

## **IV. Traditional Kho Culture**

# Some Ancient Customs of Chitral

*Gul Murad Khan Hasrat\**

Chitral is the name of a valley with scenic beauty, at the foot of the lofty and snow-peaked mountains of the Hindukush. It is believed that these valleys were settled about five thousand years ago. According to the Sanskrit scholars, the early inhabitants have been named 'Pisachas' — 'eaters of raw flesh'. They inhabited the area before the 'Aryans'. In Chitral, some graves, about five to six feet underground, have been found which are believed to belong to those old inhabitants.

In 2000 B.C. the Aryans descended upon the subcontinent, but their main flow was towards the plains. Some of them may have settled in the Hindukush valleys and, with the passage of time, merged and mixed with the aboriginals. History shows that the Achaemenian Empire of Persia extended to this part of the world till the invasion of Alexander the Great. Chitral remained under the sway of the Greeks for some time, followed by the Scythians and the Parthians. The rule of Kanishka extended up to the Pamirs and it was during his reign that Buddhism spread in these valleys. Some traces of the Buddhist era are still found in certain places; there is one rock inscription in the village of Rayin and another near Barenis. This area also remained under the rule of the White Huns or Hephthalites, the Chinese, and the Sassanians at different times. Certain immigrants from Turkestan, Badakhshan, Nuristan, Gilgit and other neighbouring countries settled here from time to time but they completely merged with Kho society. The majority of the people of Chitral are believed to be descendants of those who settled about five thousand years ago. The customs which are going to be mentioned in this paper have been practiced from time immemorial. Their peculiarity and uniqueness and their continuous practice for such a long time is an interesting subject for research scholars. The customs belong exclusively to Chitral but some of them have a colour of similarity with those of Gilgit, Wakhan, and Sariqol, adjacent areas which have some ethnic and cultural links with Chitral. Some of those customs and traditions, especially Kalash customs and festivals, show, strangely enough, the old historical and cultural links of Chitral with some of the ancient nations of Europe and Asia.

This paper aims at discussing the age-old customs and traditions of Chitral with a view to highlighting the various aspects of society of Chitral. The paper studies these customs in three parts. Part one of the paper deals with those customs which were in practice in Kho society until about sixty years ago and have been abandoned with the passage of time. A few examples of these customs are *jeSTan Dekeek*, *dahta banu*, *tiliki*, *pinik*, *i-masi*, *charaš*, *šumaš*, *γoru korik*, *buk dik*, *pažali*, *lek žur reek*, and *safar nisik*. Part two of the paper is devoted to the study of a number of customs, still in practice, hopefully to continue for the time to come. Some of these are *phindik*, *bi nisik*,

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*lek žuur*. These songs were sung at the time of departure of a newly married girl from her father's home. Before leaving the house, she circled the fireplace three times and each time, she stirred uncooked *SoSp* with a *rekh*, a local spoon. The fireplace was considered to be sacred and the fire was often called 'Gul Khan' instead of 'fire'. Then the bridegroom took his bride's hand and came out of the house, but the mother of the bride did not come out to say goodbye to her daughter. Instead the bridegroom would return to say goodbye to his mother-in-law and she would offer him some gift, usually a bowl. These ranged from glass to golden bowls according to the status of families. It was called *khatum-e-barakât*. The gift of *khatum-e-barakât* was kept safely because it was linked with an unforgettable memory. Then the wedding procession would leave for the husband's house and *lek žuur* songs were sung. These songs were also sung when the procession reached near the bridegroom's home. It was sung loudly and no musical instruments were used. The theme of the songs is an admixture of joy and sorrow. A few phrases follow.

Daughter! O dear daughter, would that I, your mother, could be with you all the time! You are a traveller from *Tek* to *šom*. (*Tek* is the upper and *šom* is the lower part of the same room. The distance is a few yards.)

Daughter! O dear daughter! would that I, your mother, could be with you all the time. Lines of people are coming to welcome you!

These are some words of consolation for the newly married girl who has just departed from her parents' house. She is consoled by saying that she is welcome in her new house and the lines of people are an ample proof of this fact.

It may also be noted that some of the above customs relating to the ceremony of marriage still exist in certain parts of Chitral, especially in far-flung areas.

*dáhta bánu*. This is a joyful custom. At night a man with an empty pot would enter the home of his neighbour, friend, or relative. He would put the pot on the floor, say the words "*dahta banu*", and run away. The people in the house would rush out, chase him, and try to catch him. If they succeeded in catching him on the way, he would host a lunch or dinner for the catchers. If he escaped to his house, then the chasers would host a lunch or dinner for him.

*tiliki*. Keeping the flocks by shepherds or *pažáli* was a common practice till some time back. Many customs were connected with it. Almost everyone in the village kept goats and sheep, and all these were herded by shepherds in the pastures. The services of some youngsters of the village were hired for this purpose, and they were called *pažal*. In the morning, as a routine matter, a loaf of bread called *awunar* was cooked for the shepherd. In the pasture, when a goat or sheep brought forth a kid, the respective shepherd looked after it, and in the evening it was brought to its owner. The owner gave some dry fruit to the shepherd which it was called *host nigali*. It means that 'something has been given to wash the hands'. Apparently the shepherd washed his hands after cleaning the kid and he has to be paid. The next morning a special bread was cooked and given to the shepherd. It was called *tiliki*.

*buk dik* ('to blow the *buk*'). The *buk* is an instrument made of ibex horn. In the morning it was blown as an announcement to collect the cattle from the house-pens. These were collected at a certain place called *nirun* and then taken to the hilly pastures. In the evening, when the flock was brought back to the *nirun* the shepherds again used to blow the *buk* as an announcement for each household to take their cattle to their own cattle-

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pens. Children and youngsters, both boys and girls, gathered in the *nirún* and took the cattle to their homes. This practice was called *roihi bik* and the people gathered in the *nirún* were called *roihidóyu*.

*pinik*. This was a custom related to the first-born child. It was observed when the mother had to go back to the father or husband's house for the first time after the birth. Loaves of bread, as many as the number of bridges which happened to come in the way, were cooked, and a loaf of bread was put on each bridge. This custom was called *pinik*.

*i-mási*. Babies born in the same month were called *i-mási*. Whenever the fathers of the newborns met for the first time, they at once exchanged their caps, otherwise the newborns would suffer from eruptions. In these days they often put on worn caps so that no loss may occur in exchanging them.

*sumaš*. This custom is related to big game, i.e. ibex, deer, or markhor. The meat was cooked and sent to the neighbours, relatives, and friends. It was called *sumaš*. The hunter used to sing a few songs just after hunting, praising a deer. This was called *γoru korik*. The same were sung when he arrived near his home. A few verses follow.

O, deer, your foot chooses the steps of mountains!

Your lip chooses the flowers!

O, your horns are your enemies!

O, deer, you are my sweetheart!

*don nisik dreék* ('to observe the appearance of teeth'). This was a ceremony held at the time when the teeth of a child appeared. The neighbours and relatives were invited and a number of children also attended the ceremony. In the case of a male child, a sword, axe, or adze, and in the case of a female a *goSini* (a stick for turning over bread) or *naγLáču* (a rolling pin) was held over his or her head and beans were thrown on the child. The beans fell on the ground and were consumed by the children. The ceremony had to be performed, otherwise the child would grow weaker.

*phur ganik* ('to cut hair'). When the child attained the age of one year, the ceremony of cutting the hair for the first time was performed. It was usually held on some Islamic festival day, i.e. Ed-ul-Fitr or Ed-ul-Azha, and neighbours and relatives attended the ceremony. A big *phulka* was cooked and a hole was made in the centre of the bread. Then the bread was placed upon the head of the child and each participant cut some hair through the hole. The hair was put on a branch of a tree. This custom still exists in some areas of Chitral.

## Customs which are still in practice in Kho society

*phatak/sal γereék* ('to change the year'). This festival is celebrated as a new year's day. Some time back it was observed in February, but today it is observed on twenty-first March, under the name of Nowruz, only by the Ismailis of Mastuj and Lotkuh. The same festival is celebrated in the Northern Areas by both the Ismailis and Shias. The Sunnis never observe it. Celebrating the Nowruz festival indicates a cultural link of Chitral and the other northern regions of the country with Persia, where it has been observed for a thousand years as a national festival. Cleaning the home, decorating the ceiling with flour prints, and throwing flour in the name of *pathak čareék* on the main pillars of the home

are some of its rituals. In the morning, a sweet dish is cooked in each house, and a person enters the house and offers congratulations for the new year. A big fire is lit and some flour is thrown on it under the name of *thuman*.

*aLok sarmač*. It is also observed in Gilgit and called *šap*. A young boy with a mask made of a hollow gourd on his face, acts as *bap* or 'old man'. Other youngsters along with the *bap* go around the village singing and dancing and collect some foodstuff like flour, dried fruit, and butter from each household. The *bap* is the main actor and he sings and offers dances to amuse the people. The youngsters then arrange a party in one of their friend's homes, where they eat the collected things and then have a musical programme.

*phindík/γári nisík*. The festival of *phindík* is celebrated in the second or third week of June. The date may not be uniform, each village has its own separate one, which is announced by the elders or religious leaders of the village at least one week before the festival. The preparations begin with the storing of milk. The stored milk is churned one day before and butter and cheese in large quantity is made. In the evening, the cattle-pen is decorated with juniper and poplar branches called *gurzén korík* 'to make a garden'. Butter is applied to the horns of each animal — otherwise it is believed that the animal will curse his master. In the morning, *sanabáči* (a salted food from flour and butter) is cooked, and small animals are taken to the hilly pastures and left free to graze. Men, women, and youngsters (both boys and girls) gather in the village gardens and splash water on each other — even no white-bearded elder is spared. Musical programmes are arranged, and singing and dancing continue while the girls are busy in swinging. Feasting with traditional food continues throughout the day. In the late afternoon, the youngsters gather in the hilly pastures where different kinds of local games are played. Goats and sheep are now collected, and a race of male goats is held. This is called *Lowáh dik*. The race continues, the *buk* is blown by shepherds, and the song of *Lowáh* is sung with the *daf*, a local musical instrument. A few verses of the *Lowáh* songs follow.

One of my shepherd's names is Bakhdur!

O! Lowah Liko Lowah!

My shepherd is small now but will grow high!

O! Lowah Liko Lowah!

He has not any trousers except a belt!

O! Lowah! Liko Lowah!

He has not any shirt on his body except a collar!

O! Lowah Liko Lowah.

He has not any cap on his head except a time-worn one!

O! Lowah Liko Lowah.

He has not *kirkóT*<sup>1</sup> on his feet except some piece of leather, O Lowah!

O Lowah! O Lowah! O Lowah! O Lowah!

Besides other local games, polo, the traditional game of Chitral is played and continues for seven days. With the passage of time, the typical Kho games have been given up and replaced by football, volleyball, and cricket.

This is a happy spring festival with various colourful festivities, mostly related to cattle. In some parts of Chitral both the big and small animals are sent to mountain

1. Loose skin wrapped around the legs and feet and used by mountaineers as boots.

pastures just after *phindik* is performed. The day of sending animals to higher pastures (*γári* in Khowar) is called *γári nisík*. In the morning, all women, girls, and boys gather at the foot of the mountain with their animals and entrust them to their respective shepherds. The animals are taken to high mountain pastures and pass some three months there. In some places only *γári nisík* is observed; for example, the *γári nisík* of Khot is called *khotó γarioγ*. The day of returning of animals after three months is also observed which is called *γári xomik*.

In Gilgit, Nager, and Hunza, a festival is celebrated which is called *ganoni*. I think that *ganoni* of Gilgit, *phindik* of the Kho people, and Joshi of the Kalasha are festivals which have some common rituals and similarities in some respects.

*lašti/dokhna*. It is called *lašti* in Biyar, *dokhna* in Torkhow and Mulkhaw, and *nasalu* in Gilgit. Keeping in view the very long winter season in the Northern Areas, the people fully prepare for it and everything is stored. In December, specially fattened animals are slaughtered and their meat stored. This is called *lašti*, and the number of animals may be different in various families according to their status. In the middle of the month of December, the *lašti* day is observed and neighbours and relatives are invited to help in removing the skins. After removing the skins, big animals are cut into parts while small animals are hung whole with ropes in the *gonj* 'storeroom'. In the evening, the fat is melted in a large kettle and some of its oil is drained on the *širo Thun* 'širi's pillar'. *širi* is a fairy which lives in the house but mostly in the cattle-pen and protects the goats, sheep, and cows. The main structural post (*širo Thun*) is attributed to her, and some ceremonies are performed to please her. She must be pleased otherwise she brings destruction to the livestock. To drain the oil on her pillar is one of these rituals to placate her. Then the flour and sweet is poured in the kettle and

*SoSp* (a sweet dish) is cooked. Some of the *SoSp* in a pot is taken to the cattle-pen and plastered on a pillar, and the *širi* is thus addressed: "O, Shiri! Phestuk! I entrust all my animals to you. You shall protect them." The remaining *SoSp* is brought back and eaten only by women. The background of its being eaten only by women is so that the pregnant animals will bear female kids, not male. After dinner, the participants amuse themselves with singing and playing on the sitar until midnight, while they are entertained with *SoSp* and roasted liver of animals.

*bi nisík* ('seed sowing'). The custom still exists, though it is not widespread, in some parts of Chitral. It is called *bi nisík* in Chitral and *binfo* in Gilgit. Before sowing the seeds, a ceremony is held, *SoSp* is cooked, and seed is taken to the field. The first sowing is begun by certain people who are believed to possess auspicious signs and the virtue of hereditary blessings. They are mostly the descendants of very ancient people and are called *bunki* 'aboriginals'. First sowing is begun by such people and *SoSp* is consumed by the participants. Then the children roll while pronouncing the words "*saraqoti, maraqoti*" 'May the crops be fertile!'. In Laspur valley of Chitral and Ghizar valley of Gilgit, two small children are brought to the field, who make two or three small furrows with a small plough. Then some butter is put in their mouths. With these ceremonies, the work of seed sowing begins, in the hope that production will increase doubly in the forthcoming year.

*baS anzeék* ('to send food gifts'). *baS* is gifts of food sent to daughters and sisters. Usually *baS* is sent on the occasion of some local or Islamic festival, but there is no

restriction to send food on the occasion of festivals if her home is far away; it can be sent at any time. The *baS* consists of traditional food i.e. *SoSp*, *sanabáči*, baked bread, and meat.

*faqiri maSkík* ('to beg for household goods'). This custom is called *faqiri maSkík* in Chitral and *losun* in Gilgit. The woman goes to the houses of her ancestral tribe demanding household goods and other necessities, usually when her husband separates from his brothers and makes his own house. They help her in various ways; some give her animals, while others give utensils, beds, and other essentials. This custom has almost been abandoned due to social and financial changes and only exists among the poor families which are now relatively few.

*Chirmuži* ('milk relations'). The custom is called *Chirmuži* in Chitral and *onilo* in Gilgit. During the reign of the Mehtars, it was a custom to send the new-born prince or princess to a family where he or she was fostered and brought up until a certain age. As a reward, the Mehtar gave the foster family some gifts, usually in form of a piece of landed property; such property was called *daráli*. The nobility of Chitral also practiced this custom, but it is no longer in practice. Besides this, some other customs of milk relations exist. Some are set up to create good relations among two families. A man drinks the milk of a woman or drinks it as medicine and thus a milk relation is set up. It is considered a blood relation.

The milk relation also exist in the Kalash community. A male goat is slaughtered in a special gathering, its kidneys are cooked and eaten, and a Kalash is declared as 'milk brother' with a Muslim or another Kalash.

*jez dik* ('to give jez'). In Chitral it is the custom that male heirs acquire landed property, orchards, and weapons, while females acquire goats, sheep, cows, beds, and household goods. To give these things to the daughter is called *jez dik*. Usually the parents give them during their lifetime. The custom also exists in the Kalash community.

*šinžik* ('to please'). This was a pre-Islamic custom in Kho society which has continued to exist even after the people converted to Islam in the fourteenth century, even though there is not any room for such beliefs in the religion. Before conversion, the Kho people had the same beliefs as the Kalasha have even to this day. They had a large number of deities and special duties were assigned to each of them. They performed certain rituals to please deities, and the conversion had not any effect on these customs, which are still in practice. The ceremony observed to please a supernatural being is called *šinžik*.

Here I am going to mention such three customs: (1) to please *xangí*, the deity in charge of the home; (2) *širi* of the cattle-pens; and (3) *šawa nan* or fairies of the mountain pastures.

*xangí*. A *xangí* is a supernatural being having a feminine personality who protects women, children, and homes. Sometimes she may be seen in the shape of a snake, different in shape and size from an ordinary one, and sometimes in the shape of a woman in dreams. *xangí* must not be provoked lest she bring destruction to the whole family. *xangí* is provoked by the following things. (1) A snake appears inside the house and it is harmed. (2) Pieces of clothes stained with menstrual blood are not disposed of and lie openly in the house. (3) Men and women do not purify themselves after bleeding in the case of women and sexual practice in case of both. They must have a bath to purify them-

selves. (4) The house is dirty and attention is not paid to cleanliness. (5) Women in the house are addicted to adultery.

Women are agreeable to *xangí* due to their physical features, manners, cleanliness, and chastity, while witchlike figures dressed in rags and adulterers are not agreeable. How can one please *xangí*? There are two customs to please *xangí*. First when an animal is slaughtered, its fat is melted and some of its oil is drained on the pillar. Second, butter is burned in the fire and its fragrance is thought to please *xangí*. The latter is performed when *xangí* is defiled.

