, while Kesar was trapped in bDud-yul after having been fed food which made him forget everything. No-čo Bamar chased the army of Hor and their King Pragaldé rGyal-po, and rescued Co-čo Dugu. On the way back he was chased by Śantamaru who wanted to recover Co-čo Dugu for his King Pragaldé rGyal-po. Near Garkun Co-čo Dugu felt thirsty and so did No-čo Bamar and he went to a water mill to collect water. As he could not bend he had to first take off his armour. The quality of No-čo Bamar was that he was made of steel and the only weak spot where he was made of flesh was under his armpit. As No-čo Bamar bent down to drink water Śantamaru, in connivance with Co-čo Dugu, shot an arrow at the weak spot under his arm and wounded him. As Śantamaru was fleeing with Co-čo Dugu the father of Kesar and No-čo Bamar, Aba Dumbu, learnt of the treachery through a vision. He immediately took up the chase of Śantamaru but was too late to rescue Co-čo Dugu whom Pragaldé rGyal-po had taken but he was able to kill Śantamaru with his arrow.

Now Aba Dumbu was perturbed at the long absence of Kesar and found himself helpless in the situation so he sent two pigeons to bDud-yul with a message for Kesar about the happenings in gLing-yul. Upon getting the message from the pigeons Kesar came to his senses and spilt the magic food of forgetfulness given to him by the Queen of bDud-yul, Menzé Como.

Kesar did not return to gLing-yul immediately as he was now aware of the evil plans of Agu Khritung who had taken over the kingdom. Instead he sent his horse with the message for Aba Dumbu that he had been delayed and would arrive in two days. Agu Khritung on the other hand seeing the horse come without Kesar was convinced that Kesar was dead. In the meanwhile Kesar, through his magical powers, transformed himself into a Changpa (Tib.:byang-pa) nomad with livestock at Sosgo 'Brog (pasture land). Here the other nomads seeing a stranger grazing his livestock demanded revenue and Kesar, in disguise, promised them that he would pay later. As after sometime Kesar still did not pay the villagers complained to Aba Dumbu who went to Sosgo 'Brog to deal with the problem. Here Kesar revealed his real self to Aba Dumbu but told him not to inform the villagers about his return. Aba Dumbu was overjoyed and returned to the village and calmed the villagers by assuring them that they would be paid soon. Though Aba Dumbu tried to restrain himself he was unable to contain himself and in his joy

started running through the streets laughing and shouting that Kesar had returned and was in Sosgo 'Brog. Agu Khritung took this opportunity and locked Aba Dumbu in prison along with his dog saying that he had gone mad. Now Agu Khritung was perturbed and went to Sosgo 'Brog to see for himself who the stranger was. Upon arrival he saw the Changpa (Tib.:byang-pa) with two beautiful girls. As Agu Khritung demanded the tax Kesar offered him in marriage the two girls he had conjured. However Kesar told him that he must be patient and that he, Kesar, would descend to gLing-yul the next day.

The following day Kesar descended to gLing-yul with a preparation of salt and chillies ground together to a powder. As he arrived in gLing-yul he saw Agu Khritung putting fresh colour on the three mChod-rten he had had constructed. Kesar inquired as to why he had had the three mChod-rten made. Agu Khritung replied that the first was for the dead No-čo Bamar, the second for the dead Kesar and the third for himself who had now become the Pasha of gLing-yul. Kesar inquired further as to why the old man Aba Dumbu had been put into prison. To this Agu Khritung replied that the old man had gone crazy and had been spreading falsehood. Kesar then changed his Changpa form to become his real self and cut open Agu Khritung's stomach into which he placed the salt and chilli mixture. This was a magical mixture and Agu Khritung would suffer from it for a few days.

Now Ané Korman appeared to Kesar and told him to go to Hor-yul and retrieve Co-čo Dugu. At first Kesar was reluctant to go as she had been unfaithful but was later persuaded by the villagers. The villagers wanted to go too but this he refused and instead took Agu Khritung with him, whose wound had healed in the meanwhile. As they were travelling they came across a great big lake and Kesar told Agu Khritung to take a dish and empty the lake. While he was doing so Kesar, through magic, made the water only increase and himself continued on the route to Hor-yul alone.

Before he could enter Hor-yul he came across three soldiers posted as guards. One of these guards was the son of Śantamaru who was there for the specific purpose of preventing Kesar from entering Hor-yul. Kesar disguised himself as a beggar and was allowed to spend the night in their camp. During the night when everyone was sleeping Kesar killed Snahuemirchal, the son of Śantamaru, and thus removed the obstacle on his journey to Hor-yul. In Hor-yul Kesar went to the house of Garba (Tib.:mgar-ba) Hemis. Co-čo Dugu who had come there to have her earring repaired recognised Kesar in disguise as she saw the mark of a star (Tib.:skar-ma) on his forehead.

Co-čo Dugu and Pragaldé rGyal-po then hid themselves in the castle of Hor which lay in between the earth and the sky.

Kesar stayed in Garba Hemis's house and one day when the Garba (Tib.:mgar-ba) was away he hid himself in a metal box. When the Garba returned and could not find Kesar he shouted for him. Kesar then replied from within the box that he was in there and could see everything happening in Lha-yul, Mi-yul and Klu-yul. Now, he shouted, he could see the Garba's daughter, who had been kidnapped by a man, being beaten with a stick. The Garba was intrigued and wanted to see it for himself. So Kesar came out and the Garba sat in the box but said that he could see nothing so Kesar asked him to get well inside and when he did so Kesar locked the box. He then took the box and put it upon the fireplace and began to heat it. The Garba inquired in anguish as to why he was

doing this evil act when he had been treated like a son in his house. To this Kesar replied that he had a wish and only when the Garba (Tib.:mgar-ba) was willing to fulfill it would he allow him out. The Garba agreed to this and then Kesar requested him to make him an iron chain with which he could climb to the castle. This chain having been made Kesar climbed up to the castle lying in between heaven and earth. Here he killed Pralgaldé rGyal-po and rescued Co-čo Dugu.

This incomplete version of the Kesar Saga is different from the Lower Ladakhi Version recorded by Francke. The difference lies only in detail and the general theme is the same as that of the stories 4 to 7 in Francke's version (Francke 1905-41:139-314). Names of the characters are also different though some are similar to the ones in the manuscript of the Balti version. Different influences over a long historical period have played a role in the version developed by the Buddhist Dards and its association with their deity.

Sringmo Lha-mo is seen as an old woman residing in a place called Určangs. Určangs is seen as a meander drawing (see Plate I) made in the house during Lo-gsar (New Year). It is supposed to be a very difficult route ('Brog-skad:Pun; Tib.:Lams) but once this place is seen one gains prosperity (rgyačans).

The shrine of Sringmo Lha-mo is a shallow cave high up on a rocky ridge where juniper branches are changed during the Lo-gsar festival. The shrine consists of Ibex horns below which round and oval white stones are placed.

No woman is allowed to approach the shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) and only the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = master of the gods) goes up to it to offer sacrifices. He cooks some of the meat (mainly entrails; 'Brog-skad:Khašo) and having offered some of it to the deity brings the rest down and distributes small pieces among the assembled women. The subject of the possible association of the demoness-deity Sringmo Lha-mo with the myth of the origin of the Tibetan race and the possibility of her being a deity of the Bon religion I have dealt with separately (Vohra 1982:82-83).

Jettmar reports that Sringmo Lha-mo is the protector of women and 30 days after the birth of a child they go with fruit and flower offerings to the Lha-tho (Jettmar 1979:344-346). However I was informed on several occasions that the women are forbidden from approaching the shrine of the deity. In Garkun for example after the birth of a child the women go towards the shrine of their section and pray from some distance below.

In Garkun the shrine of Sringmo Lha-mo lies in the part of the village called Sirčangra. Below this shrine are several small constructions where the animals are sacrificed to the deity. These are possibly sacrificial places belonging to the different pha-spun in the village. The Labdag who offers sacrifices on behalf of the village on certain ritual occasions goes right up to the shrine of the deity where there is a fire place just below the shrine upon which he then cooks the sacrificial meat (mainly entrails; 'Brog-skad:Khašo).

White colour is particularly pleasing to the deity and in times past the Lhapa in a trance could see the deity in the form of something white and hazy moving about. The kid sacrificed to the deity must always be a white one.

2. tZANG MANDĒ

Mandē, as we have already seen is one of the deities belonging to the Bonoñah pantheon. This is the only deity who has found a place in the live pantheon. The pre-fix tZang (Tib.:bzang) means good and is found associated with the names of several deities of differing status in the Tibetan pantheon.

The festival sGuñla is in particular devoted to the worship of this deity. This festival and the worship of the deity is associated with their livestock. This is the only occasion when the Labdag plays an important role after going through a purification ceremony. This ceremony is also performed during the Bonoñah and Lo-gsar festivals and though the live pantheon plays a role in the latter festival, it has many of the features adapted from the Bonoñah belief system.

The festival sGuñla, dedicated to the deity tZang Mandē, is celebrated for three days. The celebrations take place between the end of May and the beginning of June depending upon how long the winter has lasted in that particular year. The first crop is ripening by this time and it is the time when the livestock is being sent to the higher valley pasture grounds.

Seven days prior to the festival the Labdag goes through a purification ritual and sits alone on the roof top without any contact with his fellow villagers. He must abstain from sex and eating any of the forbidden foods like, garlic, onions, salt, barley beer, meat and chillies. He sits during these days on the roof-top without speaking and receives three rotis (flat baked bread), three inches in diameter, which are brought to him by his son or the eldest son of the second officiating Labdag.

On the day of the festival he proceeds before dawn to the village stream, walking upon an untrodden path, and takes a cold water bath. Following this he takes a white kid, which had been brought to his house on the previous day by the village headman, to the shrine which is located in between mDa and Garkun. Here he makes a fire of juniper wood and then sacrifices the white kid to the deity tZang Mandē. Some of the other villagers may also sacrifice a sheep or a goat on this day but their animal can be of any colour and the sacrificial place lies far below the place where the Labdag performs the ritual sacrifice.

