MERIT FEASTING AMONG THE KALASH KAFIRS
OF NORTH WESTERN PAKISTAN

by

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This thesis explores merit feasting among the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral District, north western Pakistan. Feasting is a multifunctional exchange phenomenon found universally in societies having primitive (pre-market) economies. The Kalash example will illustrate that this institution links economic, social, political, and religious dimensions in such non-monetary cultures.

I argue that while habitat may have the potential of supporting such an exchange system, individual industry in agriculture and animal husbandry is the critical economic factor. Accumulated wealth is then transformed into social and religious power and prestige through its redistribution at feasts. The Kalash have an informal political hierarchy where men achieve high positions by exhibiting the same qualities which make feast-givers successful aspirants for rank. Kalash social organization, particularly their bilateral kinship structure, is also reflected in the institution of merit feasting.

Feasting is more than a secular event for the Kalash, and sections of this thesis illustrate their assertion that wealth is god-given and must be redistributed at feasts if the gods are to continue to bestow their blessings. Moreover, feasts are both cultural performances (where the artistic forms of a culture are expressed), as well as public forums at which information and ideas may be widely shared and reinforced.

Presently among a portion of the Kalash population, a cultural renaissance is occurring which permitted the opportunity to document the following materials and hopefully, future possibilities of recording the customs and beliefs of an archaic culture that otherwise is fast slipping into obscurity.
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The information in this thesis is a portion of the ethnographic data gathered over a total of fifteen months during three separate visits to the Kalasha Kafirs of north-western Pakistan. The Kalasha (pop. 2,500 - January, 1974) are the last practitioners of an ancient Vedic culture which has persisted for more than a millennium in the isolation of the remote and rugged Hindu Kush Mountains. Who these people are and how they came to be found there is the subject of Chapter One and Appendix 2: History and Language. I am concerned here only with establishing the why, when and how I became involved in the area.

Since its violent conversion to Islam in 1895-6, the area west of and immediately adjacent to the region occupied by the Kalash has been re-named Nuristan, 'The Land of (Allah's) Light'. (Nuristan comprises the easternmost district of Kunar Province, north-eastern Afghanistan.) Prior to the conversion the area was called Kafiristan, 'The Land of the Infidels', an appellation which now applies only to the Kalasha valleys. The region has always been famous for its sophisticated wood architecture and buildings whose facades and interiors are covered in elaborate wood carving designs. In pre-conversion times, these carvings symbolized the formal ranks of the house owners, who achieved the right to display these symbols through merit feasting. It was these elaborate carved symbols which came to my attention in 1971-2 during a primitive art course given by Audrey Hawthorn at the University of British Columbia.

In the fall of 1972 while travelling in north-eastern Afghanistan in Badakhshan Province, (an area north of Nuristan,) I was introduced to Peter Snoy, a German anthropologist, who was working in that area on behalf of the South Asian Institute of Heidelberg University. Through him I learned more about life in Kafiristan (Nuristan), and particularly the existence of
the Kalash, with whom Snoy had done field work in 1955-6. These people, living under the rule of the British in India, had escaped the 1895-6 conversion to Islam. They are still 'practicing pagans' in the third quarter of the 20th century.

I first visited the Kalash for three months in the summer of 1973. A subsequent visit the following year for two weeks did little more than maintain my contacts there. During the late fall of 1976 I was able to return there and spend enough time to learn the language and to begin to study the culture.

I remained until the following December (1977), living principally in Kalash valleys but also travelling for three weeks (July 1977) in the Bashgal Valley, one of the three of four major river systems in Nuristan. (In some places, the Bashgal is only about thirty miles distant across the mountains from the Kalash areas of habitation.) Since I had by that time spent slightly less than a year with the Kalash, the Bashgal trip proved to be a valuable comparison. As the thesis will make clear, the Kalash share many traditions with the Bashgalis. Being a woman studying alone in Kafiristan presented rewarding challenges as well as some insurmountable difficulties. To begin with, Pakistan throughout has been in political turmoil. The third elections since the country gained its independence in 1947 were held in March, 1977. They were followed by civil disturbances which resulted in the overthrow of the government three months later, and the eventual imposition of martial law. The status of foreign visitors became very unclear and no one from the local to the state level felt sufficiently confident of his or her own authority to grant extended research visas. There were numerous suggestions as to how such permission could be obtained and the individual who eventually did sign my research visa (ten months later) was a woman who had been hired as an aide to a minister in Islamabad only a day or two before it was issued.

As for life in the isolated tribal valleys, the Kalash divide their world into two domains, "on jesh•ta" (pure/sacred) and "pra•ga•ta" (impure), each of which is relative to, and
defines the other. The sacred realm is associated with the gods (their altars and mountain habitats), men (and their ritual activities) and goats (including their corrals and sheds). Of potential danger and potentially polluting to these sacred places, objects, and persons are the major events in the human life cycle: birth, menstruation, sexual intercourse (if not followed by a ritual bath) and death. Since these rites of passage are intimately associated with women either biologically or culturally, for example, women are the principle mourners at funerals, they themselves are considered as agents of pollution, particularly their mouths, hair, genitals and undergarments. In order not to offend the Kalash, a woman anthropologist must observe outwardly at least, these rules of purity and pollution.

While among the Kalash there are some events that are entirely inaccessible to all anthropologists, and others accessible only to male anthropologists. There are many more situations in which the presence of women is either discouraged or strictly prohibited. Where women's presence is only discouraged it is possible for a female anthropologist to attend; but being the only woman present inevitably leads to endless teasing and ribaldry. At many vital ritual sequences, critical to a fuller understanding of Kalash religious practices, the presence of women is generally forbidden. Those must be documented by male informants who were willing to report on them. Or sometimes for religious reasons often no coverage is possible.

This frustration is at times encountered by both male and female anthropologists. Peter Snuy's doctoral advisor Adolf Friedrich died in the field in 1955 while observing the Kalash winter solstice festival (rather, three or four days later in Rawalpindi where he had gone for medical help). The Kalash of Bomboret Valley, where he had been doing his work, insist that his death occurred because Friedrich had taped some of the most sacred of the winter solstice hymns. These songs are given only on one night at the Indrain god-site and only in the presence of those
members of the sacred Kalash male community who have been baptised in the sacrificial blood of a sacred male goat specifically for the purpose of attending this ritual. (This requirement also excludes Kalash men from other valleys (and nowadays, anthropologists) who have not performed the purifications.) In 1977, some Bomboret men described to me the incident which they claimed had occurred "about five years ago". By the time they had noticed Friedrich "over there standing behind a tree with his tape-recorder on, it was too late to 'save' him. He had already recorded the hymns."

No woman anthropologist is permitted to attend this god-site at any time, although considering the Kalash version of Friedrich's experience, one wonders why would anyone wish to!

I spent the first winter in Bomboret Valley, living with a Kalash extended family that I had chosen because it was a branch of one of the wealthiest and highest ranking clans in the valley who had given the most lavish merit feasts possible in their culture. I hoped to learn about the traditional Kalash ways of achieving power by living with this family. As I was soon to find out, however, this family was in serious economic, social and moral difficulties. Within a few weeks, due to internal disputes which had occurred prior to my arrival, the joint family broke up. Illness, loss of their land to the Muslims, infidelity of their daughters, and total lack of co-operation by their sons were the sources of continuing tensions even after the split.

The winter brought more than a metre of snow, the heaviest fall in more than sixty years. When not cleared off immediately the roofs would leak, turning the earth floors to mud. Firewood, becoming more difficult to obtain in Kalash valleys as the forests are depleted, was frequently green and unseasoned. Much time that winter was spent with the remaining members of the family, usually gathered about a single, open fire in the center of the room. The wet wood being burnt gave off a thick acrid smoke, providing a painful kind of comfort. During the coldest two to three week period, people coughed incessantly, not from having colds, but from
being cold to the bone. Two members of the family had active tuberculosis that winter which further diminished the group's morale.

I learned to cook some Kalash dishes, such as boiled kidney beans mixed with walnuts and onions crushed by a mortar and pestle, with rock salt to taste. Being the only mature woman in the household when the mother went to the menstrual hut each month, it fell to me to cook for the family. Making pancake-type breads on an open fire burning with wet wood, I soon found out why most Kalash women over the age of fifty-five or sixty are blind.

Smoke was not the only thing that could bring tears to one's eyes. There were some poignant moments, for example, at festivals or rituals in which a few simple elements combined to produce sheer visual poetry. One night, flaming eight foot long torches were brandished by hundreds of men dancing wildly to hymns sung by several scores of women. Their haunting voices warmed the cold midnight air and rose amid the dark bare branches of ancient mulberry and walnut trees into a clear, endless sky, punctuated with stars and a full winter moon. These intense moments make all the efforts that one expends in field work suddenly worthwhile.

In April (1977), I moved from Bomboret to Rombour Valley in order to do translations and further documentation with the help of a Kalash man who speaks English. Most of the material on the merit feast, which is the main subject of this thesis, was gathered during this period. I remained in Rombour working with Saifullah Jan, and living in the house of his father, Qasim Khan, until I returned to Canada in December, 1977. I would like to emphasize here that without the generous help of Saifullah Jan and his father, my understanding of Kalash culture could have never taken shape.

There are many other people who have assisted me in my work since I became involved the the Kalash people in 1973. In Vancouver, Professor Audrey Hawthorn, Dr. K.O.L. Burridge, and
Dr. Kathleen Gough gave continued academic and moral support over the years. In Afghanistan, Deborah Salter and her husband Max von Klimburg frequently provided hospitality and much more. In Pakistan, Shaikh Habib Ullah, and his brother Aziz Ullah, Wazir Ali Shah, Haider Ali Shah, and of course, Saifullah Jan, Qasim Khan and 'working associate' Kush Nawaz, have all been helpful in ways too numerous to list. Also I would like to extend my appreciation to Walter Huber and to thank Peter Snoy for his initial inspiration and continuing correspondence. They deserve credit for much of what appears herein, and any inadequacies are due strictly to my own shortcomings. For the past two summers, the Graduate Studies Department at the University of British Columbia has provided funds, enabling me to arrange my fieldwork data and to prepare my thesis.
CHAPTER 1 - Introduction:

i) The Theme:

The principal focus of this thesis is on merit feasting among the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral District, Northern Pakistan. Feasting is a type of economic and social exchange found in non-monetary (pre-market) economies in many parts of the world. Many of these 'primitive' societies, including the Kafirs, have developed this form to a high degree. My purpose for choosing the merit feast is twofold - there is a dearth in the available literature (published and unpublished) on all aspects of Kalash culture but particularly on this subject. In his dissertation on *Kafir Status and Hierarchy*, (1977) Palwal devotes a page or two plus some other passing references to the Kalash feast but, unfortunately, the material is largely incorrect and hopelessly inadequate. In the past, fieldworkers did not take the time to learn Kalash language and as a result they achieved little depth in their reports.

The second reason for choosing the feast is that, as a multi-functional institution which has political, religious, economic, and social ramifications, it is a convenient topic around which to organize substantial ethnographic information on the Kalash. Feasting can only be understood in the context of the physical environment of a society and its capacity for producing large amounts of foodstuffs, which is in turn dependent upon the socio-economic factors involved in organizing people and their labor.

Because their way of life will not last much longer, there is some urgency to record the practices and beliefs of the Kalash. However, before I expand on this point, which will take up the remainder of Chapter One, I will first include a brief summary of the literature which is available on Kafiristan generally and for the Kalash specifically.

ii) Sources:

a) Greater Kafiristan:

The classic reference for the area is *The Kafirs of the*
Hindu-Kush (1896), by a British Medical Officer, Sir George Scott Robertson. It is the only extensive book-length fieldwork documentation done before the 1895-6 conversion to Islam of the Kafirs at the hands of the Amir of Kabul, Abdur Rahman. There are five or six linguistically distinct Kafir (now Muslim) tribes in the western watershed areas of the Hindu Kush. During 1891-2, Robertson lived primarily with the Kom and Kati Kafirs, two Bashgal Valley 'sub-groups' who speak mutually intelligible dialects.

Robertson went there to write ethnography but in one year was not able to become fluent in Kativiri or Komviri language. This, plus the fact that he was not a trained ethnologist, resulted in an account, which, by the standards of modern day ethnography, suffers from many gaps and inadequacies. It is, of course, unfair to be overly critical of the book. There has always been a lifetime's work for a dozen anthropologists in Kafiristan, and Robertson did an admirable job despite the obstacles he encountered.

To supplement this work there are a few early histories such as Mountstuart Elphinstone's *Account of the Kingdom of Cabaul* (1815), which provides information from interviews with some Kafirs travelling in Kabul. An older account of this type is John Biddulph's *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh* (1880), plus some early autobiographies written by a number of early Kafir converts to Islam who learned Persian or Urdu script and wrote about their own tribal customs. One example is the work of a Bashgali, Kata Muhammad Adullah Elias Azar (Palwal, 1977).

Those with first-hand recollections of the pre-Islamic period in Nuristan are dead now. In 1949, the Norwegian linguist Georg Morgenstierne had the opportunity to work with the last Bashgali Kafir priest who, to save his life, had fled over the mountains to the Kalash valley of Bomboret where he lived out the rest of his days with several hundred other refugees. In 1964 Morgenstierne, with his Afghan 'counterpart' (as they are so
termed) Razig Palwal, worked in the Bashgal Valley with one of the last survivors of that era named "Badur" (Palwal, 1977:17). The material from those interviews was published in Afghanistan Journal from 1969 to 1971. Palwal himself wrote both his M.A. thesis (The Mother Goddess in Kafiristan, 1972) and his PhD. thesis (The Kafir Status and Hierarchy..., 1977) on aspects of Kafir culture. However, his fieldwork was brief, he was not fluent in any Kafiri language, and his work does not distinguish clearly between past and present practices.

An Englishman, Schuyler Jones, re-worked some aspects of Robertson's account and published Men of Influence in Nuristan (1974), plus numerous other articles specifically on the Waigal Valley in Nuristan. Since Jones did his work in that area, several other people have conducted in-depth field work there and as a result, have criticized his material. Most of their reports from the field have not appeared (Palwal, 1977:16; Von Klimburg p.c., David Katz, Doctoral Candidate, University of California, p.c.).

Some information can still be gathered from living Nuristanis whose relatives told stories about Kafir times before they died (Strand, 1974; Jones, 1974, a & b). As well, there are some practices which are remnants from earlier times, for example, merit feasting which still continues in Nuristan, although to a much lesser degree. There is at present, however, a major civil war going on in Nuristan between the locals and the Russian-backed national ruling Communists, The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). All the inhabitants from the largest Bashgali village (Kamdesh) fled to Pakistan as refugees in November, 1978, and much of the old wood architecture has been burned to the ground this year as a result of mortar fire (Strand, p.c.). (Since May, 1979, Nuristani guerilla fighters have entirely liberated Kunar Province of all Communist forces.) It is too soon to say what the outcome will be in terms of radical social and political changes in the area although one can safely assume that the possibilities of further research is far from the
Nuristanis' minds at this time.

ii) Sources:

b) The Kalash:

The radical changes in former Kafiristan (Nuristan) since the conversion place an increased emphasis upon the Kalash as the only remaining non-Islamcized people of the entire region. Being the only Kafir group located in the eastern watershed of the Hindu Kush, they were protected by the British from conversion at the hands of the Afghans. There is, however, a certain irony to this situation because in the past, according to Sir George Scott Robertson, the Kalash were:

a most servile and degraded race and...not the true independent Kafirs of the Hindu Kush but an idolatrous tribe of slaves, subject to the Mehtar (King) of Chitral, and living within his borders...(1896:4)

Robertson's nineteenth century ethnocentrism aside, the Kalash have returned to prominence largely because their traditional culture has survived. Since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they had gradually been rendered less and less powerful by the Chitralis. In the twentieth century, through a turn of fate, they have far exceeded their earlier insignificance compared to the other more sophisticated Kafir tribes in pre-conversion times. It can be shown "that their religious systems (and other social customs) bear similarities to, but are not identical with those of former Kafiristan." (Jettmar, 1974:x), and for these reasons the Kalash are ethnographically important. Despite this distinction, the literature on the Kalash is still very sparse to date. The most extensive work is a linguistic analysis by Georg Morgenstierne: "Notes on Kalasha" (1973). There are some short articles on particular deities: Graziosi's "The Wooden Statue of Dezalik, A Kalash Divinity" (1961), or, on festivals, Morgenstierne's "The Spring Festival of the Kalash" (1947) and Siiger's article on the same festival, "The Joshi of the Kalash" (1974), plus Snoy's short note on one aspect of the winter solstice festival, "DIZILA WAT" (1974).
Apart from myself, there is only one fieldworker who has learned Kalasha language, Peter Parkes. This individual completed an M.A. thesis *The Kalash Kafirs* (1972) but his Ph.D. dissertation, researched in the field between Fall, 1975 and Spring, 1977, is still in process.

iii) **Continuity and Change - The Kalasha Situation in the 1970's:**

While it is still possible to do fieldwork on aspects of Kafir culture and religion among the Kalasha, they, like so many of the world's small and archaic societies today, face a precarious and uncertain future. There are three main valleys of Kalash settlement - Birir, Bomboret and Rombour - each exhibiting different social changes. For the rest of this chapter, I will discuss these various changes which, unless some unforeseen events occur in the near future, are all likely to lead toward an eventual end of traditional Kafir culture.

Since the advent of Pakistan (1947) and the total amalgamation of the independent Kingdom of Chitral with the state in July, 1969 (Wazir Ali Shah, p.c.), there appears to be a slight rise in the standard of living for some Kalasha. Since the complete merger with Pakistan the Kafir 'head tax', "jizya" (locally also called "ushūr" or "zakat" - see Appendix 2: Language and History) which the Kalasha paid to the Mehtar (which was 1/10th of the total annual produce equalling about 4,100 kilos of foodgrains yearly) plus "beğär", two years of forced labor to the Mehtar by all land-owning Kalasha males, have both ended. Moreover, the availability of AID wheat and powdered milk since the 1970's has lessened the plight of some Kalasha. The rapid decimation of the Kalasha population, a phenomenon of the first half of this century, appears to have halted. There are other influences, however, which have begun rapidly to erode Kalasha culture.

Since the late 1960's, the Pakistan government has been promoting the Kalasha as a tourist item. Japanese, European, and North American 'adventure travel' companies increasingly
feature the picturesque Kalasha Kafir valley, 'The Land of the
( Last) Pagan Infidels', as a must on an Asian excursion itiner­
ary. The Pakistan Tourist Bureau has in mind a short day or two
visit to see this exotic, blue-eyed fair-haired tribe, descendents
of the deserters from Alexander the Great's army, who are still
living in pastoral simplicity a millenium and a half later.
( It is surprising how many 'scholars' also show up in the valleys
hoping to document this allegation by postulating, for example,
the capitals in the Household/Clan Goddess Temple to be tribal
versions of Greek Corinthian capitals. (See Sketch #1) For
the relatively small sum of approximately $10.00, the Kalaş
women, with names like "Lon•don Bi•bi" (London Baby) and
"La•hor Fi•lim" (Lahore Film), will perform an authentic tribal
dance against the dramatic backdrop of the snow-covered Hindu
Kush mountains. The eye is captured by the glitter of the
women's colourful costumes that have a 'film star' extravagance
and Super 8's and 35 mm's whirl and click (Illustration #3).
This scene is a far cry from Sir George Scott Robertson's
description (1896:51) of a Kalaş dance in 1891, when:
the appearance of the witch-like old women dancing
heavily their peculiar polka dance-step, singly or in
pairs, was strange almost weird.

As bondsmen of the Chitrali Mehtar, the Kalaş had been
supplying the royal harem for centuries. Somehow, one suspects
that the Kalaş, understandably cautious about Robertson's
presence (Chitral was not made a part of the British Empire in
India until 1895 and Englishmen were still a rarity at that
time), had purposefully selected the least desirable of their
womenfolk to perform for him. Death has kindly spared Robertson
from the experience of the ultimate taming of the 'wild Kafirs
of the Hindu Kush'!

It is not until one has stayed a number of weeks in Kalaş
valleys that one begins to wonder where people who have a simple
agricultural/herding economy get money to buy such elaborate
costumes. One medium-length string of red trade beads from
Italy or Czechoslovakia cost in 1977 twelve rupees or about one and a half dollars and some Kalash women wear hundreds of strands. (Illustration #3). Moreover, one marvels that Kalash women, who have been the mainstay agriculturalists on their small, terraced plots for at least the last one thousand years, can do a single day's work in the fields attired in such elaborate costumes. The fact is that many of these young Kalash 'dancing girls' do not receive their sustenance from agriculture and much of their costumes come by way of gifts from Muslim suitors. Prostitution, not unexpectedly, has been accompanied by severe psychological effects upon young Kalash men. The rough, goat-hair clothes worn by the latter while herding the goats have become symbols of their comparative lack of sophistication and lack of attractiveness to their women, who prefer Muslim tourists scented and dressed in crisp clean cottons and bearing gifts of beads, tea, and fancy biscuits. Kalash men sometimes sing mocking songs to these 'dancing girls', asking them "Mai ghū·ri ja·gāly, ko pa·laiy parra?" ("Why do you flee from me when you see me wearing my goat-hair coat?"). (See glossary at the end of the thesis for definitions and guide to orthography.) If young men increasingly refuse to take up their traditional herding occupations (many now dream of going into the hotel business), and if the young women's growing disinterest in farming persists, the traditional economy of the Kalash and the degree of tribal independence of self-sufficiency which it brings will be threatened as it already is, in some villages.

iv). **Social Change:**

a) **Birir:**

When I first visited the Kalash in 1973, only Birir, one of the three 'secluded' valleys which they inhabit, was accessible by road (See Map). Although that year I spent most of a three-month stay in another valley, Bomboret (which did not have road access until 1976), I formed an impression of Birir as the most strongly affected by incursions from the outside, particularly
from tourists and Chitrali merchants. The latter have moved into the area and set up shops which carry candy, soap, sugar, tea, kerosene, flashlights, batteries, beads, rice, and cotton cloth, which many Kalash men now use for clothing. The money to buy these items is not generated by traditional economic activities but by outside wage labor for the Muslims, by tourism, and by prostitution. (See Chapter Two, section ix.)

My views with regard to the degree of cultural change in Birir compared with the other two valleys was to alter in the course of subsequent visits due to my deepening knowledge of the area. Also, Bomboret is now undergoing even more rapid changes than Birir, a situation which I will discuss later.

My description so far might suggest that change is not desirable. This is not the impression which I wish to create. It is not possible to "stem the tide of change in these areas". (Wazir Ali Shah, 1974:118) The Kalash have as much right as any other people to decide whether there are any benefits for them in the range of available modern technologies. But exploitation inevitably appears when the entrepreneurial elements of a more sophisticated, dominant group make available modern consumer goods to a traditionally inward-looking society. As the reference to tourism illustrates, the acquisition of these objects occurs at the cost of their economic self-sufficiency and often their traditional social values and moral integrity.

The high conversion rate to Islam is an example of the critical changes occurring in Birir. By the 1970's, the majority of Kafir villages and households in this valley were composed of a mixture of Kalash and Shaikh, the name given to Kalash converts to Islam. Despite being within a twenty mile radius of the other two tribal valleys, Birir still has different gods and rituals and its own distinct dialect. Nevertheless, because there are so many Muslims, (both Chitrals and Shaikh converts) living in the valley, the speech of the Birir Kalash is laced throughout with Khowar words, the language of the
neighbouring Chitrali people. (See Appendix 2: Language and History.) Conversations between the Birir locals switch rapidly back and forth between Khowar and Kalash and the process has become so unconscious that they seem not to notice which language they are using. It is quite conceivable that in the future, the Kalash language will eventually fall into disuse in Birir as it has done in the other Kalash Shaikh areas of Jinjoret, Shishi Kui and Urtsun in the Southern Chitral District.