*širi*. *širi* has been mentioned under the sub-topic of *lašti/dokhna*. She has also a feminine personality and protects the cattle. She appears in dreams in the shape of a minor girl and converses about animals. Only women can see her in their dreams. She is also made *čitu* (impure) and provoked by the same things as mentioned earlier for *xangí*, however a few additional circumstances also provoke her:

- a. When an animal is slaughtered in the cattle-pen.
- b. When a woman other than the women of the house enters the cattle-pen.

How to please *širi*? When the cattle-pen is defiled and *širi* is provoked, a custom is performed to please her. Butter is burned in the fire under the name of *dokhna* and taken to the cattle-pen to purify the *čitu* (impure) cattle-pen. Other ceremonies are performed when an animal is slaughtered. Its fat is melted in a kettle and some oil is drained on the main structural pillar of the house called *širo Thun* or '*širi*'s pillar'. Also *SoSp* is prepared and taken to the cattle-pen and some is plastered on a pillar.

The causes which provoke and ceremonies to please both *xangí* and *širi* are almost the same. Some people believe that *xangí* and *širi* are not separate beings but rather merely different names for the same being: she is *xangí* in the house and *širi* in cattle-pen.

**Fairies (*nangini* and *šawanán*).** Islam affirms the existence of jinns and fairies, but at the same time it makes clear that these creatures have not any power to cause profit or loss to anyone. In Kho society the concepts of pre-Islamic deities have partially been Islamized, using Islamic terms instead of old ones, but certain powers are attributed to them as it was in pre-Islamic days. As far as fairies are concerned, it is believed that mountains are the abode of fairies, where they live in forts, the largest one being in Tirichmir where the ruler (King or Queen) of fairies lives. Their foods are bones of animals, but sometimes they extract the substance of fruits or crops and use it. People, especially hunters, have claimed that they have seen fairies in daylight in the form of very beautiful women, while some say that they may be seen in the form of snakes. They can reach wherever they want to go. In the past — though it has not happened in my lifetime — they would pick a minor boy or girl, take the child to their fort, and present two bowls, one filled with milk and the other with blood. The confined child was put to death if he chose blood, otherwise the child was released and brought back to the place from where he was lifted. Stories of love and marriage of fairies with local people are also narrated. Fairies rule the mountain area; and ibex, deer, and markhor are their animals. They are provoked by the following things. (1) The mountains and hilly areas are thought to be *oSniru* 'pure places' and men and women must enter such areas after purifying themselves. Women during their monthly periods and both men and women after sexual intercourse become impure unless they have taken a bath. (2) When an ugly-featured person or one who is dressed in ragged clothes enters in *oSniru*. If a *čitu* 'impure person' enters

the *oSniru* (pure places, i.e. mountains), the fairies are provoked. The hunters, shepherds, or woodcutters must purify themselves before entering the mountain areas, otherwise the fairies will create obstacles in their path and force them to return, their work uncompleted or unsuccessful. It is believed that fairies even kill such persons by throwing them in deep narrow gorges.

How to please the fairies? Certain rituals to please *nangíni* 'mothers', a term used for fairies as an expression of respect, and *šawanán*, a term for those fairies who graze ibex, deer, and markhor, are performed under the name of *šinžik*, and purification is done whenever someone has to go to the mountains for hunting, grazing, or cutting firewood. Small loaves of bread, called *iStaranuku* are prepared, taken to the mountains and placed under a special juniper tree. This act is called *iStareéik*. The special juniper trees are believed to be sacred, and cutting the whole or some branches is strictly forbidden. I think that respect for juniper is another example of the ancient cultural heritage, though vague in form.

### Some ancient customs of the Kafir Kalash community

**Religion.** The ancient Aryan religions of Asia and Europe have amazing similarity with each other. The beliefs in ancestor, nature, animal, and fire-worship, and faith in many gods and goddesses was common among them. The Aryan nations of ancient Europe, the Hindus, and the Bashgalis of Afghanistan may be mentioned as examples; and at present the Kalash tribe resembles those ancient cultures. The great god was Zeus in the Greek, Jupiter in the Roman, Thor in the Teutonic, and Mercury in the Celtic nations. The same god was called Gish in Bashgal (present Nuristan) and the Kalash call it Mahadeo. The great goddess of the Teutonic nations was called Norn, in Rome she was called Juno, and in Celtic nations she was Apona. She was called Dizane in Bashgal, and the Kalash call her Jeshtak. The beliefs in one supreme creator and life after death and the practice of priesthood were also the same. At present, almost all these beliefs are found in the Kalash religion. It is an admixture of idolatry, ancestor worship, and belief in many gods, goddesses, saints, and fairies. The belief in one supreme creator also exists. He is called Khodai, Dezau, and Paidagaru, and is believed to be master of the universe and death and life; but neither is he worshipped nor does a place of worship exist in his name. The chief deity in the Kalash mythology is called Mahadeo, a warrior god who protects the whole valley. The altar is called *maloS*; it is a plinth made of dressed stones on which wooden planks carved into horse heads are erected as an emblem of divinity. It is a pure place or *oSniru*, and unclean things like women, hens, etc. are not allowed to enter the premises otherwise foul weather will occur and bring destruction to the whole valley. *Sanjidogor*<sup>2</sup> is another god, worshipped for the fertility of animals, crops and human beings in a sacrificial ceremony. Jeshtak, on the other hand, has a feminine personality and protects home, birth, children, and marriage. A temple which is called Jeshtak Han 'the house of Jeshtak'

2. Editor's note: The spelling of this deity is represented differently here than in other papers. It has intentionally been left as in the author's original to prevent loss of information of any kind.

exists in her name in every village. Ceremonies relating to birth, marriage, and death are also held there.

The worship in the shrine of a deity is done by animal sacrifice. A fire is lit and branches of juniper and holly oak are burned on it. Then the throat of a goat is slit and the blood is drained on the altar. The priest utters a benedictory prayer, the meat is consumed by the worshippers, and the ceremony is over. The priests of the Kalash are called *betans*: they are believed to be messengers, saints, and supernatural beings. They come from time to time to guide the people to the right path. They were eleven in number and some of their names are given as Sharif, Rayik, Jahan Dozak, Shardast, Miran, and Sundi. They are no longer in this world, however the present *betans* are assumed to be their deputies and are bound to practice according to the teachings of real *betans*.

**bašali.** The Kalash women, during their menstrual period and delivery, are kept separate in a building called *bašali* or *bašaléni*. Each village has one prohibited area for all men and women. A woman is allowed inside only to help during childbirth; she must leave all her clothes outside and to purify herself must have a bath in running water in the nearby stream. The newborn baby is brought to the Jeshtak Han after fifteen days and a ceremony is observed in which the hair of the child is cut. The woman is allowed to lead a normal life in her home only after the ceremony is performed. When the child has attained the age of two years, a ceremony of initiation is held in which the child puts on the Kalash traditional clothes for the first time. A goat is killed, its blood is sprinkled on the clothes, and the child is recognized as a member of the Kalash community and is entitled to participate in all religious rituals.

**Marriage.** Marriage in the Kalash community is arranged by the family. The couple become husband and wife when the father of the bride agrees with the proposal. The bride-price is paid, and its account is recorded carefully. Neither is any ceremony held nor are certain fixed terms uttered to tie the nuptial knot. This state of affairs continues until their first child is born, then a ceremony is held in their temple the Jeshtak Han. The husband and wife stand together, a goat is killed and its blood sprinkled on the couple, and they are publicly declared husband and wife.

In the Kalash marriage system, no concept of 'divorce' exists. If a woman dislikes her husband, she may elope with another man at any time. In case of such an occurrence, *dug* is paid, which means the previous husband will be compensated with twice the original bride-price.

**Death.** In death, a unique type of ceremony is held. The Kalash of the three valleys assemble, the dead body is kept in the Jeshtak Han or in an open place, and singing, dancing, and feasting continue for three days. In case of a female, only hymns are sung and no dances are performed. Then the dead body is placed in a wooden coffin along with its clothes and some food and taken to their cemetery (*madokžal*) for burial. In case of a prominent person, an effigy is also erected in his memory. The traditional disposal of the Kalash dead is that they leave the wooden coffin in the open, but nowadays this practice has been given up and they have started to bury their dead.

**Festivals.** The Kalash have four main festivals during a year: these are *čilimjušt* or *Joshi*, *Uchal*, *Porh*, and *Chitrimas* or *čaumos*.

**Joshi.** *čilimjušt* or *Joshi* is a happy spring festival; it is held in the middle of May and lasts for three days. The shrines, homes, goat houses, dancing platforms, and temples are decorated with flowers and with the branches of evergreen trees. The specially stored

milk, meat, and wine is consumed. Offering sacrifices in the altar of Mahadeo is also a part of this festival. Singing and dancing continue in the *čarsu* 'dancing platform' throughout the day; men, women, children, and elders all take part in it in their new and best clothes. The festival correlates with the ancient Roman festival of May Day.

**Uchal.** The second main festival is called Uchal; it is observed when the harvest of wheat is completed and stored. Every year in the month of June, the Kalash observe the ceremony of Ratnat according to which they perform singing and dancing after every two nights. The last day of this ceremony is called Uchal, which is celebrated with great pomp. The night of Uchal is called '*jaja-i-juk*' and Kalash girls and boys sing and dance throughout the night. In the morning, loaves and cheese are offered in the shrine of *Sanjidogor*, and the Kalash pray for abundance of crops and fruits. The offerings are brought back and consumed. Then they assemble in an open field and singing and dancing is performed until night.

**Porh.** Porh<sup>3</sup> is the third festival; it is held in the beginning of October when the goatherds come down from the mountain pastures and walnuts and grapes are ripe. No-one is allowed to remove the fruits from the trees until the festival is observed. Anyone who violates this rule is fined. In this festival, the grapes are harvested and fresh wine is prepared. Singing and dancing goes on throughout the night. The young boys, who have recently returned from the mountain pastures, acquire special position in these dances. Under the name of 'Budarak', they are allowed to choose any woman or girl for their sexual satisfaction. This privilege, for the duration of the festival, cannot be denied. It was a prevalent custom about forty to fifty years ago but nowadays this practice has been given up by the Kalash.

**čaumos.** Chittrimas or *čaumos* is celebrated in December when the Kalash new year begins with the winter solstice; it lasts for fifteen days. It is also called 'the festival of sacrifice'. Each Kalash offers a goat sacrifice at the altar of Mahadeo or *Sanjidogor*; then the meat is brought back and consumed only by men. A she-goat is killed in the home for women to whom the sacrificial meat is forbidden. All the Kalash of the village get together in an open field, a big fire is lit, and competition of singing (*sarazari*) and dancing (*čowinari*) is held. Feasting continues and relatives and friends are entertained with cheese and wine, specially prepared for the festival. Small dough figures of different animals are made as well as animal drawings on the wall of the *Jeshtak Han*. To drive the imaginary markhors out of homes with a stick is also a part of rituals and they call it *šara biráik*. They clean their homes, renew their kitchen utensils, put on their new clothes, and make merry to welcome the new year. Non-Kalash are never allowed to enter in the Kalash villages or homes during the festival. Separation, just for the time of festival, is imposed between men and women; the men stay in the *Singron* or goat-houses and the women at home. The priest (*betan*) is engaged in studying the movements of the sun to make prophesies for the new year.

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3. Ed: Note the orthographic rendering of this word here.

## **Conclusion**

In Kho society, as mentioned earlier, some customs have totally been given up, while certain others which still exist are dying out due to social changes. Religion also plays an active part in this respect. The younger generation seem not to want to continue some of these meaningless customs, in which they are justified to some extent. It is suggested that these dying customs, at least, must be preserved in documentary form. This paper is merely an initiation to achieve this goal and I, the author of this paper, invite the scholars and writers to work on the subject and record their findings in detail.

# Indigenous Treatment of Ailments in Chitral

(Late) Prince Muhammad Hussam-ul-Mulk\*

The human body is prone to many ailments, and to cure them is one of the pursuits of all nations. The Kho people have not neglected this branch of human activity. Traditional indigenous remedies were the only form of treatment before the advent of modern medicine. This knowledge and experience has been practiced for generations. Even nowadays it is practiced, even though most of the *hakims* (traditional medical practitioners) have died. It is a mixture of Greek (*yunani*) and Chinese medicine developed according to the climate and environment of Chitral.

The Kho forms of treatment can be divided into four groups:

1. Dietary treatment
2. Medicinal herbs
3. Physical forms of treatment
4. Psychological treatment

## 1. Dietary treatment

A patient is treated by trying different foods on him and observing their effects. All edibles are divided into hot (*garam*) and cold (*sard/šext*). Fatty and oily foods are *garam*. Bitter things, lean meat, and certain vegetables are thought to be cold foods. In between are those foods thought to be balanced (*mutadil*). The excess of either hot or cold food will cause all sorts of ailments. *Garam* foods are believed to make the blood thick so that it flows slowly, and *sard* is thought to cause the blood to be thin so that the pulse is fast. The face of a person suffering from the effects of hot foods will look oily; his eyes will be yellowish and he will have a rusty, yellowish, or black coating on his tongue. There will be loss of appetite, and constipation; his urine will be yellow or reddish. If a person is *šext* he will grow thinner day by day, his skin will be dry and his eyeballs white, and his urination will be frequent and of white colour. It is advised to treat *garam* patients with *šext* food and vice versa. Cold foods are barley bread, mint, radishes, salted cheese, capers (*kaviroóγ*), meat soup of kid goat with vinegar, and watermelons. Hot foods are meat of black sheep, black hens, and flour cooked in ghee.

There are some foods which are believed to be unhealthy and not to be given to sick people. These are chilies, some types of cheese, pears, pomegranates, peaches, and muskmelons.

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\*The paper was read by Dr. Sardar-ul-Mulk, Medical Superintendent, Chitral Hospital.

## 2. Medicinal herbs

Different parts of medicinal plants are used for different ailments. These include bark, roots, leaves, flowers, and seeds of various plants. Some are powdered and eaten or are mixed in different soups or extracts prepared in water and drunk. Sometimes plant portions are made into a paste or poultice and used externally.

## 3. Physical forms of treatment

These include various types of baths, surgical procedures, and massage treatment. Hot water baths are used for diaphoresis along with special diet for chronic joint pains, sterility, and a large number of other chronic diseases. Sometimes certain herbs, like *Ephedra* or hay, are put into bath water. People also go to natural hot springs containing sulphur or other minerals for similar purposes. Similarly, hot sand baths are also used. Surgical procedures include blood letting, aspirations of painful swellings through horn pipes, and setting of bones and dislocations manually and by splinting. The skin of freshly skinned animals is also used. Burning buvicks (Ed: sic.) of fire is done for the relief of acute and chronic pains. Massage treatment is useful in abdominal colics and sciatica. The Kalash specialize in these forms of treatment.

## 4. Psychological treatments

These include a large number of procedures and rituals, some religious and the rest non-religious. The religious acts are carried out by an Imam or any pious man and include the following: (i) saying special prayers and blowing over the face and affected parts of the sick person or into some water to be drunk by the patient; (ii) writing a talisman of religious verses to be tied around the neck; (iii) tying a thread after reciting special prayers. (iv) Visits to shrines of holy men are very popular among ladies who are sterile or are praying for a male issue or wish to win favour from their husband, and in times of distress. (vi) Last are practices against the evil eye and evil spirits. These include not dressing a child too smartly, placing a soot mark over the forehead, use of a talisman, and painting an infant's face black with a paste prepared from burnt goat or sheep horn. Burning a holy incense and holding the child in the smoke is usually the last procedure a wise mother undertakes at night before putting the baby to sleep. This is prepared from the seeds of plants giving aromatic smoke.

# Falconry in Chitral

*Sher Nawaz Naseem\**

I am very happy to have this opportunity to present this paper about falconry in Chitral before this gathering. I frankly say that this paper is not research-oriented but it based on some scattered information taken from the falcon tamers of this area. I hope you will find it interesting.

The falcon, which is called *yurj* in the local parlance, is a hunting bird respected and honoured for its beauty, bravery, keen sight, and high flying. It is a symbol of courage and determination. Its black eyes are compared by lovers with those of the beloved. All the love songs sung by a mother for her son are centered around this beautiful bird. Story tellers, too, have focused their eyes on it. Our elders tell us that when the king of a country died, the nobles and the people gathered in an open place and freed a falcon to fly. The man on whose shoulder the falcon chose to land was declared king.

Falconry has been in existence everywhere in the world since time immemorial. Nobody can say with certainty how, when, and where this sport began, or why it won popularity among kings and nobles in the past. During the Muslim rule in India it was developed under a planned programme. The king of the 'Slave Dynasty', Ghias-ud-Din Balban, promoted this game under official patronage.

In Chitral, the sport flourished under the old ruling class. According to a local falconer, it was encouraged greatly by one of the rulers of the former state, Muzaffar-ul-Mulk. The techniques of catching falcons were entrusted to a few persons called Mir Shikars, and they were awarded properties and land for breeding and taming falcons for hunting purposes. They were ordered to reach Orghoch Dok, about fifteen miles northwest of here, where falcons were trapped between August and October. They would come to the area with all their paraphernalia. The area, surrounded by thick forest, provided ample opportunities to catch falcons.

**Capturing of falcons.** A shelter with a small hole on the rooftop was built along the arrival routes of the falcons. A *čakor* was placed on the roof to attract the bird. The legs of the *čakor* were tied with a strong string, which a man in the shelter would hold. A falcon hearing the cry of the *čakor* would rush swiftly towards it to attack. After attacking, it would try to hold its grip on the prey while the *čakor* itself continued to struggle. The scuffle, continuing for a few moments, gave a golden chance to the falconer to pull down the string slowly without giving any warning signal to his guest. This led eventually to the capture of this game bird.