Following this the meat is cut into small pieces and cooked on the fire. A bit of the meat is then offered to the deity and the rest is brought down to the village where all the villagers are assembled.

Every household brings a quantity of ghee (clarified butter) according to their ability. The Labdag then gives each a piece of the meat (mainly entrails) and then selects for himself the largest portion of the ghee offered. The rest of the ghee is mixed together and divided equally among the village households. While the ceremony is being performed the Brongopa play the melody Larenga (Lharenga = music of the gods).

The deity is also addressed by the title rGya-po. According to the information Jettmar received the deity is seen to descend into the Lhapa and in communion he can prophecy events (1979:350).

tZang Mandē rGya-po is worshipped universally in all the villages of the Buddhist Dards and is associated with the fertility and prosperity of their livestock. Dough figures and drawings of animals are made of Sattu (roasted barley flour) for the same purpose.

3. *GANG-SI LHA-MO*

Gang-si Lha-mo is especially associated with irrigation and the building of water canals. The shrine of the deity is in mDa and in Garkun.

The glacial heights from where the water descends are seen to be protected by the deity. Every spring, before irrigation of the fields is begun, the Labdag responsible for opening the water supplies sacrifices a kid to the deity. If a new canal is to be built or the old ones cleaned or repaired, he first offers salty grain to the deity following which the work can begin.

The opening and the closing of the water canals in mDa is done by the Makponpa and Phorokpa households respectively but the actual watering is begun by the Labdag from Gangeldépa household. In village Garkun the Labdag responsible for irrigation is from Chalopa pha-spun.²⁰¹

In other Muslim Dard areas too we find deities linked with water canals.²⁰²

The deity is also connected with hunting and their livestock (Jettmar 1979:348-349).

4. *SER-LHA rGYA-PO*

Ser-lha rGya-po is seen in the female form as Ser-lha Lha-mo. The shrine of the deity is found up the mDa stream from where Dundur Bar (Dundur stream) descends. The shrine located there is known as Ser Lha-mo Deüha. The Labdag from Gangeldépa household goes to the shrine to sacrifice a goat to the deity.

Jettmar noted the deity as Selha Gyapo who is supposed to help in times of illness through the medium of the Lhapa (Jettmar 1979:350).

Ser-lha rGya-po is worshipped throughout the Buddhist Dard villages.

5. *BASANDAR LHA-C'EN*

Basandar Lha-c'en is the deity worshipped in Darçiks. The female version of the deity has her shrine in mDa and is known as Basanda Lha-mo. The deity is worshipped by all Buddhist Dard villagers.

²⁰¹ Vohra 1982:88; 1983:73-74.

²⁰² Snoy 1975:51 & 175, The Darnishi are fairies and help in the building of irrigation canals. Flour offerings are thrown for them; Jettmar also reports that the construction of an irrigation canal is celebrated as a religious act, Jettmar 1975:379.

According to Jettmar the deity is the Yul-Lha of Darčiks, i.e., protector of the village (Jettmar 1979:350).

6. *tZANG-DAN LHA-MO*

tZang-dan Lha-mo has its male form in tZang-dan rGya-po. In Hanu he is known as tZangal-dan rGya-po and is the protector of the village. It appears that this deity has only been adopted since the coming of Buddhism.

7. *tZANG-MAN rGYA-PO*

tZang-man rGya-po is known in Garkun and has the female form in tZang-man Lha-mo. He is supposed to be the protector of the village (Tib.:Yul-Lha) and is responsible for maintaining order in the village. The deity appears also as tZang-dan rGya-po and has been adopted with the coming of Buddhist influences.

This deity is worshipped throughout Ladakh and in many of the villages has the same function, i.e., that of the Yul-lha.

However they can be seen to be pre-Buddhist deities belonging to the sMan category. The Bon texts also deal with the sMan class of deities. In the work Padma than yig many of the sMan deities were subdued by Padmasambhava at a place called gSil-ma.²⁰³

8. *dPAL-IDAN LHA-MO*

Pal-Idan Lha-mo is a well known deity throughout the areas of Tibetan Buddhist cultural influence²⁰⁴ and appears among the Buddhist Dards from the time of the Ladakhi influence in the area of Hanu villages. This has come about due to the fact that the Ladakhi army used the route through the Hanu ravine and over the Chorbat La (mountain pass) since at least the early 18th century. It is for this reason that the Hanu villages adopted Buddhism quite early in comparison to the other Buddhist Dard villages (Jettmar 1979:350).

9. *T̄HONGS-LHA*

10. *BANJU-LHA*

11. *PJU-LHA*

²⁰³ Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956:199 & 198-200.

²⁰⁴ Hummel 1963:143-147; For a detailed treatment see Tucci:1949; Nebesky-Wojkowitz:1956.

Thongs-Lha, Banju-Lha and Pju-Lha are three deities about whom I could get no information. The deities were noted by Jettmar during his visit to Ladakh and he published a paper on them (1979:249). I made repeated inquiries but without success.

12. *USHA-LA LHA-MO*

Usha-la Lha-mo²⁰⁵ (or Usha-Lha Lha-mo) is the deity who has her residence in Lastieañce which is a hamlet of village mDa. The male version of the deity is known as Usha-la rGya-po and is supposed to be the Lha of Ladakh rGyal-po.

Another deity supposed to be Lha of Ladakh rGyal-po is called Shar Lha-c'en.

Until recently Lastieañce, where the deity is supposed to reside, was a pasture area. It is only since about two generations that some of the households from mDa have settled there.

13. *SUMAL LHA-MO*

Sumal Lha-mo, or also known as Sum-Styañ gi rGyal-mo, is seen as the protector of women. The following song is dedicated to her.

Hymn 16

SUMAL LHA-MO

1. I am the daughter Jomba-Chok who went up the Shazbarar Nallah²⁰⁶
2. Good flowers bloom in this ravine.
3. Goats give good milk when they eat these flowers.
4. The Dodilya flowers bloom there.
5. One evil man (red mouthed mothers son) wants to have intercourse with me.
6. His sexually accosting me makes me scream.
7. Oh Sumal Lha-mo of the Upper regions please save me from this killer man.

14. *aDRE PARI*

²⁰⁵ Ush I was informed means hair but this is a rather unsatisfactory explanation.

In the Vedic pantheon Usha is the goddess of Dawn.

Usha-la Lha-mo is worshipped at Lastieañce which lies on a plateau on which receives the first rays of the sun.

²⁰⁶ The ravine of the Shazbarar stream.

aDre Pari are evil spirits who fly through the air and cause harm to human beings. They are to be differentiated from the Lha category of deities.

According to Tucci there are five types of these malignant spirits (Tucci 1949:721 & 731). Everything harmful is a aDre and everything imparted an abnoxious character was named a aDre. They run over cemeteries during the day and at night obstruct the vital air of all sorts of beings. Their shape is like that of a sorcerer and their voice like the voice of the animals of prey (Tucci 1949:721).

The early classification of the Tibetan gods shows that upon the descendants of the four ancestors born from the primeval monkey ruled the nine brothers called Ma sans and one of these brothers was aDre (Tucci 1949:717).

In Bon-po texts aDre appears as one of the first beings created (Tucci 1949:712). The banner of the gTsan clan of Tibet, who ruled a part of Tibet prior to the establishment of Buddhism, has a aDre as the commander on the lower side (Tucci 1949:737).

15. DEN-PHO & JINJI-MO

Den-pho (male) and Jinji-mo (female) are dangerous demons reported about to Jettmar during his visit to Ladakh in 1978 (Jettmar 1979:351) but I could get no information about them.

L.Edelberg noted a lengthy story from the Parun Kafirs in which a female demon plays a role and is called Jini. G.Buddruss commented in this connection: "Paruni 'Jini' is a special class of supernatural being and has neither historically nor linguistically any connection with Arabic 'Jin'. The similarity of sounds is a mere accident."²⁰⁷

²⁰⁷ Edelberg 1972:88 & Footnote 33; Compare also Footnote 94 on page 93 where the deity "JINI-MARA" is mentioned; See also Friedl 1965:12.

Eii. DEITIES AND DEMONS OF MĪ-YUL

Mī-yul is the region inhabited by human beings where good and evil spirits abound. Mī-yul is considered to include the atmosphere and is also represented by the term Bar-čan (Tib.:Bar-btsan). There is yet another term used for Mī-yul in hymn 12, line 3 (La-skyal 2) where the region is referred to as 'Mī-deś' (also see hymn 3, line 4 for the same).

1. Śa-bdag
2. Can (Tib.:btsan) spirits and the Sandoz (Tib.:btsan-mdos)
3. Shaitan Sarpato Dado
4. Rui
5. Iliphru
6. Cangmakhan bdag-po
7. Pari
8. sMon-mo

1. SA-bDAG

Sa-bdag is a well known concept in the Tibetan religious belief system²⁰⁸ and has been translated as the "Master of the Earth". However among the Buddhist Dards the Sa-bdag plays the major and unique role of house deity while in the Tibetan pantheon it is not found exclusively associated with that role but has varied associations (Vohra 1982:85-86). Sa-bdag is represented by a stone, one and a half to two feet high and ten inches in diameter, which is placed behind the hearth.

It must be protected from all pollution as otherwise it would affect the fertility and prosperity of the household. An elaborate seating arrangement is observed around the hearth and consequently the Sa-bdag.

The Sa-bdag is believed to have been brought by the ancestral father (Jettmar 1979:351) (or apical ancestor) and its presence is the basis for the foundation of the household. Prior to taking food a prayer is offered by sprinkling three times in the direction of the Sa-bdag with three fingers of the right hand.

No stranger to the household is allowed to touch it and visitors from outside the villages of the Buddhist Dards are made to sit far away from the hearth for fear of polluting the Sa-bdag. In fact several taboos are observed in the house besides the seating arrangement which show a fear of annoying the house god ('Brog-skad:Lhaprak).

²⁰⁸ Wadell 1895:39-41; see also Tucci:1949; Nebesky-Wojkowitz:1956.