Another effect of outside influences, as I perceived the situation in 1973, was the decay and apparent discontinuation of some of their annual festivals. The most famous yearly ritual of the Birir Kalash, which happened during the autumn festival of the "Pûx", was called "Bu•dā•lēk". In this rite, the most virile shepherd, having just spend a rigorous summer in the high pastures, distinguishes himself in sports competitions played against the other young men. He is rewarded by being permitted to choose as his lover any Kalash girl or woman that he fancies. The hoped-for result of this match is the woman's impregnation, and the Kalash believe that the offspring will carry on the strongest of their seeds. In Kalash language, an individual will be referred to as "zōr be•a•nē", "from a strong/forceful seed", or "di•tai be•aiy moch, shē•tā•si mu•za•rō o", "the man born from among those energetic seeds". (See glossary at back for definitions and guide to orthology.)

Outsiders familiar with the Kalash wistfully report that since the early 1960's, this festival has not been celebrated. One can assume that this is a result of over-exposure by Muslim/Pakistani voyeurism. However, as a result of a subsequently longer year-long visit to the Kalash, I came to realize that the "Bu•dā•lēk" festival is still being performed, although in circumspect fashion. For the Birir Kalash appear to have been able to make a critical separation in their lives between what the numerous government officials and tourists expect, want, or are in fact, permitted to see; and their own private rituals, some
of which are now shrouded in secrecy and skillful deception.

The Kalash generally are very aware of the need for techniques specifically intended to beguile outsiders and they are experienced in their use. Robertson dismissed them rather hastily as "servile and degraded", but there is an explanation in their history of about five hundred years of subjugation by the Muslim Kho peoples of the surrounding Chitral District. (See Appendix 2: Language and History). Kalash language is particularly rich in idiomatic expressions of the type which describe these subterfuges. An example is the perjorative word "ha·li·vai" which means a person who outwardly is as sweet as candy (made from sugar and flour), and inwardly is manipulative and acquisitive in intent. In this same vein is the expression "trash·nê·una uk kadda", meaning a person who, being unnoticeable as "water flowing between the roots of wheat plants", works his or her way into another's good graces. Similarly, someone making "châ·kur·una uk kadda" is a Kalash who cleverly works him or herself into favour with an unsuspecting person like "water being blown through the coiled intestines of a slaughtered animal" (Illustration #1). A final example, most often used to describe the artful co-option of the Chitrali Mehtar or other outside person of authority is "ba·zu·rê rouw a·ti, gâ·aiy dra·nê", "to slip in (unnoticed) through the sleeve of someone's shirt and come out at his neck", that is, the Mehtar in unsuspecting and full co-operation with the Kalash person who is manipulating him. (See Orthography and Glossary at the end of thesis for pronunciations and definitions.)

An example: outsiders attending the "Fûz" autumn festival in Birir are likely to be suddenly and unsuspectingly secreted away from the festivities at an opportune moment. This gesture is unobtrusively couched as a generous offer, made by an all too hospitable Kalash host perhaps to enjoy a meal of hot-cooked bread and fresh goat's cheese with him at his house. This "ha·li·vai" (candy) host is of course making "châ·kur·una uk".
Later, when the guest leaves the Kalash valley to return to his home, he will also confirm the general Muslim consensus that "alas! the 'Bu·da·līk' is no more!"

The Birir people are so conscious of the need to be secretive about the persistence of practices such as the "Bu·da·līk" that they will often even exclude Kalash guests from the other valleys who have come for "Pūr". It is impossible to tell at this point how long this built-in cultural protective mechanism will be able to preserve traditional Kalash culture in Birir. The language deterioration already referred to shows no signs of reversing and the valley economy has been significantly affected by Chitrali and Pathan outsiders who own substantial amounts of land, grape vines, fruit and walnut trees and control the logging rights to the surrounding forests. It seems unlikely that "chā·kur·una uk" will persist for long against the steady impact of Chitrali and Pakistani infrastructure and control.

These developments deserve close and immediate attention. Unfortunately, I have no extended fieldwork experience in the Birir Valley and therefore cannot provide further details on the present situation. The Kalashi inhabitants of Birir themselves presently align their sympathies with the Rombour Kalash in taking a critical stand against the Bomboret Kalash, whose actions they perceive as having a desultory effect upon both the Bomboret community and the whole Kalash tribe. This position is made clearer in the following section. Having lived in Bomboret Valley for a total of seven months over a five year period, I was able to observe first-hand many of the changes which are occurring there.

iv) Social Change: Bomboret

When I first visited the area in 1973, the road to Bomboret was still under construction and the first four-wheel drive vehicles did not begin to arrive there until the summer of 1976. The opening of this road has had major effects on the lives of many valley residents. As just one example, the joint family with which I lived for the first winter split up as a result of the household head giving permission to his second eldest son
to build a tourist hotel in partnership with a Muslim entrepreneur.

This hotel was built next to the field already given to the eldest son as his part of his inheritance. The location was desirable because it was beside the road and jeeps carrying tourists would have direct access. The eldest son anticipated great inconveniences to him and his wife, who must grow their grain subsistence on this plot, and moved his family in protest. His fears were realized the following summer when his crops were being trampled down as the field was turned into an open latrine for hotel guests. Moreover, the Muslim announced, after the hotel was completed, that he had no intention of sharing any of the profits with the Kalash family until his construction expenses had been recovered. This amount became more inflated each time it was discussed.

By 1977, there were three new Muslim tourist hotels in the valley and two more under construction. One was in fact being built directly across the road from the Kalash women's menstrual hut. Despite the fact that since the 1950's the Pakistani government has made Kalash lands and walnut trees legally inalienable, there are loopholes in the regulations. In this instance, some local Muslim person must have come up with his own version of "trash*una uk" and like "water flowing un-noticed between the roots in a wheat field", persuaded the original Kalash owner to part with this strategic piece of land.

At any one time there are from two to a dozen women staying in this menstrual hut. Because the building is located at some distance from the three or four villages that use it, its occupants are quite vulnerable, particularly at night, to unexpected callers. Hotel guests, typically half a dozen young men on holiday from Karachi or Lahore, are not obligated by the same strict laws of purity and pollution which force the Kalash men to keep their distance.

Valley residents perceived dangers in this situation but
but were very slow to react. This seemed to be a common reaction by the Bomboret people toward these major changes in their lives. Perhaps it is that they have long suffered a sense of helplessness against the Mehtar's rule. Perhaps being a non-literate people whose whole frame of reference is the present, they are unable to grasp the full implications of these changes for their future collective lives.

In October, 1977, four months later, the Deputy Commissioner of Chitral was petitioned at a Minorities Meeting by some of the Bomboret 'elders' to put a stop to further construction of the hotel. This was done until the D.C. could personally review the situation. However, the government does not seem to have a full grasp of the problems either because the following month the same D.C. issued a directive to the Central Authorities in Islamabad to hasten the construction of the road into Rombour Valley. He said that the continued remoteness of that valley was becoming a serious drawback to its future development!

The Kalash menstrual hut is one of the most fundamental Kalash institutions. Its discontinuation would spell the end of Kalash religion, which is based on the strict separation or 'controlled contact' between the pure and the impure realms. The institution faces threats not only from outside forces such as in the hotels, but from attitudes of the Kalash themselves. To illustrate this point: all babies are born in a special corner of the menstrual hut that houses the parturition goddess, "Dezalik", thus initiating the child as a Kafir from its very entry into the world. More recently a few women have been choosing instead to stay in the more comfortable houses of neighbouring Muslims for their delivery and confinement. The birth prayers in a Muslim ambience cannot, of course, be offered to the Goddess and the question is now being asked whether or not the children born in these circumstances are true Kafirs. Another endangered heritage is their rich oral tradition and the skills of their impromptu orators. (Illustration #s 2 & 12) These oral
forms, the dominant idiom of expression and the focal point of all Kalash festivities, are constantly brought to the observer's attention. However, the longer one spends with the Kalash, the more one becomes aware of the fragility of this cultural wealth. The loss of the Kalash oral traditions is as close as the death of any one of the very few local singers who have steeped themselves in the details of their own Kafir culture. The loss has been more pronounced in Bomboret than in Birir. Many people—particularly the younger generation—have stopped singing these songs. This declining interest is one manifestation of a crisis being experienced by the youth as a result of tourism and other aspects of Muslim penetration. Having lost pride in their own culture, fewer and fewer young people are bothering to learn the geneologies or personal anecdotes about the deceased that accompany stories dating back more than five hundred years.

At the 1977 spring festival "Zoe•shi", in Bomboret Valley, the predominant theme of many songs presented by the older men was the rapid decay of their Kafir traditions. These songs lamented that the gay festivities of the past cannot presently be seen or heard because they are "sha•ra shi•g•una", "sealed up inside the long (silent) horn of a wild mountain goat". They refer back to the strict rule of the Chitrali Mehtar when the men doing "be•gar" ("forced labor") were often unable to get back to the valley to celebrate their festivals. Since 1969 the practice of "be•gar" has been stopped and the singers are implying that it is no longer because of any outside constraints that the young men are not participating, but because of their growing skepticism and lack of enthusiasm about their own cultural traditions.

At times during this festival, the orators became so annoyed with the behavior of some of the Kalash men, who spent their time sitting around under trees next to the danceground rather than participating, that they would turn to them and shout things such as:

What do you hope to find over there, sitting in the shade just like the Muslims?
On one occasion, an older gentleman shouted over to them:

"A·laiy ṭ ki·i a al·ya·li ḟa·wa dai ḟ?" - What are you doing over there? ( )ucking your mothers or something?

The songs at the spring festival also expressed the idea that the Kafir gods are becoming more and more distant as the Kalash become increasingly "well...just all mixed up with the Muslims."

The presence of Muslim tourists during the 1977 summer dances in Brun, largest of the six Kalash villages in Bomboret Valley, overshadowed all other activities. Large numbers of these men attended the dances and spent their entire evenings standing about on the peripheries, continually flashing their flashlights on and off into the faces of Kalash girls doing their traditional dances, or playing them up and down their dresses. The cumulative effects of these and other forms of exploitation cannot but further erode all areas of traditional life. In Bomboret there has been a rise in petty thievery and fighting between villages, which is in direct contradiction to the pride which the Kalash have traditionally taken in their lives of peace and co-operation. Tuberculosis epidemics in Bomboret have diminished livestock in the last three years. This has meant a decrease in nutritional levels in households whose animals have been affected and contributed to a rise in tuberculosis among the inhabitants. The transfer of lands and resources to non-Kalash continues to create tensions of the kind already discussed. There are also an ever-increasing number of conversions to Islam, particularly among the young people. These factors point to an over-all decay of central social institutions, symbolized by the present state of disrepair of most of the clan temples and the menstrual huts, which the Kalash claim they can no longer maintain without additional funds from the government.

iv) Social Change: Rombour:

The rather depressing situation in Bomboret, which is also found to a lesser extend in Birir, is tempered by the present cultural renaissance in Rombour Valley since the late 1960's or
early 1970's. In 1977, the road to Rombour was under construction, but, due to some hazardous geographical formations, the work has been proceeding slowly. There are fewer Muslims living in this valley than in the other two, and the Kalash villages in Rombour function more as a single community than is possible in the other two valleys where habitation is far more spread out. The tuberculosis epidemic which was affecting dairy production in the other two valleys by 1977 had by now spread to Rombour. This fact, plus the availability of AID wheat and powdered milk, and the end of forced labour and the Kafir 'head-tax', has brought about an economic prosperity among those Rombour families who have manoeuvred to take full advantage of the present conditions.

The Rombour people observe their traditional beliefs and rituals more conscientiously than do the inhabitants of the other valleys. Because there are no roads there are still relatively few tourists and guests are put up in people's houses. As yet the Rombour Kalash refuse to do such things as calling their women in from the fields to put on dances for tourists or government officials. Many of the Rombour men, including a few 'specialists' such as Kush Nawaz of the Ba•I£•c clan, (Illustration #12) know the oral histories in astounding detail. The Rombour festivals are enriched with these ancestral songs to a degree now impossible in Bomboret, and, I suspect, in Birir. (See Illustration #12)

The practice of giving extravagant, optional merit feasts, (the focus of this thesis), had largely slipped into obscurity among the Kalash for a period of over half a century. Since the 1950's, many of these feasts have been revived in Rombour. Once again men are seeking to distinguish themselves in this traditional mode, now made possible by an improvement in the standard of living combined with a sustained pride in traditional Kalash customs. At some of these feasts in Rombour, I heard several people comment that there are a number of men in Birir or Bomboret who have the wealth necessary to perform
such feasts. However, the attitudes in those valleys are presently unfavourable towards this type of traditional competition for status and power. As a result of the Rombour feasts, several Rombour men indicated that they too had plans to host them, but it is too soon to tell whether their actions will have any influence in the other valleys. It is equally possible that the conditions in the other two valleys point to the future for Rombour. Despite the more encouraging signs, the road is coming to Rombour. There are some local men who are keen to join with Chitralis to build tourist hotels in the valley. More young people are converting to Islam, as well as some older men who have recently done merit feasts, and even renowned poets and singers. (See Appendix 1: Poetry and Metaphor). The differences between the three valleys may be only a matter of degree, and, in time, Rombour is likely to suffer the same fate. For now, it is beyond a doubt the last stronghold of Kafir religion and culture in the north-western region of the Indian sub-continent.

There is an interesting story about the principal deity of Rombour, Sajigor. In the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, one of the last of the great Kalash kings, Raja Waiy of Bomboret, launched a successful raid into parts of former Kafiristan (Nuristan). A powerful shaman, Nanga Dêhar, was reputed to have been Raja Waiy's advisor during this campaign. According to the Kalash oral histories, while this shaman was in "Wêt·dêsh", the spiritual centre of Kafiristan, he became entranced and entered into a sacred dialogue with some of the local "Wêt·dêsh" deities. He then informed King Raja Waiy that the god Sajigor wished to be transferred back to Rombour Valley with the King's retreating army!

On the return journey, Nanga Dêhar ordered Raja Waiy to shoot two arrows, a black one and a red one, from where he stood on the mountain passes leading down into Rombour. Wherever the red one landed, Raja Waiy was ordered to build a "ba·shâle" a "women's menstrual hut", and where the black arrow was found he was to build an altar for Sajigor.
The black arrow landed beside a tree, (see Illustration #7) in a holly oak forest and, as the oral histories presently claim, the Kalash warriors counted the number of leaves on the entire tree and then sacrificed a corresponding number of goats to consecrate the new altar. It was after this incident, fourteen generations ago, that King Raja Waiy brought Adabok, the apical ancestor of all seven present-day Rombour clans from Bomboret to settle in the valley at Grom village.

The point of this story is that Sajigor, while still living in "Wèt·dèsh", prophesied that the Kafir tribes of the region which presently worshipped him would be over-run, the temples destroyed, and the people forcibly converted to Islam. The Kalash version of this incident goes on to say that Sajigor foresaw in this prophecy that Rombour Valley would be the last stronghold on earth of Kafir culture and religion. If is for this reason that he wished to be brought back over the mountains with Raja Waiy's army and have an altar constructed for him in Rombour.

The bloody 1895-6 conversion to Islam in Kafiristan which reportedly left 10,000 killed and another 10,000 captive (later dispersed throughout other areas of Afghanistan), broke forever the power of the fiercely independent Kafir mountain kingdoms. As I have tried to illustrate in this introductory chapter, the present state of the Kalash, themselves the remaining vestiges of Kafir culture, is a fragile one, particularly in two of the three valleys. There is a remarkable dramatic irony that the prophecy made by Sajigor about Rombour some four centuries ago appears to have been fulfilled.

This kind of profound cosmological reckoning frequently elicits enigmatic response by the Kalash themselves of: "mai n' a·sè·luk hių dai". Although difficult to translate, this expression means a feeling welling up from inside which longs for release from this earthly existence, literally, "I do not wish to remain on this earth any longer". In a culture where the word
for abject sorrow and untimate joy are one and the same, 
"pəri·shan" (actually a loan word from Urdu), one gets the sense 
that, for the Kalash, the hand of fate holds a sharp, double-
edged knife. One of the most poignant theme songs in the entire 
Kalash oral tradition is about a young man who commits suicide 
on top of the coffin of his lover, who died during his absence 
in the summer pastures. He kills himself with a bone-white 
handled dagger. No one may leave the gathering of the Kalash 
community at the annual spring festival until they have danced 
to this song, which is sung only once, toward the end of the 
festivities.

To leave before this dance would demonstrate a break 
with the solidarity and unity of the tribe. How a tragic love 
story came to be the symbol of the last vestiges of Kafir 
culture is yet a further irony.

When Kalash orators find themselves moving from one song, 
by way of word association, to yet another and another song, they 
often employ a phrase which is a signal to the group that they 
wish to end their seemingly endless string of oral stories:

Dri·ga ʒaiy uk, nā·si ʃ dra·nēu! Stories about the 
Kalash, like "water flowing in a long irrigation channel, 
never come to an end".

Because no systematic account of the local ecology, 
economics, and social and political organization for the Kalash 
is available, these topics are documented in Chapter Two as a 
prelude to the institution of merit feasting. In addition, as 
I indicate in Chapter Three, feasting for the Kalash is more 
than a secular event. This chapter is concerned with the parti-
culars of Sajigor who is the focus of the ritual activities in 
the merit feasts in the Rombour Valley. Though it is not possible 
to expand on the theme of religion in this thesis, the wealth 
of material available on one god along indicates the rich poss-
ibilities for this subject.

The shamanic trance discussed at the end of Chapter Three 
forms the final sequence of events of the feast described in detail
in Chapter Five. I chose to include the material there in order to establish the feast as a religious experience. To illustrate this, I have reproduced translations from the dialogue which took place between the Kalâsh and a shaman who was possessed by Sajigor. The reasons why the Kalâsh see themselves partaking in this spiritual communication with the deity are explored at the end of Chapter Three.

Chapter Four begins by outlining the various reasons why the Kalâsh give feasts and then goes on to provide a compendium of the different kinds of feasts that a man may host if he has the ambition, the necessary wealth, and the required status.

Some of these feasts I watched first hand such as "sa•ri•£k", "shah ni•si", and "bira mor" (see Chapters Four and Five for details), others, which rarely occur nowadays were described to me by Kalâsh informants, such as the "pi•mâ•sâ", "gônt wass", and "sha•nû•gah". Contextual details are available only for those feasts I was able to witness myself. This accounts for the difference in the way which some of this material in Chapter Four has been presented.

Feasts are cultural performances, dramatic incidents during which the various artistic forms of the particular society are presented. They are also public forums and opportunities for men to gain or reinforce their power and prestige. The dynamics of these various activities are what I mean by contextual details, and it is these other dimensions of the feast which are explored in the fifth chapter. While I working with the Kalâsh, a very influential man in Rombour, Kata Siŋg, hosted a feast which the local people claimed was the largest of this century. This feast, called "bira mor" ("the sacred male goat sacrifice"), was an opportunity to witness important men vie for greater power in Kalâsh society. Throughout the thesis, references are made to the man Kata Siŋg and his clan, the Mu•ti•mi•rêh, establishing how a man can achieve such a position in Kalâsh culture.
CHAPTER 2 - The Setting

i) Geographical Location:

The geographical setting in which the Kalash (and the other 'Kafir' tribes) live has had a profound effect upon their languages. (Jettmar, 1974:ix) As just one example of this, the Kalash have more than half a dozen different names or metaphors for mountains. A description of the environment explains why this is so.

Through the length of their three narrow valleys flow snow-fed rivers which swell up and frequently flood during the summer thaw. The Bomboret/Rombour River meets the Chitral (Kunar) River at Ayun village and the Birir River joins the Kunar at Gahiret. Beside this brown, silt-laden, raging river, these tributaries seem like mere trickles. The Kunar then continues to flow swiftly westward, draining all the rivers from the western slopes of the Hindu Kush mountains, including the Bashgal and Pesh (Waigal/Prasun) Rivers. It joins the Kabul River at Jalalabad and the combination of these two waters flows into the Arabian Ocean near Karachi.

The tribal valleys lie in the rugged foothills of the Hindu Kush at altitudes between 1,500 and 2,400 metres. Bomboret, approximately nineteen kilometres long, is the largest valley. Rombour is by far the narrowest and least habitable; in the winter months, because of the surrounding high hills some of its villages lose their direct sunlight by about two o'clock in the afternoon. These hills are streaked with a series of ancient pathways leading to summer residences in the upper fields, over passes to the Chitral and other Kafir valleys, and to the alpine summer pastures.

*Between 2,700 and 3,000 metres, these hills are covered with stands of Asian pine and firs. The region is among the most densely forested in Northern Pakistan and logging is now closely surveilled by the local representatives of the state government. The Kalash have lost virtual control of their own forests. They must apply through the authorities in Chitral to obtain cutting permits for chopping down trees to build their houses.
ii) The High Pastures:

Every year from the third week of May until the middle of October, the Kalash men take their goats to graze in the upper regions of the Hindu Kush mountains. Early in the season they use pastures which lie at about 3,600 metres and, as these become depleted throughout the summer, the men move the livestock up as high as 4,350 metres. After a brief description of the flora and fauna of this region, I will discuss the details of these herding activities.

The mountains still abound with many species of wild birds and animals including the markhor (an indigenous species of wild goat), ibex, bear, fox, leopards, ground hogs, monkeys (on the western slopes), falcons, eagles, several different kinds of partridges, and the beautiful crowned iridescent Himalayan monal (pheasant), whose feathers are a highly prized commodity for Kalash ceremonial dress.

The alpine flora is quite sparse. Willow, rhododendron, and broom end at about 3,600 metres. Above this are found the occasional stream-fed grassy patches often covered in alpine flowers. There are a variety of low, thorny shrubs, a small, thin-barked birch-type tree called "PUR"* and a scattering of the perennial juniper tree "sā'rus", which sometimes occurs in stands or groves.

For the Kalash, juniper is one of the most important resources. Not only does it provide alpine fodder for the goats and is the staple of the wild markhor, but it is cut and brought down into the valleys for a variety of other uses. Its ashes are mixed with tobacco to make "naswar", "chewing tobacco", to which many Kalash people are fervently addicted. Moreover, "sā'rus", "juniper" has a highly sacred value. It is burnt during most Kalash ritual purification ceremonies, the scent of its

*"PUR (muut)", "tree", has a very fine, paper-like bark that is taken off in strips and used to line the willow-bark cheese moulds which flavors the cheese.
smoke being likened to the smell of the gods. Wild markhor, which the Kalash believe are the sacred herds of the mountain fairies, subsist on juniper. When these wild animals are hunted and then butchered, their long-haired coats and intestines reek of juniper odor. To this smell the Kalash also assign a divine quality.*

Juniper therefore, is a sacred substance with multiple dimensions; it is the staple of the sacred herds of the mountain fairies and its odor, given off by these creatures or when burnt at purification rituals elicits the presence of the gods. From this example one can see that over the millenium, living in these powerful mountain settings, the religious symbolism of the Kalash who were originally horsemen from the grasslands of the Central Asian Steppes, has undergone a profound transformation.

The high pastures are held by the major lineages of the various clans, under a system of stewardship rather than outright private ownership as lands down in the valley are held. The first settlers in the various pasture areas establish their claims. However, due to the nature of the activity, the holdings shift as an area becomes depleted through over-grazing after several seasons of use. Some Kalash shepherds now claim that in the past, fewer men owned much larger herds of goats. Presently, most men have at least twenty goats (or more) which they pool together with other clansmen into groups of three to four hundred animals. It requires at least two men to care for this many goats. Twenty years ago in an area called "Chi•mik søn/pasture" used by certain clans in Rombour, there were only two corrals with their adjoining shepherds quarters. (Illustration #4) However, nowadays in this same area, there are seven corrals.