Another method was also used for this purpose. In areas where no forest exists, falcons move to lower areas, to spend the night in the trees around the villages. Locating a tree where a falcon is roosting, the falconer would light a fire under the branch where

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the falcon was roosting. The fire continued throughout the night, kept the falcon awake, making it sleepless and exhausted by the time morning dawned. Thus the dozing falcon was easily trapped.

According to a falcon tamer, after catching it, its eyes are covered and its training is begun. The children are allowed to play to domesticate this wild and uncompromised animal. If it is not trained properly it develops habits of piracy and usually becomes a chicken lifter, posing a great threat to poultry keepers. Sometimes it does not return with the prey until it has torn and devoured it.

When a falcon's training is completed it is used for hunting to get meat for delicious food. Serving game is considered one of the best entertainments for guests in Chitral. It is a rare refreshment for which the guest is very appreciative.

There are different varieties of this game bird. Falcons, eagles, hawks, and *šakra*, which vary in colour, size, character, and general habits, all belong to different groups of one family. The falcon is most closely associated with Chitral. It is a broad shouldered, streamlined, and powerful bird with 32-46 cm-long, pointed wings. It has a slate-black head and moustache stripes on either side of the throat. Its stomach is pinkish white and rusty-red. The female is slightly larger than the male. The pairs occupy a favourite crag for nesting. Its nest is a compact platform of sticks lined with wool and soft grasses. Both sexes take part in the nest building and repair. Incubation is done by the female alone, while the male keeps watch from a distant place.

Its flying is extremely direct and swift. In the breeding season the pairs indulge themselves in aerial play, swooping at each other, side-slipping, half-somersaulting, and doing remarkable aerobatics. They throw themselves momentarily upon their backs in mock battle.

With the departure of the old ruling class of Chitral this profession appears to be a waning sport in the area. The game lacks official patronage, which has reduced its importance as a cultural heritage of the past. The restrictions by the Wildlife Department have further discouraged the falcon tamers from continuing their job satisfactorily. A falconer laments that the profession is about to die if no practical steps are taken to protect and promote this hobby. A large number of people have left the game only because they were not financially strong enough to afford it. Like polo, if this game is officially supervised and maintained, then it can be revived; otherwise it will reach the point of no return.

# The Value of Love as Expressed in Khowar Culture

*Mir Baiz Khan\**

I would like, first of all to thank the Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Khowar for calling upon me to participate and present a paper on an aspect of Khowar culture in this august intellectual gathering. I am excited, as well as reluctant to present this paper today. The reason for my fascination and gratification is obvious and clear: because I am participating in a conference on a culture which I am part of. I also feel reluctant because my involvement in reflecting on various aspects of Hindukush culture, and reading and writing on the subject, has been minimal as compared to those many friends of mine who have had long association with the Anjuman. However, in this paper, I will focus on the value of love in the context of Khowar culture.

Love is a universal human value, which expresses itself in different cultural milieus in a variety of ways. In this paper we will reflect upon it in the context of Khowar culture. When there is love between individuals in a family or a society, peace and harmony prevail, but the absence of it opens the doors of hatred, violence, and war. In today's world man seems to be drifting away from love and is being pulled toward violence and destruction.

Television, radio, and other forms of media inform us daily about hundreds of people being killed by their fellow beings. Modern man, as Professor Nasr tells us, has burned his hand in the fire which he himself kindled when he allowed himself to forget who he was! He is more ferocious than ever; his war instincts have increased disproportionately to such a high degree, so that he is at war with everything around him, including the natural environment on which depends his own survival. Prejudices and discrimination on the basis of place, colour, language, race, and religious and political persuasions have blinded his eyes and he behaves like a locust, feeding itself at the cost of everything else. This state of affairs is not confined to big industrialized cities but its ripple effect is constantly being felt even in the serene environment of the region of Dardistan!

Therefore, it is important to draw the attention of the intellectuals to a human and cultural value which needs to be highlighted and emphasized in order to maintain peace, harmony, and brotherhood in the beautiful and picturesque region of the Hindukush.

Chitralis have been characterized as bright, cheery, impervious to fatigue, splendid mountaineers, fond of laughter and song, and devoted to polo and dancing. Colonel Algernon Durand, a British officers who visited Chitral in 1888, writes: "the man striding along before your horse... would sing all the way up hill and down dale and would gather the wildflowers as he passed them and stick them into his turban." Chitralis by nature are soft and have little or no warlike instinct. They are light hearted and very much attached to their land; they will not move except under official pressure or the compulsion of the

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\*The author resides in Karachi. The paper was read by Mrs. Mir Baiz Khan.

direst poverty. They are peaceful; there is none of the natural deviltry, dash, love of war, and enterprise. There has been no tradition of severe fighting amongst the people, and murders are very rare. For their poor military qualities, Chitralis have been termed as 'laissez aller' but this points to the fact that Khowar culture is a human-oriented culture which cherishes cultural activities such as music, dancing, and sports, which indeed are invaluable means to promote the values of love, peace, and brotherhood. A concern about destroying and losing these values was shown as early as 1895, when the British military officers were busy in their campaign in the region. G. W. Leitner, a learned British linguist and anthropologist objecting to the military activities, writes:

"It is a duty to raise one's voice on behalf of races that I have learnt to love and of languages, now threatened by degeneration or extinction, which contain the key to the first history of human thought as developed in our own, the Aryan group of speech. It is not for England to be the destroyer of the remnants of a prehistoric culture and thus inflict a loss on civilization by allowing the ambitions of the few, and the ignorance of the many, to bring about the perpetuation of an act of vandalism that will forever attach to us in the councils of the learned and in the annals of mankind.

"The laughter and song loving Chitrali will be completely cowed till our civilization teaches him that treachery is his only weapon against those who have despoiled his paradise home for no reason that he can possibly discover."

In Khowar folk poetry one can hardly find any poem which is provocative and instigating to arouse warlike instincts of people belonging to different tribes. On the contrary, love is a dominant theme in Khowar folk tradition. In most cases it is idealized to the furthest possible extent. Although it begins with an encounter of two human beings, love gradually transcends their physical union and enters into the sphere of eternal beauty. With its intensification, the lover begins to keep a distance from physical closeness in order to purify it and raise it to its ideal level. In other words, the love of man leads to love of the divine. This is precisely the reason that almost all love stories in Khowar folk tradition have one thing in common, and that is that the heroine always marries someone other than the hero. The idealization of love is such that physical communion is considered to be an adulteration of it. There is a famous narration that once Mirza Sayyar, a well-known Khowar poet, was crossing a narrow bridge in one of the freezing months of winter. While in the middle of the bridge he realized that his beloved was coming from the opposite direction. He decided not to proceed, to avoid the touch of her body. He did not turn back either, lest this should be disrespect to his beloved. He then decided to jump into the freezing water and swim across the stream, hence saving his love from being polluted by mundane human desire. He had understood that the beauty of the body withers away with the passage of time, but the beauty of the soul remains forever because the soul itself is eternal. Hence one should be in love with the soul, the eternal, not with the body, the perishable. Mirza Sayyar says:

xošó kosíru žayá, bay očén biyabán, ma bo xoš  
altí pešmán bíko sar, no altí armán ma bo xoš.

'I have immense love for the place where by beloved has trodden, whether it is a garden or a desert. Longing in separation is dearer to me than physical communion with repentance.'

He sees the beauty in his beloved which is unique to herself. He says:

na maláik na pari, na ademi na mehrjúri Allah ta qudráta,  
kya kya qésma bandagán azúni.

'Neither the angels nor human beings have the beauty of my beloved. O, Allah, the Almighty, only you can create such a human being!'

In yet another poem, Mirza Sayyar expresses his love in an emotional tone:

khyo koóm khošó sifatan, ma žan roi, huranán nadír  
ma ruh behishtote biír, dust ki tan hostén ma mariír.

'It is beyond my capacity to describe the beauty of my beloved who is the queen of the angels. I wish I was killed by my beloved so that my soul will enter paradise.'

One finds numerous expressions used in daily life which involve respect, care, and affection. For instance a stranger addressing a lady would say *ái ma nan žúúr* ('O, my motherlike daughter') or *ái ma nan ispusáar* ('O, motherlike sister'). The lady would answer with similar expressions such as *ái ma tat braár* ('O, my fatherlike brother'), or *ái ma qayamáto braár* ('O, my spiritual brother'). Expressions like these not only create a friendly environment between two persons, but there is an indirect message of brotherhood of mankind. We also hear people in agony saying, *Ha, ma širín naan!*, meaning ('O, my beloved mother'). The person in agony indeed invokes Allah to have mercy on him like his mother. The following verse from an *ásurjaan*, a very early form of Khowar folk poetry, is a good example.

haS mo ráwe ma žúúr, haS mo rawé ma naán  
kul dudério ponghós, kul šikást boyán  
haS no reé "kyaní boóm", ai ma širín naán  
ma ćustí kulo sum muS abás boyán

'O my daughter, O, my motherlike daughter, do not say that because *kul* (a derogatory attribute referring to her husband) is bound to be defeated and is on his long journey. O, my beloved mother, I cannot but say that my beauty is being wasted with *kul*.'

As a cultural value, love is expressed in many ways uniquely in a Chitrali family. The best example would be to see how love is given to a female child, who in many traditional cultures is someone whose being is not very welcome in a family; perhaps this is because of the burden of her bringing up and then the marriage which not only involves mammoth expenses but also the dignity of the family. In Khowar culture, unlike those which have created many taboos around the personality of woman, a female child is welcome in the family as much as a male child. We are aware that in many shirintraditional societies her birth is unwelcome and at times not even tolerated. But fortunately in Khowar tradition she is received with love and utmost care. A girl's birth is celebrated with the same excitement as that of a boy. The most interesting aspect is that if the first

born child in the family is a girl, it is considered to be a good omen for the family. This point, though trivial, illustrates the ethos of the culture which provides dignity and respect for a woman. Another human element is that a woman, divorced or widowed, is accepted in marriage for a second, third, or even more times without losing respect and dignity in the family, as well as in the society at large.

When married, a daughter is never forgotten. At times of adversity she can approach her parents, brothers, cousin brothers, and even relatives extending to two or three generations for a kind of help called *jahez* (different from dowry) as it is her inalienable right. She is treated with care and love lest her unhappiness should cause calamity. Her children are called *jamali*, that is, progeny of a daughter who must be treated with tenderness and love whether their mother is alive or dead, for hurting them would mean hurting their mother, which may result in some kind of loss in the family. Besides *jahez* she is always remembered on occasions such as Eid, Nawroz, or Pathak. She must receive her *baS*, a token of remembrance in the form of a cooked meal or in kind, but rarely in cash. She must receive it as long as she is alive even at the age of ninety.

*baS* is something which is invaluable for her: when neglected she would express her feeling with utmost frustration bursting into tears: *hanún anus di ma no nameéitani*, ('even today they did not remember me'). The expression has got the inner meaning, that her expectation is that she should not be forgotten even for a little while and her memory should be as fresh as the day she left the house as a bride. This expectation goes beyond her lifetime. If any neglect is shown to her child, he or she would express similar feelings by saying: *ma náno arwáhoten di no loLítani* ('they did not even care for my mother's soul').

I will conclude by saying: let us discover love in our cultures and societies in the midst of the violence which engulfs us all today!

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# The Marriage of Daughters in Chitral

*Sher Wali Khan Aseer\**

**Introduction.** Just as the culture of Chitral (Kho culture) appears globally different from other cultures of the world, so the warp and weft of this culture are unique. Its customs, traditions, and practices are quite distinct and notably different from those of other (even the neighbouring) cultures. The fabric of Kho civilization, woven from strands of very ancient cultures, had survived in its original form even until quite recent times. But now there is an attempt to embellish it by patching on many new practices, and people have intentionally abandoned some of the old customs. At the present time, if a researcher from outside comes to Chitral wanting to do research on Kho society, it is difficult for him to find people able to discuss the original culture of Chitral. According to one estimate, about half of the old customs have been forgotten or have been changed. For this reason, for today's scholars it is, if not impossible, still very difficult to write accurately about the indigenous culture of Chitral. I, too, cannot claim to be able to write authoritatively or completely on the marriage customs of Chitral.

In Kho culture, to arrange the marriage of a daughter is not considered at all difficult, because a Chitrali girl is not valued according to her property, wealth, or dowry. Rather, her value consists in her behaviour, appearance, and competence, and the refinement and honour of her parents' home. This is why, when a man looks for a wife for his son, he inquires first of all about her behaviour and competence. After observing the normal way of life in her home and the kinds of people her family associate with, he asks for her as wife for his son. He doesn't look at the girl's parents' wealth or property. On the girl's side, too, her parents keep these things in view when giving their daughter in marriage: the boy's (i.e. prospective son-in-law's) good character is considered essential. In Khowar there is a saying, 'In giving your daughter (in marriage) you acquire a son.' A son-in-law is considered equivalent to a son. Therefore, a man looks for just the same good qualities in a son-in-law as he desires in his own son. It cannot be denied that many fathers have lived and now live who bargain away their daughters in greed for property and wealth. But such persons are not representative of Kho society.

Many ceremonies and rituals are observed in connection with the marriage of a daughter. These are discussed in order below.

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### 1. *mažaro dik* or *mažaro dieéik* (seeking the opinion of the girl's father)

If someone wants to ask for somebody's daughter in marriage, he first sends a trusted confidante to ascertain the opinion of the girl's father.<sup>1</sup> This process is called *mažaro dik* or *mažaro dieéik*.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. *večhík* or *maSkík* (the engagement)

If the girl's father is agreeable then the father of the young man brings along some respected persons of his village and approaches him to request his daughter in marriage. Some of these persons are such that even if the girl's father does not immediately agree, with the aid of these honoured and influential persons, the boys's father can prevail upon him. He will not be able to refuse the request of the respected persons of the area. Whether he wants to or not, he will agree to the marriage. A *qazi* (person with the responsibility of conducting religious rituals) also goes with the party to request a girl's hand in marriage. When the girl's father has agreed, the *qazi* says a prayer. The boy's father thanks the girl's father and uncles by kissing their hands, and also thanks the women of the girl's family.

This process is called *večhík* (lit. 'to beg') or *maSkík* (lit. 'to ask for'), or the engagement. Nowadays it is also called *Allah-o-akbar korik* ('to say God is great'), or *duá korík* ('to say a prayer'). In Kho society, when this ritual has been performed, the girl's parents say that they have settled the marriage of their daughter. This means that the saying of *Allah-o-akbar* is in a way considered equivalent to a preliminary *nikáh* (Muslim marriage contract). After the engagement (*maSkík*), it is considered very bad to break the agreement. In the old days it was virtually impossible. No matter which side would break an engagement, the other party would consider this a great insult to themselves. A *jirga* (council of elders) would sit to resolve such matters, and would impose a punishment on the party breaking the agreement.

### 3. *duró roi bik* (to become a member of the family)

If, after the engagement, it is decided that the departure of the girl for her husband's house after the *nikah* (*žuúr veSeéik*) is to be delayed, it is necessary to observe the custom of *duró roi bik*. If, on the other hand, the bride is to go to her husband's house immediately after the *nikah*, this ceremony is not needed. Normally, after the engagement, the girl will be married and sent to her husband's house within six months, or at most a year. If the delay is to be of a year or more, then the custom of *duró roi bik* is carried out. This

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1. In Kho culture, marriage relationships are (almost) always sought by the family of the prospective husband, not by the family of the girl.

2. Nowadays this opinion is also sought by letter.

means that the essential steps of the marriage, excluding the departure of the girl, are performed.

At the time of *duró roi bik*, a small celebration is held. The fathers of the girl and the boy consult with each other and decide on a date for the nikah. This date is fixed after asking the local qazi or *peš imam* (leader of prayers in the mosque). On that date the girl's father invites his relatives and people of his village. The boy's father or elder brother or uncle brings him to his in-laws' home on the appointed date. The marriage party also includes a few men to carry loads; they are called the *bardóyu*. Their loads consist of the carcasses of slaughtered animals, *SoSp* (a sweet made by frying sprouted wheat flour), *xiST* (wheat flour fried and then pounded into a solid cake), *sanabači* (a salty halwa-like dish), and *sanabačTiki* (bread baked with a filling of *sanabači*). The cooked things are eaten by the people of the village on the spot and the uncooked gifts are divided and sent to their homes.

When the time for the marriage party to arrive approaches, the girl's father takes his relatives and neighbours and goes to receive them.<sup>3</sup> They go at least a mile from the village to welcome the marriage party, and bring them home with a great display of honour and ceremony. As they near the house, the qazi, holding the Quran, comes out and conducts the in-laws and son-in-law into the house. Before this, he has sprinkled flour on the five pillars of the house and on both sides of the fireplace. He also sprinkles flour on the shoulder of the leader of the marriage party (*toxmiran*)<sup>4</sup> and of the groom when they arrive. The qazi or mullah sits at the head of the seating area in a traditional Khovar room. Below him sit the bridegroom, and then the *toxmirán*.

### 3.1 *xotbá korík* (the marriage contract)

When it is time for the *nikah*, the bride is brought out from the back room of the house. A female relative takes her by the hand, brings her out, and sits with her on the side of the room above the qazi. This woman is called the *mužo angyák* (lit. 'the one who brings (the bride) in between'). The *mužo angyák* is given a gift of money by the *toxmirán*. This is called the *mužo angyáli* (reward for bringing the bride). After that the qazi begins the nikah ceremony. This is performed in the Islamic way. There are one legal representative (*vakil*) and two witnesses each from both the girl's and the boy's sides. The girl's legal representative suggests an amount for the *mahar*<sup>5</sup>, and the boy's representative attempts to reduce this amount. He gets it reduced a little in the names of the people gathered, and

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3. The marriage party is quite small, consisting of the bridegroom, his patron (the *toxmirán*), and the *bardoyu*.