A married daughter when visiting her maternal home cannot sit on the left side of the hearth as she belongs to a different household. After marriage transsubstantiation occurs whereby the woman worships the Sa-bdag of her husband's household and therefore must not approach her natal Sa-bdag. She must henceforth sit next to the central pillar ('Brog-skad:Thuñ) of the house where the little children and the aged grandparents who are the neutral members of the household sit.

Similarly Muslim workers from Chigtan, in Purig, are made to sit near the door and their utensils are not brought close to the hearth. They are served by taking the food in a bowl to them and pouring it into their dish.

When a household member goes on a trading expedition to Leh, or to Skardu as in the past, he takes his rations with him for the period that he is going to be away. On his return he must either finish the rations prior to entering the village or give them away to a fellow traveler. The rations must in no case be brought back as they would cause pollution. The person can only enter the house when he has purified himself with juniper smoke (Vohra 1982:86 Footnote 29b).

In the past this taboo was so strictly observed that no outsider was even allowed into the village premises. If an outsider wished to contact someone he had to shout out his name from the path outside the village. This has been discontinued since the Muslim labourers had to be employed to cultivate their fields.

However elements of this past is still evident in the fact that a thorough purification of the village is undertaken each year during the New Year and triennially during Bonoñah festival.

On the roof of the house particular caution has to be observed as far as the chimney or the smoke hole is concerned. Crossing over the smoke hole would annoy the house god and thus bring harm. In case the household is split, which is very unusual although a few cases have been noted in the last few years, the Sa-bdag is always kept in the house of the eldest brother.

On the top of the Sa-bdag are sometimes kept two or three small stones denoting the fertility of the children and representing the continued prosperity of the household over the generations.

2. ČAN (Tib.:btsan) and the SANDOZ (Tib.:btsan-mdos)

Sandoz (Tib.:btsan-mdos) is a stone pointed at the top and about one and half feet tall. It is kept so that the Čan (Tib.:btsan) keep away.

It is usually kept on the roof top and is sometimes also referred to as the Sa-bdag.

The Čan (Tib.:btsan) spirits cause harm to human beings and in order to protect one's self and the household fresh blood is sprinkled on the Sandoz everytime an animal is slaughtered. In this way the Čan spirits can be appeased. The Čan spirits are believed to inhabit the atmosphere and to be red in colour. The prayer (Hymn 4) has the sentence "Bar gi čan sangan" meaning the middle regions be cleansed of the malignant Čan spirits.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁹ For more on the Čan (Tib.:btsan) spirits among the Ladakhi, see, Kaplanien:1984.

3. *SHAITAN SARPATO DADO*

Shaitan Sarpato Dado is thought to be an old man with a long flowing white beard who only appears during the night.

He is usually seen around the streams where there are many trees and the flour mills. Jettmar reports about a Sarpato Dado from Punyal, an area which lies towards north-west of Gilgit (Jettmar 1979:352).

4. *RUI*

Rui are commonly equated with witches in the literature of the Himalayan regions where belief in them is widespread. Stories are told about them to children.

Two stories about the Rui were related to me in Garkun.

The Rui have the ability to take possession of a person's soul which locally is equated with the heart. There is the tale of a man whose soul was in the possession of a witch.

A group of witches, who during the day were normal women of the village, used to assemble at a place after midnight. They flew through the air to their midnight congregations riding on the main pillar of the house called *Thuñ* (also known as *Brusikā*; *Brus* = carved; *ka* = pillar). They played a game at night and whoever won got human flesh to eat. It was not clear whose flesh and to my question if the man was meant I received no answer.

The wife of the man learnt that he was in the possession of the witches. After taking advice from the *Labdag* (Tib.: *Lha-bdag* = master of the gods) she told her husband that when he felt the summons of the witches and saw them he should hit them with a stick. Thus on this particular night the witches appeared grazing in the field in the form of cows and tried to attract his attention. While he was obeying the command of the Rui the force of his wife prevailed upon him and he struck them with a stick. This broke the spell upon the man as the Rui turned to stone.

I was shown three stones in the middle of a field in Garkun village in confirmation of this story.

The other tale about the Rui is told in connection with the origin of the procession of the lighted torches performed during *Lo-gsar* (New Year) festival.

It is said that once *Kesar rGyal-po* fell in love with a beautiful woman with long flowing hair which reached down to her ankles. This affair of his came to involve him so much that he decided to marry her. However in the nick of time the protecting spirit of *Kesar rGyal-po* discovered what was happening. *Anne Korman*, who protected *Kesar* against all evil, informed him about the real form of the woman and that she was in reality a witch. Realising that he was being deceived he lit the hair of the Rui after midnight. The witch ran through the alleys of the village in agony with her long hair burning. In memory of this incident the lighted torch procession takes place on the second day of *Lo-gsar*, called *Ṭraharis*, when all the three sections of the village assemble separately and

then proceed in a column to the village assembly ground called Čangra ('Brog-skad:Lhaspa) where they throw the sticks in a bonfire and dance around it. Here we find the motif of the torch procession and the bonfire also cleansing the atmosphere of the village and doing away with the evil of the past year.

5. ILIPHURU

Iliphru who is also known as Balutshē is said to have the form of a dwarf and is supposed to roam with the wind. Balištia is similarly a dwarf and the name is derived from the persian word Bališ which means one measure of the hand from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the ring finger.

Balu is a well known dwarf and in the Kesar Saga is a spy between Hor-yul and gLing-yul.

Iliphru is a positive spirit and its form is of three hands. One hand extends from the trunk and the other two where the limbs are. Drawings or rock carvings fitting this description can be seen near village mDa.

It is Iliphru to whose account are ascribed the carvings on the rocks. These are mostly the figures of domesticated animals and are said to be made during the night.

Iliphru usually takes up residence in a flour mill and the owner of the mill is supposed to have luck on his side.

Occasionally a lucky man can find the hat or the shoe of Iliphru and this is supposed to bring prosperity. These good luck charms are kept very carefully as they are supposed to ensure the repeated visits of Iliphru to that person.

In village Turtuk along the river Shyok in the area of Čhorbat an old man informed me about a similar belief in a dwarf called Lha-la-lu. He is supposed to have a flowing white beard reaching to the ground and two long canine teeth. He has one long hand extending from his trunk and a hat which is of the same size. Encounters with Lha-la-lu (or Lha la Klu) is made at night and one should upon meeting him touch him or try to snatch his hat. If this is done then the dwarf will give a hat full of gold.

The old man of Turtuk said a similar dwarf was also known in Skardu where he was called Phatgon.

6. ČANGMAKHAN bDAG-PO

Čangmakhan bdag-po is appealed to for assistance in a song during sGuñla and Ñah festivals and belongs to the bdag-po category of deities. Unfortunately I did not get a proper translation of this hymn.²¹⁰

²¹⁰ bdag-po (Masters) class of deities, see Tucci:1949 & Nebesky-Wojkowitz: 1956.

7. *PARIS*

Paris are female spirits commonly known to the mountain people of the Himalayas. Stories about them are widespread in the same manner as are the stories about the Rui. aDre Pari, a Pari spirit of a particular type, has been dealt with already. There are other positive Pari spirits but I could not get more information about them.

Paris are also known from Gilgit and Baltistan areas and have been dealt with in detail in the literature concerned.²¹¹ Pari Khan is one such spirit which is still revered despite the coexistence of Islam.

8. *sMON-MO*

sMon-mo appear disguised in the form of beautiful girls and lure the shepherds. They attack a person unawares, dragging him by the leg and throwing him down a cliff into water. The eldest son of the priest of mDa once had such an encounter when he was young (Vohra 1982:87).

²¹¹ Jettmar 1975:see Index; Snoy 1975:172,180 & 182.

Eiii. KLU of KLU-YUL

Klu-yul inhabited by the Nagas may be supposed to have several layers. Klu may be found on the earth's surface, water sources or below the earth. An alternative term for the Klu-yul is available from hymn 5 (Prayer) where it is referred to as Yur-Klu, a term well attested to from pre-Buddhist literature, i.e., from the Bon Chos and gLing Chos (also see chapter Aiv.).

There is a general belief in Klu spirits who live in water. Fresh water springs in particular are guarded by Klu whose anger can be aroused if a polluted person approaches it.

During times of pollution such as birth or death in a house all the household members, and particularly the spouse, must observe the taboos associated with the particular kind of pollution. Thus during these times the spouse must avoid approaching a spring or crossing a stream for fear of bad luck caused by the Klu.

Similarly the person afflicted by pollution must not walk upon the trodden paths of the village but use untrodden-routes.

Klu are not only known to exist in water but also have their habitation under the earth.

During periods of pollution the person or under certain circumstances the entire household is 'Chitu' (Chi-tu). This state of affairs lasts for a certain period depending on the type and nature of pollution. There are different regulations which apply to pollution by birth or death in a family or to pollution caused by contact with polluting persons or things. It can be removed by cleansing with smouldering juniper ('Brog-skad:Cilgi Phok). The smoke is supposed to have not only a cleansing effect but the fragrance also appeases the Klu deities. This purification is known as 'Shicho' (Ši-čo) and is different from the ritual purification called 'Shigchu' (Šig-ču, see ch. Bi.).

Eiv. ANCESTOR WORSHIP

Ancestor worship takes place at the Munal on several festive occasions. The Munal is a crevice in the rock where the bones of the dead are placed and juniper branches stuck between the crevices in the rock. Every pha-spun has its own Munal and at this place all the households belonging to a particular pha-spun assemble.

The *Mamani* festival is in particular dedicated to the ancestor cult. A.H.Francke was the first to report about this festival. He says that the festival is held one and a half months after mid-winter (21st December)²¹² and further states that one of the ancient sites around Khalatse is the Mamani Chorten (Tib.:mchod-rten) (Francke Juni 1906:418). This most likely refers to the site of an ancient Munal.