If men from other lineages or clans want to bring their

*If a goat returns to the sheds at night with juniper stains on its head or horns, it is believed to have had contact with the fairies and Kalash custom prescribes that it be sacrificed immediately.
goats to a particular pasture, they must consider the grazing potential of the pastures in lieu of how many animals they have and how many are already in the area. They must also obtain permission from the other families using these alpine pastures. If during one summer, an area becomes completely grazed out, shepherds are forced to approach men in other parts of the mountains and ask them if they may pool their herds. When men mix their goats, they do not mix their milk or other dairy products.

Unless men are unmarried or are full-time contracted shepherds, they usually do twenty-day stints in the pastures after which they bring the cheese products to their houses down in the valleys. If several brothers are working a herd and have not split their house or assets, the products go to the one joint family. However, if this family has disbanded, one household gets all the dairy products for one twenty-day period, and for the next period the other brother's house will receive it.

Some men hire themselves as full-time shepherds either for one or three year contracts. Under the first arrangement, they receive from their employer grains, clothing, and three full-grown female goats a year which they prefer to take in the early spring when they are pregnant. In a three-year contract, a man gets his food, clothing, tobacco, and all the baby goats born in the flock on the third year. If for some reason they should die of disease that year, then the owner will give the shepherd the one-year olds from the previous year.

The goats are brought back down to winter in the valley sheds in mid-October, but only after the local valley government (See Chapter 2, Section 5) has given its permission. A fine of two full-grown goats is imposed if the animals are brought down too soon.

Many of the peaks that tower above these pastures are over 6,000 metres high and remain snow-covered the year round. Between these heights there are a series of passes which lead to Afghanistan. In the summer, the Nuristanis come over these
passes to rustle the Kalash goats. In pre-conversion times, a large number of goats were needed to give the extravagant merit feasts and for this reason raiding became an institution that has continued to this day.

In October, 1977, the Kom Nuristanis from the lower Bash-gal in Afghanistan staged a daring attempt to steal about three thousand goats from three of the Kalash grazing areas. The Nuristanis were heavily armed with much more sophisticated weapons than the Kalash. However, the latter, standing to lose a great deal more, had the advantage of being able to travel more quickly than the robbers, who moved slowly herding their booty in front of them. The Kalash were able to get above them and, in a five-hour gun battle on Majam, the last pass before descending into the Bashgal, (in which at least five Nuristanis were killed), they succeeded in re-capturing their herds. A large portion of these goats were for the merit feast to be held the following month. The feast-giver, one of the eighty Rombour men who went to retrieve the goats, was later celebrated in in his own feast, although necessarily in rather a circumspect manner, as a "man-killer", "shu ra moch". This status, discussed in Chapter 4, is one of the most highly recognized in traditional Kafir society.

iii) Seasonal Activities in the Lowland Valleys:

Growing in the valleys at altitudes up to 2,400 metres is a rich variety of flora including stands of walnut, mulberry, apricot, apple, pear, peach, sallow, and holly (stone) oak trees, plus an abundance of ancient grape vines.

The new branches of the holly oak provide the main fodder for the herds wintering in the lower valleys. The stands of oak which are on private property are used by the owners. Other trees are part of communal grazing areas, "mush ty ruk gum ta".

*Stone oak branches are symbolic of the Household Goddess, Jeshtak, and therefore considered sacred. Branches of holly oak are used as an alternative to juniper in religious ceremonies that are concerned with "women's" activities such as childbirth, presenting the new-born to the community, marriages, etc.
which are marked off by large stones whose boundaries are common knowledge. These communal hillsides are themselves sectioned off and, for conservation purposes, some portions are closed off for a five-year period and then opened for three. Every spring, there are seven to eight young men chosen from each clan, (these numbers refer only to Rombour Valley), who throughout the year guard those sections of the community forests that are closed. A shepherd is fined one goat for every day he permits his animals to graze in such an off-limits area. As payment for their services, the young men receive larger portions of meat and skins from animals which are collected as fines.

The cold season begins in late October and heavy snow starts to fall in late December or early January. In the winter of 1976-77, the most severe in over sixty years, snow fell in some parts of the Kalash valleys to a depth of one and a half metres. In these lower reaches of the Hindu Kush the thaw occurs in March and marks the onset of agricultural activities.

Throughout the winter months, manure is deposited on the ground inside the sheds which house hundreds of goats. As soon as the snow has melted this manure is dumped out by the basketful onto the fields. Winter wheat, planted the previous November, is the first to be fertilized. Heavy rain falls in March and April and the wheat crop does not need irrigating until early May. Next, the fields of corn, (a crop which was introduced into the area within the last century), are fertilized in the same manner. This type of work is done by the men, organized into daily communal work-bees. Usually these men are the clan brothers of the person whose fields are being tilled or any other friends willing to lend a hand, usually in return for a similar favor. Custom prescribes that the men are fed two generous meals during the day,

*During a particularly severe winter, a shepherd might be forced to forfeit some of his goats as fines by grazing them on closed portions of the communal forests than lose an even greater number by starvation.
of crushed walnuts mixed with feta cheese on fresh bread which the women prepare throughout the work-bee.

Gujars very often winter in the Kalash valleys. They are a North Indian nomadic, herding peoples speaking a dialect of Hindustani, who have migrated from the Kashmir area slowly westwards as far as Afghanistan. They do no agriculture and exchange their dairy products, goat meat, and hides to lowland people in exchange for grain. Many of them, at least in the Chitral region, are bitterly poor. In exchange for giving the Kalash some milk or occasionally meat, the latter sometimes permit the Gujars to winter in their summer residences which would otherwise lie vacant during the cold season when the Kalash remain in their villages. The Gujars' goats also produce a substantial amount of manure over the winter that is used by the Kalash on their fields in the spring, a most organic form of paying rent! The Gujars also often assist their Kalash "landlords" to spread the manure before they migrate to the higher pastures for the next six months.

Repairing the irrigation channels, making new fields, ploughing and planting, (the latter activity is too strenuous for women because huge holly oak branches must be dragged over the seeds after sowing to protect them from birds), are the agricultural activities performed by the Kalash men. From then on, agriculture becomes the sole responsibility of the women.*

Except for the occasional lightening storm and flash flood in summer, the skies usually remain clear throughout the growing season, with temperatures in July and August going into the thirties on the Celsius scale. By May, the entire agricultural endeavor depends upon an extensive and efficient irrigation system. During the hot summer months, when watering the crops (corn, and later on,

*In Nuristan, the Kafir women traditionally took responsibility for most of these heavier tasks such as the ploughing. In fact, Kafiri women were reputed to be substituted sometimes for draught animals. Robertson, however, denies this, and states that the main prohibition was against men touching the plow. (1896:550)
millet) every second or third day is critical, the brilliant sunshine melts the snows in the upper reaches of the Hindu Kush. This heavy run-off feeds the rivers and fills the irrigation channels, some of which run up to six and a half kilometres and water three to five fields.

The anthropological literature on societies that depend on extensive hydraulic systems points to a correspondingly high degree of social organization for the smooth running of these complex operations. The Kalash are no exception. Annually, just before the spring festival, village teams or work groups of those people whose fields are dependent upon a particular water system are organized to repair the channels. One man is retained afterwards to keep the larger channels operative. During the harvest, he receives half a "maun" or twenty-one kilos of grain from each family whose fields are irrigated by that channel.

Women whose fields lie on the same channel must come to some formal agreement between themselves as to how they will share the water. In areas where water is in short supply this can sometimes lead to conflicts between them. Initially this consists of hurling verbal insults at one another. "You prostitute!" is a popular one. If the fields are drying out badly these tensions will escalate; the men give wry descriptions of hair-pulling incidents, or women striking out at each other with their metal-tipped digging hoes.* At this point, one of the men will step in and approach the husband of the other woman. If the

*The association between water and women in the secular realm is also carried into the sacred one. Women cannot put a common water vessel to their mouths, but use their left hand cupped against their mouth as an intermediary 'channel'. At the winter solstice festival, a ritual is done by men which makes women 'pure' for a period of four days. After this ceremony women return to their houses and pour out all the water brought up earlier from the river, an act which symbolizes their pure state. But this is an entirely relative status and women never become 'pure' enough to eat male goat meat, or go to the god sites or goat sheds.
issue still cannot be settled, the "respected valley elders", ("ga·dıiy·ra·khan") become involved.

iv) Local Decision Making Bodies:

These elders are men who have a thorough knowledge of the local history, economics, and the social and political relationships in the whole valley. It is not enough to know the clan genealogies. They must have taken an active interest in community issues since their early adult years. Knowledge about landholdings, how they were acquired, from whom, and for how much may initially be an asset to the individual himself, but over time, the accumulation of this type of information becomes of value to the whole community. Usually when a man is forty to fifty years old, he has acquired a broad enough knowledge to be useful to the community, and becomes informally recognized and referred to as "ga·dıiy·ra·khan". Men who spend most of their time away from the social and political life of the community, for example, shepherds who tend goats year round in the high pastures, rarely assume this kind of role.

Most often the 'elders' do not wait to be called upon but step in voluntarily when they see a potentially volatile situation emerging. In difficult situations, in an attempt to achieve peace, these mediators will sometimes set a stringent fine called "za·na·mat". This fine is held out as a threat to force the disputants to settle their differences. If one side or the other continues to perpetuate the quarrel and contravene the solutions suggested by the "elders", then those offenders must pay the fine.

v) Policing:

While discussing the subject of local law enforcement, it is appropriate to mention the "rožy", the valley police or 'magistrates'. During the growing season, it is the job of these men to see that there is no theft of the ripening fruit, vegetables, or grains in the valley. The ban on picking produce until the "rožy" have given their united consent is called "dën". The "rožy" are also instrumental in deciding when and how the
goats should be herded to and from the high pastures, after taking into consideration such factors as over-grazing and the protection of ripening crops.

The men that make up the "roiy" are annually appointed on the first day of the spring festival dance celebrations by the 'elders', from amongst whom these magistrates may also be chosen. This is done in a ceremony at the god-site of Mahandeo which invests the position with a sacred importance. If chosen, an individual cannot refuse, but generally he is proud to have been selected. The potential candidates must have the reputation as being honest and trustworthy and be known as individuals who themselves conscientiously observe the "dęn".

The number of "roiy" varies from valley to valley. In Rombour there are four who are representatives of each of the major clans. In Bomboret, two men are appointed from each of the five villages, the same number as in Birir, despite the latter being a much smaller valley, but where the "dęn" is very strictly enforced. The job entails spending many evenings and sometimes entire nights during the growing season patrolling the valley, particularly in areas where there is an abundance of fruit trees, on the look-out for thieves. Small, purposeful groups of teen-age boys are the anathema of the "roiy". The reason why there are so many "roiy" in Birir is due to the abundance of grapes, a fruit very difficult to watch because bunches will ripen at different times. In Bomboret and Rombour, the job usually ends when everyone has gone to bed, whereas in Birir, the "roiy" are notorious for staying up to prowl about all night.

Anyone caught violating the "dęn" will be severely beaten.

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*Parkes reports that in Rombour there are five "roiy", one representative from each of the major clans. The discrepancy with my information is perhaps because two of the major clans in this valley are represented in two of the villages and that two of the five villages are small and so close as to be considered as one unit for some purposes. (Parkes in Palwal 1977:123)*
if he (they) can be caught, and a fine of one goat is later extracted from the offender. As payment for their services, the "roiy" get the skins from these animals, and the skins of any animals sacrificed at the god-sites throughout the year at the various annual ceremonies. This often comes to a total of forty to sixty skins.

When the "dēn" ("ban") is lifted on the various fruits and grains as they ripen throughout the season, the people quickly harvest their produce, sun-dry it, and then put it inside their houses or storage huts for winter consumption. This job must be accomplished quickly because as soon as the "dēn" is lifted, regardless if the trees are standing on communal or private property, everyone can help themselves. Only after the fruit has been picked and layed out to dry in the sun does it become the property of any particular individual. If, however, the trees happen to be owned by the Muslims in Chitral, who usually acquired them originally as credit against loans which the Kalash later failed to make good, then the products are not free for the taking. For example, at the grape harvest in Birir the Chitralis come to the valley, load up donkey trains of the ripened fruit and transport it to Chitral, Ayun and other towns in the Chitral Valley.

The women see to it that the agricultural foodstuffs are made to last until spring, whereas the men control the butchering of animals and the distribution of the dairy products to guests and household members.

vi) Landholding: (Economy)

The Kalash have two basic types of land transaction other than direct inheritance between men of the same partiline. One type is called "gir·a·wē", a 'temporary' sale wherein a person owning land may turn over the use of a piece of property to a creditor as collateral for a cash loan. The loan is usually for much less than the real value of the land and the creditor must return the land once the loan has been made good. Because
the Kalash are non-literate, there are no written records of such transactions. The system depends on the verbal testimony of a witness "begaras", and therefore works best within the Kalash community. In similar dealings with the Muslims, the bonds of trust between fellow tribesmen are missing and a Kalash may find himself in a lengthy court proceeding in Chitral before he can recover, if at all, his "girawe" lands. The second type of transaction, called "baya te", is an outright sale of land at an agreed upon price, with no future return to the original owner.

The measure of land for the Chitral District is called "cgurum" in Khowar or "chapai" (Persian - "jireip") in Kalash valleys. Forty years ago, one could purchase a "cgurum" for four to five hundred Rupees (about forty to fifty dollars). In Bomboret Valley, the year before the road was opened (in 1975), it was up to eight hundred dollars and the government forced it up even higher to one thousand dollars a "cgurum" when private lands that the road was to be built on were purchased. The most recent 1979 government price has gone up to 15,000 Rupees per one "chapai". Between the Kalash themselves, especially between clan brothers, the cost is much lower. For example, in 1977 in Rombour Valley, a man sold a piece of land that was two "chapai" on which grew six apricot, and two walnut trees, plus two grape vines, for 1,500 Rupees (one hundred and fifty dollars). The buyer was one of his own clansmen.

In Kalash valleys, one "chapai" of land, with an input of twenty kilos of wheat seed, can annually yield about five hundred kilos of grain. Double-cropping after the wheat has been harvested will produce about eight hundred and forty kilos of corn annually. Alternatively millet may be used as the second crop. Fields are not left fallow and cultivation is done under continually depleted soil conditions. A minimum of six "chapai" are required for an extended household, called "kushun", to
remain self-sufficient in grains from season to season. (A more
detailed discussion on the composition of these households
follows in Section viii.)

Some families own enough land to produce their own grain
requirements throughout the year. The head of such a household
is called "cha-ra-da moch", a "man whose harvests last season to
season."

The largest landowner in Rombour Valley is a Kalash
Shaikh, (convert to Islam), Abdul Salam of the Dra-m££ clan
whom I was told, has about forty "cha•kaiy". I suspect, however,
that this is somewhat of an over-estimate. Kata Sing, who gave
a large merit feast in November, 1977, owns about ten "cha•kaiy",
upon which, for six years, he, his sons, his two wives and
eldest daughter grew large grain surpluses which were stored
for the feasting celebrations.

The economy of the Kalash valleys is still based pre­
dominately upon a kinship idiom. Inter-clan barter and exchange
occurs notably between affines (See Chapter 2, Section xiii)
but the extended families and lineages, which comprise a larger
clan grouping, typically balance out between themselves their
shortages and surpluses, e.g. walnuts or cheese for grain, or
honey for grapes and wine, etc.

However, the use of money is definitely increasing and
is occasionally demanded as part of the bride price, anywhere from
500 to 2,000 Rupees ($50 - 200).

The tourist industry, government positions such as border
patrol, day labor on roads and irrigation projects, private day
wages from logging for Chitrali Muslims, and wages earned by
the few young Kalash men who travel to "down Pakistan" and work
on construction sites in Karachi, Lahore, or Peshawar, infuse
the Kalash economy with a certain but still limited amount of
ready cash. This money buys certain essentials (and now,
increasingly, luxury goods) not produced locally such as salt,
cotton cloth for the men, women's jewellery, kerosene, socks and
shoes, sugar, tea, wrist watches, household utensils, eye glasses,
false teeth and of course the 'king' of consumer goods, the still relatively scarce transistor radio.

vii) Architecture:

The Kalash live in villages perched on the hillsides above the valley basins, both for defense purposes in a historically hostile environment, and to conserve arable land. The smallest villages have about a dozen houses and the largest, such as Brun in Bomboret Valley, thirty-five. These houses, either one or two stories high, (with or without enclosed verandahs depending upon the wealth of the owner) are made of piled stones braced between horizontal wooden beams and then caulked with mud. The flat roofs which often serve as verandahs for the houses below are made of roughly hewn wooden planks placed side by side, and then covered over with a mixture of dirt and soot which becomes quite water-proof after repeated pounding. During the heavy snow or spring rains, the roofs may leak if not pounded sufficiently.

The interiors of these windowless, one-room houses are naturally lit only through a small smoke hole and a single door, left open during the day. Thick black soot, accumulated from years of burning fires, covers the wall, ceiling and rafters, and frequently drops onto uncovered foodstuffs or persons seated below. The ceilings are supported inside by four centrally located, equi-distant carved wooden pillars. Within the area thus demarcated most of the household activities: cooking, eating, and socializing take place. The fire-pit, "in•grok".

*Chitrali Muslims have gradually occupied some of the most fertile lowland areas in the Kalash valleys, where they have built their houses. These are surrounded by walled-in gardens in which their women work, observing the Muslim practice of seclusion called "r•poush" in Khowar. The Chitralis prefer rice as their staple, which they grow on these well-irrigated lowlands. The Kalash never cultivate rice and rarely consume it.

**The roofs on houses which contain clan altars have special Central Asian lantern-type smoke-holes. These, plus the roofs of clan temples and the goat-sheds are called "on•jesh•ta dr•mi", "sacred roof" and are at all times strictly out of bounds to women.
is made from slabs of grey slate sunk into the ground in the centre. The back wall of the house, dedicated to the Household/Clan Goddess Jeshtak, is adorned with the horns of sacrificed goats and holly oak branches. The area between this wall and the fire-pit is called "on·jesht·a wah", "sacred space". Women's genitals, believed to be polluted and dangerous, must never pass over this space.

Household furnishings consist of no more than the essentials; cooking pots and a wooden storage trunk or perhaps a small, tin box pushed under the beds. These beds, cots strung with goat-hair ropes, line the walls on either side of the room extending back from the outer perimetre of the central pillars. A house approximately three and a half metres wide by four and a half metres long is typically arranged with four or five cots which sleep two to three persons each.

viii) Social Organization: (Introduction)

The average household numbers from eight to twelve in an extended family called "ku·shūn". Varying of course from situation to situation, a "ku·shūn" might typically be comprised of a father, (his brothers usually if they are much younger or unmarried), his wife or wives, and their children, plus the wives and children of any of their married sons.

There are few Kalash men who have two wives, this practice generally being limited both for emotional and financial reasons.

*The household fire is not defined as 'sacred' probably because it is constantly tended by women. There is, however, a certain respectful attitude observed towards it. Garbage or soiled food cannot indiscriminately be tossed into it, nor can the leftover bones of domesticated animals be thrown in. However, the bones of markhor, ibex, or any of the wild game birds are always thrown into the household fire.

**In Bomboret there are a total of 110 "ku·shūns" and in Rombour there are 83. Unfortunately, I do not have the equivalent figure for Birir where the situation is different in that, comparatively, there are more individuals living together in one commensal unit than in the other two valleys.
Unlike the Muslims who usually have separate domiciles for each wife, two Kalash wives live under one roof and this frequently creates tension. The Kalash are very suspicious about problems created as a result of women being dissatisfied, which can bring bad luck to the household. These kinds of disruptions are called "stri·ja u·ba*t", "trouble created by dissatisfied women."

The "ku·shūn", a patrilocal, patrilineally extended family is the smallest unit of the Kalash clan structure. Economically, it functions as the main productive unit in the round of daily work activities. The Kalash social system demands that the extended family work units produce more than their own subsistence needs. Surplus foodstuffs are required to fulfill the social/ritual function associated with the ceremonies that mark the rites of passage of the household members from birth to death. Other households within the same lineage branch or wider clan, "kum", must also share in the responsibility of sponsoring these various ceremonies. A family or clan that economizes on these expenditures loses prestige in the eyes of the community.

The head of the household is the most senior male, who has absolute authority within the "ku·shūn", and also exercises a degree of control over the actions of the closely related lineages. For example, if a grown man's cousin or nephew on his father's (or brother's) side is of marriagable age, he will freely offer suggestions as to the choice of the bride. When the boy's father is arranging the bride-price the lineages that make up the clan are obligated to contribute whatever objects, livestock, and/or foodstuffs that they can. These individual household heads also have a say in the feasibility of larger events such as merit feasts that might be proposed by clan members belonging to other lineage branches in one "kum" (clan). These are major socio-economic undertakings which require the cooperation of the entire clan for their successful planning and execution.

Mutual cooperation is the goal of each clan and the key to their social, economic, and political success. A metaphor
used to symbolize the solidarity of the clan brothers is "wa•sun•gaiy bûr", the "arrow sheath" of the successful hunter or warrior. (See Appendix 1: Poetry and Metaphor for some other poetic terms which describe clan solidarity and prosperity.)

viii) Social Organization: (Clan Structure)

All the men in Rombour Valley can be traced back to one apical ancestor, Adabok, who was settled there by King Raja Waiy in the late fifteenth century. Adabok had four sons and it is from the grandsons of these four men that the seven distinct "kum" in Rombour have descended. If one was considering only the Rombour situation, the word "kum" could appropriately be translated as "major lineage". However, in the other two valleys Birir and Bomboret, these distinct groups cannot be traced back to one location of a single apical male ancestor. The whole tribal community recognizes the same corporate identities for all of the distinct clans in all three valleys, regardless of the fact that some of these "kum", as in Rombour, can be traced back to a single male ancestor. "Kum" must be translated as "clan" to give it accuracy for all three valleys and to give it the greatest concurrence with the local definition. The discussion on the Bomboret situation will make clearer this choice of definition.

I am not familiar with any Kalasha terms which specifically define the kinship units larger than the household ("ku•shûn") and smaller than the clan ("kum"), such as minor or major lineage segments, except by reference to a few notable male ancestors, particularly those who performed the merit feasts in their lifetime. All clan brothers, regardless of how closely or distantly they are related, e.g. whether they belong to the same lineage branch or another of the same clan, are called "da•i•ruk". This is an interesting term because it denotes the constant fluidity in these types of ever-expanding kinship systems. For example, "da•i•ruk" is also a term applied to men who are related through a common ancestor older than the man who is recognized as the clan founder. Members of the Dra•më•së clan in Rombour (See the Genealogical Charts at the end of the thesis on the Dra•më•së), will
sometimes refer to those descendants from the Wa•ko•kaiy clan (See Wa•kok in the chart), as "da•j•ruk". This is done in recognition that both the Wa•ko•kaiy and the Dra•m•se (and Ba•g•li•a), have all descended from Ba•kar who is recognized as an important ancestor. Bakar was the father of Wa•kok and the great uncle of Dra•ms. These three Rombour clans, Dra•m•se, Wa•ko•kaiy, and Ba•g•li•a are often referred to in the oral histories as "Ba•kar na•wouw", "the grandsons of Ba•kar".