4. The term *toxmirán* here refers to whichever senior and respected person accompanies the groom to the bride's house.

5. *Mahar* refers to an amount of money promised by the groom to the bride on the occasion of marriage. This amount may be forgiven later by the wife if she chooses, in which case the husband gives the wife a gift equivalent in value to at least half the *mahar*. If the amount is not forgiven, and if a divorce takes place, the husband is obligated to give the full amount of the *mahar* to his wife.

a little more for the sake of God and the Prophet. Finally, the girl's representative will fix the amount of the *mahar*, and the boy's representative will agree to the amount. Then the qazi asks both the girl and the boy three times whether they agree to marry such and such person with this amount of *mahar*. The bride and the groom say 'I agree', or 'I have agreed'. After that the qazi recites the concerned passages from the Holy Quran and then after saying a blessing over a glass of *šarbat*,<sup>6</sup> gives it to the bride and groom to drink. After this, bits of roasted liver are prepared and fed by hand to the bride and groom. Finally, the qazi prays for the health, happiness, love, long life, and prosperity of the newly married couple.

### 3.2 *išperbáanu lakhík* (lit. 'placing of the white dish')

Fresh cheese mixed with butter is put on thin unleavened bread and placed in front of the new husband and wife. This is called *išperbáanu lakhík*. The person who brings this dish and places it before the bride and groom is called the *išperbáanu lakhák* ('placer of the white dish'). The groom's father gives a gift to the *išperbáanu lakhák* according to his own status and position. This is called the *išperbáanu lakháli* ('reward for placing the white dish'). It is said that whichever of the newly married couple manages to grab some of that dish and put it into his mouth first will in the future have the upper hand over his spouse. Because of this, when the white dish ceremony is carried out, both the bride and groom try their best to get the first bite. This is an amusing spectacle for the people gathered, since the bride, because of natural shyness, cannot lift her head. But at that time, in order to gain dominance over her husband, she tries in any way possible to grab a bit of the white dish first. This occasion is very difficult for the bride, and the shy groom too does not find it easy. When the new man and wife have eaten from the white dish, all the members of the gathering partake of it. People are particular to give some of it to anyone who is not married. The belief is that if one gets to eat some of the white dish he will be successful in getting married. After the eating of the white dish, the ceremonies connected with the *nikah* are finished. Both parties congratulate each other. The *toxmirán* and son-in-law thank the bride's parents, uncles, and other close relatives.

### 3.3 *toxmirán basi* (the entertainment of the *toxmirán*)

On that night, the *toxmirán* is entertained at the bride's house. Animals are slaughtered and after the evening meal at night they make *SoSp* of animal fat and roast meat over the fire. The people of the bride's village and her relatives chat with the *toxmirán*. The village singers sing, play, and dance. After this night has passed, the *toxmirán* leaves his son behind and returns to his own home. With this, the observances of *džró roi bik* ('becoming a family member') are completed. After this, the son-in-law and his family come and go freely to the bride's house from time to time.

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6. *šarbat* refers to any sweet drink.

#### 4. *žuúr veSeéik* (departure of the bride)

Previously it was pointed out that if the departure of the daughter is to be delayed, the ceremony of *duró roi bik* is performed. In case the plan is to send the girl soon after the engagement or the saying of 'Allah-o-akbar', it is not necessary to perform *duró roi bik*, and both the nikah and the departure of bride take place at the same time.

After the completion of *duró roi bik*, both sets of in-laws consult among themselves again and set a date for the departure of the bride to her husband's home (*žuúr veSeéik*).

##### 4.1 *zap anjeéik* (dressing of the bride)

One or two days before the departure of the bride, the custom of *zap anjeéik* is observed. The girl's female relatives and the women of the village are invited to her house. In their presence, the bride is dressed in her wedding clothes. Her bridal dress includes two silken shalwar kamiz (worn one over the other), a *čadar* (large shawl), shoes with golden embroidery, an embroidered cap, an embroidered headband, a *burqa* (head to foot veil), embroidered cuffs and neckpieces, an embroidered bag, and jewelry. *išperi* (a white dish) is served to all the assembled relatives and neighbours, and after that a full meal is served. All the guests bring gifts for the girl according to their means. This bringing of gifts is called *čičéč* ('wedding gifts') Some bring clothes, some embroidered headbands, some caps, some one thing, some another. In previous times, the girl too would go from house to house in the village. That was called *čičéč maškik* ('asking for wedding gifts'). Nowadays that practice has been discontinued.

##### 4.2 *toxmirán bolán gik* (arrival of the in-laws)

On the day of the arrival of the marriage party, the girl's relatives and the people of the village gather together and go to receive the marriage party. They accompany them to the girl's home with great ceremony. This reception of the marriage party is called *prušt bik*. After this, all those ceremonies and rituals which were described under *duró roi bik* are carried out.

From the boy's father's home, according to their circumstances, loads (of food gifts), bulls, horses, rifles, and ancient shields and swords are brought. Even now this custom survives, although the time of shields and swords has passed. The girl's father also asks for specific things by name; for example, he instructs them to bring this kind of rifle, that kind of horse, so many bulls, and so many loads of food. It is considered essential to bring the things so specified. The boy's father begs, borrows, or steals to bring these things. If the father of the girl is greedy he asks for a lot of things. These days people also ask for money. Formerly, people of wealth and status, to show off their position, would bring many costly things, and the girl's father would give things on a similar scale to his daughter. At the present time, the boy's father definitely brings a full suit of clothes for the girl's mother, her father's brothers' wives, and her brothers' wives. This is considered the right of the bride's close female relatives. It is called *khapála lakhónu*

(something to put on the head). Even if the girl's father doesn't ask for anything at all, the boy's father will bring the *khapála lakhónu* (or *khapala petshónu*) no matter what.

### 4.3 *žuúro samón* (the daughter's dowry)

The girl's father, after considering his domestic circumstances, and according to his means, gives things to his daughter. A poor father will send his daughter with a single suit of clothes. He will not indulge in a false display of wealth and he will not feel ashamed; nor will the boy's father feel it a shame for himself. This relationship of mutual simplicity is spiritually and aesthetically satisfying. A fairly affluent father will give his daughter one or two sets of bedding, one or two boxes of clothes, footwear, jewelry, two or three sets of fine bedding, and one or two cows. Wealthy persons of high status give even more than this to their daughters. They also give gold and silver jewelry. The ostentatious display of wealth and position also exist in Chitralli culture, but people who indulge in it are relatively few.

Embroidered items are an essential part of a daughter's dowry; they are called *suru*. Caps, headbands, detachable embroidered cuffs, decorated neckpieces, tiny bags for a woman's collyrium container, and envelopelike bags for men's collyrium bottles, knife cases, and other embroidered items are in the bride's trunk. The women and girls invited as wedding party members in the groom's house take these things and divide them among themselves. An embroidered bag is considered the bride's personal property. It it are kept her comb, mirror, collyrium, and other personal items. In previous times high status people would also give their daughters a personal horse; this was called *žuúro bargí*. Fathers of limited means would also give, according to their circumstances, one extra personal thing to their daughters as *bargí*.

In addition to these things, a load of cooked food is also prepared for the daughter. In this load of food are small fried rolls of bread, small salty cakes, large baked cakes, and cakes of fried and pounded wheat flour. A small bundle of flour ground from sprouted wheat and a small ball of ghee wrapped in a leaf or a piece of birch bark are included in that load of food.

### 4.4 *parvezík* ('to send off')

On the morning after the nikah is performed, it is time for the bride to depart. At a time suggested by the qazi, the daughter is dressed in her bridal clothes. Once again a white dish is served. After this the bride circles the fireplace three times in a counter-clockwise direction, each time stirring a pot containing a mixture of sprouted wheat flour and water for making *SoSp*. Each time she puts some of the mixture on her finger and dabs it on the central pillar of the house. After this, the bridegroom takes her by the right hand and leads her out of the house. Outside the door the qazi is standing facing the doorway

holding the Quran.<sup>7</sup> After the bride leaves the house her female relatives surrounded her and take her with them. They do not let her look back, because it is said that if she looks back she will not be able to adjust to her husband's house. After taking seven or eight steps away from the house, the son-in-law comes back. He kisses his mother-in-law's hand, and saying farewell, he takes a special dish or vessel called *xatún bahrkát* from his mother-in-law and leaves. The bride's mother does not leave the house at all during the entire ceremony of departure.

#### 4.5 *lek žuúr*

When the bride steps outside her father's house, the singers of *lek žuúr* (farewell song for a departing daughter) sing its poignant lines in a sweet tune. They sing either in chorus or singly. A line from *lek žuúr* follows.

*žuúr-éi golóte awá baam naan žuúr-éi*  
 'Oh my dear daughter, would that I, your mother, could be with you always (but this is not possible).  
*žuúr tan moóšo hostó la gané ki*  
 'Daughter, now it is time for you to take your husband's hand.'

This scene of the daughter leaving her home is heart-rending. The melody and words of *lek žuúr*, and the separation of the bride from her beloved mother and father, sisters and brothers, and the place where she was born and grew up melt the heart of anyone who has children. Tears come to everyone's eyes. After going a long way down the road to bid farewell to the bride, her relations return home feeling bitter pangs of separation. For two or three days after sending off their daughter, her family miss her greatly. On the day when the bride leaves, no black thing is taken out of the house until evening, and the house is not swept.<sup>8</sup>

One or two persons — of the bride's father, uncle, brother, cousin, godfather<sup>9</sup>, or godfather's son — accompany the bride as *toxmirán*. Having taken her to her new home, they return after one or two days. The groom's family give the *toxmirán* a complete suit

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7. The term *móxa nisik* (lit. 'to come out facing someone') refers to a specific ritual performed at the time of departure on a long journey. The qazi (or other elder) stands right outside the door facing the house, holding a vessel containing a copy of the Quran placed on top of some (barley) flour. Just as the traveler emerges from the house, he sprinkles a little of the flour on the right shoulder of the traveler. While saying a prayer, he passes the Quran over the head of the departing traveler.

8. The belief is that if a black thing (considered inauspicious) is taken out of the house, some harm will come to the departed travelers. Similarly, if rubbish is thrown out after them, it will have an ill effect.

9. *Chir-tat*. Literally, the husband of the *Chir-nan*, a woman who has nursed someone else's child, but the relationship can be considered as similar to that of a godfather in the west.

of clothes, and offer him a horse, a bull, or a rifle as *usél*. Whether they accept it or not is up to him.

#### 4.6 *kóli baar alík* (a post-wedding gift for the in-laws)

From a week to two months after the departure of the bride, her family prepare a batch of *pondí* (cooked food for a journey) get a few suits of clothes made for the groom's family, and take these things along with a cow or expensive set of bedding to their son-in-law's house.

This is called *kóli baar alík* (lit. 'to take a crooked bundle'). Until *kóli baar alík* is performed, the bride cannot return for her first post-marriage visit to her parents' home.<sup>10</sup> Someone also goes with the *kóli baar* as *toxmirán*, taking along one or two porters. At the son-in-law's house this *toxmirán* too is honoured and offered ceremonial gifts (*usél*). With this, the customs connected with the marriage of a daughter are concluded.

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10. This first visit is called *γéči neéik*.

# Khovar Music and Songs

*Maula Nigah Nigah\**

Every language is associated with unique styles of music and rhythm. Khovar, as any other language, has many types of music and distinct rhythms. The term *hang*, from the Persian *ahang*, is used in Khovar to refer to both melody and rhythm. It refers to the ebb and flow of a particular song, and to its musical composition. Thus it refers simultaneously to both *mausiqi* and *saaz*, or 'music' and 'rhythm'.

Various folk songs of Khovar have different compositions, some similar, some at variance with each other. During recent years, there is a trend toward borrowing from Urdu and Pashto compositions:

Khovar songs are divided into two main categories, those with short lines and those with long lines. These are termed (1) *dani* and (2) *sauz*, respectively. Songs consisting of long lines are called *dani*, and those consisting of short lines are called *sauz*. The *dani* style is believed to be older than the *sauz*, because the age-old folk music of Khovar is composed in *dani*. All the old songs have long lines and all the traditional music and dances can be classified as *dani*. *Sauz* is a comparatively new form of Khovar music, as is evident from the fact that only songs composed in the recent past fall in the category of *sauz*. Apart from this distinction, an expert Khovar singer can convert *dani* music into *sauz* by increasing his tempo and maintaining a higher speed. Similarly, a *sauz* song can be transposed into *dani* by reducing the speed of the ebbs and flows of the music. Even if this is done, the name of the song remains the same; the change is indicated only by saying, "A *dani* song is being sung in *sauz*," or vice versa.

Every composition, or rhythm, every Khovar song is generally attributed to its creator, the artist, and it is taken as a symbolic expression of his/her joys or sorrows. The way the whole story expressed by the artist in the song is reflected in its musical composition and the performance of the dancer in a particular rhythm clearly conveys the whole episode to the listener, who already knows the background of the song or the rhythm. In Chitral everybody shares the background knowledge of these well-beloved songs.

Some of the oldest songs are no longer sung, but the rhythm is played by musicians on various folk instruments.

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## 1. Musical instruments of the Kho

There are a number of folk instruments used in composing and playing Khowar music; the most important being the *sitar*.

*sitar*. The *sitar* is the most loyal companion of a Kho lover or a Kho artist, who expresses his love, his pains, his hopes, his disappointments, and sorrows by playing a certain tune on the *sitar*. Even any rhythm played on the *sitar* conveys to the listener the words of a specific Khowar song. Dances are also performed to the rhythm of the *sitar*. The *sitar* is made locally in different parts of Chitral. Its component parts are locally produced and easily available. Only the wire for its strings is obtained from outside markets. The main parts of a *sitar* are:

1. *Dori*, the thin, hollow belly of the instrument
2. *γaaz*, the long handle
3. *gušek*, the tunings
4. *xarek*, the basement of the wires
5. *pardah*, strings tied around the handle at different intervals
6. *sim*, the wires or strings

The *Dori*, *γaaz*, *gušek*, and *xarek* are made of wood. The *pardah* is usually made of sheep or goat gut, but plastic is also sometimes used these days. The strings are delicate wire brought from markets outside Chitral. There are many artisans and craftsmen skilled in *sitar* making in Chitral. In the past, the Chitrali *sitar* was developed by local artisans, who should be given credit for being pioneers in introducing this popular musical instrument.

A *sitar* player starts playing the tune of a song on only one string, and gradually switches over to all the strings. The *sitar* is played with the index finger. The rhythm of the *sitar*, like that of the vocalist, can match the beat of the drum or the *Daf*. In addition to Khowar songs, a number of Urdu, Pashto, and Persian songs are popularly played by Kho musicians on the *sitar*.

*beLu* (flute). Another important musical instrument in the Khowar musical tradition is the flute (*beLu*), on which music is produced by placing the fingers on holes in a tube while blowing with the mouth at one end. In Chitral, musicians use two types of flute.

1. *dar beLu*, a flute made of wood
2. *lenJu beLu*, a flute made of bark

The *dar beLu* is a common type of flute found and used in many places besides Chitral. The *lenJu beLu*, however, is a unique Chitrali flute which can be found nowhere else. It is made of the bark of delicate willow shoots. The holes required to play the music are carved out before the bark is gradually stripped off the wood. The bark dries in a few days and thus the flute can only be played for a day or two. Normally in the spring and early summers, young boys, girls, and even old women play this flute. As with the tune of the *sitar*, its rhythm communicates the specific wording of a song to the listeners.

*γarba*. Another musical instrument is the *γarba*. It is made on the pattern of the *sitar*, with a little difference. It is smaller, and *tendur*, string of sheep or goat gut, is used instead of wires. The *γarba* is played with a small piece of wood. The tune of the *γarba* is alike for all types of songs and rhythms. Therefore, for conveying the message of a song, a vocal expression is necessary. The *γarba* is not played on happy occasions, and love songs are not played on the *γarba*. Only spiritual songs, like *marsia* 'laments' and

*qasida* 'panegyric odes' are sung with the monotone rhythm of the *γarba*. The *γarba* is associated with religious rituals of the Shia Ismaili community, and it is not included as part of a musical concert. It is rather meant for serious gatherings of elders.

*surmai*. After the *sitar*, the most popular musical instrument in Chitral is the *surmai*. It is made of wood on the pattern of the *beLu*, with the addition of a reed (*šoL*) mouth-piece, with which it is played. An expert *surmai* player must know all the words of a song that he is accompanying. His music follows each line of the song uniquely. Thus the meaning of each line of a musical composition is specifically communicated to the listeners. To play the *surmai* well is thus more demanding than to play the *sitar*, with which one relatively short melody can be repeated time after time from the beginning to the end of the song. Combined with the beat of drums, it helps the dancer to perform his art. The sound of the *surmai* is louder than that of the *sitar* and *beLu*, and it can be heard from far away.

*čhang*. The *čhang* is an ancient musical instrument of Chitral. It is a small curved mouthpiece made of metal parts. It is played with the mouth and the fingers, which strum a wire stretching from one end of the mouthpiece to the other. Its tune can suggest the full verbal expression of a song. It can also be combined with the *sitar* and the beat of the drum for a musical concert.

*Dol*. The *Dol* or drum is a common musical instrument of Khowar music. It is used in combination with the *beLu* or the *surmai*.