In 1978 the Mamani festival in mDa took place on the 19th of December. The main part of the celebrations are held at the Munal where all the households of each pha-spun assemble separately and bring food prepared for their ancestors. During this festival the old juniper branches at the Munal are replaced with new ones and an oil lamp ('Brog-skad:Tṛa) is lit. Following this, symbolic offerings of food are placed for the ancestors at the Munal. This is followed by festive singing of songs and feasting which each pha-spun does separately. Of late the ceremony has also come to include the participation of the Lama (Tib.:bLa-ma) who goes from one Munal to the other performing prayers in accordance with the Buddhist custom.

In Garkun the names of some of the pha-spun are connected with a type of dance. For instance, the pha-spun Chalopa, from which the Labdag responsible for the beginning of irrigation each spring comes, is also the name of a Dance. Then Dumani is the name of a pha-spun which is also the name of a dance. The pha-spun Sumenpa from which the Labdag (Tib.:Lha-bdag = master of the gods) responsible for the servicing of the village deity comes is of particular interest as Sumen is a musical tune, a dance as well as the name of a hymn sung during the Bonoñah festival called Šali Sumen.²¹³ This informa-

²¹² Francke 1904:366; Francke Juni 1906:413

²¹³ Francke, upon crossing the Señ-ge pass on a journey to Zanskar, found Mani votiv tablets one of which had a lengthy prayer dedicated to Thse-dbang-mam-rgyal. In this there is the mention of the "Schali" clan who live under his government and are of good descent. Then there is also the mention of the monastery in Photogsa. The "Schali" clan, according to Francke, are found in Photogsa as well as in Zanskar (Francke 1906-1907:647-649). In this connection it is interesting to note the Bonoñah hymn called 'Schali Sumen' (Šali Sumen) which is also the name of a pha-spun in Garkun and provides evidence of certain Dard clans living in Zanskar. There is good reason to believe that certain villages in Zanskar still have customs and rituals which

tion relates to their ancient customs inherited from the Minaro. These are performed even today not only during the Bonoñah but also on other festive occasions.

The names of the dances and their identity with the names of the pha-spun leads one to think that a particular form of dance was performed by the pha-spun ancestor and therefore came to bear that name. Similarly the particular melody Sumen was played by the ancestor and therefore got that name.

dTakur Lha-mo has a shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) on the Sanid lungpa (stream). Sanid, according to the migratory song recorded by Francke, was the first place to be settled (Francke Mai 1905:98 Song.IV,Vers 18) and today forms part of mDa village. dTakuré is also the name of a pha-spun in mDa. However the shrine of dTakurmo Lha-mo is not only worshipped by dTakuré pha-spun but by the entire village. It is plausible that a particular art of dancing or the way of playing a tune by the ancestor came to acquire the name of that pha-spun. Similarly these powerful pha-spun groups and their famous ancestors experienced a rise in status so that even a shrine came to be made for them.

Bogri Lha-mo is the pha-lha of Gangcungpa household in Hanu. At Hanuthang the ancestor cult is practised at the festival called *Nam-gang*. During this time they go to pray at the *Minduk sa* which is situated in the middle of a field. The bones of the dead are placed at the *Minduk sa*.

The Muslim inhabitants of Hanuthang also celebrate Mamani but do so at the end of January.

provide evidence of their Dard heritage and which need investigating.

EV. ERECTION OF SHRINES AND OTHER RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS

Shrines are erected for most of the important deities and are called *Deüha* though the Ladakhi terminology, *Lha-tho*, is used when talking to a stranger unless one specifically asks for the 'Brog-skad term. The *Deüha* has several large Ibex horns, their curvature measuring about one and a half meters. These are placed one on top of the other to form a circular hollow in the center of which are placed juniper branches. At the lower end, when facing the shrine, are the roots of the horns and next to them and below them are placed round and oval shaped white stones of marble measuring the size of a man's palm.

The shrines are located away from the settlements. In mDa the shrine of Sringmo Lhamo is located about half a kilometer above the village on a rocky defile. No stranger is allowed to approach them.

The Buddhist Dard women can only go up to a certain distance and even then are not allowed to look at the shrine directly for fear of causing pollution.

There are shrines dedicated to other deities which lie far away from the village. Often these are located along the route up to the pasture grounds (e.g., at Dundur Bar).

Lha-tho of various kinds and at different places are built or develop over time from piled up stones. Some of these are located high up above the village on a ridge away from polluting influences. These are known as *Darçhoks* while there are other *Lha-thos* built at dangerous crossings such as a mountain pass or a narrow gorge.

The belief of the Buddhist Dards in the *Swastika turned in an anti clock direction*, which they call *Pata*, has already been commented on in previous publications (Vohra 1982:86 & 1983).

At *Turtuk* mosque, in the *Çhorbat* area of Nubra, I was able to photograph anti-clockwise turning Swastikas which were carved into very old walnut wood. I was informed that these, along with the massive pillars inside the mosque, were brought from the ancient 'Brog-pa Dard fortress above the village few hundred years ago upon their conversion to Islam.

Munthoto are the urinary bladders of the goats. These are blown up and hung on the roof inside the house on the right side of the hearth where the men sit. The reason for doing this was explained to me as providing protection against evil spirits. When entering an old house one may see several of these hanging from the ceiling blackened by smoke.

Juniper ('Brog-skad: *Çilgi*) is a particularly important tree in the socio-religious life of the Buddhist Dards and is mainly used for purification purposes. The tree is also pleasing to the deities.

The Lhapa, after drinking water boiled with juniper, falls into a trance and in this state is able to see the deity as something white. The same ability is ascribed to the Labdag who is responsible for servicing the deities. The significance of juniper has been dealt with in considerable detail in the literature available.²¹⁴

The small white blossoms of the juniper tree are religiously collected and kept at home. These are used during ceremonial occasions when they are offered as 'phok mar' to the deities. Only the variety of juniper tree called *Ḷha-šuk*, also known as *Cilgi sgum* in the hymns, has flowers called 'phok mar'. The *Cilgi* trees which do not bear flowers are called *Dé Šuk nas*.

Dough figures and drawings of various kinds are made during different festive occasions and have varying symbolic meanings. Some are made for the fertility of their animals, others for the prosperity of the household and still others for their deities.

On Lo-gsar (New Year festival) dough figures of a fox ('Brog-skad:Lé-ai), she goat ('Brog-skad:Kila), kid ('Brog-skad:Thōnas), moon ('Brog-skad:Guénkar), polo stick ('Brog-skad:Takopolo) and the figure of an Ibex ('Brog-skad:Bargan) are made. This last one, that of the Ibex, is the largest in size. All these figures are placed on the shelf called *lCaṅgs* behind the hearth.

During Stas-tun festival they make a dough figure of the Yak ('Brog-skad:Máriak).

During the celebration of Bhi (sowing of crop) festival tricones of dough are made. The smaller ones for the children are called *Pali* and the larger ones *Chet*. These are consumed on the day after the celebrations.

During Lo-gsar elaborate drawings are made with roasted barley flour ('Brog-skad:Sattu) on the door, the main pillar ('Brog-skad:Thuñ;Tib.:Ka), on the shelf ('Brog-skad:lCaṅgs) behind the hearth and on the balcony if the house has one. I was able to copy down some of these drawings and these are reproduced along with their symbolic meaning in Plate I.

²¹⁴ See Index in Jettmar 1975; Vohra 1982:87-88.

Plate I:

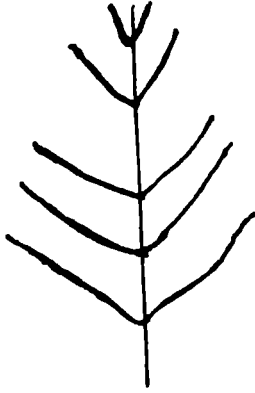


Fig 1. SHING rGYAL (king of the trees), the drawing is made on the left side of the hearth ('Brog-skad:Gush) on the lCangs.

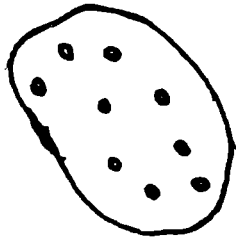


Fig 2. PYE. Points symbolically representing the domesticated animals. The number of points made are mostly 7, 9, or 21. They represent a prayer for the prosperity and fertility of their herd and are made on the left side of the hearth ('Brog-skad:Gush) on the lCangs.

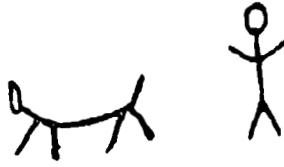


Fig 3. MAN and the most important GOAT of the herd. The drawings are made on the right side of the hearth ('Brog-skad:Gralgo) on the ICanggs.

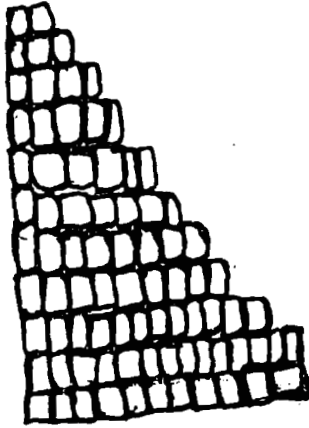


Fig 4. MINDUQ mKHAR (beautiful Fort) made on the right side of the hearth ('Brog-skad:Gralgo) on the ICanggs.



Fig 5. PUN ('Brog-skad= Route;Tib.:lam) to UR-CANGS. This route is very difficult but when traversed brings rGYA-CANGS ('Brog-skad:prosperity). The drawing is made in the center of the ICanggs.

Evi. TABOOS AGAINST FOODS AND ANIMALS

The Labdag servicing the deities has to go through an elaborate purification ritual before exercising his function and must abstain from ghee (clarified butter) salt and chang (barley beer). Further, the smell of onions, garlic, chillies and tobacco is annoying to their deities and the Labdag must abstain from consuming any of these things.

The Brongopa, before singing the hymns or playing the instruments, must observe the same restrictions.

Similarly the Lhapa has to follow these prescriptions when he is making ritual preparations to communicate with the deities.

Sexual abstention is essential to all these functionaries prior to performing their religious activities.

In Gupis, the westernmost part of Gilgit agency, there is the belief in the deity Charoti Dadi who is the protector of women and hates chillies and the odour of onions. In deference to her the local inhabitants do not cultivate these plants (Jettmar 1975:212 & 237).