All those kinship groups who have achieved recognition as distinct clans are strictly exogamous. In Rombour, some of the clans, for example, the Dra•m•se and the Ba•l•a•h, now have lineage branches living in two different villages. Thus it can be said of Rombour, that the clans transcend the village. As will be discussed later, this is not the case in Bomboret. Because clans are exogamous the possibilities of who one might marry within the village are more limited in Rombour. For example, if there are only two clans in a village and one is ego's patrilineage (which he/she must not marry into within seven generations) and the other is his/her mother's natal clan (who one must not marry into within five generations) then, if ego is a female, she must marry outside the village. If ego is a male in this instance, he must bring his wife from another village. Because two clans in Rombour are found in more than one village, suitable marriage partners are more often sought from outside the valley.

Unlike Rombour, clans in Bomboret do not transcend the village. Two or three of the twelve distinct clans in Bomboret are exclusive to one of each of the five Kalash villages in that valley. Major lineage branches, separated over time by a minimum of seven generations may technically inter-marry. It is this act,

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*One possible exception to this is the Bu•sin•ga clan who resides both in Brun and Sarikjouw villages. However, Sarikjouw is virtually only a summer residence, and the inhabitants also have houses in Brun which they move back to in the winter.
often resisted despite its legality, which serves as a catalyst in having a major lineage recognized as a separate exogamous clan. The Ku tu wa yi clan (meaning "people of the small, summer cottage"), which was previously a major lineage of the prestigious Bad ze kai clan in Brun, Bomboret, is presently undergoing this kind of re-formulation into a distinct clan and are of late marrying Bad ze kai.

Moreover, unlike Rombour, in both Bomboret and in Birir (although I do not have specific examples from this area) the clans cannot be traced back to a single apical ancestor. The oral histories reveal that some of the present-day clans in Bomboret came from quite different localities, one example already mentioned is the Bu le sin ga of Brun, descendents of King Bu le sin ga of the ancient town of Kari, eleven kilometres north of Chitral. Another example is the Shari na wouw clan of Darasguru village in Bomboret who, probably due to pressures from encroaching Kho groups, came from a place in Upper Chitral at the time of Raja Wa. According to the oral histories, a stick that the Shari na wouw stuck into the ground grew leaves overnight. This convinced the King of their magical powers, and they were permitted to settle in the valley.

Allowing for a certain hierarchical stratification between clans, (a point I shall take up later) the Kalash give full recognition to the solidarity of the clans in the three valleys regardless of different geographical origins and common unilineal descent or the lack of it. Each clan has a separate altar dedicated to the Household Goddess, Jeshtak, which is kept either in her "han", "temple" or, if the clan is small and cannot afford the expenditure that is required to build and consecrate a Jeshtakhan ('temple'), then the altar will be kept on the

*The clan altars are made of carved, wooden horse-heads attached to a wooden board incised with a cross-hatched design and decorated with holly oak branches, the symbol of Jeshtak. (Illustration #5)
mantlepiece in one of the clan member's houses. Some clans share their temples, particularly if they have branched off from a common apical ancestor some centuries before. Men of rank from each clan must be given their due respect at all the merit feasts. Also, each clan (except in Birir) has the responsibility of sponsoring an annual 'thanksgiving' feast called "pra·cheish" held at the god-site* in the name of the apical male ancestor of the clan.

These distinct corporate clan groups are the principal organizational units at the village, valley and tribal community levels for all the major social, political, and economic institutions. Marriage for example, is wholly guided by principles of the Kalash clan structure. Each of these patrilineal clans is strictly exogamous within seven generations on the father's side and for five generations on the mother's side, a point which I will take up in more detail later. The rules of exogamy regarding the patrilineage are enforced by a strict threat of excommunication from the entire Kalash community if they are broken. Individuals marrying too closely within seven generations in their patrilineage violate the incest rules and are thereafter called "bai·ra". In Kalash valleys today there are actually some incidents of these incestuous type marriages. These people live at some distance from the regular Kalash villages and, not unexpectedly, are nowadays all converts to Islam. The marriage rules of the Muslim system are tolerant of close marriages, giving preference to certain parallel cousin marriages. Kalash female agnates remain associated with their natal clans (father's/brother's) throughout their lives. In the Muslim system, if ego is a male, the preferred marriage choice is father's sister's daughter. For the Kalash this is marrying into one's own patri-

*In Bomboret, this feast is done at Mahandeo, and in Rombour at Sajigor. Nowadays, some clans which used to do "pra·cheish" can no longer afford to, and other clans have discontinued the practice because of changing priorities and a growing lack of willingness, particularly in Bomboret, to spend one's wealth on traditional customs.
lineage and considered "n' wəsh", a "violation of custom", punishable by excommunication with the status of "bai•ra".*

From the contextual evidence, however, which came to light while recording the Kalash oral traditions, it became evident that "bai•ra" is somewhat of an ambiguous term. There is some indication that, historically, those people who became "bai•ra" did not inevitably also become Muslims. More likely they became the personal slaves of certain high status or wealthy Kalash individuals. This brings up an important point of hierarchical stratification between the various socio-economic groups in Kalash society. This situation can best be understood comparatively with reference to Kafiristan west of the Hindu Kush prior to the 1896 conversion.

ix) Social Hierarchy:

Amongst those tribes, notably the Waigalis and the Bashgalis, society was divided into three or four major classes, within which the various individual clans were hierarchically arranged. The main divisions were between the freemen, the wealthy "atrozan" aristocracy, and their slaves called "ba•ri".** In the Bashgali village of Kamdesh (Kombrom), the "atrozan" was comprised of six very wealthy and prestigious clans, one of which produced the hereditary priest, "Utah". (Robertson, 1896:85) The warriors and the fighting men, although coming from all groups, were only recognized by the appropriate "man-killer" merit feasts if they were from this nobleman class. The two middle classes, sometimes more difficult to distinguish from each other (and from the "atrozan" or "ba•ri" depending on which end of the scale they

*It is not surprising that, probably partially due to their marriage practices, the Kalash consider the Muslims impure and restrict them from their villages during the most sacred of their festivals and rituals.

**Palwal mentions a group of house slaves "La•ņe" who were a group comprised of either war captives or criminals, and not wealthy enough to pay a fine, were forced to become slaves in the house of the man whose rights he (they) had violated. (1977:55)
fell) were most importantly, however, viewed as free men. The "ba•ri" were, and still are, the lowest group although technically equal (since 1896) according to the central Islamic premise of 'brotherhood'. These people are craftsmen who traditionally provided essential services 'free of charge' to their "atrozän" masters (Ibid:100). They are the wood-carvers and house builders, smiths, jewellers, potters, basket-makers and leather workers.

Robertson noted, without going into detail, that not all slaves were of the same social position (Ibid:99) and, more specifically for the Waigal Valley, Schuyler Jones differentiated this slave 'caste' into two groups, the "ba•ri" and an even more inferior social category "sewala". (1974:46) The latter performed the less prestigious (and less 'pure') functions of potting, making baskets, and working with leather. In pre-conversion times even the "ba•ri" would not inter-marry with the "sewala".

Some of the other tasks delegated to the pre-1897 "ba•ri" include: carving the wooden graveyard effigies commemorating those persons who gave merit feasts during their lives; assisting at animal sacrifices, particularly for cows which were exclusively the "ba•ri's" task to skin and butcher; and beating drums or playing pipes at festivals and funerals. The "ba•ri", considered to be impure, were forbidden to enter temples or approach the sacred hearth in their hereditary priest's house. They lived in the lower regions of the villages at some distance from the other residences.*

The question must now be posed as to what similarities or differences exist between the situation we have just been discussing and the Kalаш. Both historically and geographically, the Bashgalis and the Kalаш are quite closely linked, commonly

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*It is not unexpected that these proscriptions and prescriptions resemble features of the present-day Hindu caste system, ie. untouchability. As mentioned, the Kafirs are Aryans, the remains of Vedic peoples who became isolated and gradually transmuted in response to their new alpine environment.
grouped under a term "Siah Posh Kafirs", "wearers of the black robe". There appears to be some definite functional similarities between the Kalash category "bai•ra" and the Bashgali denomination of "ba•ri". The Kalash oral histories make specific reference to the "bai•ra" working as slaves for their Kalash masters. For example, there is a well-known story in Rombour in which Ma•go•kan, one of the sons of Adabok, the founder, gave to his brother Sum•ba•ra, all of the family slaves ("bai•ra") but took as his share of the inheritance the most fertile valley lands. Sum•ba•ra proceeded to have these sixty "bai•ra" build a four mile long irrigation channel. It is doubtful that this large group of slaves were all incestuous outcastes and when my informant was questioned about this he replied they were the "Ba•la•lik", those autochthonous persons who were subjugated by the Kalash when they migrated into the area. This corresponds with Robertson's observations about the "ba•ri" that:

"a portion of them at any rate, are probably remnants of an ancient people subjugated and enslaved by the present dominant (Kafir) tribes (1896:82)...and partially descendants of prisoners (from other Kafir tribes) taken in war." (Ibid:99)

The people displaced by the Bashgali Kafirs were called Jazhis, (Ibid:82) which Morgenstierne maintains is another name for the "Ba•la•lik" ("Jashi"). (1973:161) There is no mention in any of the Kafir literature as to the kinship structure of these

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*This term refers to a somewhat obvious similarity and often has been used more for convenience rather than as a definite scientific category.

**This channel called "sû•ã zai" (golden channel), constructed in the sixteenth century, still supplies the upper fields in Rombour with water. Sum•ba•ra was the grandfather of Mu•ti•mir, the apical ancestor of the present day Mu•ti•mi•rhclan which lives in the upper village of Kalashagrom and whose fields are watered by the "sû•ã zai" channel. Kata Sing, the man who hosted the largest merit feast in fifty years in November, 1977, belongs to the Mu•ti•mi•rhclan and also owns fields along this channel.

# Saifullah Jan, Ba•gā•li•ā clan, Balanguru village, Rombour.
ancient peoples, nor are there any specific references to the kinship structure or marriage rules of the Bashgali "bari". I would suggest that the latter, being socially inferior and unsuitable as marriage partners to the 'free' classes, were most likely endogamous by force of circumstance if not by social preference.

With regard to the Kalash situation, there is a village in Bomboret called Kandarisar whose inhabitants, although presently Muslim, speak Kalash. These people are reputed to be "bari", former craftsmen slaves of the Kalash. Within the last century they converted en masse to Islam and escaped their traditional servitude. From this kind of evidence, it appears that in Kalash society there was also a merging of the class of craftsmen slaves, "bari", the indigenous inhabitants of the area, "BalaLik" (Jazhi) and incestuous outcases, "bai ra", indicating the presence of a quite heterogenous group of outcases who more recently have become associated with Islam.

Kalash culture is pre-literate and because of this it sometimes exhibits a certain fluidity of inherent changeability with regard to its beliefs and practices. It is, therefore, often difficult to determine how recent certain expressions or attitudes might be. The type of situation found traditionally in the Bashgal where manual labor was performed for the noblemen by the slaves is not manifested in contemporary Kalash culture. If a Kalash man wants prestige then first he must acquire wealth and this means he must work.

For example, in 1977, at the spring festival, zoeshi, in Bomboret, I recorded a song (eulogy) given by the shaman from Rombour, Janduli Khan, praising the abilities of two high ranking men (both deceased within the last fifty years) as builders and carvers, "ou stat". They both belonged to the Drames clan, one of the three wealthiest and most prestigious of all the clans in the valley.

In Bomboret Valley, a man, Sumeil Bek, who belongs to the
highest ranking clan in Krakal village, Rachi-kosht-dari, is presently (1977) the best known carver of grave effigies, a skill which in traditional Kafir culture, would have been exclusive to the "ba·ri". Both these examples negate the equation of an avoidance of manual labor and achieving high status. One of the functions of the traditional Bashgali "ba·ri" slaves was to beat the drum at festivals. There is presently a clan in Rombour Valley, Ba·gā·li·āā, who are renowned drummers. Although Kalāsh men will take a turn drumming at festivals, these celebrations are not begun or sustained without the presence of Ba·gā·li·āā. This clan is in fact one of the poorest and least prestigious in the valley but apparently this is not a social structural phenomenon. Their apical ancestor, Ba·gā·li, was the full brother of Dramgs, founder of the Drama·sē·sē clan, which, as mentioned, was one of the three highest ranking clans in the valley.

Dramgs and his wife were both physically disabled, she less so than he. According to the oral legends, one autumn when the Mehtar of Chitral requested his annual payment of the "jizya" (Kafir head-tax), Dramgs was unable to transport his own load. Because his brother Ba·gā·li refused to assist him, the task fell to his crippled wife. When the details of this story are recalled today of Dramgs's wife crawling on all fours up the mountain loaded down with a sack of grain, members of the Ba·gā·li·āā clan become somewhat sheepish and show signs of embarrassment. It appears that this incident, which happened over two hundred years ago, still reflects on their collective clan character. Presumably it was at that time that these two separate clans developed out of a rift between these two men.

If the Kalāsh "ba·ri ("bai·ra") converted to Islam and ran away, then today they obviously have no choice but to assume the tasks that the "ba·ri" traditionally performed. If a Kalāsh man wishes to be economically successful, the prerequisite to a
rise in social, political and religious importance, he must be prepared to engage in physical, and often back-breaking labor to achieve these ends. It seems unlikely that the Kalash have ever had as hierarchically stratified a society as have the Bashgalis. Group status amongst the Kalash is less rigidly ascriptive, less indisputable, and more upwardly mobile in a shorter length of time through sheer industriousness than was ever possible amongst the Bashgalis.

x) Achieving Clan Status:

The most prestigious Kalash clans are those who have the most wealth but who also have a reputation for their generosity both informally, and also in the institutionalization of generosity, the merit feast. Kata Sing, the man who gave the large "bira mor", "male-goat sacrifice" merit feast in the autumn of 1977 belongs to the wealthiest clan in Rombour Valley, the Mu'ti'mir.". Over the last two centuries or so, men from each generation of the Mu'ti'mir are renowned for giving extravagant feasts. Sak'dar, Kata Sing's grandfather, upon the instructions of a shaman, Januk Dhar, gave a "bira mor" feast with "bat'yak", "one-year old goats", an even more difficult feat than using the usual mixture of goats and cows or bulls ranging in age and size ordinarily required for such a "bira mor" feast.

One aspect of "bira mor" and other merit feasts is the recognition, or re-affirmation of the status of men who have previously performed similar accomplishments. In doing this, certain privileges are bestowed upon them such as the best choices of meat or a second ladleful of clarified butter, "pre.chena kotch", in addition to the one which each family in the community is entitled to. For more than two decades now, the Mu'ti'mir have been known to use the largest ladle or "kotch" in the entire valley, which gives both the 'men of rank'

*The founding ancestor of this clan, Mu'ti'mir, was the great grandson of Adabok. (See Kinship Charts -back pocket- for the full genealogy of this clan.)
and each member of the community, a larger portion.

The reputation and prestige of the Mu•ti•mi•r£h goes
back seven or eight generations to the lifetime of SakdÄr's own
grandfather, Brum•burak. At that time, there was a famine
in Rombour when the whole wheat crop was destroyed by a blight.
The Mu•ti•mi•r£h clan fed the entire population of the valley
until the next harvest on their own personal reserves of grain,
an act still lauded in the formal praises given today.

xi) Marriage Rules:

Of the two to three clans that are represented in each
Kalash village, usually one is numerically, socially and econo­
mically dominant. Individual exceptions definitely occur, but
generally these clans try to arrange marriages for their
children in other villages or valleys with clans of similar
reputations. The boy's family usually makes the first over­
tures. The amount of the bride-price, "mal", must be settled
by the girl's father and his clanbrothers in consultation with
the future in-laws, at a meeting called "k•hul•ta•b•r•" ("k•hul•
ta•b•ri" means 'in-laws'). The price varies according to the
wealth and prestige of both clans. A fair payment might include
"3 x 20 chu•chu" or "sixty dry goods" such as iron fire tripods,
cooking pots, ** juniper-root woven baskets, and guns, etc.
Livestock is also included which might typically amount to ten
goats and three of four cows (or bulls), one of which must to
the future bride's mother's brother called "Mo•p•". # If the new

*A typical exception would be a situation in which a woman might
be in poor health and want her eldest daughter to marry in the
same village so she could continue to assist her in the fields.
Later perhaps a wife would be arranged for a younger brother who
would take over these duties from her sister-in-law.

**A variety of cooking pots are given, including the common alum­
inum ones from the Chitral Bazar and the increasingly unavailable
"krish•na chi•din" (worth five goats) which are black, heavy
iron-cast cooking pots made by the metalsmith slaves in the
pre-Islamic Bashgal Valley.

#Because a Kalash woman remains affiliated with her natal clan,
hersister plays an important role for her and her children
throughout their lives. A young man must be presented to the
community by his mother's brother and later, he may ask his mater­
nal uncle to help him amass a bride-price to pay for his wife.
in-laws are in the same valley, the girl visits them occasionally until her first menses.

During this time, sometimes for five years or more, the son-in-law, "ja•mo" will work for his "ish•pa•shor", ("father-in law"), bringing firewood or helping with the autumn harvests. A good relationship between a young man and his father-in-law is usually achieved by the former's willingness to perform whatever tasks the latter sets for him. Over time this relationship may prove to be very politically and economically advantageous to the young man. After her first menses and when her husband's family has completed paying the bride-price, the girl will go to her husband's house to take up full-time residence.

In Kalash culture there is a 'loop-hole' to this system of "khɔ•ji•kas" or "arranged marriage", called "a la ʂiŋg", literally, "on the horn", a rather graphic term for elopement. In Kalash society, where unmarried teen-age boys are the most ritually pure age grade, male adolescent virginity is valued much above female continence. From a very early age women have much freedom, and pre-marital (and post-marital) relationships tend to be extremely common. The oral traditions have a rich repertoire of love songs about lovers of long ago, as well as songs above present-day lovers.

The Kalash menstrual hut, which to outsiders appears archaic and burdensome, often has its positive side. Women take nearly a one week holiday each month from household chores, leaving all children except those nursing in the care of their husbands. Sometimes they extend their stay after their menses has ended to arrange clandestine meetings with their lovers. Almost any evening there is a small gathering of young men seated about outside the 'off limits' area or perched up in close-by trees, singing love songs to their girlfiends inside the menstrual hut.

Romantic love is a subject to which many conversations inevitably turn. Daily news in the valleys often consists of
relating who has gone to the "ba•sh•le", menstrual hut, or occasionally, somewhat more exciting, who went "a la shing" in the night. If a girl is not keen on the husband her parents arranged for her, and if she has a sweetheart who is himself not tied up with a wife, they may decide to run away together. This usually happens just before, or sometime shortly after she is sent finally to her husband's house.* Sometimes the cuckolded husband is secretly glad to be rid of her because it then becomes possible to take his own lover "a la shing". In fact, young men occasionally try to 'freeze out' their 'arranged brides' for this very reason. However, the young man may be genuinely distressed because the years of labor for his father-in-law have now been wasted, and his ego and his honor are crushed. It is in this type of situation that a good relationship established earlier with his father-in-law becomes important. The latter will often support his son-in-law by exhorting his daughter to return to him or face excommunication from her natal clan. If his wife has eloped, the next day the cuckolded young man might be seen striding up and down the valley expressing his displeasure by rallying his supporters and allies, slandering his rival with heated verbal attacks, and, should the opportunity happen to arise in a chance encounter, a retaliation of physical violence. Intra-tribal homicide is shunned in Kalash society and therefore the intent is to injure rather than kill.

If the girl's father cannot persuade her to return, and, even more importantly, if the close male relatives of her lover's clan are prepared to financially recompense the ex-husband, then she will stay with her lover, who, after a small ceremony, automatically becomes her new husband. Injured feelings usually subside within a few months and are officially terminated by

*It is virtually impossible for a woman to elope with a man of her husband's clan unless the couple are willing to become Muslim." The solidarity of the clan would be too badly shattered to contemplate such a move. However, if a woman's husband dies, she often marries his brother.
making the appropriate financial settlement with the ex-husband and his clan. This payment is called "donđ" and it must be double whatever the ex-husband paid as bride-price to the girl's father. The ex-son-in-law's labor must be forfeited.

If the original price was sixty dry goods, this becomes one hundred and twenty, and ten goats become twenty, etc. Should the girl later on elope again with someone else, (and this has been known to happen as many as five times), the price will always be double the double, i.e. two hundred and forty dry goods.

The metaphor used for this "donđ", the "doubling of the bride-price" is a pregnant woman producing a child. The original bride-price is called "kũ·ak kũ·ak", "child-child price". This imagery also applies to the objects in the payment. For example, "bu·tel i·dhon" are heavy, wrought iron fire tri-pods (made in Nuristan) which are grouped as 'mother objects'. If the original husband had as a part of the bride-price three such tripods, he can expect to receive three of this same type from the husband but also be prepared to accept three ordinary Chitrali bazar tripods called 'child objects' in the doubling process. A woman will be prevented from making any further moves when her 'cost' becomes so high that no one could possibly afford to pay for her.

This practice of doubling the bride-price is in fact, one of the major reasons why there are presently such a large number of Kalash young people between the ages of about seventeen and thirty converting to Islam. If it appears unlikely that the boyfriends's family or clan can, or are willing to pay the "donđ", "double bride-price", and if the young people are determined to be together, then they will run away to a Muslim town in the Chitral Valley. There the girl changes her costume and by saying the "Kalimah"*they become converts to Islam.

* "Ashhadu inna la ilaha ila-lalah: Muhammadun rasul Allah." Literally, I bear witness that 'There is no god but God and Muhammad is the apostle of God'". (Cragg, 1969:6)
This act allows them to completely side-step the "dond". Islam adheres to no such practice and, as Muslims, the ex-husband's clan has no recourse through the usual channels of Kalāsh tribal law and custom. When the furore that usually accompanies these incidents dies down, perhaps after a few months, the couple returns to their valley to take up residence either separately or in the husband's house, as Kalāsh Shaikhs.

It is this rapidly escalating phenomenon that, in the future, is likely to spell the end of Kalāsh religion and ritual. However, Kalāsh women who convert to the more restrictive Islam give up not only their freedom of movement but, more importantly, and probably less recognizably in the immediacy of the moment, they renounce the support systems of their natal and affinal clans. This does not perhaps affect their own lives so much, having already established the types of social relationships with men made possible by the Kalāsh kinship system and its associated moral structure. Their own children, however, and particularly daughters who will probably marry 'outside' to Chitrali Muslims, are cast adrift from these kinds of supportive relationships. This point can best be understood when one considers the content of quality of the relationships between Kalāsh men and women who belong to a strict exogamous clan structure.

xii) Women, Clan Exogamy and Affiliation:

Not only is it taboo according to Kalāsh custom, "law" or "das tur" but is is also forbidden to marry into one's mother natal clan within five generations. To do so would be "n ws h", "a violation of custom", and a couple would become "m kā". Although not exiled as are "bai ra", "m kā" are excluded from participating in certain important ceremonies and rituals which continually re-confirm their identity as:

*Kalāsh women in increasing numbers are frequently being persuaded to become the wives of Chitrali and Pathan Muslims.
Kalash.* These marriage rules define a large number of women (and men) who, unless one is willing to become "mākā" or "bai·ra", are sexually 'void' for one's entire lifetime. A most necessary social, political, and economic dimension of clans are the female agnates who are collectively referred to as "jāmī·li·shēr", "daughters/sisters of the clan" and remain a part of their natal clans throughout their lives. A man never makes any sexual inferences to or about his clan's "jāmī·li" and whether or not she is deserving will always publicly defend her honor.