*damdama*. For a complete concert, a pair of small drums, *damdama*, are combined with the big drum. There is a typical style of Kho drummers, which is steady and low for the *dani* mode and fast for the *sauz* mode.

*Daf*. The most original, simple, and commonly used musical instrument of Chitral is the *Daf*. It is made of wood and skin. A 6-7 inch deep hollow cylinder of wood (about 36-42 inches in diameter) is covered and tied closed at the bottom end with a plain skin of goat, sheep, dog, donkey, or wolf. The mouth is left open. The wooden cylinder has a hole to allow a thumb to fit into it to hold the *Daf* while it is being played. For style, a number of holes are made in the cylinder, in which are fastened some metal pieces. These metal pieces vibrate when the *Daf* is struck, producing a musical murmur. The *Daf* is played with the palm of the hand. As with the drum, the beats of the *Daf* cannot convey the specific images of a song; however, dance is performed to the combined beat of many *Dafs*. During the past few years the *Daf* has been abandoned and the *jerikan* (< Eng. *jerrycan*) has been introduced by the younger generation of Kho musicians as a musical instrument.

Along with all these traditional and some modern musical instruments, *caL dik*, the clapping of hands, is essential for Khowar music. Without the accompaniment of clapping, a dancer in a Khowar musical concert cannot dance his best even with the tune of the *surmai* and the beat of drums. The clapping symbolizes the zeal and enthusiasm of the participants, who share in the experience of the artist by clapping their hands. The artists are encouraged by this performance of the audience, who are transformed by this act of sharing from mere spectators into fellow participants in the artistic experience. Equally important in Khowar music is the *xez* of the participants in a musical concert. *xez* means echoing of the particular rhythm of a song sung by the artists. This repetition on the part of the participants increases the tempo of the concert. The repetition of the rhythm is either in full or with a few words like "haw, haw, haw", etc. *caL* 'clapping' or *xez* must

be synchronized with the tempo and rhythm of the instruments and the vocalists. If they are not synchronized, or are poorly coordinated it disrupts the whole concert.

Each rhythm of Khowar music is attached to a specific song. Some old songs have vanished with the passage of time, and only the rhythm is now played by musicians. It is high time for the writers of Khowar to make efforts to document all the old folk songs of Chitral so that these treasures of the past can be saved from extinction.

## 2. Khowar songs and music

Here are descriptions of a few Khowar songs, which I present in order to throw light on the traditional heritage of Khowar music.

1. *ašurjaan*. The *ašurjaan* is one of the oldest styles of song in Khowar. Though the *ašurjaan* has its own style and tune, it is considered to be one of the classical types of the *dani* mode. In terms of poetic techniques and structures, the *ašurjaan* is a unique form of poetry in the region. It has no restrictions on the length of its lines; the lines are not necessarily of the same length and structure. It is rather like an archaic type of *azad nazm* in the Urdu tradition or free verse in the English tradition. It is the best way of expression for the deepest feelings and highest emotions. Though there are hundreds of thousands of poems and songs in Khowar, communicated from one generation to another, some of the oldest being five hundred years old, the origin of the *ašurjaan* is cloaked in obscurity. A large number of songs in the *ašurjaan* genre are attributed to anonymous poets of the past. It is sometimes said that most of the *ašurjaan* have been contributed by women. As the *ašurjaan* is sung in a dialogue form, it is said that these were created by mother and daughter, lover and beloved, or two girl friends. Whoever the originator of the *ašurjaan* may be, the treasure of this folk art has been enhanced by contributions of many unknown poets and lovers over hundreds of years. The *ašurjaan* can be sung and its tune can be played on musical instruments in three different styles of *dani*. However its tune cannot be used for a dance. Some lines of the *ašurjaan* are very long and some are short. As a whole its lines are longer than those of other Khowar songs.

2. *luk žuúr*. *Luk žuúr*<sup>1</sup> is also a folk song. Its tune is not popular among musicians, but the song itself is very popular. According to musician Afsar Khan, *Luk* and *Buluk* were two sisters in Chinar Mastuj. *Luk* died on the day of her wedding and *Buluk* was wedded in her place. The mother of *Luk* sang this song in memory of her deceased daughter. The song is still sung on the occasion of the wedding of daughters, at the time when the bride is being seen off by her relatives.

3. *naan doši*. Another folk song of Khowar is *Naan Doši*. The song has a story similar to that of *Luk Žuúr*. *Doši* and *Naan Doši* were two sisters who lived in Brok, Laspur. *Naan Doši* died on the night of her wedding and *Doši* was wedded to the bride-

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1. Subheadings which represent specific songs rather than genres or types are spelled in the subheading in the broad phonetic transcription used throughout this volume for Khowar words. In the text, however, their names are treated as proper names and are capitalized. Since capitalization is used in the phonetic transcriptions to indicate certain systematic phonetic values, the reader should refer to the first, phonetically spelled, version of the name for its correct pronunciation.

groom in her sister's place. The mother of Naan Doši composed this song in her memory. The song has a traditional tune and it is sung at wedding ceremonies.

**4. Dok yaxdiz.** The famous folk song of Dok Yaxdiz is based on a beautiful love story. There were lover and beloved in Khot, Torkhow. The lover went on compulsory military duty to Gilgit and did not return by the time he was due. In his absence, his beloved was betrothed to someone else by her parents, but she still waited for her lover to return. On the day of her wedding she was reluctant to part ways with him and in the hope that he would still return she kept scanning the horizon for sight of her lover. Suddenly she saw a horseman approaching in the distance. She began to sing a melancholy song, saying, "Would that the approaching horseman were my lover." To her good fortune, the horseman was really her lover, and he soon arrived. Then she was married to him and the wedding party of the second bridegroom had to go home without a bride.

Dok Yaxdiz has its own tune and it is one of the classic forms of *dani*.

**5. hašim bigim.** This is a historic song attached to another tragic story. As the folk story goes, a beautiful princess of Gilgit was given in marriage to a cretinous prince of the ruling Rais family of Chitral during the reign of Khan Rais (1356-1420 A.D.). The princess found out about the abnormalities of her appointed life partner only after reaching Chitral, and she then decided to reject the marriage by fleeing back to Gilgit in the darkness of night. Accompanied by her slave girl, she managed to escape, but she met with an arranged accident at a mountain path near Shadok and was killed on the spot. The song of Hashim Bigim was composed in her sweet memory by her slave girl, who had escaped the mishap and reached Gilgit somehow or the other.

The song of Hashim Bigim has not survived, but the tune and rhythm of the song are played by Kho musicians on the *sitar*, *beLu*, and *surnai*. It is an archaic type of *dani*, and it is played at the end of a musical concert. According to Afsar Khan, singing any song or playing any tune after Hashim Bigim is strictly prohibited in the traditional conventions of the Kho musical concert. If anyone does so, his wife is considered to be automatically divorced under these rules.

**6. yorman hamin.** Another important Khowar song is Yorman Hamin. This song was composed by the venerated lover and poet of Khowar, Mirza Mohammad Siyar (1770-1842). Siyar belonged to Shogram and his beloved lived in Reshun. He wanted to keep his love true and free of all human desires, and therefore chose for himself everlasting separation.

His song is a popular *dani*; it is both played and sung in musical concerts. In Kho folk culture, Yorman Hamin is the most popular folk song. Everyone, young and old, man or woman, artist and singer, or scholar and pious man, knows its verses. It can genuinely be called the mystic poetry of Khowar.

**7. šer-e-mulko dani.** Sher-e-Mulk was a famous poet and lover of Nogram, Mul-khow. His song is a famous *dani*, which is both sung and played on Kho folk instruments.

**8. rustamo dani.** Rustam was a poet, lover, and musician of Istach in the Yarkhun Valley of Chitral. His love song is popular among the people of Chitral. It is in the typical style of *dani* and its tune is one of the favourites of musicians.

**9. nano begal.** This is another *dani* of Khowar. It is a tragic song and is associated with a melancholy tune. The song is attributed to a mother whose only son, Begal, was killed by the order of a tyrannical ruler of Chitral. Begal came from Shoghor; he was an excellent polo player and often defeated the ruler in polo matches. This displeased the

ruler, and he ordered that Begal be killed. On the day of Begal's tragic murder, when she heard of her son's death, his mother rode out on his horse impersonating her son and played a heroic polo match, defeating the tyrannical ruler. After winning the match, the old lady took off her headdress and said to the ruler: "If even an old woman can play as well as Begal and defeat you, why did you have my son killed?" After disclosing her identity she sang a beautiful song in praise of her assassinated son; this song is known as Nano Begal.

10. *šah phuri*. One of the *dani* songs which can also be converted into *sauz* for singing is Shah Phuri or Phuri. This song was created and composed by a lover and poet Firdous Firdousi who came from Jughur. The song has a *dani* tune, but it is also sometimes sung and played on instruments in the *sauz* mode.

11. *yormas bigim*. The love song of Yormas Bigim is one of the *dani* songs. Yormas Bigim was a beautiful girl of Shoghor, where a prince fell in love with her. This love song is a testimony to this love. Its tune is as popular as the song itself.

12. *xoš bigim*. The song of Khosh Bigim is a light, semi-classical *dani*. Khosh Bigim and her lover Aman belonged to Ghizar district of Gilgit. Their love story, its song, and its tune are very popular in Chitral. There are two different songs, both light *dani*, attributed to Aman and known as Khosh Bigim.

13. *gaderio dani*. The renowned poet and lover of Sonoghur, Ziarat Khan Zerak, is known as Gaderi, and his songs are known as Gaderio Bashono. Gaderi has to his credit a number of songs, all except one being *dani*. Only one of his songs is in *sauz* composition.

14. *saidooγ or saidoó 'the song of Saida'*. Saida was the name of a girl of Mastuj who was the beloved of Safdar, who also lived in the same area. Much against her desires and feelings, Saida was married to a prince, and her lover was rejected by her parents. One day the unfortunate lover, Safdar, was shot by the prince while he was swimming in the river flowing in front of the prince's fort. The song was created and composed by the unfortunate beloved Saida. The song Saidoó is named after her, but its name is mispronounced as Saidooγ. It is a *dani* composition, and it reminds the listener of the tragic incident.

15. *gulo dani*. Gul Azam Khan, a poet and lover, originally came from Wokh (Wakhan) and was settled in Zaini, Chitral. He is also known as Phoroliko Zhau (*phoroliko žau*), the son of Phorolik. His song is famous as Gulo Dani.

16. *xuda rakhmato dani*. Khuda Rehmat was a lover, a poet, and singer of proper Chitral. His song is famous as Khuda Rakhmato Dani.

17. *lot mitaro dani*. Aman-ul-Mulk, Mehtar of Chitral (1854–85), is known as Lot Mitar. His love song and its tune are known as Lot Mitaro Dani.

18. *mir wali mitaro dani*. Mir Wali Mitar was one of the Khushwakhthe rulers of Mastuj and Ghizar. He was a swordsman as well as a poet. His Khowar song in *dani* composition is known as Mir Wali Mitaro Dani. Because of the similarity in their tunes, the songs of Aman-ul-Mulk and Mir Wali are sometimes confused with each other.

19. *yarxuno hakimo dani*. Abdul Murad Khan is known by the office he held as the Hakim of Yarkhun. His love song in *dani* composition is famous and popular as Yarkhuno Hakimo Dani.

20. *Laspro hakimo dani*. The Hakim of Laspur's name was Mir Shah.<sup>2</sup> In addition to being a strong ruler, he was a close relative of the royal family. But passion has no regard for status, and he also could not restrain his passion. He fell in love with a girl in Buni and composed a song. His song is called Laspro Hakimo Dani.

21. *Thekadaro dani*. Shukri Amin, a lover and poet of Sonoghur is known as Thekadar. His love song is very popular among the people, and it is called Thekadaro Dani.

22. *sonogro xalfo dani*. Gilas was a healer, religious leader, and poet hailing from Sonoghur. He is generally known as Gilas Khalfa, and his love song, Sonoghro Khalfa Dani is named after him.

23. *mestučo čarwelo dani*. There are many Khowar songs composed by Sahib Nagin of Mastuj. His title was Charwelu. His songs include songs of protest against the prevailing political situation as well as love songs. All his songs are in *dani* composition and people know them as Mestucho Charwelo Dani.

24. *čarwelu xano dani*. This *dani* was composed by Mohammad Nadir Khan of Kosht. He is more popularly known by the family name of Charwelu Khan. Therefore his song and its tune are called Charwelu Khano Dani.

25. *anwaz bibi*. This love song of a lover and poet of Drosh is known by the name of his beloved Anwaz Bibi. The song is in the *dani* mode.

26. *zar bibi*. This is another *dani* song of an unknown poet of Drosh named for the beloved of that poet, Zar Bibi.

27. *šarafuddin xano dani*. Sharafuddin Khan Sharaf is a living poet of Kosht. His songs are known as Sharaf-Din Khano Dani.

28. *keso malango dani*. Keso Malang is the nickname of Shirin of Kesu. His songs are very popular, and are known as Keso Malango Dani.

29. *mir gulo hang*. Mir Gul of Hon, Chitral, is a living Khowar poet, musician and vocalist. Mir Gul has created about sixty popular songs, and has to his credit the composition of music for over a hundred other songs created by his contemporaries. The songs and music of Mir Gul are known as Mir Gulo Hang.

There are a number of tunes and rhythms which have survived but whose original songs or even the stories attached to these tunes are not known. However the tunes are played for dances and on particular occasions appropriate to the particular tunes. Here is a brief description of some of these tunes.

1. *sardar mitaro dani*. A particular *dani* tune is attributed to Sardar Nizam-ul-Mulk, Mehtar of Chitral (1892-5). The tune is known as Sardar Mitaro Dani.

2. *bulbul xano dani*. Bulbul Khan was a poet and musician of Gilgit Territory. A Khowar *dani* tune is identified as a composition of Bulbul Khan.

3. *arab xano dani*. Arab Khan also belonged to Gilgit. Music for a Khowar tune was composed by him and it is known as Arab Khano Dani.

4. *pialo mitaro dani*. A certain ruler of Punial, Gilgit composed a song in *dani*. The song is now extinct, and only its tune is played.

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2. The translator, Inayatullah Faizi, comments that some people attribute this song to Sher Khan.

5. *dado dani*. This beautiful *dani* tune, attributed to someone known as Dada, is very popular.

6. *mahmud γaznavio dani*. This Persian ghazal, which starts with the name of Mahmood of Ghazna, has been composed in Khowar musical style and its tune is played on the *sitar*, the *surnai*, and the *beLu*. It is known as Mahmood Ghaznavio Dani. The tune is also called Kabuli Dani.

7. *berangi dani*. Berangi is a *dani* tune introduced from Gilgit. According to Afsar Khan, its song may be in Shina, which is also called Giltikwaar.

8. *baChai šap*. This is a typical *dani* tune played on the evening of the departure of the ruler on tour to another country. Hence its name BaChai Shap (< Persian *šab* 'evening'). The tune is meant to let the people know about the imminent departure of their ruler on a journey the next day.

9. *ponwar*. This is a tune composed in *sauz* and played on the eve of the setting out of the ruler or his guests on a journey, or on their return to the palace after a journey.

10. *bakharašwar*. This is a martial tune played on the eve of the outbreak of a war. In a way it is a signal of the declaration of war against an enemy.

11. *žangwar*. This is yet another tune played on the occasion of war, when combat is lasting too long. The tune is meant to encourage the warriors and accelerate the tempo of the battle.

12. *muraLe*. This is a special tune played at the bedtime of the ruler or his distinguished guests.

13. *γaLwaar*. This tune is played at the beginning of a polo match, as well as for the announcement of a polo match in the early hours.

14. *šištuwaar*. This is a tune played on the occasion of the departure and arrival of a wedding procession at its destination.

15. *barwazi*. This is a tune which symbolizes a folk story and is played for a traditional dance.

16. *šab daraz*. This is another tune played for traditional dancing. It is as popular among the people as *barwazi*.

### 3. *Sauz*

There are innumerable *sauz* tunes in Khowar. Almost all songs with short lines are composed in *sauz*. *Sauz* is easy to dance to and it is light music which even a beginner can sing, play and dance to.

In recent years some young and amateur artists have introduced Urdu and Pashto music into Khowar by composing their songs to the tunes of popular songs of these languages.

In short, Khowar music has the rich traditions of a treasured culture. What is needed is to create an awareness of their tradition among the Kho people. We should concentrate our efforts on preserving and promoting this beautiful heritage of our past.

# An Account of the Movements of the Sun and the Pleiades in Chitrali Tradition

*Rahmat Akbar Khan Rahmat\**

The culture and customs of an area which develop according to its conditions become traditions, and the inhabitants live within these old traditions. In Chitral, many of these traditions revolve around the movements of the heavenly bodies. Some days of the week are believed to augur well or badly for commencing a project or a journey. The days of the week have been experienced as good or bad by different people, who have acted according to the predictions of traditional astrologers, believing in the good or bad qualities of each day. These predictions have been borne out by the experience of the people over a long period.