The Buddhist Dards do not use cow flesh or its products for fear of annoying their deity Sringmo Lha-mo. I was informed that in Zaskar there are villages around Hemilang called Phišu pismo and Shumi shazdé where similar taboos against the cow are observed. R.B. Shaw writing in 1878 about his experience among the Buddhist Dards says that the touch of the cow is contaminating so that they use a stick to put the calves to, or remove them from, the mother (Shaw 1878:5).

Similar taboos exist among the Shin people for whom the calves are particularly contaminating.²¹⁵

In Astor valley the priest had to observe the cow taboo as he was responsible for bringing animal sacrifices to their fearful deity Sri Kun. For the followers of the deity it was strictly prohibited to use cow's milk for fear of loosing their livestock.²¹⁶

Among the Kafirs sacrifices of goats and cows are made to their deities. Immediately after the sacrifice the assembled men draw lots with sticks and decide as to who will skin a particular animal. Anyone can skin a goat or a sheep but the cow can only be skinned and divided by the slaves. When the head of the goat is severed it is put for a short while in the fire but the same is not done in the case of the severed heads of the bull or the cow.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Jettmar 1975:237; Snoy 1975:99; Biddulph 1880:75.

²¹⁶ Jettmar 1975:208-209; Ghulam Muhammad 1907/Reprint 1980:34.

²¹⁷ Robertson 1894:126; 1896:426.

Among the Buddhist Dards when a cow dies the Sapas families (Ladakhi) are called to take the animal away. Until recently even goats and sheep were not cut by the Buddhist Dards themselves and for the purpose the Pirko (Purigis) were called. Cow's skin taken to a spring can cause pollution and bring disaster (Biddulph 1880:95).

Cow dung is placed on a part of the grain so that the fairies do not take the grain away. Later that particular portion of the grain where the cow dung was placed is given away to the poor in Chitral (Jettmar 1975:431).

Similarly Shamans, called Bitan among the Buroshos, must obey the taboo against the cow which, as Jettmar observes, is a custom borrowed from the Shin people (Jettmar:252).

Hens are not kept among the Buddhist Dards nor are their eggs consumed. Some of the boys of the younger generation have now begun to eat eggs but under no circumstances are they allowed to cook them at the hearth of the house but must do the cooking on a stove outside.

Robertson reports that in Presungul there is a distinct religious atmosphere in comparison to the other Kafir valleys. It is only in Presungul, out of all the Kafir areas, that no fowls are allowed to be brought into the villages.²¹⁸

Demons in the Dard belief system have the ability to fly but only if they do not come in contact with cows and hens are equally despised by them (Jettmar 1975:223).

The Shin people hold particularly strong emotions against hens.²¹⁹

Among the Kalash also hens were not kept due to its being against their religion (Jettmar 1975:331).

The household Watchepa from village Čušot, not far from Leh, still prescribes to the taboos against cows and hens. Only the present generation has begun to give the babies tinned milk and keep hens for economical purposes.²²⁰

The inhabitants of Kinnaur also do not consume eggs (Deuster 1939:69).

Shaw reports that the Buddhist Dards do not eat fish²²¹ and the same is reported regarding the Shina speaking Dards who despise fish (Jettmar 1975:253).

The Kafirs similarly do not eat fish, writes Robertson, saying that the fish feed on dirt, and they shudder at the idea of using them as food.²²²

²¹⁸ Robertson 1894:113; 1896:379.

²¹⁹ Jettmar:237 & 253; Snoy 1975:99; Biddulph 1880:37; Schomberg 1935:165.

²²⁰ Communicated by Nawang Tsering Shakspo (08.08.85) who is related to the Watchepa house.

²²¹ Shaw 1878:9; Jettmar:1975:237ff,252,290,311,313,314,431.

²²² Robertson 1894:41; 1896:68.

F. CLOSING REMARKS

The hymn *Mi-yul dangpo* (No.1 & 2) recounts the cosmogonic notion of the Buddhist Dards. We have three versions of the hymn the first one being recorded by A.H.Francke. The hymn is sung on several occasions besides *Bonoñah* and the New Year (Tib.:*Lo-gsar*) festivals. According to Francke the cosmogonic notions belong to the traditions of the ancient Dards and are different from the cosmological ideas present in the *Kesar Saga* where the creation of *gLing-yul* is accomplished by cutting up the body of a demon (*Srin-po*).²²³

1.i. This creation hymn recounts the bringing forth of earth from under the ocean which is the theme of the account on the 'Creation of the World' recorded from Gilgit by Ghulam Muhammad. As has already been mentioned this cosmogonic motif is familiar from the Vedas.

Dähnhardt confirms this view in that he examines the *Rāmāyaṇa*, *Taittirya-Saṃhitā* and *Taittirya-Brāhmana* in which a boar dives under the ocean to bring forth mud out of which earth is built (Dähnhardt 1907:14-16).

He further examines the *Saga* from Altai in South Siberia (1907:3-5) in which it is related that before earth was created all was water and god flew over water and along with him flew the devil *Erlík*. In the end the human god *Mandy-Schire*, with the help of god, was able to defeat the devil. Dähnhardt is of the opinion that *Mandy-Schire* is the *Yima* of the *Awēsta* and *Yama* of the Vedas (1907:9).

The fight against the devils (= demons) which *Mon* (= *Mandi*) undertakes with the help of *Imra* in the numerous *Kafir* myths of creation is reminiscent of the role of *Mandy-Schire*.²²⁴

The above mentioned author has examined the different versions of the same cosmogonic myth from Bulgaria, Trans-caucasus, Hungarian and Transylvanian gypsies, Russia and North America and is of the opinion that the myth grew in Iran under the influence of Indian religious ideas (Dähnhardt 1907:36-38).

1.ii. The world cosmology among the Buddhist Dards is represented in the 'Tree of the World'. The primordial times are brought to an end by the connivance of an old woman, who also represents a deity, thus causing the separation of gods and humans. This is also

²²³ Francke 1923:5 and 8; 1905-1941:17-18 and footnote; Mai 1905:95, Hymn Nr.II is *Mi-yul dangpo*.

²²⁴ Robertson 1894:114; 1896:381-382; Snoy 1962:86-91; Jettmar 1975:82-83; Hussam-ul-Mulk 1974:26.

the first duality, i.e., the creation of heaven and earth.²²⁵

Similarly in the Myth from Altai there is the mention of the tree which had grown nine branches at the command of god and at its foot were nine humans from whom descended nine races of humans (Dähnhardt 1907:4 & 8).

In the gypsy myth from Hungary (Magyar) and Transylvania we learn that to create earth god puts a stick into the ocean which becomes a tree and at the roots of the tree is the devil who is commanded to bring forth sand and from this sand earth is created. From the branches of the tree fall leaves which transform into human beings (Dähnhardt 1907:35).

This reminds us about the Buddhist Dard cosmology with the tree 'Kořom Shiŋgé dang gyuth' and the Kafir myth recorded by Robertson.²²⁶

In the Hungarian gypsy myth we also find the motif of the stick which is put into the ocean and turns into the Tree of the World. Thus the stick is the medium which provides the foundations of the cosmological order.

This notion of the Tree or the Stick (or pillar) as the medium or the instrument causing the separation is known from Vedic literature where the 'Pillar of Creation' (Skt.:Skambha) plays this role.²²⁷

In the cosmogonical myth from Gilgit area it is related that Yamlo Hal Singh (a giant) became the pillar in the water and after that a mouse dug a hole through the ice and brought forth mud causing the creation of the earth.

In the Myth of the Buddhist Dard it is an old woman who is the instrument and through her conspiracy provides the occasion for the separation of heaven and earth and thus the cosmological order.

The Bonoñah traditions which form a complex by themselves have been separated from the Buddhist Dard socio-religious belief system as it is found practised in their daily life. In doing so one is able to discern several differences which exist between the two.

2.i. The deities worshipped during the Bonoñah festival are not appealed to in prayer at any other time. The pantheon of deities worshipped during the numerous festivals through the year and during the critical events in the life cycle, i.e., rite de passage, are the ones which concern the Buddhist Dards in their daily life. Only the deities of the 'Live Pantheon' are brought regular sacrifices and offerings as they are the ones feared. Every time pollution occurs it is these deities who must be appeased so that no harm comes to the fertility and prosperity of the household.

²²⁵ See Chapter Aii. Primordial Times: All beings lived together.

²²⁶ See Chapter Aiii. The Tree of the World.

²²⁷ Gonda 1960/Reprint 1978:180-181; 1975:294.

The deities of the 'Bonoñah Pantheon' on the other hand are not feared, nor are they brought offerings regularly, but are only appealed to in their hymns where symbolically they are given offerings and asked to participate.

2.ii. The deities of the 'Bonoñah Pantheon' are seen descending from Stañ Lha, or the upper regions, for the communal celebrations. The deities of the 'Live Pantheon' are seen residing at particular places which are their fixed places of residence and most of them have functions to perform and have a shrine ('Brog-skad:Deüha) devoted to them.

The deities of the 'Bonoñah Pantheon' have no such place of residence nor any fixed function to perform. They are asked to depart at the 'Stone' at the end of the festival which can be seen as their shrine.

2.iii. The majority of the deities of the 'Bonoñah Pantheon' do not have titles attached to their names. The exceptions are Léi Nakm rGyal and Como Mandi which could possibly be forms developed later.

In contrast, the deities of the 'Live Pantheon' are all given titles and these when assessed according to the gradations of the Tibetan pantheon give them a particular status and order them into a particular class of deities. The latter association with the Tibetan pantheon must not be taken literally as the deities of the 'Live Pantheon' are deities of pre-Buddhist origin.

2.iv. The deities of the 'Bonoñah Pantheon' have no association with the Kesar Saga and belong to the most archaic period in the history of the area.

The 'Live Pantheon' is closely connected with the Kesar Saga and the deities are seen as having been born with the 360 deities who took birth with Kesar.