Despite the fact that daughters and sisters always remain associated with their natal clans, they are not entitled to inherit any family property** or any portion of the family livestock unless her father or brothers choose to bestow some upon her. This is done in a particular kind of context. Kalash men must continually fulfill an obligation called "ri·zaū" towards their clanswomen. This amounts virtually to a recognition of the efforts which women contribute to the prosperity of their natal clans, but to whose total wealth or assets they have no jural rights.

For example, "Jāmī·li" are expected to cook the massive amounts of bread at the funeral feasts of their deceased clansmen and, gathered about the death-bed, mourn them with lengthy dirges to the point of physical and emotional exhaustion. When a merit feast is to be hosted by their natal clan, they

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* For example, the woman 'offender' is never again permitted to partake in the purification ceremony called "shish·ōw" (literally, "head-breads") at the annual winter solstice festival, and men may never again do "is·tōg·gis", the baptism or ritual purification ceremony in which a man (or boy) is anointed with the blood of a sacrificial animal.

** A man's property, usually apportioned during his lifetime, goes to his sons. The eldest often gets the larger share of property and the youngest the familial house. If he had no sons, his property goes to his brothers, or father, or if none of these men are extant, to the closest male relative in the clan.
spend months finger-weaving the intricate, cotton-thread neck garlands to be presented to the 'big men' (Illustration #6) and do the massive task of cleaning and milling the grain (not to mention growing it) and then cooking breads, often for more than a thousand guests, almost non-stop throughout the feast.

(Illustration #20)

In appreciation for this kind of labor, brothers or fathers occasionally make gifts to the "ja•mi•li" of sheep, or one-year old goats, or sometimes even more generously, of a lactating cow, if one's sister has perhaps just had a new baby. (Illustration #18) Men will bring their "ja•mi•li" jewellery or cloth from the Chitral bazar, firewood from the mountain if the need arises, gifts of cheese that they have made in the high pastures, or any number of other gestures. Probably the most significant example of the institutionalization of "ri•zaî" is the merit feast "sa•ri•gk", in which a father honors his married daughter (and his affines). This feast will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

However, "ri•zaî" does not end with this series of mutual work obligations or economic exchanges. If a man conscientiously fulfills his "ri•zaî" towards his "ja•mi•li", then she (they) will pray to God for him. The Kalasha believe that without these prayers from their women, including wives but more especially the "ja•mi•li", neither the community, clan nor individual will prosper. In order to give a merit feast a man must be economically successful. The wealth needed to carry out these feasts can only be acquired with God's blessings, which are bestowed upon a man whose women pray for him.
CHAPTER 3 - The Relationship Between the Institution of the Merit Feast and Kalash Religion.

i) Influences of Islam:

Kalash religious beliefs are too complex to be adequately explored in the context of a thesis on the merit feast, but in this chapter I will examine a few points related specifically to the feast. The over-all dialogue at the "bira mor" (sacred male-goat sacrifice) merit feast in November, 1977, represented both ends of a belief spectrum that ranged from the most orthodox of Kafir notions to the most "avant garde" of cosmological interpretations. The following discussion will illustrate what I mean by this last statement.

The Kalash world view is anthropocentric in the sense that they believe if their sacred moral code is violated, the gods will administer a swift and certain justice, in the form of personal disaster or natural calamities such as earthquakes or floods. These people also subscribe to a belief in an underworld called "pa•la•loiy", "the final resting place of the ancestors" which is connected to this "chum tar̄ du•ni•yā" by a metal pillar. (For further references to this metal pillar see Appendix #2.)

For over five centuries the Kalash have lived as an ever-diminishing minority surrounded by populations subscribing to the philosophically more sophisticated and proselytizing world religion of Islam. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that they have adopted some ideas from their neighbours. What is unexpected though, is that some seemingly contradictory Islamic notions have become extremely popular Kalash expressions. For example, in addition to their belief of an

*At times of crisis the Kalash call up their dead ancestors to ask their advice using divination techniques called "thum ku•chēk" and "stānk ku•chēk". The former literally means "searching with a (goat-hair) bow" used by the men, and the latter means "searching with a (metal) bracelet" which is employed by the women. The idea is that if held in a certain loose fashion, when the ancestors are present, these objects will begin to swing of their own accord.
expeditious divine justice, the Kalāsh have incorporated the Muslim notion of a final day of judgment set for some undefined future date. They also refer to an afterlife in heaven with no attempt to make it consistent with their notion of an underworld home of the ancestor spirits. An explanation which suffices in one context may be entirely over-shadowed (a convenient temporary amnesia), in the next instance. The spirits of the dead seem to dwell in any place which is uppermost in the referent's mind at any one moment, ie. the underworld, heaven, or sometimes even the tall mountain 'Palar' (behind Rombour Valley) believed to be the home of the "pa·ri·ān" fairy spirits. In favoring one idea, the others are conveniently bracketed off, and there is no concern to make sense of one concept in relation to other possibilities.

It would be a misrepresentation if an outsider were to attempt to define or describe Kalāsh religion as a coherent or consistent belief system. This is not to say, however, that an outsider cannot give a coherent and consistent description of such heterogenous and often conflicting beliefs. I am not arguing that this non-literate Kalāsh culture is incapable of logical thought, in many instances quite the contrary, but that their multi-layered and heterogenous religious beliefs inherently permit a certain shifting perspective. I believe, however, that there is presently some evidence which indicates a trend towards systematization, this being what I referred to earlier as the "avant garde" of religious interpretations. This idea still needs some further clarification.

Kalāsh religion is polytheistic with a host of "dē·va lok" (divine beings), local deities, fairies, and "bhut" (malevolent spirits), all of whom are assigned various powers and responsibilities such as the health of livestock, agricul-

*The Kalāsh use two words for spirit. One is a Khowar word, "jan" which may also be used as a term of endearment, "oh mai jan", "oh my dear". The other pure Kalāsh word is "har·wa" which refers to the spirits of the dead ancestors.
ture, fertility, etc. There appear to be very few individuals in Kalaş culture who are able to objectify their society's religious beliefs, (undoubtedly related to the above discussion), and there is rarely a consensus between any two individuals who may venture their own interpretations. Most interesting, however, were a few separate occasions on which certain spokesmen were prompted to give their views and which had in common a parallel, although as yet highly unusual theme.

These individuals classified the many local deities and 'divine beings' as being only messengers. This interpretation would be given in conjunction with another closely associated idea that there is also a single most important 'Creator God' called "De•za•u". He is usually described as the son or sometimes the husband of the birth goddess in the menstrual hut, "De•za•lik". De•za•u is rarely appealed to through animal sacrifices, he has no altar and is conceived of as omnipresent and omnipotent. In prayers or oaths he is frequently referred to as "Xo•dai", the Urdu (Persian) word for God, or sometimes even "Allah" himself. These usages I have heard in public speeches, given by tribal 'elders' in front of large numbers of guests assembled for formal occasions such as the merit feasts. I believe that these expressions indicate an even more profound phenomenon than the mere accretion of undigested Muslim beliefs onto Kalaş religion. To determine the reasons why these expressions are popular on formal occasions, the Kalaş view of themselves and vis-à-vis the Muslims, must be considered.

In their oral forms, songs, poetry, orations, etc. one comes across frequent reference to the word "ni•shān". Although sometimes referring to different things in other contexts, most importantly it means the "mark of God", which may amount

* "De•zik" is the infinitive of the verb "to make" or "to create".
** "Lik" is a diminutive suffix also sometimes used to denote the feminine gender.
to no more than a rough design etched into a slab of wood.* The literacy rate amongst the Kalash is still extremely low, probably about one percent,** and for the majority of the population the written word is associated with supernatural or magical powers. From this point of view, the Muslim 'holy book', the recorded word of God, is the epitome of written charms.

At the Kalash merit feast in November, 1977, not only was the Creator God being summoned as "Allah", but the speech-makers also made references to the "sacred book of the Kalash", "the written word of God" and one orator even compared the Kalash merit feast to the Muslim pilgrimage of Mecca. Such public events are fraught throughout with a concern by the principal organizers and spokesmen to either establish, maintain, or re-affirm their status and power. For these reasons such occasions can be used as a gauge of current attitudes and beliefs. The Kalash orators who deploy these syncretic Muslim/Kalash images definitely seek to impress their audiences, and the latter are all too willing to be impressed if only because the loquaciousness of the speaker has mystified them.

The Muslims, particularly the orthodox "mullahs", (religious leaders) from "down Pakistan" (Karachi, Peshawar, etc.) are openly contemptuous of the Kalash Kafirs, whom they view as a pocket of pagan idolators, and a blight upon the name of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. However, in Kalash culture

* For example, the same word "ni\b\a’s\b\n" is used for the "X" marked beside a candidates name in the national elections held in Pakistan in March, 1977.
** The Muslim Chitrali Khos have only about a 2% literacy rate themselves, and their language was not written down in Urdu script until about the middle of this century by Shahzada Hussum-ul-Mulk, a son of the previous Mehtar of Chitral. (Pott, 1974:116) The same individual has also translated the Koran into Khowar. (Ibid)
it is not these overt criticisms by the iconoclastic, monotheistic Muslims that are wholly responsible for the growing emphasis upon a single Creator God, De•zäu.

In recent years an awareness of the wider world has pressed in hard upon the Kalash, brought by improved modern transportation, expanding government bureaucracies, a sizable tourist industry, and mass communications. If their own 'primitive' or at least non-literate, cosmological beliefs cannot put into perspective or explain many of these new experiences, then the Kalash must seek a broader mode of understanding. The evolution towards monotheism and a god who transcends the boundaries of their narrow valleys is a process potentially inherent within Kalash religion itself, i.e. a subsequent de-emphasis of local spirits and a greater stress upon the Creator God, De•zäu. More accurately, Islam serves as a catalyst to this process rather than the cause, and is able to provide the terminology and the symbols with which the Kalash may express their increasingly monotheistic tendencies. If this is a stage in the process of an eventual complete conversion to Islam, it is a very much more subtle and complex phenomenon than the classical Muslim "Jihad", (Holy War) by which the rest of Kafiristan fell under the sway of Islam in the late 1800's. Although as yet by no means the perceptions of the majority of Kalash people, these new ideas are definitely "in the air" and it is fitting that, along with the more traditional Kafir religious beliefs, they be expressed at such gala affairs as merit feasts, events whose very substance is all about power.

A more in-depth study of this process is easily a thesis in itself and must wait for a future time. It is also important to examine how the more traditional Kalash Kafir religious beliefs relate to the merit feast, there being a close association between these two activities. By giving a feast, the host is attempting to achieve a higher social status and,
perhaps more indirectly, greater political power. Equally as important, however, he hopes to attain a higher sacred status by pleasing the gods in whose names he relinquishes, during the feast, his most sacred wealth, his mature male goatherd.

ii) History and Function of Sajigor:

Once again I must stress that the religious cosmology of the Kalash is far too complex a subject to go into extensively in this thesis. A discussion of one god, Sajigor, must suffice since in Rombour Valley, where most of the information on the merit feasts in the following two chapters was collected, he is the presiding figure at these functions.* This god was brought from a place in present-day Nuristan called "Wet·desh" in the sixteenth century because of a prophecy of impending doom. The Kalash attempt to establish a dynamic and intensely emotional relationship with Sajigor. However, before expanding upon this theme, it is necessary to discuss some basic facts about him such as his origins, his worldly manifestations, e.g. altars, icons, and his duties and functions.

The Norwegian linguist Georg Morgenstierne suggested two different versions of Sajigor's name, either of which (or both) should relate to his special functions. One of these pronunciations is "suchigor". However, Morgenstierne did not expand further upon the implications of this rendition. If this form, his name may be derived from "suchi", the Kalash word for fairy, or even from "such·ar·y" (infinitive - "su·chek") which means "to perform a ritual purification" by burning juniper or holly oak branches. During the climax of these rituals, (done at Sajigor and elsewhere), the expression "such! such!" is repeated like a prayer or 'mantra' to dispel pollution and restore (the person to) a pure state. This first pronunciation could possibly then

*In Bomboret Valley, Mahandeo becomes the presiding deity on ceremonial feasting occasions. He is the god of warfare, and agricultural fertility and the harmful consequences of intra-tribal violence, e.g. incest, fratricide, are counteracted by making sacrifices to him.
indicate the sacred status which is assigned to Sajigor.

The second, and to my mind more likely possibility is that Sajigor's name was derived from the Sanskrit word, "sajji-kṛ" which means "to prepare", "to equip" or "to arm". This interpretation definitely relates more closely to the reason why Sajigor was brought from Western Kafiristan, to be the protector or guardian of the last stronghold of Kafir religion on earth.

As further evidence of this interpretation, inside Sajigor's enclosed stone altar there are reputed to be buried sixty daggers called "niṟung" which date back to the same sixteenth century Kalash raid on the Bashgal, concluded by Sajigor's transfer to Rombour. Nāṅga Dēhar, whom the Kalash regard as the greatest of all their shamans to date, was reputedly the advisor and spiritual guide to the leader of this successful campaign, King Raja Waiy of Bomboret Valley. Afterwards, in order to preserve the power which had been accrued to these deadly weapons (in hand to hand combat) in a very bloody battle, Nāṅga Dēhar ordered the Kalash warriors who owned them, to place them inside the stone altar being built to house the newly arrived god. With these potent weapons inside his altar, Sajigor is himself "armed" or "equipped" to defend Kalash culture to the last.

Sajigor's role as 'protector' is frequently expressed by a metaphorical image which describes him as fixing a huge iron lock onto the end of the valley adjoining Rombour (Gaṅgawat), the upper extremities of which lead up over the passes into Nuristan. When the Kalash graze their goats in

* By this denomination, I simply mean those Kafir tribes who live(d) in the foothills and side-valleys on the Western slopes of the Hindu Kush mountains (present-day Nuristan), as opposed to the Kalash who live in the eastern foothills of these same mountains. It should not be confused with the term Western Katis, who live in the Ramgul Valley some few hundred miles to the west of their "brothers", the Eastern Kati, who live in the Bashgal area (See map.)
the summertime in these alpine pastures, Sajigor's lock, symbolically at least, protects these animals and their shepherds from the Nuristani rustlers who come over the passes to rob them. Sajigor's role as the protector of Kalash goats is one of his most important functions.

Palwal claims that Sajigor also protects the crops from disease inflicted by evil spirits (1977:31). Yet this writer fails to mention Sajigor's extremely critical relationship with the Kalash patrilineal clans which, together, make up the "grô·vēi", "the sacred male community", to which every boy or man over the age of seven or eight belongs. Sajigor is the principal focus of most of the ritual activities associated with the fertility and prosperity of these clans.

The component parts of his open-air site, ie. altar, sacred trees** (Illustration #7), etc., which are arranged like a cosmic diagram, are located in a holly oak grove upstream in Rombour away from the centers of habitation. (See Sketch #2) Elevation is associated with higher or lower secular, as well as sacred statuses: the houses of high-ranking clans tend to be the highest in the villages and the god-sites and the goat sheds are, for religious reasons, located above the villages. The valleys are also divided into two domains, "wē-hunk" ('upstream') which being closer to the high mountains, home of the fairies, sacred markhor, and juniper forests, is considered to be purer than "prē-hunk" ('downstream') connected with women's bathing

*There are two other gods also responsible for the flocks, "Su·ri·Zān" and Gosh·i·dojy". The former resides in the valleys inside the goat sheds during the winter, and the latter god is called upon at the spring festival to accompany the goats up to the high pastures for six months.

* * There are two very important trees at this site. The one at the center of this entire "mandala-type" site is a very stunted and gnarled, old holly oak tree. (Illustration #7) A second tree, said to have grown up from the spot where Raja Waïy's black arrow stuck in the ground, is an unusually large deodar (evergreen) tree, the proportions of which are found no where else in the whole lower valley. Its thick trunk is naturally denuded of all branches to a height of about six metres.
places, menstrual huts, Muslim habitation, etc.*

Sajigor's altar is situated on the left hand bank at a point where the Rombour River takes a sharp bend. Two of the largest irrigation channels in the valley commence at this point, one of which waters several fields on the left bank and the other, on the opposite side of the river, is the "golden channel". As mentioned previously, this channel runs for about six kilometres, to end up in the fields of the prestigious Mutimirgh clan of Kalashagrom village. Because of its special location, the Sajigor site is regarded as being the most sacred place in the entire valley and may be visited only by men. Women are not permitted to approach this sacred grove within about eight hundred metres. If women find themselves at the few elevated places on the sides of the valley where one can look down to see the site nestled in the holly oak forest, they are forbidden to so much as cast their eyes in that direction. Sajigor remains as inaccessible to the women as the menstrual hut goddess "Dezalik" is for the men.

iii) Origins of Sajigor:

Another name which I have heard the Kalash use for Sajigor is "Disane" which they claim is the Kati (Bashgali) appellation for this same god. It is at this point that the form and the nature of Sajigor becomes extremely complex. There was a very popular goddess with a very similar name, "Desani" (or "Disni") who was commonly worshipped by all pre-Islamic Kafir tribes in the area now called Nuristan. In Robertson's time, the importance of this goddess "Desani" was indicated by her very distinctive shrine in the Bashgal village of Kamdesh (Kombrom), which was the most elaborate in the entire valley. Robertson observed that:

*If a woman has given birth, she may not go into the upper portions of the village or travel up the valley until she has done a special purification ceremony at one of the three principal annual festivals, depending on which festival comes first after she has finished her two to three month post-natal pollution period.
"it was built by men brought from Presungal (valley) for the purpose. It is covered with carving, and has the wedge-shaped roof so common in Presungal and practically never seen in the Bashgal Valley except at this place. Along both sides of the base of the sloping roof poles are fixed and support wooden images of birds... (1896:396)

The Kalash claim that Sajigor ("Di san."e") was brought from a place in Western Kafiristan called "W£t-d£sh" which some sources mistakenly claim was in the Bashgal. (Wazir Ali Shah, 1974:77). However, there appears to be enough evidence to indicate that "W£t-d£sh" was in (or was another name for), the Prasun Valley, the same place which Robertson said was the original center for the goddess De san i. *

When I enquired from the Kalash themselves as to the location of "W£t-d£sh", in their usual casual manner they gestured "over there", pointing in the direction of Nuristan. Few of them ever having been more than fleetingly over the Afghanistan border, they were unable to be of any further help. However, on other occasions, while documenting some further oral histories, I did record the names of two sites (or villages, I wasn't sure at the time) "Bronz" and A•t£•ti" which were the exact locations in "W£t-d£sh" from whence the Kalash claim Sajigor ("Di san."e") was brought. There is a village on the Prasun River called "Pronz" which the Kalash have possibly rendered "Bronz". In Kalash "pon•du•r£ bronz" which literally means "the round meadow", is used to denote a funeral or a dance ground. "A•t£•ti" is somewhat more difficult to decipher. Tentatively at least, I would suggest that it is the Kalash name for "Shtiwe", a village north of "Pronz" ("Bronz") on the Prasun River. Robertson, referring to this same village by its Kati (Bashgali) name of "Kstigigrom" ("Kstigi-village") said of this place that:

*The Prasun is somewhat further west and north of both the Bashgal (Kamdesh) and the Waigal river systems (see map).
"(its) chief temple was to Imra... and (that) undoubtedly (it) was the most sacred village in the whole of Kafiristan. (1896:389)

The Kati oral histories indicate in fact, that the Prasun Valley which they call "Kti•wi" was their original home valley. (Morgenstierne, 1953:161) Morgenstierne's fieldwork also supports the idea that the "W•t•d•sh", which he renders "W•tr"** is the Prasun Valley. (1973:164) This evidence seems to satisfactorily establish the fact that Sajigor ("Di•san•e") was brought from the Prasun, which was also the home of the most important Kafir goddess, De•san•i.

Not only are their origins and the names of these two deities markedly similar, but when one examines their functions there are many other common features. Of all the Kafir goddesses De•san•i was the most powerful. (Palwal, 1977) She was responsible for fertility (human, livestock and agriculture), virility, productivity (dairy and crops, particularly wheat and millet), and protection (of goats and of Kafir warriors on raiding missions). (Palwal, 1977:161) In the Bashgal specifically, Robertson noted that De•san•i had many bridges and irrigation channels constructed in her name. (1896:410)# In the Prasun Valley she was particularly responsible for the cattle, and oversaw the production of dairy products and their sacrifice. (Edelberg, 1968:8)

The elaborate De•san•i temple in the Bashgal described by Robertson was located above the village. Since it was at a 'sacred elevation' it could only be attended by men, despite the fact that the deity was herself female. A prohibition against women approaching De•san•i corresponds to similar

*"Im•ra" in the Prasun, ("Im•ro" - Kati, "Yam•di" - Waigal) was the highest Creator God of the Kafir pantheon (Morgenstierne, 1953:163) and corresponds to the Kalash god "De•zau".

**"W•tr" is the name Robertson gives at the Kati denomination for "mountain fairy". (1896:412) In Waigali this becomes "wotri". (Morgenstierne, 1953:165) The Prasun or "W•t•d•sh", according to this association, means "land of the fairies".

# This calls to mind the specific location of Sajigor's "open-air temple" on the Rombour River next to the start of two major irrigation channels.
restrictions against women at Sajigor in Rombour. There are other more significant resemblances.

In the Bashgal, the De•san•i shrine was the spiritual center of the Kafir winter solstice festival. (Robertson, 1896: 410) Sajigor presently serves this same function in Rombour for the Kalasha winter festival. If a man in the Bashgal had a son, he would sacrifice a goat at her shrine. When this boy became of age, he was presented to the (male) community at the De•san•i shrine wearing special loose wool pants which symbolize his membership in the male community. His father would sacrifice goats at the shrine and after baptizing the boy in the blood, would feed the men who had gathered at the shrine a feast of meat. During their winter solstice festival the Kalasha perform the same presentation ceremony ("is•ton•gis" - "baptism in blood"), but the goats are killed on the "sacred" roofs of the goat sheds which are located above the village before going to the god-site. Afterwards the whole male community proceeds to Sajigor altar where the boy is individually introduced to him and "Bal•u•mein", the prophet messenger who is said to visit this place for three days during the winter solstice festival. Annually, on this occasion, a long willow withe for each living member of the sacred male community is then thrown onto the top of the Sajigor altar. The boys being presented in their special loose pants have their sticks thrown onto the altar for the first time. In both the above examples, the emphasis of the two deities Sajigor ("Di•san•e") and De•san•i is definitely upon their relationships to the individual members of the partilineal clans who together make up the sacred male community.

At De•san•i's own festival which used to take place in the Bashgal in mid-summer, huge quantities of cheese and butter were brought from the alpine pastures to the goddess's shrine where all the men had gathered to enjoy a feast of bread and dairy products. (Ibid:590) The annual pre-harvest
Kalash festival of "U-chow" which takes place at Sajigor is an almost identical celebration. Both these festivals stress the role of De-san-i and Sajigor as divine beings who are concerned with the livestock and their productivity.

In the Waigal Valley:

"goat horns are associated with wealth, the man who has many goats is rich, he can give feasts and achieve rank. A man who have given many feasts can have goat horn symbols carved on the front of his house. Horns, wealth, and prestige are closely associated...A successful hunter will decorate the front of his house with the horns of the animals he has killed. (Schuyler Jones, 1974:99)

Palwal, although critical of Jones' emphasis on horns with hunting, agrees with him that they are definitely important symbols of achieved rank. Palwal also stresses that horns are symbols of fertility, specifically related to the powers of De-san-i.