Ignorance prevented the people of Chitral from taking advantage of the knowledge in books, but they had a smattering of knowledge of the movements of astronomical bodies like the sun, the moon, and the stars. The pace of the movements of these bodies, after long observation, provided visual guidance to them for their daily lives. The common people by observation of the annual rotation of the sun, and some wise ones, by observation of the movements of stars, established auspicious moments. The ordinary people marked the rising and setting points of the sun over the hills, and when the sun's rays hit the wall of the house through the chimney on particular days, the place was marked with a wooden nail. For the calculation of *hamal* 'equinoxes' and *yorwán* 'summer and winter solstices', these marks and fixed points have proven accurate. In some old houses in Chitral these points are still intact. In the present days of modern education, we know that the vernal equinox falls on March 21st, and the autumnal equinox falls on September 21st, and that June 21st is the summer solstice and December 21st the winter solstice. But our traditional computation of the movements of the sun also yields nearly the same dates. Besides these, the sun's journey in other months of the year has also been marked in connection with the cultivation of different crops and other works. Experience enabled the people to get guidance even in rainy seasons. In this mountainous country, the sun rises over the hills and the rays of the sun coming out earlier through notched cliffs have also been closely observed and marks have been fixed to mark the advance of a season. The sun changes its route daily, which shows the movement of one season and the arrival of ploughing time. No ploughing is done on the days close to the vernal equinox, nor are trees planted, for it is believed that the crop will be less abundant. Such days are called *khampirik*, and the traditional astrological lore says that a human child or an animal baby born on these days will be feeble. The scheduling of farm work according to these

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calculations is called *dehqán hisáb*, 'the peasants' account'. From these movements of astronomical bodies, predictions about whether the coming seasons will be dry or wet are also made. If the equinox falls on Friday and the next Friday is overcast, then it is said that the *hamal* (equinox) 'drowned'; that is, much rainfall is expected. Otherwise a dry season is predicted.

## 1. The tradition of *boól* and its importance

Besides their fixing of points based on the movements of the sun, the Kho people have experienced the auspiciousness of particular times as dependent on the movement of the stars. This astrological system is called the *boól* system and is regarded as very important. It has proved itself accurate.

*boól*. *Boól*<sup>1</sup> is a constellation numbering six or seven small stars, but some experts even say that there are twenty-six stars which form a cluster. Because of their clustered appearance they are called *bol* or 'troops'.<sup>2</sup> This constellation travels on the same route in winter and summer; that is, the route on which the sun travels on June 21st in the northern hemisphere is exactly the route of *boól*. The rising and setting spots of *boól* are the same as those of the sun on June 21st. The moon travels both in the northern and southern hemispheres during a month and after the first day of the lunar month rises each day at a different place and a little later each day.

The day the moon and the *boól* come closest in the sky at night is called *boólo anus* 'day of the *boól*'. Usually the moon is on the right and *boól* on the left. Sometimes the *boól* and the moon travel just above one another. That night is exceptionally cold compared to other nights. The *boól* and the moon can come closest together during early night, at midnight, near dawn, or even during the daytime. In the months of autumn in the higher places, crops, fruit and vegetables get frostbitten and destroyed on that night. The leaves of trees, crops and potatoes change completely overnight. Unripe fruit is much affected. According to the experts in this study the moon also has some heat which is blocked by the *boól*. It is believed that the *boól* is lower than the moon and obstructs the emission of the heat of the moon. (This is scientifically wrong.) The *boól* comes closest to the moon, i.e. they stand one above the other, on the odd dates of the lunar month, namely on the 29th, 27th, 25th, etc., which means that in each lunar month the *boól* date falls one odd date earlier, so that *boól* can also fall on the 3rd or on the first of a lunar month. On the first, 29th, and 27th, it is not visible. The experts can see it on the 25th, and ordinary people can see *boól* day on the 23rd's. The experts compute the (lunar) dates according to the movements of the *boól*; they do not base their calculations on observing the crescent moon on the first of the lunar months, but from the date on which the *boól*

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1. The spelling *boól* represents a vowel which the editor has analyzed as long with stress falling on the second mora, producing a low tone on the word. (See Bashir *A Reference Grammar of Khowar* (in preparation). The existence of tone in Khowar has been noted by Morgenstierne and Buddruss and is well recognized by Khowar speakers.

2. Editor's note: *boól* is the Pleiades. The gloss 'troops' reflects equating *boól* 'Pleiades' with *bol* 'troops, army'. This may not be the correct etymology.

happens. The occurrence of the *boól* night on odd dates testifies to the accuracy of this method.

From the *boól* night (*boólo anus*) of one month to that of the next, the days have been given different names by those who study this lore. And those days have been designated as auspicious or inauspicious. According to the quality of the days, the Kho people from time immemorial have been taking guidance for arranging important work like marriages or construction. The experts have prophesied for the coming days from the study of the *boól*; their prophecies are often proved correct.

## 2. The characteristics of days after a certain *boól* night

1. *boól*. The day the *boól* and the moon come closest; this day is considered auspicious for arranging marriages or starting a construction project. A human child born on this day is also regarded as auspicious. Humans or domestic animals born on this day are believed to prosper and multiply in later life.

2. *śah boól*. The first week from the occurrence of *boól* till the next *boól* day is believed to be subject to the rule of *boól*; this is considered good for all kinds of work.<sup>3</sup> When the day of the *boól*'s rule is over the following *saats* occur.<sup>4</sup>

- a. *rom*. The next *boól* day is called *rom*. This day is good for laying the foundation of a building and starting food storage. If food storage is begun on that day, it is believed that the food stock will last longer. The Kho people also begin to consume their food stocks on that day.
- b. *Son*.<sup>5</sup> This day is good for all kinds of work. A child born on this day is believed to be intelligent: a male child is believed to be mild but a female child will be a shrew.
- c. *xoyánu*. A human or an animal born on this day will be a glutton, but a crop sown will be abundant.
- d. *hari*. A birth on this day is also auspicious; the child will be strong and stout. This day is also good for sowing and planting.
- e. *sorum čhiL γos*.<sup>6</sup> This day is believed auspicious for all kinds of work. A child born on this day will be polite.

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3. Translator's note: For example, if *boól* falls on Friday, the following week up till the next Friday will be the period of the rule of *boól*.

4. Translator's note: *saat* is used in two meanings in Khowar: (1) day of the week (ordinary usage); (2) a term used by experts in the lore of *boól* to refer to a particular moment of a day or a part of a day or night when a certain star is dominant in the sky and affects human actions. In the preceding sentence, meaning (1) is intended.

5. The symbol <S> 'capital S' represents the voiceless retroflex sibilant, as distinct from the palatal sibilant <ś>.

6. Editor's note: The spelling in the Khowar original gives *sorum čhiL γos*, in which <L> represents a velarized 'l'; however, the translator has glossed the second word as 'mlk', which is usually spelled as *Chir*, not *čhiL*.

- f. *goh gruT*. This day is only good for hunting; other works will have disastrous results. A human or animal born on this day will die by accident.
- g. *γolomul*.<sup>7</sup> This day is considered average for all kinds of business.
- h. *ačhu*.<sup>8</sup> This day is good for building houses and storing food.
- i. *dili*. Good for driving cattle to pastures, the wedding of daughters, and starting a journey.
- j. *kaši*.<sup>9</sup> This is a good day for taking horses for grazing in the summer. It is also good for journeys.
- k. *Tigal*. Average, neither very bad nor unusually good.
- l. *γoloγames*. Good for moving from one house to another and for the wedding of daughters.
- m. *mož*. A child born on this day will be gentle.
- n. *toman*. This day is believed good for receiving gifts from rulers. A child born on this day will be loving and loyal.
- o. *teloman*. A female, especially an animal, born on this day will give much milk and a human will be wealthy and sedate. A piece of work started will progress well.
- p. *auγoman*. A man born on this day will be poor.
- q. *phoh taLing*. This day is not good for any work. Any birth on this day is also inauspicious.
- r. *manoThal*. This day is good for visiting rulers. A man born on this day will be rich, but devilish and quarrelsome. These characteristics will be dominant until the next *boól* day falls. No work will be fruitful in these days.

### 3. Watching of the *boól* occurring

One day in a year is a fixed day for watching the fall of *boól*. This occurs on the third of *šetu dreék mas* ('month of making buttermilk', one of the indigenous months). After that the constellation of *boól* travels with the sun and is not visible. There is a precisely specified way to see *boól* again after its separation from the sun. It then rises earlier than the sun and the observer prepares to watch the reappearance of *boól* in the latter half of the night. He places an object with a hole in the center in front of him and focuses his sights through the hole toward the point where *boól* rises — that point being the rising place of the sun on June 21st, *yorwan*, the summer solstice. If in the meanwhile the observer drowzes or becomes heedless and the *boól* rises before he sees it, he is doomed. It is said that 'the *boól* overtook him'. The observer or his family will meet physical or financial damage. For this reason the *boól hisáb*, the observer, keeps with him a loaf of bread from which he takes morsels continuously while watching through the hole, so that the act of chewing will keep him alert. As the *boól* rises, its color is as red as molten iron because of the sun's rays. If the observer catches sight of the *boól* through the hole as

7. The original manuscript has *γolomul*, whereas a translator's note has *γolomul*.

8. The original manuscript has *ačhu*, whereas a translator's note has *aChu*.

9. The original manuscript has *kaši*, whereas a translator's note has *kaSi*.

it comes out, he will become rich besides being blessed with other pleasures. But if he is beaten by the *boól* then he will suffer a lot. Sayyed Ghufraan of Mastuj has told me that his father and grandfather both were once defeated by the *boól* and both of them died within the week and their survivors faced much trouble. No *boól* observer from that family survived after the incident. Sayyed Ghufraan no longer practices *boól* observation, but knows when *boól* falls. At present not a single *boól* observer is to be found in the whole of Chitral.

The lunar months are so different from the solar months that they do not correspond at all. A lunar month, which is the source of the Islamic calendar, each year comes ten days earlier than the previous year. Therefore the month of Ramazan, for example, comes ten days earlier each year, approximately one month earlier after every three years, and thus completes a cycle of the seasons. The Khowar months, however, are not so; they are based on solar movements like the English months. These months have been named from the seasons in which they come, like *yorwan mas* 'the month in which the summer solstice occurs', *šetudreék* 'month of making buttermilk', *kholkrémi* 'the month of threshing', *Sadaγ*, *ChanChori* 'month of falling leaves', *žuLisprú* 'month of apricot blossoms', and so on. The name of each month reflects a quality of the particular season. The lunar months do not affect them; thus two parallel calendars — the Islamic months based on a lunar calendar and the Khowar months based on a solar calendar — are in vogue in Chitral. The *boól* observation system is related to the Khowar months only. The *boól* falls on the following dates of the Khowar months.

1. 25th of *yorwan mas*
2. 23rd of *muž mas*
3. 21st of *poyanso mas*
4. 19th of *kholkremiti*
5. 17th of *kiSman mas*
6. 15th of *ChanChori mas*
7. 13th of *Thonšal mas*
8. 11th of *pħeting mas*
9. 9th of *γorγor mas*
10. 7th of *Sadaγ mas*
11. 5th of *žuLispru mas*
12. 3rd of *šetudreék mas*

It is also important to note that the arrival of seasons, e.g. the months of *žuLispru*, *kholkremiti*, *kiSman mas*, differs in different parts of Chitral because of altitude. The local names of the Khowar months are sometimes different in different areas. The names for the months mentioned above are in use in the Mastuj valley.

#### 4. Different aspects of *boól* calculation

The experts on the movements of *boól* were unlettered and have transferred the traditional knowledge orally to their descendants. According to their experience, it is unusually cold on the night of the fall of the *boól*. This is still believed by all. It was generally believed that the *boól* obstructs the sun's rays by coming between the sun and the earth. Folklore

tells us that at the time of the creation of the universe the sun vowed to burn up the earth, but God replied, "Do it if you can." When the sun returned after June 21st (the summer solstice) from the northern hemisphere, God placed the constellation of *boól* in front of it, which prevented the sun's rays from falling directly on the earth and thus the sun's pride was hurt. God knows better, but it is a common experience that on those nights or days when *boól* falls, it is unusually cold, which can be experienced by observers of the present day. When in autumn *boól* falls in the last part of the night in the cold areas as well as in some lower regions as far down as Dir and Chakdara, the unripe paddy gets frostbitten. This is due to the *boól*. The above belief about the obstruction of the sun's rays by *boól* is a traditional one and modern scientific research rejects it, but the effect is still experienced; this may have some other reason.

I have heard my father Hakim Farman Akbar Khan, who was a *boól hisáb*, a *boól* expert, telling stories about particular auspicious moments, based on *boól* calculations, and births taking place on those days. One incident he related was about a man named Muqbil of Istach village, who had in-laws at Dobargar Village in the Yarkhun Valley. Muqbil, who was a *boól* expert, paid a visit to Machuli, the head of his in-laws. Early the next morning the housewife told them that a goat had given birth to a male kid during the night. Upon this Muqbil told Machuli that it was Monday that day and a *goh gruT* day of the *boól*, and that an animal born on that day would surely die of some calamity and its meat would not be available to its owner. This served as a warning for Machuli; he looked after the young goat with special care. After five years the goat was ready for slaughter and so far had not suffered any harm. Machuli also invited Muqbil to participate in the event and share the meat of the goat of which the latter had expressed such doubts at its birth. In the evening he told his guest that night he wanted to slaughter the goat, which according to his prediction was to have died useless. When he said he wanted to kill the goat, Muqbil replied that the moment of its birth had been inauspicious but that he might have made a mistake in his calculations. After that the goat was taken out of the fold. When it was brought to the door of the house, no sooner did the goat enter the doorway than a dog that was in the house barked and jumped at the goat and chased it out again. Then the goat shied, fled into the hills, and could not be searched for until the next morning. The following day it was found killed and partly eaten by a wolf. The prediction had proved true. On my inquiry, the veracity of this story was confirmed by Muhammad Taus Khan, grandson of Machuli, and Afsar Khan, grandson of Muqbil.

Another story told by my father on this topic was that once a *boól* expert was sitting on a mound with two or three other people and saw a magpie nesting in a tree. The expert said that it was not an auspicious hour for making a nest, since something built on this day would catch fire and burn up completely. The others said that a nest high on the branches of a tree cannot be burned; it is impossible. The *boól* expert replied that if it does not catch fire then some other disaster will visit it. The magpie completed the nest, but straw was yet to be added. Some children were tending their flocks and had prepared a dish of beans — as is still done — and eaten it while on the grazing ground in the daytime. While they were eating, grains of beans fell on the ground and the magpie, after their departure, came to the cooking spot to pick up the grains to eat. After searching for the beans, the magpie picked up pieces of wood from the fireplace in its beak and took them to its nest. By ill luck it picked up a piece of wood which still had a live spark on one end. As soon as the wood was placed on the nest it set fire to the straw spread over

the nest and with that the nest caught fire and burned up. But I did not ask my father at that time about that particular day of the *boól* system. It is not impossible to say which day has this quality.

## 5. *murix istari*

In connection with the auspiciousness or ill-omened nature of certain days, another star was also the center of observations of the astrological experts. This star is called *murix istari*. This star rises on the first of each lunar month, at the rising point of the sun on the 21st of June. On the second and third of the lunar month it reaches the rising point of the sun on December 21st. On the 4th of the month it remains there or comes down a little; on the 5th it turns to the south, on the 6th it comes to the west and on the 7th of the month it turns toward the north. On the 8th it fights against other stars and remains suspended. This day is considered to be a day of riots and bloodshed. On the 9th of the month it falls to earth. This day is believed to be good for a journey in any direction. The star is said to be 'under one's feet'. On the tenth of the month it returns to the point of June 21st. It starts the same journey again on the 21st of the month. A special point about this star is that a journey should not be started in the direction where this star is present and likely to be faced. A proverb in Khowar goes, 'The star was in front of you.' It is uttered when a man returns from a journey sooner than the expected date without completing it because of some trouble; the phrase means that the journey resulted in failure.

The 29th of the lunar month is called the 'last nine'. This 'last nine' (29th) is believed to be the most inauspicious day. If Wednesday falls on the 29th of a lunar month, it is very bad; a child born on this day is said to be wicked. His chances of survival are low, and if he/she does survive then the parents will come to grief. A child born on the 9th and 19th of a lunar month is believed to be good, but one born on the 29th is said to be ominous.

## 6. *tarazu*

Another group of stars that are also observed for taking guidance in various matters is called *tarazu*. This is a group of three stars at equal distance in a straight line. Their route is that of the sun on the equinoxes when the sun comes close to the line of the equinox. The *tarazu* constellation is observed and the setting point fixed. All the three stars set simultaneously. The setting point of the central star of this group is the point where the sun will set on the equinox (*hamal*).

In modern civilized society no importance is attached to the auspiciousness or the opposite qualities of days, which used to have so much significance in the past. The days are no longer believed to be good or bad for starting a journey and therefore this kind of observation has already fallen into disuse. The *boól* calculation has come to a stop. This was a good study and a source of guidance and predictions. It is expected that some interest will be taken in reviving this traditional knowledge.

My late father, Hakim Farman Akbar Khan, taught me about the secrets of the *boól*, as part of a traditional education. Other resource persons who have helped me in this work also command my gratitude. My thanks are due to: Sayyed Sadat Shah, Sayyed Ghafran, Shakar Baig, Wori Khan, Muhammad Taus Khan, and Afsar Khan.

# Traditional Games of Chitral

*Mohammad Changiz Khan Tariqi\**

Games are a necessary part of human nature. Throughout the world, the indigenous games of a tribe, clan, or particular group of people in an area reflect their geographical environment, and their social character and cultural values. A study of such games also reveals the aesthetic sense and tastes of a nation. The Kho people, though living in a geographically restricted area, have a distinct and unique culture, which has flourished in the valleys of the Karakoram and Hindukush. This unique heritage maintains some of the great traditions of ancient Central Asian and South Asian cultures.