2.v. The language spoken today is 'Brog-skad and it is associated with the 'Live Pantheon'. The language of the Bonoñah hymns is a mixture of archaic Tibetan dialects and Balti, 'Brog-skad and some remnants of the Minaro language. It is the latter language in which the the Bonoñah hymns were sung in the earliest times. Further accuracy in our analysis can only be arrived at through a linguistic analysis of their language and the various dialects which have been integrated into it.

2.vi. The Minaro used to bury their dead with all the personal belongings whereas the present practice is to cremate the body of the dead.

As to when the practice of inhumation was discontinued is difficult to say and like their language the different elements of the Minaro traditions phased out slowly and at different periods through historical times.

2.vii. We also do not hear anything of the taboo associated with the cow and its products in the Bonoñah traditions.

The taboo against the cow is associated mainly with Sringmo Lha-mo which is the chief deity of the live pantheon. This taboo against the cow was most likely brought at a later period when subsequent migrations took place. A similar place must be allocated to the taboo against fowl and the consumption of its eggs.

Despite the above dissimilarity between the two traditions there are a number of aspects which they have in common. At the present stage it is not possible to determine with any certainty what those elements brought by the later migrants were. There are however a number of aspects which were in the process of time carried over from the Minaro.

3.i. The ritual making of dough figures, the drawings made for the fertility of the livestock and for a successful hunt, the purification with juniper and the taboo against chillies, onions and garlic which are to be observed by the Labdag, Lhapa and the Brongopa during ritual occasions are common to the Minaro traditions and are also observed during worship and rituals of the live pantheon.

3.ii. There is the deity tZang-Mandē, worshipped in relation to the livestock, which has been taken over from the Minaro traditions. The rearing of livestock has remained the primary occupation, alongside agriculture, and thus the worship of this deity has continued in the live pantheon.

3.iii. Similarly, several of the names of the lineages which belong to the sphere of ancestor worship have continued from the times of the Minaro and some of them experienced an elevation in status and have come to be worshipped by an entire hamlet if not the village and ethnic community.

3.iv. There are several sites which are mentioned in the Bonoñah hymns, like Ski šur and Phoñskatu, which even today are seen as the pure regions. There is a sacred atmosphere associated with many of these geographical locations. These are also the places where the Minaro performed worship or where they lived and celebrated their festivals.

TRANSCRIPTION LABEL OF 'BROG-SKAD

Pronunciation Table of Consonants

		<u>Articulatory Points</u>															
		<u>Bilabial</u>		<u>Labiodental</u>		<u>Alveolar</u>		<u>Alveopalatal</u>		<u>Retroflex</u>		<u>Velar</u>		<u>Back velar</u>		<u>Glottal</u>	
		p	b	t	th	d	dh	z	zh	ʃ	ʒ	k	kh	g	q	ʔ	h
<u>Mode of Pronunciation</u>																	
<u>Voiceless</u>																	
<u>Stops: Aspirated</u>																	
<u>Voiced</u>																	
<u>Voiceless</u>																	
<u>Appiccate: Aspirated</u>																	
<u>Voiced</u>																	
<u>Voiceless</u>																	
<u>Fricative:</u>																	
<u>Voiced</u>																	
<u>Nasals</u>																	
<u>Rolled</u>																	
<u>Lotenal</u>																	
<u>Semivowel</u>																	

Pronunciation Table of Vowels

		<u>Pronunciation Mode</u>								
		<u>Front</u>			<u>Central</u>			<u>Back</u>		
		Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long
<u>Position of Articulation</u>										
<u>High</u>		i	i	i				u	u	u
<u>Middle</u>		e		e				o	o	o
<u>Low mid</u>										
<u>Low</u>					a	a	a			

TABLE OF BROG-SKAD SOUND TRANSCRIPTION

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'BROG-SKAD TEXT OF THE HYMNS

Hymn 1

MĪ-YUL DANGPO

1. Mī-yul dangpo čoi ka čhks
2. Choi ka čí čhks, čoi ka Gañs čí čhks
3. Gañs poi ka rdul čí čhks
4. rDul pokā spañgs čí čhks
5. Spañ poi ka ri-sum čí čhks
6. Ri-sumí miñg-po čí-nali, Ho
7. Ri-sumí cikpoi čhoñg-ri kar-mo
8. Choñg-ri marmo, čhoñg-ri zgun-mo
9. Šing-sum čhks, šing cikpoi miñgna
10. Čandan kar-mo cikpoi miñga
11. Čandan zgun-mo cikpoi miñga čandan marmo²²⁸

²²⁸ *Note:*

The song recorded by A.H.Francke reports further about three birds which grew upon the trees. A second version of the hymn Mi-yul dangpo was recorded by me which is given here under Hymn 2 (Hnd version) and also deals with the three birds but the sequence of the hymn is some what different. The three birds are in 'Brog-skad:Cha & in Tibetan:Bya. This second version is sung to the praise of the king of Gilgit called 'Su Malik' who reigned in the 14th century.

Hymn 2

MĪ-YUL DANG-PO (2nd Version)

1. Ho Su-Malik na ho
2. Ho Mī-yul naṅ tanpo ni takšan čhks
3. Ho Su-Malik na ho
4. Mī-yul naṅ tanpo čhuí khñran čhks
5. Čhuí kha naṅ čí rañ čhks
6. Čhuí kha rdul čí rañ čhks
7. rdul poi kha-ña gañs čí čhks
8. Gañs poi kha spañs čí rañ čhks
9. Spañs poi kha ña ri sum-ri čhks
10. Ri čí poi miñg lan čí nali ho
11. Ri čí poi miñg lan ri-rGyal kar-po
12. Ri-rGyal na kar-po ga-yuli ri
13. Ri-rGyal na kar-po Lha-yuli ri
14. Ri-rGyal kar-po poi goika čhig čí hangaldañ
15. Čhig čí miñg lan naleyé ho
16. Čhig čí miñg lan čandan naṅ kar-po
17. Čandan na kar-po ga-yuli čing
18. Čandan na kar-po Lha-yuli čing
19. Čí somi goika čí sum rangldañ
20. Ča sumi miñg la čí nali ho
21. Ča čhigi miñg la cha-rGyal naṅ kar-po
22. Ča-rGyal kar-po Lha-yuli ca
23. Ča-rGyal marpo Mī-yuli ca
24. De čaí miñg po čí nali ho

25. Ri-rGyal na marpo ga-yuli ri
26. Ho Su-Malik na ho
27. Ri-rGyal marpo Mī-yuli ri
28. Ho Su-Malik na ho
29. Ri-rGyal marpo čo čí ran čhks
30. rGyal marpoi šing čí rañ čhks
31. Shig poi ka ča čí rañ čhks
32. Cha hoi miñg la čí nali ho
33. Cha hoi miñg la ča rGyal na marpo
34. Cha rGyal na marpo ča Mī-yuli cha
35. Ho Su-Malik na ho
36. Ri-rGyal na sGoñpo ga-yuli ri
37. Ri-rGyal na sGoñpo Klu-yuli ri
38. Ri-rGyal sGoñmoi goika čí čí rañ čhks
39. Ri-rGyal sGoñmoi goika čing čí rañ čhks
40. De šing poi miñg la čí nali ho
41. Šing poi miñg la čandan na sGoñmo
42. Čandan na sGoñmo ga-yuli šin
43. Čandan na sGoñmo Klu-yuli šin

Hymn 3

HYMN OF THE PRIMORDIAL TIMES

- 1.Lha-yi sponbō čhigí yot mī sponbō čhigí yot
- 2.Đeᅅgi ys ka mām̄tas Lha khaᅅyoᅅs ālākaᅅsuoᅅ

- 3.Jyak-ná skarma, skarma jombi jyk-yoᅅ
- 4.Lha na mī deša i-sun̄ taᅅspi, Hé
- 5.Lha sumya tuqčú Lha-yul zugla skyoᅅ
- 6.Mī sumya tuqčú Mī-yul yugla skyoᅅ
- 7.Lha-yuli Lha-la solᅅhang skyéᅅči, Hé
- 8.Mī-yuli Mī-la zaᅅhang skyéᅅči, Hé
- 9.Yarmičokhá čhogaᅅᅅ gaᅅgmī zā-yul

Hymn 4

PRAYER

- 1.Staᅅᅅ gi Lha sangaᅅ
- 2.Yur gi Klu sangaᅅ
- 3.Bar gi Can sangaᅅ
- 4.Chui čho-rDo sangaᅅ
- 5.Nam gi skarma sčies na sangaᅅ

Ilymn 5

HONG LEKHA BURYON YA LIJYO

1. Como mundígmén jakna, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon²²⁹ ya lijyo
2. Jakna skarmana, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
3. Boᅅryus Khāmsí Khaᅅdyogna, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
4. Khaᅅdyog činmoé styaᅅgna, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
5. Zangsi khírđan thārthigna, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
6. Motégi sojó thas skúornal, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
7. Candani kha phorthas skúornal, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
8. Numení lakhi čhak rnamesé, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
9. Tungí tungčholo čhak rnamesé, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
10. Serí paksé skor čhuksé, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
11. Tungí tungčholo Su rGyal, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
12. Serí paksé Khoᅅgyal soᅅg, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
13. Tungí tungčholo Léi Nakᅅn rGyal, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
14. Húai čhigbu skor čhuksé, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
15. Tungí tungčholo Su rGyal, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
16. Húai čhigbu khoᅅgyal soᅅg, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
17. Tungí tungčholo Turmik Co rGyal, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

18. Khačr Khamāčr, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
19. Khačhol khamāčhol, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
20. Khatum khamātum, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
21. Khaskír khamāskír, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

22. Brukšyal Giliᅅ nali, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
23. Giliᅅ Ghutumsali, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
24. Turmik Barbansali, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
25. Bašo Bišo, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
26. Shakar čundab, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
27. Skardo goti čangrasa khar-po-che doᅅs, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
28. Khar-po che Ga-Singh khonbo, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
29. Skardo, Shigar čhambrojim, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
30. Kéiris čumđusa, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
31. Parkutta namskilsa, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
32. Shiri tingpé tho nali, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
33. Lālopé Bransāsali, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
34. Thále Bankasa, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
35. Khapula spaᅅjúsalé, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
36. Khapula boᅅrilsa, Hoᅅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

²²⁹ "Buryon" is also known from the Buryon kanrai kwar which has its source near the petra, the Ilam itself, and runs into the Barandu which later flows into the Indus.