Amongst the pre-Islamic Kafirs of the Ashkuñ Valley, a house-owner who wished to carve 'U-shaped' horns on the door of his house must have more than four hundred goats and annually sacrifice twenty to De-san-i. (1977:268) There is a second horned design from the same area called "Atali-Desani" composed of repeatedly crossed horns. The actual carved head of the goddess appears in the crotch of the final, uppermost cross. To use this symbol, a man must sacrifice sixty goats annually to De-san-i and thus achieves the rank of "Mir" ("Maswi", "Masi" or "King"). (Ibid:269) Horns carved on houses are supposed to affect the fertility of women within, and ensure plenty when they are put onto the doors of storage rooms or goat sheds.

Like the Ashkun Kafirs, horns for the Kalash are connected with wealth, rank, and fertility. In Kalash language the work "sa·ri·fā" is most commonly used to describe a gift of new clothes which are presented to honor men of rank on ceremonial occasions. For the most difficult of Kalash merit feasts, a man must also prove that he has at least four hundred
goats before the festivities may commence. During these feasts a large number of goats (perhaps about thirty), are sacrificed in the name of Sajigor. The expression "Sajigor as sa·ri·fā", meaning "gifts of clothing for Sajigor", is metaphorically used to describe the numerous pairs of horns belonging to these sacrificed animals. After the feast, they are affixed to the trunks of the sacred trees which grow next to the god's altar, including one evergreen with the tall bare trunk. (See Chapter 3, Footnote #2) (Illustration #7). The quantity of these special objects symbolizes the obeisance of the feast-giver to Sajigor, whom he hopes will reciprocate by bestowing blessings on himself and his clan.

It seems evident from the above discussion that there are many similarities between the Kafir goddess De·san·i and Sajigor ("Di·san·ê"). The most obvious discrepancy is in the gender of these two deities. However, the contradiction of gender indicates that the transfer of Sajigor from Western Kafiristan was a much more complex affair than the quasi-historical Kalash oral accounts presently reveal. The clue to this potentially puzzling situation is the connection which the Kalash sometimes make between Sajigor and the Clan/Household goddess, Ješhtak, whom they claim is his mother.

Already mentioned is the fact that the goddess De·san·i was frequently symbolized by carved goat horns. Since the 1896 conversion to Islam, there have been uncovered in the Prasun Valley a few very interesting three-dimensional carvings, also of this same goddess. These, (and I believe that there are extant only three such figures), are of a woman seated on the back of a goat. She sits in a special chair (symbol of rank) and her vulva is hidden by the head of the goat. This animal has exceptionally long, upright horns which the goddess, with her arms outstretched holds in her hands about half-way up their length. (Edelberg, 1968:8)

While in the Prasun in 1964, Edelberg discovered that in pre-Muslim times a statue of this type existed in the
households of the headmen of each of the eight clans in the village of Shtiwe. The statue was kept in the space between the central hearth and the back wall of the house. This is the same spot that the Kalash call "onjeshtat wah", the "sacred space (void)" and which, as mentioned earlier, is dedicated to Jeshtak. In a Kalash house Jeshtak's altar, comprised of the horns of sacrificed goats and branches of holly oak, are affixed to the back wall directly behind the "onjeshtat wah". Kalash clans that are small or impoverished and cannot afford the expenditues of wealth required to build their own clan temple, "Jeshtakhan", keep their carved clan altars in one of the houses owned by a clan member. Apparently this was the practice in the Prasun regardless of the size or wealth of the clans. It appears that for the Prasun Kafirs, De
dani served the same function as the Kalash clan/household goddess, Jeshtak. If, as the Kalash say, Sajigor is Jeshtak's son then it seems likely that Sajigor, or at least some related form, must be the son of De
dani.

In the story of Sajigor's transfer to Rombour, King Raja Waïy shot two arrows; a black one at whose landing place Sajigor's altar was to be built, and a red one where the Kalash were instructed to build a menstrual hut. Inside this hut is kept the Kalash parturition goddess, "Dezaalik" (whose name has a marked resemblance to De
dani's). What is more important here is to establish the association with Sajigor. To do this, it is necessary to turn to some of the literature, sparse though it is, on Kafir religious mythology about De
dani. Palwal collected a myth from the Prasun which mentions that De
dani had a son (whose name wasn't known) who was responsible for constructing a vast irrigation network in the Prasun which radically changed the ecology of the valley. (1972:59) This angered the other gods who pursued him. In his flight, his own mother De
dani, armed with a dagger accidentally killed him. (Ibid) This myth relates
De•san•i's son as the builder of agricultural hydraulic systems. This calls to mind an association with Sajigor whose "sacred grove" is centrally located beside the two largest irrigation works in Rombour.

In 1892 Robertson recorded a myth that described the birth of De•san•i and her son called Bagisjit. In 1929, Morgenstierne was told another version of this same story by one of the last surviving Kafir priests who had fled from the Bashgal during the 1896 Muslim conversion to Bomboret where he lived as a refugee until his death. * I will combine both versions of this myth because together they reveal some very important facts about De•san•i's son and his connection to the Kalash god Sajigor.

Although De•san•i was believed to have sprung from the right breast of the Kafir creator god "Im•ra" ("De•Zăû"), her own father was "Sut•aram" or "Sat•aram", the Kafir weather god. This god had been "created out of a juniper twig and assume(d) the shape of a markor kid (whose) horns reach heaven." (Morgenstierne, 1953:164) He lived in a large mythical lake (Dorah) into which De•san•i was born. According to Robertson's version of this story, the goddess lived in the middle of this lake, inside the trunk of a tree that was so large that it took nine years to climb and eighteen years

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*Several hundred Kafirs fled for their lives from Nuristan during the conversion and were permitted by the Chitrali Mehtar (and the British India Government) to settle as refugees in villages at the ends of both Rombour and Bomboret valleys. Their descendants, numbering as many as a thousand people, live in these two Kalash valleys to this day. All of them, however, have converted to Islam.
to cross the span of its branches. (1896:382) *

When Sat•aram, apparently intrigued, approached this tree, it burst asunder revealing De•san•i encased in the centre of its trunk. Left alone, she was later violated by a demon (yus) who according to Morgenstierne's version, appeared in the shape of an unshorn ram. **(Ibid) De•san•i became pregnant and in Robertson's account, she wandered until she came to the Prasun where she delivered her son, Bagisht, standing in the Prasun River. (Ibid:382) Morgenstierne's rendition says that De•san•i remained in Dorah Lake and suffered through an extremely painful pregnancy in which the foetus swam about in her womb. When this son Bagisht was born, De•san•i said to him:

"This city is on the surface of the water. Thou canst not live with Gods, thou canst not live with men. Thou wast made to move about in water. (Morgenstierne,1953:168)

Robertson also mentions that Bagisht's altar was usually located near the confluence of rivers or on irrigation channels. (Ibid:406) Moreover, this same writer also noticed that Bagisht was never connected with a temple of any kind. but always had an 'open-air site' so that the Kafirs could offer their sacrifices more directly to this god. (Ibid:590) Often the only marker was a blood-covered stone. In Rombour,

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*Robertson recorded another myth which mentioned a sacred tree whose roots were the parturition goddess, "Nirmali" (Kalash "De•Zā•lik"), the trunk was De•san•i, and the branches seven (sud) brothers (aram) "Sut•aram", who were responsible for supervising the goats. (Note the similarity to the Kalash goat-shed god "Su•zi•rān"). The repeated reference of De•san•i to the trunk of a sacred tree has an almost uncanny association to the huge deodar tree at Sajigor, who distinguishing feature is its tall, thick trunk which is totally denuded of branches for about the first 6 metres.

**The theme of one of the seven sacred hymns sung at the winter solstice festival in Bomboret is of a grey-haired, unshorn ram who has a single horn which the Kalash say symbolizes his penis. The hymn calls upon the ram to 'beat' (have intercourse) with his 'horn' (penis) and bring strength, vigor, health, and happiness to the Kalash people.
Sajigor's own altar is little more than a pile of river rocks with a single wooden board, onto which is attached some small carved horse-heads. It too is blood-covered from being anointed with numerous handfuls of sacrificial blood during the various festivals and feasts which take place there. The 'open-air' type of site of Bagisht is also, as was mentioned, common to Sajigor.

The parallels drawn thus far between these two deities seem too similar to be merely co-incidental. There is in fact, further supporting evidence to show that Sajigor and Bagisht are different forms of the same god. A Bashgali hymn to Bagisht summons him as a supreme 'protector' god (Morgenstierne, 1953:180) which is also the main function of Sajigor. According to Robertson, Bagisht was a very popular Kafir god who helped men in their struggle for wealth and power; by sacrificing goats to Bagisht, the Kafirs believed that they would become prosperous. This is the same reason why Sajigor is selected by the Kalash as the focus of their merit feasts, particularly the "bira mor"("sacred male-goat sacrifice").

For the whole of pre-Islamic Kafiristan, it appears that there were some common religious themes that at times emerge clearly or were sometimes melded together with a complex of other ideas. It is betwixt and between these beliefs that I have tried to trace back "the black arrow" to determine the origins and relationships of Sajigor. The special features of the sacred grove, and his duties and functions presently seem to combine elements of both the goddess De•san•i and her water-borne son Bagisht. It is by establishing these links that more about the present-day ethnography of the Kalash can be revealed, which this may, in turn, shed some light on aspects of a now transformed Kafiristan (Nuristan) which for the most part, has lost forever its earlier ethnographic reality.
iv) Contemporary Relationship to Sajigor:

It is very evident that the Kalash still regard Sajigor, to whom, individually and collectively throughout the year, the men turn as an extremely powerful and influential deity. As a way of concluding this chapter on religion, a brief description of the events which occurred at the climax of the "bira mor" merit feast which took place in November of 1977 at Sajigor, will illustrate the kind of rapport that the Kalash seek to establish and maintain with this god.

Out of a total of approximately one hundred and forty animals (of which the majority were goats) that the feast-giver, Kata Sing, distributed at his "bira mor", some thirty were sacrificed at Sajigor on the last day of the festivities. (The events of this feast will be described in their entirety in a later chapter.) Most of these thirty animals were male goats, about four to six years old, which of all their possessions, the Kalash consider to be the most valuable and sacred objects of wealth. The reason why such a large number of beasts are required on these occasions is to draw the attention of Sajigor, whom the Kalash believe becomes pleased if "bira louje", the "sacrificial blood of the sacred male goat", flows for him as copiously as a "da•ren" (flood). Only then will he be persuaded to bestow his blessings upon the feast-giver and his clan.

*Being a woman, I was not permitted to personally attend this sequence of events at Sajigor, and I have therefore had to re-construct this scene from various sources. I had discretely visited the site myself on one occasion in 1973 and at that time was able to photograph some of the most important features. For the merit feast in 1977, my principle informant had learned how to operate my camera, which resulted in another half a dozen or so photographs. (Illustration #10) Another Kalash man kindly recorded for me an hour long tape at the god-site which included prayers, hymns, dialogue, and the shaman's trance. The rest of the information was supplemented during lengthy discussions while translating and interpreting the taped materials.*
At this 'finale' event, attended by about five hundred men and boys, the excitement level was extremely high. A small number of men with their sleeves and pant legs rolled up had ritually purified themselves with 'holy' water and by burning juniper branches. These were the only men permitted to cut the throats of the animals. (Illustration #9).

As each animal is killed, the other men all shout special prayers called "par.wa.za" ("prayers that send off the spirit of the goat to the god") which ask for wealth and prosperity from the god in return. (Illustration #10). If the goat trembles violently as it is killed, this is a sign that Sajigor has accepted it as a gift and the men then make loud kissing noises through puckered lips to give their thanks to the god for receiving it.

Just shortly after the last sacrifice had been completed the shaman suddenly became possessed, supposedly by the spirit of Sajigor himself. (Illustration #11)

*One of these "on.jesh.ta moch" ("purified men") collects the blood into his cupped hands as it flows from the animal's throat and throws it onto the sacrificial fire made of juniper wood. The next double-cupped handful of blood is thrown onto Sajigor's piled-stone altar. (Illustration #10)

**The Kalash believe that Sajigor retains these prayers until the following winter solstice festival when he will deliver them to the prophet messenger god "Balumein", who comes over from a place in modern-day Nuristan specifically to receive these prayers and take them back to the gods.

#A man becomes a shaman in Kalash culture according to his own personal predilections, e.g. his capacity for suggestibility or ability to have prophetic dreams, etc., although there is some notion that the ideal temperament or character most suited to become a shaman runs in particular families. In addition to the shaman, in each valley there is a hereditary priestly family, but which is less formally recognized than the Bashgali equivalent, the "Utah" (hereditary priest). For the Kalasha, one member of this family knows the secret hymns "gatch", which are sung annually on a few special occasions. (Illustration #12) The songs are passed down from father to son. These families have a more ascribed social and political status than does a shaman, however, the latter may sometimes in addition also belong to a prestigious lineage or clan.
"dêhar", may go into a trance at the sight of a great quantity of sacrificial blood or even with the smell of burning juniper smoke, the 'scent of the gods'. In this state, his eyes roll back and his limp body must be supported by the other men standing around. The Kalâsh call this possession state "um•bû•lêk", "to go up" or "to raise oneself up", and they say that in these moments the shaman "sees but not with his own eyes".

At that time, the ritual became extremely intense and crowds of men began to gather about the "dêhar" and simultaneously shout at him to make specific request of Sajigor. The verbal responses of the "dêhar", prefixed by a ritualized sequence of: "Ha! ha! ha! ha! Hetch!" became extremely mumbled and erratic. The Kalâsh believe these words are coming directly through the shaman from Sajigor himself. Those men standing closest must strain to catch the meaning of the "dêhar", and then shout his words loud again for all the others to hear. The following is a short excerpt from this dialogue:

"Dêhar"/"shaman":
(to the feast-giver)
(Janduli Khan-
Mu•ti•mi•rê clan)
(Illustration #11)

Crowd of Men:
(shouting to Sajigor via the "dêhar")

Bashara Khan: (to the shaman)
('Elder' - Ba•lê•rê clan)

Gârdâ: (shouting to the shaman) (Mu•ti•mi•rê clan, Uncle of the host)

"Ha! ha! ha! ha! Hetch!"
In recognition of your finely executed feast, I (Sajigor) will bring into your hands strength as great as the roof beams of a house!
Yes! Make him as strong as the roof beams! Make him strong!
Why is it that the uncle of our host (father's brother- Gârdâ) has less than he deserves in life? (Why has he no sons?)
Oh! You who walks messages to the gods! Write down these mens' prayers that are asking for a son for me!
Crowd of Men: (shouting to Sajigor) 
Grant him his wish! Grant him a son!

"Dēhār": (to the crowd) 
"Ha! ha! ha! ha! Hetch! He will grant it! He will grant it!

This three-way conversation, constantly building in momentum, ranged over a variety of subjects including Sajigor's intentions to, in future, better protect the Kalāsh goats from the Nuristanis. Also he promised to keep at abeyance the tuberculosis epidemic that was raging amongst the goat herds in the other two Kalāsh valley. This disease, the shaman (Sajigor) said, would not come to Rombour as long as the community upheld the rules of purity and pollution, particularly concerning the prohibitions against Kalāsh women consuming the meat of the sacred male goats.

These ideas make fascinating counter-points to some of the other, less orthodox, more modernistic/monotheistic views that were also expressed on other occasions at this same merit feast. It is the presence of both these traditional and the more 'avant garde' ideas which I referred to earlier, when I suggested that occasions of power such as the merit feast could be used as a gauge to detect the full range of ideas in a broad, (and at times, fluctuating) spectrum of cosmological beliefs.

My informant later on expressed skepticism concerning the authenticity of the shaman's possession state, and claimed that many other men were also doubtful about the "sacred discourse" conducted by this particular shaman. Those who were skeptical presumably find his views too orthodox or out-dated perhaps in the light of some of the other more current attitudes examined in the first part of this chapter. Visits from Chitrālī veterinarians with serum cannot help but create new attitudes towards the notion of "disease caused by bad spirits". The question of the authenticity of the trance aside, the shaman's part was superbly acted. He appears to have his
finger on a very important pulse, that is, he is still able to anticipate the more critical concerns and beliefs of some, if perhaps the more traditionally-minded portions of the Kalash community. The dynamic interplay between the highly emotional crowd of men and this estatic shaman at Sajigor, developed into one of the most dramatic sequences in the entire "bira mor" merit feast, (itself a type of dramatic performance). The tone or character of the relationship which the Kalash engage in with their gods is one of direct and active participation. They believe these divine beings to be 'actively present' and a shamanistic medium is particularly equipped to engage in direct communications with them.

v) Religious Aspirations of Feast-Giving:

The content of the above dialogue at Sajigor illustrates the very pragmatic and 'this worldly' orientation that the Kalash have towards their divine persona and their religion generally. The feast-giver seeks the god's blessings which, he hopes, will bring himself and his clan health, fertility, and material prosperity in the future.

Palwal maintains that Kafir religion holds some notion of reincarnation and that by performing a merit feast, a man may achieve a more honorable position in his after-life. (1977: 301) As for the former idea of reincarnation, the Kalash will sometimes name a child after a dead ancestor with some hazy notion of a deeper connection; however, the whole idea remains rather vague and inexplicit. That a man achieves a better standing in his afterlife is a belief which I did not encounter in the course of documenting two of the most important Kalash merit feasts in situ, or while gathering information from informants about these and other feasts.

My own findings correspond with a verbal exchange that was related to Edelberg in 1948 in the Prasun Valley, when there were still a very few Kafirs still remaining alive. These Kafir men had Muslim sons who teased their fathers
about their old religion. They responded to their sons by saying: "You console yourselves with beholding God in the life to come, but we prefer to see him in this life." (Edelberg, 1968:6)

The Kalash and, specifically in this context, the feast-giver, are not concerned with how their actions affect what lies after death except in the sense of how those who remain behind will remember them. The emphasis of Kalash religion and their relationship with the gods is concerned with what benefits can be derived for the living. If a feast-giver's concerns can ever be considered abstract, it is only when the benefits of giving a feast are not realized immediately but their future descendents will later gain in wealth, number, and prestige. The Kalash will sometimes say that a man makes a large merit feast "out of love for his grandsons". The latter will prosper and give thanks to him. A phrase frequently quoted in this vein is "nom tā tōw how·ow", "his good name will remain behind" to be cherished and remembered by future generations to come.

The intentions of a man who strives to become a "na·moo·si moch", "man of rank", are pragmatic and 'this worldly', he hopes to receive more sons, increase his wealth and to gain power and influence. The next chapter will be a discussion of the various types of Kalash merit feast and, afterwards, a more detailed examination of one feast in particular, the "bira mor" ("sacred male-goat sacrifice"). The religious dimension of this feasting institution will be a recurrent theme throughout the remainder of this thesis.
CHAPTER 4 - Merit Feasts Amongst the Kalash

i) Introduction:

This chapter and the following one are both concerned with examining merit feasting, a multi-functional institution which has structural characteristics common to exchange systems found in all non-monetary societies whose economic, social, and political organizations are based upon kinship and affiliation. The feasting complex of the Kalash will provide the specific socio-cultural context (while discussing this mode of exchange) found universally in all non-market societies. There is no published information about Kalash feasts and many inadequacies exist in what limited unpublished material is available. For this reason, I shall include in this chapter a rather detailed enumeration of the various types of feasts and their associated ranks and symbols which a man may achieve in Kalash society. I will preface this discussion with a few remarks of a general nature about the merit feast, using the Kafir (or the Kalash) situation as examples wherever necessary.

ii) Feasting as a Mode of Exchange:

Feasting is an aspect of all societies where there exists a limited degree of economic liquidity, (Belshaw, 1962: 17) that is, where there is no common unit of currency which may be directly exchanged for foodstuffs or other material objects. In Kalash society, goats are the common exchange unit and one full grown bull is worth the equivalent of twelve goats, a cow eight, an iron cooking pot five, and (according to their old rate of exchange) a walnut tree is worth eight goats. However, a goat is a very large object and does not solve the problem when an individual wants to procure an item worth much less. As mentioned in Chapter two, circumstances enabling individuals to procure daily subsistence items in such societies are met in a different fashion. The family is the primary economic unit and the re-distribution of goods produced in Kalash society is exchanged between families, lineages, and
clan groups. Exchanges are also effected through feasting, a practice organized along kinship lines, with concomitant relationships in the economic sphere which may actually amplify the amount of materials to be re-distributed. Thus a feasting mode usually co-incides with an economic competitiveness, e.g. women competing to produce the most foodgrains or shepherds attempting to increase their herds in order to produce the most cheeses, etc. This competitiveness results in the production of large amounts of food which are then re-distributed by an aspirant feast-giver to his fellow community. In return he achieves formal rank associated with greater social and political status, and it is these added dimensions which renders the feast as more than mere economic exchange.

The previous chapter on religion was also concerned with these multi-functional aspects of feasting and there it was pointed out that feasts are more than just secular events. Recognition of the achievements of the feast-giver comes not only from the community but, the Kalasha believe, from the gods as well.

During the concluding ceremonies at Sajigor's altar detailed in the previous chapter, the god, by way of the shaman mediator, praised the host of the "bira mor" for his "well-planned" feast. The actual Kalasha term used was "chi·ti·lā kromb (work)". "Chit" means "thought" or "decision" and the abilities being praised at that time were Kata Siug's planning and management skills exhibited throughout the duration of the feast. The point is that it is not just the amount of goods involved which are important but also the manner in which they are distributed. Which objects are to be given, to whom,

*This factor of economic competitiveness in societies which exhibit a feasting mode of exchange holds as much importance as natural environmental abundance theories. The environment may hold the potential for abundant surpluses but work is required to exploit these resources and the competitive ethic is a critical stimulus.
(which rank-holders, relatives, etc.) when, and how, are all points generally prescribed by a particular society's customs and traditions. There must always be, however, a certain degree of latitude within these rules which are left to the discretion and taste (sensibilities) of the individual feast-giver in a particular situation.

In Kalasha culture, and I suspect in other societies of this type, there can never be enough goods to cover all the formally prescribed obligations, and a compromise must be achieved, otherwise the system would collapse. For example, at a "bira mor" feast, one group, amongst others, which custom prescribes must be formally honored with gifts of prestige objects (a goat or silk robe), are all previous feast givers of the rank the host is aspiring towards, plus their sons and grandsons. During the "bira mor" Kata Singh distributed about one hundred and forty animals; however, a large portion of these went to his affines (his mother's clan, etc.), "daughter of the clan", "ja·mī·li", and to the god Sajigor, the meat from these animals went to the males of all the households in the valley (the "grō·wei", "sacred male community").

If there were four such individuals already holding that rank, who are of an advanced age and all have three or four sons and grandsons, potentially this could number thirty or more goats which according to formally prescribed custom, must be distributed. In lieu of the other obligations which the feast-giver is also responsible for, it is not possible for him to give goats to all the descendents of these ranked men. It is this type of situation which requires that there be a certain latitude within the broader rules, which permits a compromise to be reached in each specific feasting situation. Both parties, the givers and the receivers, are aware of the limitations of the system.

If the host is skilful, he will be able to distribute
a minimum amount of goods to fulfill his obligations, to the satisfaction of the recipients. If the latter group perceives his actions as just, the host thereby maximizes his returns and gains public recognition, formal rank, increased status and political influence.

Because the manner of presentation is so critical a part of the proceedings at a feast, these events appear to function in much the same way as a well-executed dramatic performance, with the host as director. An interpretation of the various activities at a feast must, therefore, also do justice to the aesthetic dimensions of these events. This approach will be considered in the subsequent chapter where I specifically discuss one merit feast, the "bira mor" ("sacred male-goat sacrifice").

A further aspect to this analogy of the feast as a dramatic performance is the host's abilities to manage or direct the large number of people required to hold such an event. The largest feasts can only be accomplished with the help of clansmen and numerous other allies. The highest ranks are scarce because the pre-requisites for achieving them are so extremely difficult. To succeed, a man needs a large number of supporters to assist him and for this reason achieving high rank is inevitably a cumulative process.