Like other components of the Kho civilization, the traditional games of Chitral deserve detailed study. These folk games are played with such outstanding discipline that few modern games can match their calibre in meeting the requirements of entertainment and moral and social nourishment of the human race. By studying these games, one can learn much about the conditions and culture of past times. All over the world, including Chitral, the modern age has affected traditional games and many of them have been abandoned with the passage of time, while others are being replaced by new and borrowed games. A few traditional games, however, still survive today. A close observation of some traditional games of Chitral reveals that games similar to modern cricket, hockey, wrestling, javelin throw, obstacle race, and many other games were being played in Chitral hundreds of years ago in an earlier form in free-style.

Much like the ethnic and linguistic diversity found in different parts of Chitral, the traditional games also differ from place to place and valley to valley. For example, there are some games which are known in Arandu, Shishikuh, and Lutkoh which are not known in Laspur, Khot, Yarkhun, Mastuj, Terich, Torkhow, and Mulkhov — and vice versa. For these reasons, this paper deals only with those games which are common to most parts of Chitral.

In order to describe all the specific variations of each game, a full book would be needed. In order to collect this information, the investigator will have to travel from village to village, spend time in each place, and meet with the people of each area. This requires much time and expenditure of effort. It is an important task for other writers and

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\*Village Shogram, Chitral. Translated by Inayatullah Faizi, Israr-ud-Din, Amin-ur-Rahman Chughtai, and Elena Bashir. Editor's note: The complete paper by Mohammad Changiz Khan Tariqi was too long to include in its entirety in this volume. Therefore we have decided that, rather than abridging the whole paper, it would be better to present one or two sections in full detail, reserving the rest for publication later. The complete paper included discussion of forty-five different games. Out of these, we have translated the sections on the game *šapir keLi* played by all children, the boys' game *buDi dik*, and the girls' game *pai dreëk* in full. The translation of *pai dreëk* is rather free, and draws both on the original Khowar text plus on demonstration of the motions of the game by the author.

researchers to collect detailed information about games and variations not discussed here and preserve this information for future generations.

## Classification of games

The folk games of Chitral can be divided into several categories. Some are played only by men and boys, some only by girls and women, some by both boys and girls, and some only by little children. For example, the following games are for boys and men of different ages. (1) *paTik dik* 'hit the shank bone', (2) *búDi dik* 'hit the block', (3) *Tuksúri dik* 'hit the stick sharpened at both ends' (similar to *gullí DanDā*), (4) *bámphu γaL* 'cloth ball hockey', (5) *pLinj γaL* 'wooden-ball hockey', (6) *istor γaL* 'horse hockey' (polo), (7) *potbál porvál* 'football' (< English 'football'), (8) *khamSér γaL* 'hockey with a curved branch', (9) *noγór dik* 'hit the fort', (10) *Sit dik* 'hit the target', (11) *gaC Cokík* 'wrestling', (12) *šiméni Zingeéik* 'pull the rope' (tug-of-war), (13) *boht petshik* 'throw the stone' (shot put), (14) *pahlawán bóhtu usneéik* 'wrestlers' stone lifting' (weight lifting competition), (15) *áykun Cakeéik* 'make the eggs fight', (16) *buzkáši* 'snatch the goat', (17) *pagáh* 'horse racing'.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to these, (1) *hup dadáli dik* (whirling in pairs), (2) *phišpú hápu* (moving feet back and forth), (3) *aγawúli*, (4) *Cúqam biž* 'swinging', and (5) *pai dreék* 'throwing (down) the goats' are played exclusively by girls and young women.<sup>2</sup>

The next category consists of those games played by both boys and girls. It includes: (1) *šapir kéLi* 'the sheep and the wolf', (2) *gordóγ daSmán* 'the mullah and the donkey', (3) *khošt nabíli* 'hide and seek' (variant *khošt nakhóšti*), (4) *aurí khoi petshik* 'to throw the cap while riding', (5) *áčo khoi petshik* 'to drop the cap in back'<sup>3</sup>, (6) *pásur petshik* 'throwing the white stone', (7) *laLú laLú xarbúza* 'cantaloupes and watermelons', (8) *Chingír dik* 'see-saw', (9) *táka just* 'odd or even', (10) *kuThuk dik* 'making the (apricot) pits fight', (11) *bax báxo dreék* 'putting (something) in holes', (12) *khoi khoio dreék* 'putting (apricot pits) in the cap', (13) *čama Dóri* 'the wooden spoon and the silver brooch (whirling competition)', (14) *Dangí Cakeék* 'to compare (walnuts) for hardness', (15) *iškuThó dik* 'hopping while holding one foot', (16) *Sek Seko dik* 'putting something in the lap', (17) *Curγá* 'sledding', and (18) *Tung kéLi wáw* 'the old woman and her short-eared sheep'. These games are not played by older people.

Some of these games take a relatively short time, ranging from one to two hours. *Cúqam biž* and *šiméni Zingeéik* are relatively short games. Some games take a long time, ranging from three to five hours. *buDi dik* and *pai dreék* are long games. Some games are very simple and one can easily follow the rules. For example, *Sit dik*, *pahlawan*

1. Inayatullah Faizi suggests that the following games also belong in this category: *ther dik* 'hit the ball rolling down', *sapiúk dik* 'hit the hoof' (ed.: This game appears to be identical to the modern 'hackeysack', which recently enjoyed fad status in some Western countries), and *ustureei dik* 'jump and fall'.

2. Inayatullah Faizi suggests that *tsiγáma* could also be added to this list.

3. Editor's note: This appears to be very similar to the Western children's game 'drop the handkerchief'.

*bóhtu*, and *Cúqam biž* are simple games, with brief rules. In sharp contrast, the boys' game *búDi dík* and the girls' game *pai dreék* are very complicated, with so many rules and regulations that they seem to be a regular science. While watching these games with their complicated rules and regulations, penalties and rewards, restrictions, and countless concessions for different players at different stages, one marvels at the ability of those who invented them. In addition to providing entertainment, they carry in them lessons of concentration and discipline.

Some of these games are excellent forms of exercise, developing the coordination of arms and legs, and the conditioning of the whole body. Others seem to be designed for mental exercise. For example, playing *istór γaL* 'horse hockey' (polo), *bámphu γaL*, *šiméni Zingeéik*, and many others provides vigorous physical exercise. Some games like *Sit dík*, *gaC Cokík*, *šapír kéLi*, and *noγór ganík* are exercises in military tactics — either of posing a terrifying offensive to the enemy or offering tough resistance to an invader. The game of *gordóγ daSmán* 'the mullah and the donkey' teaches about the role of the religious scholar in society and the value of kindness to animals.

Games like *Sek Séko dík*, *pásur petshík*, *khošt nabíli*, *aurí khoi petshík*, and *áčo khoi petshík* are meant to exercise the intelligence of young children and train them in mental alertness and curiosity. *laLú laLú xarbúza* has a lesson for the lazy and work-shirking farmer. The ancient *pLinj γaL* is actually like a war without swords.

Entertainment is the main objective of all these games, yet some of them like *Curγá*, *iškuThó dík*, *táka just*, and *bax bákho dreék* seem to be purely recreational.

Among all these games, the following are occasionally seen in some places. *šapír kéLi*, *búDi dík*, *gordóγ daSmán*, *paTik dík*, *hup dík*, *khošt nabíli*, *šiméni Zingeéik*, *Dangí Cakeéik*, *áykun Cakeéik*, *gaC Cakeéik*, and *boht petshík*.

But *bámphu γaL*, *pLinj γaL*, *khamSer γaL*, *aγawáli*, *phišpú*, *tsiγáina*, *Sit dík*, and *noγór dík* have been almost completely abandoned.

Only *éuqum bíž*, *iškuThó dík*, *Curγá*, *hup dík*, and *pai dreék* among the girls' games, and *istór γaL*, *áykun Cakeéik*, *Dangí Cakeéik*, *buDi dík*, and *páTik dík* among the boys' games are regularly played today.

There follows a detailed study of three games: *šapír kéLi*, *búDi dík*, and *pai dreék*.

### ***šapír kéLi* 'the sheep and the wolf'**

This is a game for children — both boys and girls. Sometimes, also, boys play the game alone. *šapír* means 'wolf', and *kéLi* means 'sheep'. This game is called *šapír kéLi* because during the game the attack of a wolf on sheep and the defensive tactics of the sheep and their lambs against the wild beast are shown.

In this game, one person takes the part of the 'mother sheep' and another one is the 'wolf'. The rest of the participants are lambs of the mother sheep or her flock. The game is started with the sheep along with her children making a circle for self-defence and the wolf attacking the flock. The sheep make their defence line by standing in a circle with the mother sheep in the middle. There is also another style, in which the mother sheep stands in front of the lambs, and they make a long row, holding one another by the shirttails from the back. In the meanwhile, the howling of the wolf is heard from a nearby

place, and the 'flock' (i.e. the children playing) become cautious. When the wolf attacks the flock they fight the wolf like a defending force. The 'mother' and the 'lambs', as represented by the players, kick the wolf and do not let him break their defence. While defending the flock the mother sheep repeats a special rhyme as part of the game. This rhyme is: *tan i pholóko ko dóman, sotko pholóko ko dóman*. 'Why should I give you my only child, who is as beautiful as a coral bead'.<sup>4</sup> The wolf is strong enough to snatch some of the lambs one by one and keep them in a cave. At last the mother sheep, with the help of her grown-up children, defeats the wolf and beats him to death, freeing all her lambs from the cave.

### ***búDi dík***

This is one of the best-known traditional games of Chitral. Although it is played much less than before, it can still be seen being played in some parts of Chitral. Although there are slight variations in the details of this game from valley to valley within Chitral, in general the main outlines of the game are the same.

Three types of object are used to play this game. A surprising thing about this game is how much it resembles the English game cricket. But it seems to be older than cricket. The things that are used to play it are: (1) the *búDi*, (2) the *Dazbán*, and (3) the *čirčilik*.

***búDi***. This is a piece of wood which is played with like a ball. In some areas it is a spherical wooden ball. In other places, it is roundish stick from 1½–2 inches long, rather than being completely round.

***Dazbán***. The *Dazbán* is a 2–3 ft long and 1–1½ in thick, round wooden stick that is cut straight on both ends.

***čirčilik***. This piece of equipment is used in some parts of Chitral, but in other areas it is not. Where it is found, it consists of a stick about 1 ft long and 1–1½ in thick. In some places, a 1 ft long piece of wood is stuck vertically in the ground and the *búDi* is placed directly on top of it and hit.<sup>5</sup> On one end it is cut straight and the other end is sharpened so that it can be driven into the ground. After it is driven into the ground, a 1 ft long, 2 in thick wooden plank is placed on top of it. The *búDi* is placed on top of this.

**The field.** The players are arranged in the field depending on the number of players and the size of the playing field. Usually the field is rectangular. It is divided into four parts. Three parts are on one end and in the fourth part a 3 ft wide circular/elliptical area is marked. This is called the *xoná*. (See Fig. 1.) The *čirčilik* is put into the ground in the middle of this circular area. The boundary between the quarter of the field including the *xoná* and the remaining three-fourths of the field is called the *táan*. The opposing team stands on the side of the field beyond the *táan*, like the arrangement of fielders in a cricket team. The area beyond the boundaries of the field on the batting side of the *táan* is called

4. Editor's note: I have rendered the word *sotko* as 'a coral bead'. Meanings proffered for this word include 'a reddish-colored bead'. This word probably refers to the coral-colored beads of a rounded cylindrical shape found in the older necklaces of Kho women.

5. Ed.: This seems to be the *Thun* in the author's diagram of the playing field.

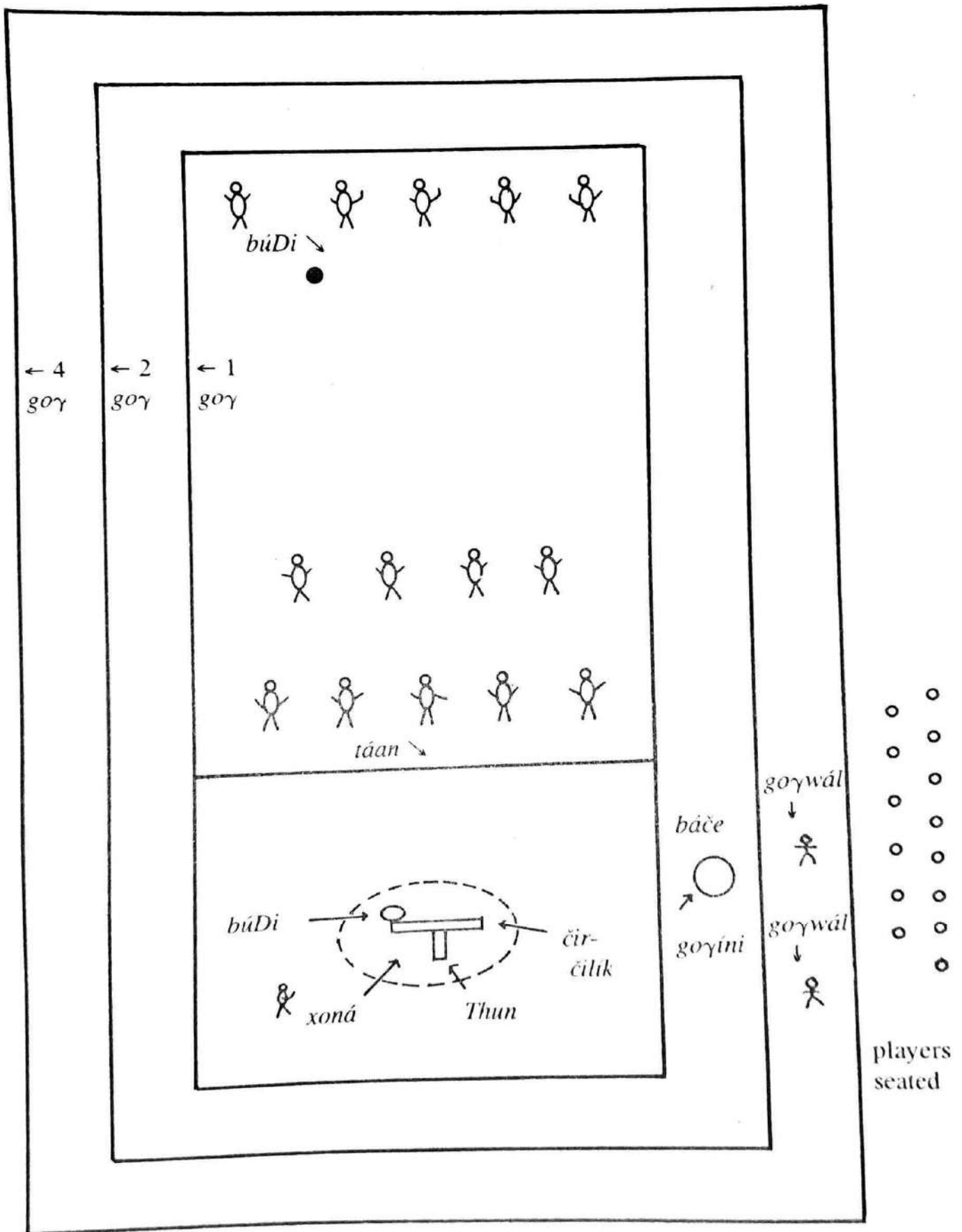


Figure 1 Playing field for *būDi dik*

*bačé* 'out of bounds'. If the ball is hit into the *bačé*, it is 'out'. In the *bačé* area, parallel to the *čirčilik* on either the left or right side of the field, a pit is dug in which are put from thirty to fifty small stones or apricot pits. This pit is called the *goγini*. One person from each team sits by the *goγini*; these two persons are called *goγwál* 'scorers', and their task is to count the *goγ* (small stones or apricot pits). The *goγ* is comparable to a run in cricket or a point in other games.

The players whose names are selected by a toss sit near the *čirčilik*. As they are gotten 'out', their team members take their turns one-by-one to hit the *búDi*. A player who is gotten 'out' comes back and sits down. The players of the opposing team take their *Dazbán* (bats) and stand on the opposite side of the field. Three lines are drawn on the ground or demarcated with stones around the field. These boundaries are marked at three different distances. The first boundary represents a score of one *goγ*, the second boundary is two *goγ*, and the third one is four *goγ*.

**Preparation for the game.** First a toss is made. For the toss, they take a small stone or clod of earth and wet it on one side, leaving it dry on the other. They show it to everyone so that there is no suspicion in anyone's mind that the stone or clod has been switched. After this, a senior or a non-partisan person selected with everyone's agreement conceals the stone or clod in his hand. Then one person from each team is asked whether he chooses the wet side or the dry side. One of them takes the dry side. Then the 'referee', in everyone's presence, throws the rock up into the air. After this, if the dry side comes up, whichever team called the dry side wins the toss and comes up to the *xoná* to begin the game. The team which had the wet side goes in the field. They take up their *Dazbán*'s and take up their position as fielders.

**The sequence of play.** One player from the team which won the toss takes his *Dazbán* and comes forward to the *xoná*. Then he places the *búDi* on one end of the *čirčilik*, and hits the other end of the *čirčilik* with his *Dazbán* as it is still in the air. The opposing team members try to hit the *búDi* with their *Dazbáns* or to catch it. If they succeed in catching it or hitting it with their *Dazbán*, the player who hit it is 'burned' (i.e. 'out'). If he is not 'out', he scores a *goγ*, or point, on the opposing team. The *goγwál* (scorer) takes one stone from the stock and places it on the edge of the pit. The opposing team throws the *búDi* back at the *čirčilik*. If the *búDi* hits the *čirčilik* as it is being thrown back, or if it hits inside the *xoná*, the (hitting) player is 'out'. Then another of his teammates takes his place in the *xoná* to hit. In this way, each player takes his turn until he is 'out'. After all the players of this team are 'out', the members of the other team take their turns at the *xoná*.