- 37. Bombuí khamsnaṅ, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 38. Khamsé khaṅduknaṅ, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 39. Gabis Śuktukṣa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 40. Śuktuk sGon mosa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

- 41. Sāsala Bṛukṣa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 42. Skī śur lha Bṛukṣa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 43. Khṛom čin mosa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 44. Khṛom čin maika, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 45. rDul čin mosa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 46. Miṅduk kai krandal, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

- 47. Hembabs stonbú čhung, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 48. Mulbé rdua neyem sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 49. Kharbu rGor-rGor sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 50. Yuru Singé zgaṅs, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 51. Tiṽavé sur-sur sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 52. Tinmosgang braqbu, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 53. Hemis śuktuk sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 54. Śuktukṣ sGon mosa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 55. Basgo Bamgo sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 56. Leh vé le rDo sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 57. Šé vé šang šang sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 58. Shak-thi shnag sdir sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

- 59. Rongi Čhu rgyuds sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 60. Čhu rgyuds Chugaldam, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 61. Nubra spañjuṅ sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 62. Spañjungs sGon mosa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 63. Durtsé Chumik sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 64. aOphoni styaṅbu sa, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 65. Kar-pe phé pheut naṅshue shik, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 67. Migmar phodongs naṅshue shik, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 68. Cokor raskyes naṅshue shik, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo
- 69. Tepue nags naṅ puengs naṅshue shik, Hoṅ lekha Buryon ya lijyo

- 70. Lha-yul la soṭ pa čan Čhōra
- 71. Mi-yul map soṭa
- 72. Lha-yul la čhoto
- 73. Mi-yul la so lo.

Hymn 6

HARI LĚI

1. Hari Lěi Lha Nakṛn skěsa
2. Lha Nakṛn črsa, duksa jarsa, yuṅsa ghunsa duksa
3. Lha sumgya dusa, Klu sumgya dusa
4. Jipči tanmosa tukčoí sambrasa níyalding pukstan motik sakkyú
5. Candan Lakhi, Bíru Lakhi, Numén Lakhi,
6. Tungí čhola seré tranke skujla čhuksé
7. Húi paksé skujla čhuksé
8. Sere paksé Goṅg rGyal soṅ
9. Húi paksé staṅ Gi-rGyal soṅ
10. La čhola la Su-rGyal
11. La čhola Lha Nakṛn rGyal
12. Čukpa ij guru Phoṅskatu, Tórmikí brbaṅsa
13. rGyal sa Gilit, Gilit phastaṅji
14. Gilit Ghutuma, Gilit Sógarmé
15. Gilit Bruksal, Ronge čhuk rjamsa
16. Bašoi Bišo, Sṭak Mendi, Goti-čangra
17. Shigar Chambroji, Gaṅse Khamboji
18. Parkúṭa namskil, Kéri sChumdosa
19. rGyalsa Khapulu, tíčoí gonkha, Gabisi šuktuk
20. Skí šur spaṅktoṭ, Skí šur sandum, Khrom čin mo dusa
21. rGyalsa Himbabs, Phokar ri phoksa, Mulbu rdoingsa
22. Kharbu sčimo, Yuru Singé the sgaṅg
23. rGyalsa Tinmosgang, Basgoi Bamgo
24. Leh li rDo, Shi mos gaṅg, Sakari šansder
25. Larāpila Nubrají spaṅstúr

26. Lha Layul la suru
27. Mī Mī-yul la suru

Hymn 7

MANDĒ ŠO

1. Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
2. Hoᅇ purmo Dúdon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
3. Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
4. Hoᅇ purmo Dēdeon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
5. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
6. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Bābon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
7. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
8. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Āiyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
9. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
10. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Momoyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
11. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
12. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Pépeyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
13. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
14. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Bāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
15. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
16. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Jujon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
17. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
18. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Kākeyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
19. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
20. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Sāsyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
21. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ Sċimon kāyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé
22. Hoᅇ titon mǎrmār, Hoᅇ purmo Sāzyon mašo, Hoᅇ shiryon lakhi, Mandē dé Mandē šé²³⁰

²³⁰ *Remark:* This hymn is sung on the second day of the Bonoñah festival. According to another informant this hymn is sung everyday of the festival and is also known under

Hymn 8

YANDING

1. Yanding gana čhaks
 2. Nam thi stoná sprinto gonz
 3. Bar-čans Bang Bang Lokčen či bar
 4. Nam khi stona Bung Bung Bṛuk-čen či brus
 5. Har Moṭi čhar na bas
 6. Lanṭo (oder Lanṭo) čhubgyeṭ ṭabsiga bapas
 7. Spus-skar jaṅs maí phokna bapas
 8. Gul-Gul jaṅs maí ṭri-na bapas
 9. Krúkar jaṅmo phyṭaks ṅa bapas
 10. Lanṅphoče tZang-me moklaṅ ṅa bapas
 11. Nyomn tZang-me nya-šing ṅa bapas
 12. Byuru tZang-me nya-phúr ṅa bapas
 13. Sikim tZang-me nya-ṭho ṅa bapas
 14. Nyala-diṅg tZang-me šo-ṭhak ṅa bapas
 15. Šuk-kar tZang-me šolda ṅa bapas
 16. Phulad tZang-me núl-čhaks ṅa bapas
 17. Candan tZang-me šyol ṅa bapas
 18. Ṭung-kar tZang-me šag-sum ṅa bapas
-
19. Yanding likto nam baṅsaṅ che
 20. Yanding likto sa baṅsaṅ che
 21. Yanding zi ganyas gaṅgs ba sa sang-kar

the title "Sčimon käyon. This is the only hymn recorded which is completely in the 'Brog-skad and the Minaro language. Most of the words have been translated and compared with the vocabulary provided by Francke. Certain words, like for example, 'Purmo', remained untranslated. The kinship terminologies used are the same as the ones in use today.

This hymn can be compared with the last five verses of the 'Song of Migration' (Francke, Indian Antiquary, Mai 1905, Lied 6. Verse 20-25) recorded. The song 6 of Francke is also different because the deity appealed to is different, i.e., Yanding. The Migration song text is quite similar to the hymn 'Hong lekha Buryon ya lizyo (Hymn 5) in this work which however covers more of the migratory route, i.e., beginning earlier and ending further in Nubra instead of mDa.

Vocabulary

Käyon = small field

Mašo = Respectful

The even numbered Verses in which the kinship terms occur can also be translated as follows:

< < "This is the place of worship Oh Father, and the Gods assembled, Mandē dé Mandē šé" > > .

22. Yanding staṅpo phīmar basaṅ jam

23. Yanding ski-zang skac phac lung phoče lung ṅa kalsh

24. Yanding ski-zang skac phac śing čhok mansac malep

25. Yanding ski-zang skac phac čhu phoče čhu nal kase sza-Rong mase malep

26. Yanding ski-zang skac phac aman mang zam ṅa kalse sgingdung ma selc

Hymn 9

HONG YASA YANDING

1. Hoṅ Yanding čhaks pa čí daṅ ga daṅ čhaks

2. Hoṅ yasha Yanding čhaks pa Staṅ gi Lha na čhaks

3. Taṅsé thé lé taṅsér²³¹ me na Yanding

4. Hoṅ Yanding baps pa čí daṅ ga daṅ baps

5. Hoṅ Yanding baps pa Staṅ gi Lha na baps

6. Taṅsé thé lé taṅsér me na Yanding

7. Hoṅ Yanding Gul-Gul zaṅ me phok na baps

8. Hoṅ Yanding kar-poi Ü-pheu na baps

9. Hoṅ Yanding kaṅ-poi Phé-pheut na baps

10. Hoṅ Yanding Cokor raskyes na baps

11. Hoṅ yasha Yanding, Pankā ché²³² byem-gam na boṅ stoṅ rdun-sum shu lé rjyes mamding

12. Hoṅ yasha Yanding, Kharmang²³³ byem-gam cú co rdun-sum čhos la taṅsé cus mamdak

Hymn 10

DUMEN

1. Jyak-ná skarma, skarma zombi jyk-yoṭ, Hoṅ lé Dumen

2. Dumen čhaks pa čí ná čhaks, Hoṅ lé Dumen

3. Dumen Staṅ gi Lha ná čhaks, Hoṅ lé Dumen

4. Dumen bas pa čí ná baps

5. Dumen bas pa Gul-Gul zaṅ me phok ná baps

²³¹ The sentence implies sexual movement; see also the alternate translation of Francke with which I have dealt in the text. Francke, *Indian Antiquary* May 1905: Song VI, line 6 and Song IX, line 4.

²³² A place near Nurla, about 10 km away from Khalatse.

²³³ The capital of a chiefdom in Baltistan along the river Indus.

6. Dumen bas pa č i ná baps
7. Mar-kar, Gumbu ná baps
8. Hoᅅg lé Dumen, Dumen bas pa č i ná baps
9. Dumen bas pa Cokor raskyes ná baps, Hoᅅg lé Dumen
10. Dumen bas pa č i ná baps, Hoᅅg lé Dumen
11. Dumen bas pa aŌphen Staᅅbu ka baps

Hymn 11

MOR-KI KHANTAK

1. Mor-kí Khantak,²³⁴ Lha rGyal-po rGyaduse, rGyadus salét Rong-bya-mo²³⁵
2. Rong rong rongé, Rong-lha-ché lha-mo²³⁶
3. Rong rong rongé, Lonpo rGyaduse Londus salét
4. Rong rong rongé, Lonmo rGyaduse Londus salét
5. Rong rong rongé, Apo rGyaduse tugu salét
6. Rong rong rongé, Api rGyaduse balkhal salét
7. Rong rong rongé, Sharbar rGyaduse mDa phaᅅs
8. Rong rong rongé, Náčhung rGyaduse bardaps²³⁷
9. Rong rong rongé, Bazbis rGyaduse Bardi²³⁸
10. Rong rong rongé, Bomo rGyaduse Chagos²³⁹

Hymn 12

LA-SKYAL I

1. Jyak-ná skarma, skarma zombi jyk-yot
2. Skarmí rgya-stot čhár bí jag-yot, natang yáto čaᅅko
3. Nindum²⁴⁰ lagoi šé-to bíᅅgná
4. Lha sumya tuqčú, déru juksé ma, Hoᅅg lé
5. Lha-yuli lha gunla solthang, skyékčik, Khuda jú
6. Mí-yuli mí gunla solthang, skyékčik, Khuda jú

²³⁴ This Hymn is also called rGyal-dusa. Mor-kí Khantak is the name of a village.