A man must initially establish his credibility with his patrilineal clan, which becomes the basic unit for corporate action in the preparation of the bigger feasts. As an individual, with the help of his clan, he gradually accomplishes increasingly more difficult feasts, a larger and larger public

*In order to become a "ga·dey·ra·Khan", ("respected elder"), an informally acquired political position in Kalash valleys, an individual must exhibit a sense of justice, propriety, and a thorough knowledge about community affairs. Many of these same qualities required to give a successful merit feast are in fact the same skills which an individual must employ to prove his leadership capabilities.
becomes convinced of his abilities and are willing to be co-opted into his ranks to work towards his further aggrandizement. At the biggest Kalash merit feast a kind of paradox exists: while the entire community is extolling praises about the host, the majority of them are furiously engaged in numerous tasks upon whose completion the very successes of the feast-giver critically depend. Such are the powers of control and persuasion of these big men!

iii) Kafir Feasts:

Feasts are presently still being performed in Nuristan but conversions to Islam have resulted in there being many fewer feasts than before. In traditional pre-Islamic Kafir society (including the Kalash) a man's ability as a warrior, his accumulation of wealth, and his ascriptive association with a high-ranking patrilineal descent group (the clan), were, and still are to some degree, all factors associated with high social value. However, these distinctions, unembellished by ceremony, do not stand alone; and the individual who accomplishes these deeds (advertently or inadvertently/ascriptively), must make them known by transforming his wealth into rank through the institution of the merit feast.

Anthropologists who have specifically examined Kafir feasts (pre-Islamic and present-day) have distinguished between two or three different types. (Strand, 1974; Jones, 1974; Palwal, 1977). Because they tend to over-lap at certain critical points, there are certain dangers in using broad analytical categories to differentiate these feasts. For example, Jones (1974:168) uses two major categories for the Waigal Valley, "private" and "public" to describe 'obligatory' feasts and calls another type 'non-obligatory'. In the Kalash situation, the 'obligatory' feasts are all in some sense 'public', and therefore I have not found Jones' labels useful.

Palwal, writing primarily on the Kati (and Kom) of the Bashgal and Ramgul Valleys, discriminates first between the
complex of feasts associated with warfare (wherein one achieves ranks of heroism), and then characterizes the others as feasts either associated with individual rites of passage by which one achieves 'distinction', or aimed towards achieving public office through merit. (1977:216) (I have already noted the close association which the Kalasha make between the managerial skills of the feast-giver and the informal nature of 'elder'.)

Once again, according to traditional Kafir society, neither type is mutually exclusive. In the Bashgal, before a man could begin giving the public office feasts, he must already have become a ranked warrior of some repute. However, by grouping the warrior feasts in the second category, I have found Palwal's labels to be quite useful for the Kalash situation.

Feasts associated with the natural life crises that publicly record these events (Jones's 'private/public'), I have chosen to call 'prescribed' because families (or clans) are obligated by custom to perform them. The second type (Palwal's 'public office'), although not entirely divorced from an individual's life cycle (there are only certain points when an individual commands the material resources or people to help him), is distinct from the former group because it is entirely 'optional'. It is this type of feast which will be the main focus of future discussion in this thesis. Before going into the details of this latter type, I will give a brief summary of the 'prescribed' type.

iii) a) Prescribed Feasts:

These feasts accompany the passage of all individuals from birth to maturity, marriage, and finally death. Some of these occasions require special (or sacred) rituals, and the giving of prestige objects such as clothes or livestock, but the ubiquitous element is food, prepared and distributed in prescribed amounts.

In order to maintain the status of the family or clan,
people try to fulfill the customary obligations of these feasts to the best of their economic abilities. If they choose to, they may give more than the minimally prescribed amount and, having done so, this may heighten their prestige in the community. Palwal prefers to call this "distinction" rather than status because, compared to the possibilities for improved status and prestige in the 'optional' type of feasts, the benefits from the former are very limited.

One Kalash example of a prescribed feast is called "pin įx a·oyúw" ("bread and cheese")* given the morning after the birth of a new baby. It is given by the father's family, or with the help of his close male lineage if necessary. The family dips into their grain and cheese reserves to feed their neighbours (village, or in the case of Rombour the valley), a single generous meal.

If this is considered to be a special occasion, the birth of a long awaited son for example, the family might extend the invitation to include more villages or, perhaps, give away their most special reserves of fresh cheese. It is the widening of scope or the amount in these instances which brings more prestige to the hosts in the prescribed type of feasts.

iii) b) Optional Feasts:

Optional feasts are much more competitive than the prescribed type. While potentially involving great economic, social and spiritual risks to the aspirant host and his patrilineal clan, these 'optional' feasts also hold out the possibilities of much higher distinctions than are ever possible in the rites of passage type of feast, if they are successfully executed.

*"Pin" is just one of several words in Kalash which is 'situationally' rather than 'variably' specific. That is, it may refer to several different types of cheese but is a 'cheese-word' used only on the occasion of a birth. The same type of cheese on another occasion is called something else.
Top ranks achieved by giving feasts are scarce because they require a great deal of planning, forethought, and accumulation of wealth resulting from sheer hard work on the part of the aspirant and his supporters. It may take years to make adequate preparations. At an earlier "bira mor" feast in 1969, Kata Singh undertook to give his own "bira mor" eight years hence, the amount of time which he estimated would be required to save sufficient wealth. Right up until a month before, neither he nor his clansmen ever publicly referred to their intentions to give "bira mor". This was partially for superstitious reasons, but also because of the great shame involved in having to renege if their schemes had not fallen into place as planned.

The community, particularly those individuals who have given merit feasts in the past, judge the performance, in relation to amounts of prestige items and foodstuffs distributed in acceptable form to the right places and the aspirant thereafter gains the formal rank "na·moos". Other men of rank exercise a critical eye because to do otherwise would lower standards, thus jeopardizing their own elevated social positions.

Increased social status brings greater political influence which can potentially be manipulated to open up avenues of greater economic gain for the individual and his close supporters. Greater social prestige afterwards also affects the everyday life of a feast-giver. An individual who has achieved "bira mor na·moos" ("rank") will never again be able to walk casually into someone's house. Upon his arrival, all the occupants in the room will be on their feet, offering him their places. Moreover, at future festivals and feasts, he is given double portions of the choicest cuts of meat, or an extra ladleful of butter. On those occasions he may also sport a special kind of dress, the markhor hide shoes "shā·ra kundā·li" for example (Illustration #13), or other
decorations that indicate his status. Those who have done "bira mor" are permitted to sit out-of-doors on the low Kalash stools called "han•yak" (Illustration #14).

In contrast with the affluence of a modern Western consumer society, it is maybe somewhat difficult for observers from the former societies to put into perspective the relative extravagance of feasts sponsored in materially limited, archaic cultures. Comparatively, the outlay at these feasts may not seem too significant. Or the benefits accrued afterwards, such as sitting on a stool outside one's own house, may appear not worth the effort of the host. It is, of course, because these cultures are materially simple that the expenditures are comparatively large and that there is a great symbolic value attached to most material objects, particularly the prestige items. In traditional Kafir culture, there were extremely strict sanctions against exhibiting any behaviour or wearing the symbols of rank which had not yet been legitimately earned (Palwal, 1977:192), and fines were imposed upon any individual who broke those sanctions.

Among the Kalash presently this is still true for some behaviours and symbols. However, a number of other symbols traditionally having meaning, have become purely decorative, particularly some features of the women's costumes which, as I mentioned in the introduction, have become very extravagant (Illustration #3). I will give a few examples of these 'secularized' symbols.

In Western Kafiristan amongst the Wai and Kati, women were permitted to give at least a limited number of feasts. Symbols indicating rank worn by these women therefore reflected their own achievements, as well as those of their natal clansmen such as fathers, paternal uncles, or brothers. Among the Kalash there is no evidence to show that women were ever permitted to give feasts themselves and could only achieve recognition according to the ranks their natal clansmen (with their women's assistance) earned.
For most of the Kalash women today, the meanings of their costumes are not remembered, but from comparative studies it appears that they are similar to some of the prestige symbols worn by ranked men (and women) in the pre-conversion Bashgal Valley. The warrior rank "ley mach", which a man could achieve only after he had killed a minimum of eighteen people, was signified by a black cloth (wool) fillet worn on festive occasions draped over his shoulders and down his back. This fillet, called "pti ("cowrie-shell") stem" ("back"), had shells sewn onto it in a whorl-like pattern representing a shield and symbolizing the man's prowess as a warrior. All Kalash women today have this exact same design on their large shell headdresses but, rather than indicating the achievements of the men in their natal clans, they are freely adopted for purely decorative purposes. (Illustration #15). Kalash women also wear bells attached to these headdresses which were previously associated with and reserved for those with a warrior status; one bell was equal to one homicide. Another Bashgali symbol which Kalash women wear are "grin ga", heavy, fluted neck rings. Previously these were reserved for the highest ranking warrior "sur mach" who had made at least sixty killings. A final example of decorative adaptation of ranked symbols are the numerous silver chains called "sha gai" which Kalash women wear tied to their headdresses that reach around one side of their skirts to tuck in at the waists. (Illustration #3). Traditionally in the Bashgal these chains ("sturi") were worn by a man of rank called "ara mach" or his sons and daughters. One achieved this title be giving a feast similar to the Kalash "bira mor". Each time a man gave this feast he was then allowed to wear one "sturi" or "chain".

The rest of the discussion in this chapter will describe the various ranks which a Kalash man could traditionally achieve in Kafir society.

iv) Warrior:

The first rank of the over-all complex of 'optional'
Kalash merit feasts is that of the ranked warrior. Raiding for the sake of proving one's bravery, as well as acquiring booty (livestock) which paid for the expenses of the merit feasts, resulted in (or was the result of) the institutionalization of the warrior in traditional Kafir society.*

Since the turn of the twentieth century, the old balance of power established as a result of these raiding and trading practices in greater Kafiristan has been irreversibly destroyed. This was primarily due to the extension of Afghan and British suzerainty (now Pakistani) over these areas. Cultures, however, do not let go of their ideal images of manhood so rapidly, particularly when they continue to serve a purpose in a remote area that has remained relatively lawless well into the twentieth century.**

These archaic war-like societies produced and were sustained by a sociological and psychological 'warrior-type' whose appearance and manner bespoke both of his military prowess and accomplishments. Although one may read about the fearsome Kafir warriors of Robertson's time (1892), the impact of such individuals is reserved for person-to-person confrontation. It is impossible to comprehend the human dimension of ritualized warfare in these archaic societies by merely discussing the frequency of homicides with the corresponding prescriptions for feast-making, and their associated ranks and symbols. The individuals involved remain simply curios of a by-gone age. Before examining the Kalash requirement to achieve rank through killing,

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*Raiding is the antithesis of the merit feast, a kind of negative reciprocity (Sahlins, 1965:148) wherein the individual acquires something for nothing. This activity was justified in terms of the ends to which the booty was used, the merit feast itself which legitimized these negative activities. Booty is redistributed 'Robin Hood' style and a 'man-killer' becomes a hero.

** The continuing militant elements in Nuristan whose photographs have recently been featured in American new magazines are now fighting against the Russian backed People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) who in a civilian backed military coup took power from President Mohammad Daud in April, 1978. Nuristan has been entirely liberated of all Communist forces (since May, 1979) by these Nuristani guerilla fighters who refer to themselves somewhat tongue in cheek as "ley mach", "man-killers".
I will begin with a short character sketch of the first Nuristani whom I chanced to meet actually in the Bashgal Valley.

After a gruelling three-day ride in a Russian jeep across eastern Afghanistan, I had just rather wearily begun the sheer 600 metre climb up to Kamdesh village (pop. 1,750 - 1974), when I was hailed by a man sitting down off to the side of the path. At first glance one presumed that he was somewhat 'out of the ordinary' or, if in fact he was not, then the visitor was in a forbidden region.

He was a very large man, his size further exaggerated by his layer upon layer style of dress. He had roughly tanned goat-skin strips, with much of the hair still left on them, bound around his feet and up his legs to the knee. He wore faded, dark-colored loose cotton pants and open shirt (or perhaps the remains of a shirt), and overtop, a rough, goat-hair woven jacket. On his head was the usual brown, soft-wool Chitrali cap pushed back to reveal a dominant fore-head and receding hairline.

Slung across the full width of his broad chest was a leather bandolier studded with dozens of bullets for his high-powered rifle which he had resting comfortably across his knees as he squatted down on the path. During our brief encounter he repeatedly gazed up the valley through a well-used pair of good Swiss binoculars which he kept strung across his shoulder.

His face was one of the most disquieting I have ever looked into. He had a large, beak-like nose that curved sharply downwards near the tip, penetrating hazel-brown eyes, and a very white, pock-marked skin with an assortment of other deeper and less regular scars on his cheeks and temples. Most interesting, however, was his moustache about which I couldn't help wondering at the time (or perhaps dreading) if it was the fashion of the day in Nuristan.

Medium brown in color, it grew only at the edges of his upper lip. A bare portion in the center under his hawkish
nose was not clean shaven in the usual manner but rather, the whole center section of skin (perhaps five to eight millimetres long), had been peeled away leaving even whiter scar tissue from which hair no longer grew.

Afterwards I was informed that he was the hired bodyguard/assassin of one of the highest ranking Kamdeshi leaders and he had the status of "man-killer" ("ley mach"), with at least ten notches on his gun barrel. Spared these details at the time, however, I readily accepted the offer to look through his binoculars and, after a brief conversation in broken Urdu, Kalasha, and Farci, gave him an oyster shell before proceeding on up the hill. Some days later, while walking through lower Kamdesh, he emerged from his house with a revolver in hand and, in a rather wry fashion, enquired if there were any more shells available.

Robertson's account (1896) is full of such anecdotes about Kafir braves. The Kalasha, however, although they perhaps affected a similar style in the days of King Raja Waiy, nowadays live by a much less overtly aggressive code. Before examining the more recent developments of this warrior mode, I will first discuss the traditional requirements for a Kalasha merit feast to acquire the rank of "man-killer", "shura moch". Because killing a leopard is (was) marked with a somewhat similar ceremony, I will also include those details with the following discussion. In the past, unless a man fulfilled the requirements of the feast, despite being a 'killer', he did not receive the formal rank of a 'leopard' or a 'man killer'.

Returning to his home village after killing an enemy, if the man publicly intended to announce his deed he would summon the help of some other men. Together they would drag a large rock (out of the river) and put it into a communal

*During the funeral of a 'man-killer', the mourning party of men at some point during the activities, breaks off from the others to circumambulate this stone three times before re-joining the group. This is also done at the funerals of any of the male descendents of this 'man-killer'.
meadow close-by, or into one of his fields. He then dressed in two silk robes, one of which he wore normally but he only put his arm in one sleeve of the other and let the garment hang loosely down his back. This second robe is meant to symbolize the man (or individual) whom he has killed. It may in fact be the actual garment from the dead enemy called "ka•ra". (Palwal, 1977:184) which a 'warrior' would try to bring back as proof. In the Bashgal a 'man-killer' was required to bring back the blood-stained garment which covered the fatal wound or if possible, an ear from the victim as evidence. (Ibid:169)

Next, the Kalash 'man-killer' will place under his arm nine woven wheat stalks tipped with the iridescent feathers of the Himalayan monal (pheasant), that are tied together into a bundle around a short stick with red and white threads. For everyday wear these feather bundles, called "cheish", are made by a man's lover and attached to the edge of his cap or worn by women in their headresses at dances. (Illustration #16). However, in the context of a merit feast, when a man is trying to achieve the status of "shū•ra moch", they are called "patch māl", literally, "feather wealth".

The "patch māl" of a 'man-killer' always has nine feathers and is called "a•sc•māl".* If the victims were women or children, the plume will sometimes be substituted with the wing from an eagle. If it is a leopard that the man has killed, he will wear a bundle of three feathers which is placed in his hat for the dance at his feast. For killing a leopard, a rock is not placed in the man's field.

Killing a man is a very powerful act with possible dangerous after-effects, for example, retribution by the rela-

*Traditionally in the Bashgal, a 'man-killer' would be permitted to wear a feather for each enemy that he killed. For the Kalash, there does not appear to be a correspondence between the number of feathers and the number of homicides.
tives of the deceased or the ill-effects of the evil-eye. By placing the nine-feathered plume "a•s¢•mål" under his arm, the 'man-killer' symbolically acknowledges the potential dangers and the need to be circumspect at such potent moments.

Climbing up onto the rock which was dragged up into his fields, he proceeds to sing a secret song called "gatch" taught to him by another 'man-killer' or a representative of the priest's family who knows all these secret hymns (Illustration #12). The theme of this "gatch" refers specifically to the powers of becoming a "shū•ra moch","man-killer". In Kafir times in the Bashgal, a successful warrior would also sing a special song, as he approached his home village, dedicated to the war god "Gish" (Kalash equivalent of Mahandeô), announcing his accomplishments. (Palwal, 1977: 170) He then gave this song again later while standing alone on a rock over-looking the village.

In the Kalash case, a dance by the entire community is done around this rock and, having himself danced upon the rock, called "shū•ra uphor" ("man-killer's dance") the man then descends from it to oversee a feast which is given to his entire community. My informant did not mention any prescribed number of goats that should be killed and the expenditures for the feast depend upon how many individuals are in the community. While doing research amongst the Kalash, Palwal was told that the minimum requirement was five hundred kilos of cheese and ninety-six kilos of wheat flour to give a "shū•ra uphor" feast and dance. (Ibid:183)

In the Bashgal, a man was required to kill a minimum of twelve

*In Bomboret, a "gatch" is sung at the spring festival, by a select individual, who sings it softly into a small, woven willow-twig basket that he holds up to his mouth. The belief is that for those not entitled to hear a "gatch" e.g. women, Muslims, foreigners, it is very 'dangerous for their souls'. A different "gatch" is sung at the winter solstice festival.
goats to achieve the rank of "sur manchi". (Ibid: 164)

In the feast for killing both a leopard and a man, a long straight willow stick with its bark left on in an elaborate 'curl' design is prepared. This stick called "phā (ဗ) gun-deik" is stuck into the ground next to the altar made of markhor horns called "Shing Mou". This altar is presently found only in Rombour Valley situated below the Mahandeо altar in Grom village. Twenty years ago there were over half a dozen such stick markers but today none remain. Afterwards the warrior was entitled to receive extra portions of food at feasts.

The above description appears to have been the extent of the Kalash ceremonies involved in achieving the rank of "man-killer". The Bashgalis and the Waigalis had a more elaborate series of feasts according to the number of homicides that a man committed. To achieve the highest warrior rank in the Bashgal, a man had to kill at least sixty people and then became known as "sur-mach", and wore a bell for every homicide. (Palwal, 1977:178) The bells, accumulated one by one, were attached to a thick metal cord which was worn over their neck and across the shoulder. **One year after the death of such an individual a commemorative human effigy, mounted on a horse called "uzawa-mut", was carved and placed in the graveyard.

In the Kalash valleys this kind of feast is no longer celebrated because the central law enforcement agencies in both

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*The Bashgali equivalent of this stick was a tall pole erected outside a man's house which was notched or pierced through with holes according to the number of victims the man had slain. If the victim was a man, a metal pin was placed in the hole or a wooden one was substituted if the victims were women or children. (Palwal, 1977:174)

**When young Kalash boys are presented at the winter solstice festival for the second time (wearing their special loose pants), they wear on this occasion a similar braided metal cord, strung with numerous brass bells. After this ceremony the boys are recognized as members of the Kalash "sacred male community", and presumably, in earlier times would have then begun to prove their courage as warriors.
Chitral and Nuristan will no longer permit such violence or murder as a result of inter-tribal rivalry or disputes. Their present concerns are to try to keep raiding, the central cause of such violence, to a minimum. The last 'man-killer' feast that is known to have happened was in Rombour in the mid-1950's.

The incident which surrounds the last 'man-killer' feast is very revealing about present-day Kalash culture. It involved a man, Gulap Din, from Batet village in Rombour Valley who belonged to the Dra*m*e*s clan. Gulap Din, now dead, was reputedly so large and powerful that he actually killed a bear in a struggle with a knife. He was a 'man-killer', and has the reputation of killing seven Nuristanis on raids in the high pastures.

The occasion which preceded the feast was a result of the last of these killings. Gulap Din had apparently been upstream in a more remote valley harvesting his wheat when it became late. Rather than return to his village, he spent the night in a summer cottage near the fields. He rose early to begin work again and, while he was approaching his fields, he came upon two Nuristani men (obviously not expecting any one that early), from the refugee village at the top of Rombour stealing grain out of his fields. One of them Gulap Din shot dead on the spot, and the other fled back up the valley. Din then returned to Batet village and confessed to the incident.

The Chitrali Scouts (army) stepped in and arrested Gulap Din and two other prominent members of the Dra*m*e*s clan, Abdul Salam and Pukhati. All of them were taken back to Chitral and found guilty in the Mehtar's court and sentenced to death. They were marched through the Chitral bazaar down to the firing ground with marks on their foreheads, indicating that they were doomed men. (I obviously heard the dramatized Kalash version!) The only respite offered to them was to convert to Islam and thus save themselves. This both Gulap Din and Abdul Salam did but Pukhati refused, saying that
he would die a Kafir. The Mehtar, impressed with Pukhati's courage, pardoned him at the last minute and the three men were permitted to return to Rombour. Despite the fact that two of them were now Muslims, as their last Kafir 'gesture' they gave an extravagant "shū•ra uphor", "man-killer dance" and feast.

Since then, the publicizing of these events has taken a much more circumspect form. Kata Sing, the host of the "bira mor" feast in Rombour in 1977 is himself a "shū•ra moch", "man-killer" of about five or six Nuristanis. By force of circumstance, his acknowledgement of these deeds, or any public admission, must be couched in a very subtle kind of language. He did in fact publicly announce his most recent "killings", which had taken place a month before the feast, in a raid in the high pastures when the Nuristanis had attempted to steal several thousand Kalash goats. This announcement took place at his own "bira mor".

The audience at this feast was comprised of Kalash, Shaikhs, Chitralis, and a few dozen Nuristanis, members of the refugee village at the end of Rombour. The announcement, made in Kalash, which certainly restricts most Muslims from understanding it, went something like this: (the phrases inside the brackets are what the speaker was implying with his words, but could not make explicit for obvious reasons:)

Kata Sing: (to the crowd) (Host of the "bira mor" - Mu•ti•mi•rgh clan) "In my great grandfather's time, he broke open the heads of seven enemies. To mark those occasions, he put a golden stone in his field. In those days gone by, my ancestors were 'blood-drinkers' and many times were forced to pay a blood price to relatives of dead men. Some 'man-killers' in my clan gave a feast as proof of their deeds, others killed but did not make it public. After that, in my father's time and in my own time, if and when my enemies attack me, I will say to them: 'Because God alone created me,
I am afraid of nothing and no one else but him'.

When I was with my grandfather, Sakhimir in the high pastures, whatever I did there, I did with my own hands. (I killed those Nuristanis with my own hands.) Oh! My relatives and respected gentlemen!

Now I am giving (a confession to you that I killed them). On another occasion, my uncle Gārdā and my cousin, the strong Pulus Khan, were with me one night in my goat sheds in the high pastures. What I did on that night, (killed two Nuristanis who came to steal my goats), I did it in front of them."

Baraman: (to Kata Śing)
(Ba·lź./ēh clan - Priest/Elder)

"As we Kalaš understand such things, God saw to it that you carried out his orders. All these things are God's work. He has your fate written in his book, it is God's wish!"