When a player hits the *búDi*, they see how far it travels. If it passes the first boundary, the hitter scores one *goγ*; if it passes the second boundary, he scores two *goγ*; and if it crosses the third boundary, he scores four *goγ*. The *goγwál* takes out as many *goγ* (stones) from the scoring pit (*goγini*) as the first team scores and puts them on the edge of the pit. At the end they are counted. When the opposing team comes up to play and scores points, they put those stones back in to the pit one by one. At the end (of the game) the stones are counted and the winner is determined. If the *búDi* goes out before it crosses the *táan*, it is called *bačé*, or 'out of bounds'. There is no score for this.

**Some unusual rules and concessions.** There are several very unusual rules and concessions in this game. First, the initial toss ('wet or dry') is done with extreme care, and is watched very carefully. This is because the team who has the first turn to hit has

a great advantage. Suppose that teams A and B are competing against each other, and that team A wins the toss and has the first turn to hit. Suppose that the B team are so expert that they are quickly able to put all the members of team A 'out'. Then team B comes up to hit. Even if they succeed in making more points than team A and this round (inning) is finished, the game is not complete. The first team (i.e. team A) has the privilege of coming up to hit again. If they are not able to outscore team B in this second round, they get still a third chance to hit and make more points than team B. The game is then finished after three innings (i.e. after both teams have had three turns to hit). The team which has more points (*goγ*) is declared the winner. But if in the first inning, team A (i.e. the team who wins the toss) are not gotten out for a long time or if they score more points than team B (the second team), the result of the game is announced at that point, i.e. after the first inning, and there is no need for a second or third inning.

The second special rule is this: if the *búDi* is dropped from the hand while it is being hit and falls in the *xoná*, then the whole team is 'out' and the opposing team comes up to play.

### *pai dreék*

This is a Chitrali game exclusively for girls. It is even more popular today than it used to be. In fact, everywhere in Chitral, our daughters and sisters can be seen playing this game in all its numerous variations. This is an amazing game. It is supposed to be a game, but when one sees it, it seems like veritable sleight-of-hand. Even though there are no incantations or spells, the players' hands move with such dexterity and speed that an onlooker is completely entranced. In different areas and valleys of Chitral, slightly differing versions are played. This is the reason why different versions of the game are known by the names of specific villages — for example *reŠneγán* 'the game as played by the girls of Reshun', *buneγán* 'the game as played in Buni', *košTekán*, *kuhekán*, *sarhadián*, and so forth. It seems that the girls of different villages have invented different additions to the game in order to compete with other in the dexterity of their hands and the keenness of their minds. However, the general outlines of the game are the same in all parts of Chitral.

If one were to travel to all the villages of Chitral and describe in detail all the versions of this game, the description would require a thick book in itself. In writing this paper, I experienced the problem that even though I was watching the game, without actually playing it, it was difficult to understand and find the correct words to describe the speed, dexterity, and specialized movements of the players' hands. For this reason, in this paper I have only tried to describe those parts of the game that are understood in all parts of Chitral. Usually two, four, or six persons play the game. The players usually form teams to play; often, too, they play for small wagers.

**The plan of seating.** The players seat themselves exactly as six players do for a game of cards.

*pai.* Slingshot stones, large seeds, or apricot pits are used to play this game. These things are called *pai* 'goats'. The number of *pai* is usually five. Sometimes, however, ten, twenty, or even thirty-five are used. The game proceeds in stages, which are easy in the

beginning and involve progressively more difficult tasks. If you sit and watch the game, the movements of the players' hands seem like lightning.

To start the game, two, four, or six players sit opposite each other. The first phase of the game is called *igán ganík* 'to pick up one by one'.

1. *igán ganík*. First all five *pai* are tossed up into the air together. When they fall to the ground, a player picks up one of them and tosses it up into the air. Before this *pai* reaches the ground, she picks up one *pai* from the ground and, while holding it in her hand, catches the *pai* that was thrown in the air before it touches the ground. Then she puts this *pai* away in her left hand. Next she takes the second *pai* and throws it up, picking up another one from the ground before the one in the air falls to the ground. She then puts the *pai* that she has successfully picked up into her left hand. In this way, one by one, she picks up all the remaining *pai* (stones). The whole process of picking up four *pai* takes less than one second. If she is not able to catch the 'goat' thrown up in the air before it hits the ground, or to pick up the 'goat' from the ground, she is 'burned' (i.e. 'out').

Whoever is not 'out' continues playing through the second, third, fourth, etc. stages of the game until she is out. If she succeeds in completing the fourth stage without getting 'burned', she claps her hands once. This is a signal that she has won this round of the game. This rule continues to apply until the whole game is finished.

2. *jugán ganík* 'to pick up two-by-two'. The player takes one *pai* in her left hand and throws the other four into the air, letting them fall to the ground. Then she takes the one from her left hand, throws it into the air, picks up two *pai* from the ground, and catches the one in the air before it hits the ground. Then she puts away two of these in her left hand, throws up the remaining one onto the air, picks up the last two *pai* from the ground, and catches the one in the air before it hits the ground.

3. *troigán ganík* 'to pick up three at a time'. At this stage, all five *pai* are tossed into the air. When they fall on the ground, the player picks up one, throws it up in the air, picks up three *pai* together in one motion, and catches the one in the air before it hits the ground. After this, she puts these three *pai* into her left hand. Taking one of them she throws it up, picking up the last remaining *pai* and catching the one tossed up before it hits the ground.

4. *čhorgán ganík* 'to pick up four by four'. Keeping one *pai* aside, the remaining four are thrown up in the air and allowed to fall on the ground. The 'goat' kept aside is thrown up in the air and the four 'goats' on the ground are picked up two-by-two, while the 'goat' in the air is caught before it hits the ground.

5. *čhán petshík*. Four *pai* are placed at the corners of a square. The remaining one is tossed into the air, the four 'goats' in the square configuration are picked up one by one, and the *pai* in the air is caught before it hits the ground. The next stage of the game is to place three *pai* in a triangle on the ground. One 'goat' is tossed up in the air, the three on the ground are picked up one by one, and the *pai* in the air is caught before it reaches the ground. In the third phase, two 'goats' are arranged in a line on the ground. One is tossed up in the air, the two on the ground picked up one by one, and the one in the air caught before it hits the ground. In the final stage, one 'goat' is left on the ground. Another one is thrown up, the one on the ground is picked up, and the one in the air caught before it can hit the ground.

In this way, all the players quickly throw the stones and pick them up. This all takes place without a break. If in this process a stone falls on the ground or one on the ground is not picked up properly, the player is 'burned' ('out') and the opposing player will start playing.

6. *šoyútu* 'a thin, wire, finger ring, without stones'. All five *pai* are thrown into the air and some of them caught on the back of the hand while others fall to the ground. Then the hand with which the *pai* were caught is raised and turned over, and the *pai* on it allowed to fall. Before these stones hit the ground, the *pai* on the ground are picked up **and** the falling *pai* are caught. If during this process any 'goat' falls, the player is 'burned'.

Next, one 'goat' is kept aside and four 'goats' thrown up in the air and caught on the back of the hand. The ones on the back of the hand are allowed to fall as before. As they fall and before they hit the ground the ones on the ground are picked up and the falling *pai* are caught before they hit the ground.

This process is repeated with three *pai*, and finally with two *pai*.

7. *soík* 'to collect with the palm of the hand'. Four *pai* are arranged at the four corners of a square. The remaining 'goat' is thrown in the air, and (with the right hand) in a circular motion starting at the right and moving to the left (i.e. clockwise [ed.]) the four 'goats' on the ground are picked up in one sweep and the 'goat' in the air is caught before it hits the ground.<sup>6</sup>

In the next stage, three 'goats' are used. Two are left on the ground and the third tossed up into the air. The two on the ground are swept up with a clockwise circular motion (with the right hand) and the *pai* in the air caught before it hits the ground.

8. *tsop tsóp* 'stacking'. Four 'goats' are arranged in a square on the ground. The fifth is tossed into the air and while it is still in the air the right hand makes a circular motion (Ed.: moving clockwise from the 6 o'clock position to the 5 o'clock position), slaps the left hand, then with the same clockwise motion picks up two 'goats' from the ground and catches the one in the air before it hits the ground. The same sequence of steps is repeated for the remaining two 'goats'. If a goat falls or one on the ground is not picked up properly, the player is 'burned'. Also, if the player is supposed to pick up the stones with a clockwise motion but instead picks them up with a counter-clockwise or some other motion, she is 'burned'.

9. *dap dáp* (from *dapheéik* 'to pound or press flat or compact'). Four 'goats' are grasped in the left fist. With the right hand, the fifth one is tossed into the air. While it is in the air, the right hand slaps the left hand, the four 'goats' in the left hand are transferred into the right hand, and the *pai* in the air is caught before it can hit the ground. This is the right-handed version of *dap dáp*.

This game is also regularly played in a left-handed version. In this version, four stones are grasped in the right hand, and the left hand throws the fifth one into the air, slaps the right hand, receives the four stones from the right hand, and catches the 'goat' in the air before it hits the ground.

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6. Ed: Assuming a right-handed player. For a left-handed player, the handedness of the rules and regulations is reversed.

10. *Tiq* (name of a bird that names the sound 'Tiq Tiq Tiq'). This game is played in two versions. The **first version** is like this. Stage 1: Five *pai* are grasped in the right hand. Two of them are shifted forward in the hand and grasped between the thumb and the first two fingers. One of these two is tossed up into the air and the other dropped forward onto the ground. Then the hand is moved forward quickly and one stone dropped forward onto the ground. At this point two remain in the hand. Then the hand is moved forward again and the fourth *pai* dropped onto the ground. The process is repeated for the fifth *pai*. All this is done while the *pai* which was tossed up is in the air. Finally, the *pai* in the air is caught before it hits the ground. At this point, there are four *pai* on the ground and one in the right hand.

In the second stage, the objective is to arrange the four goats on the ground into a line. To do this, the 'goat' in the right hand is tossed into the air, one 'goat' picked up from the ground, and the 'goat' in the air caught before it hits the ground. One of these is not placed in position. The three so-far unarranged 'goats' remain on the ground. This process is repeated for each of the three remaining 'goats' until a line of four is completed. At this point, four 'goats' are in a line and one is in the right hand.

In the third stage, the *pai* remaining in the hand is tossed up in the air and the four in the line picked up in one motion, catching the one in the air before it hits the ground.

The **second version** of *Tiq* is played like this. Three of the five *pai* are held in the fist, while two are grasped between the thumb and the first two fingers. One of these two is tossed up into the air, one of the 'goats' held in the fist is dropped to the ground passing it between the fourth and fifth fingers, and the one in the air is caught before it hits the ground. Now another 'goat' is tossed into the air while a second one is dropped to the ground, this time passing it between the third and fourth fingers. Now there are two 'goats' on the ground, which must be in a straight line. Next, another 'goat' is thrown in the air, a third one is dropped to the ground passing it between the second and third fingers, and the 'goat' in the air is caught before it reaches the ground. Now there are three *pai* in a line on the ground. Next, one of the remaining two *pai* is tossed into the air, the last one is dropped to the ground, passing it between the fourth and fifth fingers. Before the 'goat' in the air hits the ground, the four 'goats' on the ground are scooped up in one motion and the one in the air is caught before it hits the ground. This whole process should be done so quickly that there is no break in motion. If a 'goat' in the air is not caught, or if the 'goats' on the ground are not picked up properly, the player is 'out'.

11. *qazi* 'judge'. This game is for two players. Four *pai* are arranged in a square. Then, with the thumb and second finger of the left hand, a 'bridge' is made between the two rows (or columns) of stones. With the index finger of her right hand, the player tries, following the orders of her opponent, to flick each of the stones, turn by turn, under the 'bridge' in such a way that it does not touch any of the others. This process is repeated for all four of the goats. If one of the *pai* being flicked touches any of the others, the player is 'burned'. When the player is 'burned' the turn of play passes to the opponent. In this way, the player quickly flicks all four of the 'goats' through the 'bridge' without letting any of them touch any of the others. After this, she tosses one of the four 'goats' into the air, picking up one of those on the ground, and catching the one in the air before it hits the ground. She does the same for the remaining two 'goats'. This concludes one

round of the game. After this, the successful player claps once. Another name for this game is *ičáLi* 'with one clap'.

There is also another variation of this game, which is called *jučáLi* 'two claps'. This game takes much longer than *ičáLi*, and requires even more speed and dexterity of the hands. This game has twelve stages. They are listed as follows.

1. *hósta dreék* 'to put into the hand'. All five *pai* are thrown into the air and (as many as possible) are caught on the back of the hand. Those that are caught on the back of the hand are again tossed up into the air, and the ones on the ground are picked up in one sweep, catching all those in the air before they hit the ground. The conditions for being 'out' are the same as for the earlier versions of the game.

2. *lašTa dreék* 'to put on the ground'. Four 'goats' are put on the ground and one thrown into the air. Before the one in the air hits the ground, two of the *pai* on the ground are picked up and the one in the air caught before it hits the ground. In the same way, one more is thrown in the air and the remaining two 'goats' picked up before it hits the ground.

3. *búmtu čaL* 'clap the ground'. The player throws five 'goats' into the air, claps on the ground, and catches all five of the goats in the air before they hit the ground.

4. *liík* 'to lick'. In this game, the five *pai* are held in the right hand. One of them is thrown up into the air. Before it hits the ground, the player draws a line with his right index finger on the ground and catches the *pai* in the air before it hits the ground. (The object of this game is to do all these operations with one hand without dropping the goats in the hand on the ground. This is done five times, once for each goat. If a player is unsuccessful in doing all this, she is 'burned'.

5. *pai tinzeéik* 'to chase the goats'. All the five 'goats' are held in the right hand. One by one, they are thrown up into the air, bounced off the fingers of the left hand, and caught in the left hand.

6. *pai búmo petshík* 'dropping the goats on the ground'. First one 'goat' is dropped with the right hand from a height of about two feet (Ed: All the players remain seated.) and caught before it hits the ground. Then two *pai* are dropped and caught. The same is done for three, four, and five *pai*.

7. *soík*

8. *tsop tsóp*

9. *dap dáp*

10. *čhan petshík*

11. *šuyútu*

12. *tiq*

Stages 7-12 of the *jučáLi* sequence are played in the same way as described above.

13. *gordóγ báar* 'donkey load'. Three goats are in the left hand and two in the right hand. The player tosses up the two goats in the right hand and catches them on the back of the second and third fingers. Then one of these is allowed to fall on the ground. The second is thrown up into the air and caught after picking up the one on the ground. One of them is put aside. The second of them is tossed up and one of the remaining three 'goats' in the other hand is thrown on the ground. The one on the ground is picked up before the one in the air can hit the ground. The one successfully picked up is put aside.

Then the same series of steps is repeated for the 'goats' remaining in the left hand, one by one. If a *pai* is dropped or not picked up successfully, the player is 'out'.

14. *qači dik* 'hit the scissors'. Three 'goats' are held in the left hand and two in the right hand. Of these two, one is tossed into the air, and before it can hit the ground, the one on the ground is picked up with the second and third fingers of the right hand used like a pair of scissors, and the one in the air caught before it hits the ground. This same process is repeated for all five 'goats'.

15. *phán-tu dik* 'to hit on the palm of the hand'. All five 'goats' are thrown in the air together. The player claps her hands, then catches the five *pai* before they hit the ground. This series of actions is repeated five times.

16. *pás-tu dik* 'to hit on the ground'. All five *pai* are thrown into the air. The player hits the ground with both palms and then catches all five 'goats' before they hit the ground. This is repeated five times.

17. *ačasák* 'the one left behind'. Each player in this game takes out seven *pai* and places them in the hand of one of the players. This player then spills all the *pai* on the ground, then observes how they scatter. A line is traced on the ground between those 'goats' which are far enough apart that a finger can be passed between them. Then the first player flicks a *pai* from across the line toward one of the other *pai* with her left thumb, trying to hit it. If she hits it, she is successful and takes both of the *pai*. If she fails to hit it, she is 'out', and the turn passes to the next player. The play continues in this way until only those *pai* are left that are so close together that a finger cannot be passed between them. The winner is the player who has taken the most 'goats'.

18. *još aih petshík/Cóktu petshík* 'throw up (ten) in the air'. This game is played with only two goats, keeping the other three back. Both are grasped in the right hand. One is thrown into the air, and before it is caught the second is also tossed up into the air. The two 'goats' are juggled in this way five times, making a total of ten throws. A player is 'out' if a 'goat' falls on the ground, or if two 'goats' touch in mid-air.

*ačasák* and *još aih petshík* are sometimes played with bets. Also, they are often played alone, not as part of a sequence of games. *još aih petshík* especially resembles the sleight-of-hand of a magician.

19. *qazí*. This is the same as the *qazí* game described above.

Whichever player is able to complete all nineteen stages of this game, or who completes all nineteen stages before all the others, claps twice. This shows that she has completed all steps of the game with complete success.

If a player is 'out' but still continues playing, her opponents let her know that she has made a mistake by saying a special word (pronounced something like [pTu]) which only a native speaker can pronounce properly. This word is used to give the player a delicate hint that she is 'out', rather than telling her abruptly.

Sometimes it is decided in the beginning whether the game is to be a one-clap game, a two-clap game, a three-clap game, or even a five-clap game. If it is decided in this way, then usually the game is played with only the first eleven phases. This game can also be played with wagers. If two players achieve the same score, there is a competition between these two players until only one is left.