²³⁵ Deity of the ravine; but 'bya' is a 'mouse' in the language of the Minaro.

²³⁶ Deity of the ravine.

²³⁷ bardaps = to untangle wool.

²³⁸ Bardi = A game played by the children with the knee bones of goat.

²³⁹ Čagos = A game played with cowrie shells.

²⁴⁰ A mountain in Chigtan area.

- 7.Ngátang yaṭo čaṅko Phoṅs-na-Katu,²⁴¹ čhitu biṅna, Hoṅg lé
- 8.Lha-yuli lha gunla solṭhang,²⁴² skyékčik, Khuda jú
- 9.Mi-yuli mi gunla solṭhang, skyékčik, Khuda jú
- 10.Ngátang yaṭo čaṅko Šukpa sgum,²⁴³ shi-tu biṅna
- 11.Lha-yuli lha gunla solṭhang, skyékčik, Khuda jú
- 12.Mi-yuli mi gunla solṭhang, skyékčik, Khuda jú
- 13.Ngátang yaṭo čaṅko Ski šur Lha-'brog,²⁴⁴ šé-tu biṅna
- 14.Mi sumya tukčú đeru juksé ma, Hoṅg lé
- 15.Bu-mét rgya Lha Bu sālaṅ, Khuda jú
- 16.Nor-mét rgya Lha Nor sālaṅ, Khuda jú
- 17.Chu-mét rgya Lha Chu sālaṅ, Khuda jú
- 18.Gos-mét rgya Lha Gos sālaṅ, Khuda jú

Hymn 13

LA-SKYAL 2

- 1.Jyak-ná skarma, skarma zombi jyk-yoṭ
- 2.Yarmé čhoghá, čhogha zombi jyk-yoṭ
- 3.Lha na mi deš i-sun taṅ spin
- 4.Lha sumya tuqčú Lha-yul zung la skyoṭ
- 5.Mi sumya tuqčú Mi-yul yung la skyoṭ
- 6.Lha-yuli lha gunla solṭhang skyétčik, Hé
- 7.Mi-yuli Mi gunla zaṭhang²⁴⁵ skyétčik, Hé
- 8.Klu-yuli Klu gunla solṭhang skyétčik, Hé

²⁴¹ In the higher reaches of the pasture grounds ('Brog-skad:Nir mDa) is a rocky place amidst which there is a particular rock (Phoṅskatu) shaped like a throne upon which the ruler of the Minaro used to sit.

²⁴² Offering with juniper branches and water in the direction of the sky.

²⁴³ Šukpa sgum ('Brog-skad:Cilgi sgum) is a huge juniper tree just below Phoṅskatu, which is looked upon as a shrine and in earlier times Markhor and Ibex horns surrounded it. Women were not allowed to come near it. The horns have now been removed and placed around a smaller juniper tree a few meters higher up on the hill. This was done after muslim labourers came to work in the area and there was danger of pollution.

²⁴⁴ Just below Phoṅskatu and Šukpa sgum lies the pasture area, Ski šur, which is also called pasture of the gods in the hymns.

²⁴⁵ Offering with juniper branches; the water is sprinkled upon one's self. (or on the ground). Thus blessings of the prayer for one's self.

Hymn 14

ĀHOLO TING

- 1.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, déru Āholo Āhaks pa Āi daᅇ ga daᅇ Āhaks
- 2.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, bas pa Staᅇ gi Lha na baps
- 3.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, Gul-Gul zang me phok na baps
- 4.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, Markar gombu na baps
- 5.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, kar-poi phé-phcut na baps
- 6.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, ᅇar-poi Ū-phcut na baps
- 7.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, Cokor raskyes na baps

After this the hymn is sung between the two groups, of the men and the women alternatingly (from lines 8 to 46).

- 8.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, traᅇks ka la rinĀiĀot
- 9.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, bums Āo jig man
- 10.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, mamjes lai mamjes

The prise asked by the women decreases with each line until line 46.

- 47.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, traᅇks ka la rinĀiĀot
- 48.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, Chagos jig man
- 49.Hoᅇ Āholo ting, mamjes lai mamjes

- 50.Ser brigan ᅇga mi do mamjes
- 51.Bro brigan ᅇgaz mi taᅇ
- 52.Khiri tanu, Khi tanu
- 53.Khiri jonba, Khi jonba²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ *Note:* The verses 1-7 are sung by all. The verses 8-49 are sung alternatingly by a group of men then by a group of women. The men ask about the price and the women name a price beginning with 100,000 Jigsman. In the following verses, each time the price is named the men say it is too much and that the women should name a lower price. In the end the (women ask for a Cowrie ('Brog-skad:Chagos), which is also claimed to be too much by the men. Then from verse 50-53 it becomes serious and the women feel that injustice has been done and curse the men and the atmosphere turns unfriendly. Until verses 8-49 it had been an enjoyable atmosphere.

The term Jigs man probably refers to a weight-measure; Also compare Balti man, a weighing instrument, in:Vohra:1985 Unpublished manuscript; The word Mamjeshas in the prefix mam a negation, as in the case of Hymn 9 where lines 11 & 12 have mamding and mamdak respectively.

Hymn 15

Hymn of the Hunt "BELDANG MANYOR"

1. Beldang Manyor,²⁴⁷ malyo honar buryondi, than thai chung, than tang the to thanliyo san
2. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi til tili bon, tiltil the to tilyak san
3. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kap kapi chong, kap kap the to kabilya san
4. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, thor thuari chong, thor thuar the to thuarliya san
5. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Shoar shoari chung, shoar the to shoarlei san
6. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, sepa the to zdagleai san
7. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Hogspa²⁴⁸ the to zdagleai san
8. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Karmé khedor²⁴⁹ zdagleai san
9. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, tumburu khukur²⁵⁰ zdagleai san
10. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, dhasing dazman zdagleai san
11. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, sermo zu chung zdagleai san
12. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, chumalu pha lo zdagleai san
13. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, chumalu pha lo sa dag dagi chung, dagdag the to dagleag san
14. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, chumalu pha lo sa phal phali chung, phal phal the to phalleag san
15. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, umalu gritung zdagleag san
16. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, shalam bulmo waleag san
17. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, stépa the to waleag san
18. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Hogspa the to waleag san
19. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Karmé khedor waleag san
20. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, tumburu khukur waleag san
21. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, sermo zu chung waleag san
22. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, chumalu pha lo waleag san
23. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Khašo the to zdagleai san
24. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, khulak khumar zdagleai san
25. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kroyos yuzmar zdagleai san
26. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kar-poi Ü-pheut zdagleai san
27. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kar-poi phé-pheut zdagleai san

²⁴⁷ Manyor = Deer, Ibex and Markhor. Instead of Manyor it could also be pronounced Malyo.

²⁴⁸ Hogspa can shoot well, it is most likely that a Minaro is meant.

²⁴⁹ Dog

²⁵⁰ Karmé khedor (vers.8) means 'Dog' in 'Brog-skad, and Tumburu Khukur is a 'Dog' in the language of the Minaro; also compare 'Ku-ra' = Dog in the Zan-žun language, E.Haarh 1968:26.

28. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kur khandaha zdagleai šan
 29. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, burdum mi lānda²⁵¹ zdagleai šan
 30. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Khašo thē to Béthé čan²⁵²
 31. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, khulak khumar Béthé čan
 32. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kroyo yuzmar Béthé čan
 33. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kar-poi Ū-pheut Béthé čan
 34. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kar-poi phē-pheut Béthé čan
 35. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, kur khandā Béthé čan
 36. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, burdun lānda Béthé čan
 37. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Khašo thē to khāi ma khāi
 38. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, Khašo thē to themš ma themš
 39. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, huru²⁵³ thē to zdagleai šan
 40. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, papa thē to zdagleai šan
 41. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, huru thē to Béthé čan
 42. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, papa thē to Béthé čan
 43. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, jumbo leāi ja waleag šan
 44. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, yali jon rum rum buņ
 45. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, umbu leā zdagleai šan
 46. Beldang Manyor, malyo honar buryondi, umbuleā sa zdagleai šan²⁵⁴

Hymn 16

Hymn to SUMAL LHA-MO

1. Mi molei to Sazbarar géyos
2. Mi Jomba-Chok Sazbarar géyo
3. Khu thalo pušo hura pusho
4. Dodiliya pušo hur pusho

²⁵¹ According to Francke it is the 'Fox Tail' flower (Francke May 1905:104).

²⁵² Either Bethe čan (Béthé čan) is a particular deity or it is a term used for the gods to whom offerings are made.

²⁵³ Huru is a dish made with roasted barley flour which when consumed the following morning produces an intoxicating effect.

²⁵⁴ *Vocabulary:*

Vers 5, Shoar means Ibex.

In all verses we find "---leag šan" with a prefix. It means 'Good' and according to Francke it means 'Clever' (Francke May 1905:106).

Vers 15, Umalu gritung means 'Knife' in the language of Minaro.

Vers 17, Stepa means 'Hunter'.

Vers 30, Bethe čan, according to Francke means (Francke May 1905:103) "let us offer".

5. Sileđiya đuryos điyuko điyuko čene
6. Sileđiya đuryos squákgyon sqákgyon čen
7. Sumal Stañ gi Lha-mo niyorang lavé rGyal-mo

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