Kata Śing: (to Baraman and crowd)

"Yes! It is exactly in this manner that I became a 'blood-drinker'! Just like that I have done these deeds! But as for my future, gentlemen and respected elders, I am now asking something from you. I am asking that you pray for me. With the might of your lives and the surety of your deaths, out of your love and your sweet taste for life, I am asking that you pray for me and for my future safety. As for the rest of the praises about my accomplishments, I will leave those up the the community and the world to make about me!"

Baraman: (to Kata Śing) Bravo to you and may you live long!

Kata Śing took advantage of his moment of glory in another context to made public his achievements as "shū·ra moch". At an earlier time in history these accomplishments could also have
been celebrated in a merit feast that would have formalized the rank. It is in fact, the merit feast which changes a man from a killer into a hero, and the Kalash nowadays must improvise as best they can in publicly celebrating such deeds.

v) "Sa·ri· 엠" - "Our daughters are paths to the houses of our in-laws."

Another feast, called "sa·ri· 엠" (literally "to gather together" the people), hosted by a father for his married daughter (and her husband's family) has a more socially integrative function than appears to be the case with the warrior feasting complex.* From what little information is available at least in the Kalash instance, the latter seems to have been more concerned with gaining a sanctification from the gods, and to a lesser extent the community, of the powerful but dangerous 'condition' of being a 'man-killer'.

There is also a lesser religious dimension to the "sa·ri· 엠", the "feast for the clan daughter's", "ja· má· li". On the last night of the "sa·ri· 엠" festivities a female goat is sacrificed in the clan temple to the goddess Jeshtak (this is the only sacrifice I am aware of in which women are permitted to eat the meat)**, but this sequence plays a minor part compared to some other highlights of the feast.

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*The information on the 'man-killer' was wholly provided by an informant but I was able to attend an actual "sa·ri· 엠", therefore it is admittedly difficult to make an adequate comparison between these two bodies of data. The reality in these types of situations obviously exists in the combination of why people say they do something and what they actually do.

**There are other instances when women eat sacrificial meat but is not socially sanctioned. Kalash female witches, who wish to destroy another individual (a man), will perform a potent ritual with one of his possessions, or even more effective, some of his feces. The witches then kill a goat on the spot, cook, and consume the meat. Informants claim that there were no witches in the Kalash valley at this time.
The sacrifice does, however, provide a clue as to the nature of this feast: which is to honor the host's clan and his "khul.ta·bar" ("in-laws" and their clan). In poetry and song, the "sa·ri·êk" is frequently referred to as a "kam·ba·u·kê" a "fancy doll", which is a double metaphor referring both to the host's daughter dressed up in the new clothes which her father has given to her, and to the festivities as a whole, which have been provided for the enjoyment of the "khul.ta·bar" ("in-laws"). The spirit of the festivities at a "sa·ri·êk" is called "go·ri loush kho·sha·nê", "the happiness of the father-in-law ('ish·pa·shor') of the host's daughter". A further explanation of what takes place at at "sa·ri·êk" will reveal the source of his happiness.

According to Kalash oral histories, the first "sa·ri·êk" was performed several centuries ago in Bomboret Valley at Batrik village, the home of the King, Raja Waiy. The first man to have given the feast was named "Sam·ba·lak" in honor of his daughter Ju·ris·tā. In this century, there was a thirty-five to forty year period, (at least in Rombour Valley), when "sa·ri·êk" was discontinued due to large debts incurred from funeral expenses. This period, from around the end of the First World War to the 1950's co-incides with the high mortality and of population decimation amongst the Kalash. In the 1950's, the feast was revived by a Rombour man, Da·jagl Khan of the Ba·lêr·h clan.

"Sa·ri·êk" feasts reflect the importance of an ambilateral social organization in Kalash society, in which women remain active members of their natal clans throughout their lives. (As mentioned previously, inter-marriage within the matriline is forbidden for a minimum of five generations.) Before their marriages these "ja·mî·li" ("clan daughters") contribute their full efforts to the sustenance of their natal clans and after marriage continue to work (particularly at merit feasts) for the maintenance and elevation of the status of their patriline.
A father will not give a "sa·ri·ęk" feast for his daughter until it appears that her marriage is stable and permanent, usually after the birth of her first child. Preferably this will be the marriage that the two sets of parents agreed upon, but if the girl did go "a la śiŋg" (eloped) and her natal clan has established good relations with the lineage (clan) of her new husband, in time a "sa·ri·ęk" feast may still be held. It is, therefore, a feast which publicly formalizes or confirms the durability or the future permanence of the host's daughter's marriage in a system that condones some flexibility in initial marriage contracts. As the meaning of "sa·ri·ęk", "the gathering together (of the people)" implies it makes public the permanency of the bond between the woman's natal clan and her affines. In recognition or confirmation of this solidification of relations, the girl's father virtually returns, in the form of the "sa·ri·ęk" feast, the original bride-price to the "in-laws". This is what is meant by the expression, "go·ri lōŋsh kʰo·sha·nē", "the happiness of the father-in-law".

Usually by this time there are not any bride-price objects outstanding; however, if there are, when the in-laws come to the house of the host for the feast, they will bring these objects, e.g. cooking pots, etc. They present these to the feast-giver amid a flurry of eulogies and praises about his family and clan. The in-laws are also required to bring the female goat, which is later sacrificed in the Household/Clan Goddess temple symbolizing the bonding of these two kin groups.

Although the expenditures of this feast required from the host approximately equal the amount of the bride-price which he received from his in-laws for his daughter, the outlay of wealth takes a somewhat different form because the host must give the valley community large meals for the two consecutive days on which the actual festivities are taking place. The difference therefore lies in the
amount of foodstuffs required for such an undertaking as compared to a bride-price which includes more "dry-goods" such as cooking pots, fire, tripods, etc.

The total expenditures for a "sa·ri·čk" hosted by three male members of a major lineage segment of the Dra·me·č clan (Rombour Valley) in October 1977 were: seventy-three kilos of clarified butter (four "tirá"); one thousand two hundred and thirty-six kilos of cheese (eight "maun"); two bulls killed and eaten by the guests; and twelve goats, one or two of which were killed, the rest being given in the form of one-year old kids to the daughter ** to take back to her husband's clan and add to his herds. Such animals are called "ja·mí·li wály", "wály" being the name for the clan daughter's share of the family's herds and given to her as a form of "ri·záí", the "duty" of clan brothers to their sisters a concept already discussed in Chapter Two. There were also about two to three hundred rupees (twenty to thirty dollars) given away mostly in one, five or ten rupee notes, into the hats of the orators and other praise-givers who gave oral clan genealogies, histories, and songs at the celebrations. At that time, this money had more value as a mark of prestige or appreciation rather than for its expendable or exchange value.

*The local weights are so various that it is difficult to establish a common unit of measurement. The following table are the local weights given to me for Kalash valleys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Weight</th>
<th>Equivalent in Kilos</th>
<th>Equivalent in Pounds</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 chetung</td>
<td>1 pow</td>
<td>16 batti = 1 maun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 pow</td>
<td>1 tsier (1 kilo)</td>
<td>1 maun = 41.98 kilos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5 pow</td>
<td>1 batti</td>
<td>1 maun = 92.3 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 batti</td>
<td>1 tim (a volume measure)</td>
<td>2 maun = 1 waččı</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 waččı = 83.96 kilos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**At one point in the festivities, all the guests, the host, and his daughter go up to the goat sheds of the clan and there the daughter is presented with the animals. She must individually kiss each animal on the forehead as it is given to her. This act is a ritualized reversal to the usual traditional behavior in which women are not permitted to touch goats (Illustration #18).
There were also seven silk robes distributed by the host at this feast, which was apparently a new practice or at least an embellishment of a traditional custom. The elders of the affinal clan (daughter's husband's clan) customarily would have been presented with a few such prestige items in the past, but it is not traditional to give these items to the important men of some of the various valley factions at a "sa•ri•şk" which was in fact what happened at the October, 1977 feast.

Ranked men are always acknowledged at all feasts by extra ladlefuls of butter (Illustration #19) or double portions of meat, but the addition of the robes seems to indicate that an added emphasis of social and political rank is creeping into a ceremony that previously concerned itself more with the relationship between affines.

It takes two to three years to save the wealth prescribed for this type of feast. About one year before, the "clan daughters" are requested to begin weaving the numerous brightly patterned straps required as gifts for the various prestigious guests expected to attend (Illustration #6). Two days before the actual dance festivities begin, these same women are called back to their natal homes to begin preparing the food. They bring with them about two dozen walnut breads, "jäu•fō" which, if the women are married, they have been preparing in their own husbands' houses in the day or two preceding the feast. (When these walnut breads are cooked for such occasions, it is called "mö•ş•ouw".)

The wheat is then brought out of the basement storage areas ("phann"), dried, sorted, cleaned, and milled for the next forty-eight hours. Their clansmen bring quantities of wood and the women begin making breads (Illustration #20). These are the usual 'crepe-type' of loose-batter Kalash breads

*Wheat is the most prestigious foodgrain and, unless otherwise specified, is always used at merit feasts.*
but on these occasions, the women use two large heaping handfuls of batter per bread, instead of the usual one. These doubly large breads called "dro.chê.nik", are symbols of the wealth and generosity of the host's clan. For the October, 1977 "sâ.rîé.k", the Dra.mê.sê "ja.mî.li" ("clan daughters") made sixteen "so.tî.lô" or large wicker "burden baskets" full of these breads.

On the morning of the third day, the guests come and the singing and dancing festivities begin. As each party of guests arrive, they shower the host and his clan with loud formal praises recounting past deeds and present admirable qualities.

All of the traditional oral forms are represented at the "sâ.rîé.k" feast. The women dance around the outside of the dance ground singing a refrain, while a group of mainly male orators stand in a circle (on the dance ground) (Illustration #2). For two days these individuals sing the special songs associated with "sâ.rîé.k" as well as the encomia and stories about all the key ancestral figures in the host's clan. These stories, given in the epic form called "drâ.xê.lik" (literally, "to drag" out one's words), recall the most well-known details about clan personages dating back several hundred years. The full impact of the Kalâsh concern for how their names will be remembered throughout history becomes clear at these moments: touches of madness, individual idiosyncrasies (pleasant or otherwise), astuteness, generosity, rank, etc., are recalled.

The content of these songs are too voluminous to be discussed in detail here so I will include only one example to illustrate the richness of this type of oral tradition. One of over two dozen stories presented on that occasion concerns "Kû.an.ôk", a man from the hosts' clan, Dra.mê.sê, who lived eight generations before, well over two hundred years ago. The physical beauty of some of the male members of the Dra.mê.sê...
clan has been renowned for centuries, some individuals being remembered throughout the Chitral District as well. "Kë·an·ok" was one of these beauties, his features so delicate that as he drank water, one could see it rippling down inside his throat. (See Geneological Chart, Dras·mc·se clan.)

He was reputed to have been a great bee-keeper and his hives, located up at the goat sheds in Upper Rombour Valley, annually produced large quantities of honey. One summer as "Kë·an·ok" was collecting an even vaster quantity of this honey than usual into a goat-skin bag, a golden bird is said to have flown out of the hive, perched upon his shoulder, and frightened him to death. Spontaneously put to song, in an abbreviated poetic language by a talented singer, these personal anecdotes are thoroughly enjoyed by all the guests.

On the first day of the dance festivities, a meal of the "double breads" and cheese was distributed and on the second and final day, after the daughter had been presented with her "waïy", "share of the goats", a final meal was given. Each household in the valley brings or sends two flat woven baskets, one for the women and one for the men, plus a third one also for the men, if any of their numbers are off in the upper reaches of the valley caring for the goats.

In each valley (or village in the case of Bomboret), there are a few men called "mi·cin moch" ("the divider-man"), familiar with all the persons in all the households in the community. These men take it upon themselves to apportion the huge quantities of prepared food to the various family households. There are eight-three in Rombour, which means a minimum of one hundred and sixty-six baskets (not including those for the shepherds) plus Muslim and Kalash guests from other valleys (who are always fed first). Each guest or valley resident over the age of five or six is entitled to receive three of the "double breads" at each meal, plus a portion of whatever garnishing accompanies it, e.g. meat,
butter, cheese, salt-gravy, etc., (Illustration #22). If the household head is a man of rank then the men's basket for that family will have a double portion of meat or extra spoon of butter. (Illustration #19). It is up to the "food-dividers" to be aware of all of these specific types of details.

Despite the fact that there is always more than enough prepared food to go around at these moments, there is almost always a ritualized kind of loud bickering and squabbling throughout the proceedings. After this final meal is distributed, (most of which is taken home to be eaten over the next two days), the guests disperse to their villages amidst a flood of praises and formal thanks to the host and his clan.

Most men who aspire towards making a "bira mor" give a "sa·ri·εk" for their daughter(s) some years prior. Being a less difficult feast in terms of material requirements, it does not bring the same heightened status as does a "bira mor", but it does give a man the opportunity to publicize his abilities and to win a wider group of supporters. However, this is not always the case as the following example will illustrate.

A year or two after Kata Sing had promised to give his "bira mor" in eight years time, he gave a "sa·ri·εk" for his eldest daughter, Waslim Goule (Beauty-Cream, Flower), whom he had married two years before to a promising young Ba·ıε·ɛh clansman in his own village. The circumstances of this "sa·ri·εk" were somewhat unusual in that his daughter, being only about fourteen years old had barely begun her menses (and of course had no children) and it was not at all apparent that she would remain in her present marriage. Some of the big men in the valley perceived the impropriety of Kata Sing's actions and accused him of performing the merit feast entirely for his selfish ends, e.g. to improve his rank and status, rather than in the best interest of his daughter and his affines. As a result, several of them refused to attend
the celebrations.

Although his daughter could say nothing at the time, she was already very much in love with another young man of the lower status Bagala clan and with whom about six years later, she did in fact go "a la şingg" ("eloped"). This act was seen by her father as such a grave slight to his reputation and his honor that he unsuccessfully tried to force her and her new husband to convert to Islam in order to regain his position in the community. The affair was settled only a few days before his "bira mor" proceedings began, under the threat of serious valley factionalism. The new husband's village absolutely refused to partake in the "bira mor" unless Kata Sing and the cuckolded husband collected their double bride-price (which by that time also included the price of the "sa•ri•êk" merit feast), and made peace with his new son-in-law. This was done and although the new husband and his village eventually attended the feast, the subject remained an extremely sensitive issue throughout the celebrations.

vi) "Sha•ru•gah" - Funeral for a Big man

There are two types of "sha•ru•gah" both of which may only be performed by individuals who have previously performed "bira mor". The first type of "sha•ru•gah" is done during the lifetime of a man who had performed "bira mor" and the second, more usual type is held as a funeral upon the death of such a high-ranking individual. In this latter case, the hosts are members of the deceased individual's patrilineal clan, particularly sons and surviving brothers.

Having already classified funerals as 'prescribed' types of feasts, it is important to stress that first, "sha•ru•gah" is definitely an 'optional' feast and second that it is a very special funeral that can only be performed after a man has previously hosted other 'optional' feasts, usually including "sa•ri•êk" but also as mentioned, most importantly "bira mor". It would perhaps then make more sense to first
discuss the "bira mor" feast as a pre-requisite to "sha.rū.gah". However, because "bira mor" is the subject of an entire subsequent chapter, I have decided to refer the reader to that later section if necessary and discuss "sha.rū.gah" as part of the summary presently being made of all the various types of Kalash merit feast. The events of the "sha.rū.gah" are understandable without already knowing the details of a "bira mor". By all reports, the last "sha.rū.gah" to be performed in Kalash valleys dates back to about the first or second decade of this century and, not having personally witnessed such an event, the following details were therefore gathered solely from informants, particularly Kush Nawaz of the Ba.l£.f£h clan (Illustration #12).

I do not have an adequate translation of the word "sha.rū.gah". The Western Kati of the Ramgul Valley were reputed to have a feast of the same name, "sha.ruga" (Palwal, 1977:230) which an individual (Kati) could perform when he could prove that he had sixty head of cattle (3 x 20 cow-raiser). This is also one of the Kalash prerequisites for "sha.rū.gah". Palwal himself does not offer a translation of the word. "Gah" is the Kati word for "cow" and in Kalash "shā.ru" means "autumn", which is when the first type of this feast preferably takes place. Tentatively then I will offer a loose translation of the work as "the autumn feast of cow-giving". Cows in fact, have much higher value in Western Kafiristan (where they almost entirely make up the bride-price) than they do for the Kalash. This is only one of several reasons why I suspect the Kalash have borrowed this feast from the Kati. Other details throughout the following description also point to the same conclusion.

The first type of feast, done while the "bira mor namoo.sí moch" ("man of rank") is still alive is called "junū (live) sha.rū.gah". It may not be performed until at least five years have elapsed since making the "bira mor". If the
man's clan approves (at that time), they will then summon
two 'respected elders' from the valley community and inform
them of their intentions. If the latter also agree, then some
time afterwards the entire "grō·wēū", "sacred male community",
will be assembled and the two 'elders' will act as witnesses
for the clan's announcement to them of their plan to give
"sha·rū·gah". This act commits the clan to their scheme and
from then on there is no possibility of the feast not being
made without loss of honor.

Before this assembly of men disperses, the host (and
his clan) are required to supply 5,000 kilos of wheat (sixty
wā·'ō at two māūn per wā·'ō), which today would work out to sixty
kilos for each of the 83 households in Rombour Valley. The
two 'elders', acting as witnesses oversee this procedure and,
after distribution, the men take the grains away to their
respective households.

After this the host must next distribute sixty cows
amongst the male community, (which would work out to about
one cow per major lineage group). At this time the host must
give a goat to each member of the sacred male community who,
wearing the special pants, have been presented to the commun­
ity at the winter solstice festival by being baptized in blood.

If there are five or even ten such individuals in one
household, that house will still receive the corresponding
number of animals. (These requirements seem like a tremen­
dous expenditure of wealth but my informant assured me that
it was possible.)

The last event in "junō sha·rū·gah" is the distribution
(at a feast) of twelve large goat skins full of sour milk
called "trōna chēār". To make this product, milk is boiled
and then set aside for three or four days to harden. After­
wards it is usually cut with water to make it stretch further,
but for "junō sha·rū·gah" it must be served undiluted. This
completes the last requirement for "junō sha·rū·gah".
The second type of feast is "nāsh·ta (death) sha·rū·gah" and although neither the "junō" nor the "nāsh·ta" type are performed often nowadays, this latter is the more common of the two. The form of "nāsh·ta sha·rū·gah" changes slightly depending on the time of the year that the "bira mor" 'ranked man' dies. If it is autumn, the body, after being dressed in new clothes and all the symbols of rank which the man earned, is laid on a bier and placed in a millet field which has not yet been harvested. If one is not available then a bean field may be substituted. (In Kalāsh culture, both of these foodstuffs are strongly associated with women who are said to be extremely fond of these kinds of staples.)

During the funeral dance, the crop will be trampled down and destroyed. This ritual, called "shi·ri·stān na·ta·l·louw" is highly prestigious, being the greatest honor which a clan can bestow upon an eminent dead kinsman.

If the 'man of rank' dies in the early spring, this dance will take place on a ripening crop of winter wheat, weather permitting. Otherwise, if it is still freezing or raining, the crop of winter wheat will quickly be harvested and brought, stalks and all, inside the Clan Goddess temple, "Jeshtakhan" and thrown out onto the ground to be danced upon. Custom prescribes that at least seventy kilos (twenty seven "batti") be dispensed in this fashion, as well as an additional six hundred and seventy-two kilos (eight "wa·ū") of millet which is also thrown out onto the ground of the temple and under the bier of the deceased. This bier, with the body on it, is raised to a height of about one and a half metres, supported by four large wooden posts which have been sunk into the

*The regular millet is called "āi·yn" and if such an uncut crop is unavailable then a second type of millet called "ka·rūs" may be substituted.
The members of the community dance wildly around this elevated funeral platform. Some of the men consecutively pick up from the cap of the dead man a bundle of Himalayan monal feathers called "cheish", (discussed in the context of the warrior feasts, Chapter 4, Section iv) (Illustration #16) and dance around the body waving it in the air. It is the usual custom that the "jami·li" ("clan daughters") mourn the death of their clansman by giving funeral dirges called "bash·i·kãn", seated on the edge of the bier on which the corpse is lying. However, at a "sha·ru·gah" funeral, the "jami·li" are not permitted to climb up onto the raised platform to give their dirges until they have first thrown several handfuls of millet, or less desirably wheat, on the ground to be trampled by the dancers.

In addition to throwing grain, the "jami·li" also dance on the ground below or stand up on the raised platform, holding long sharpened sticks that have pieces of cheese skewered onto the ends. These objects are called "chë·bin". The cheese is a special type called "ki·lar", which is rarely eaten by the Kalash but is very popular amongst the Bashgali Katis: this is another indication of links between this particular feast and practices borrowed from Western Kafiristan. The clansmen of the deceased man must provide twenty 'rounds' of the cheese, each one being about 1/3 m. in diameter.

*It is after this raising up has been done, they clan of the deceased must then distribute the five thousand kilos of wheat grains to all the households in the valley as well as the sixty cows and numerous goats already mentioned in the context of the previous "juno sha·ru·gah".

**"Ki·lar" is produced by adding to boiling milk a powder made from crushing up a dried and smoked stomach (and its contents) of a baby goat. (The kid must be killed within the first week after birth when its mother is still producing colostrum.) After the boiled milk and its mixture has cooled, the cheese is pressed into rounds and allowed to harden.
These cheese rounds are then sliced into long thin pieces (about the width of three fingers) and skewered onto the ends of the sharpened sticks. I was variously told that "sha•rū•gah" lasts from three to five days, during which the body 'lies in state' on the platform. Throughout this period the widow of the deceased and "ja•mī•li" dance about and sing their dirges with these "chē•bin" ("cheese sticks") in hand. This particular ritual is performed only at a "sha•rū•gah", and is called "ki•lār pa•chōuw" ("the cheese-cooker/maker").

If the weather permits, around the outside of the clan temple or the full circumference of the millet field in which the body has been placed, is lined with banners made from colorful silk robes. These garments, usually given as prestige items to men of rank at merit feasts, symbolize the high rank of the dead man. Several long ropes are tied together and strung, tree to tree, around the area. Then the robes are threaded through their sleeves on this rope, touching cuff to cuff. This ritual, done only at the funeral of the highest ranking men, (and always included as a part of "sha•rū•gah") is called "mi•rak pa•chōuw".

One other important event central to this special funeral feast, and also a practice which identifies this feast as being one borrowed from the Kati, involves a special kind of dance done to a tune played on a flute called "Chat•ro•mā mu•nē". "Chat•ro•mā" is the name the Kalāš call the Bashgalis and "mu•nē" (also a Kati word) is a flute made out of the horn of a male goat. If a Kalāš man cannot be found who knows how to play the "mu•nē", then the clan will call upon a Bashgali to help them perform this ritual.

The clansmen bring to the mourning ground two special heavy fire tripods made with twisted legs called "bu•tēil i•dhon" (See Chapter 2, Footnote #12). Two extra silk robes are also required for this ceremony. The flautist will wear one robe in an ordinary fashion, but one sleeve of the other
robe is draped over his head like a hood while the one empty sleeve and the rest of the garment hangs loosely down his back.

The flautist then sits down, (straddling the two tripods) and slowly plays a simple tune on the horn flute which sounds like "tu•tu, tu•tu". A pair of Kalash drums called "watch" (which is shaped like an hourglass), and a larger barrel-shaped one (called "dā•hā") (See Illustration #23) are beaten to a slow rhythm called "plok-jo, plok-jo". While this song is being played, seven male relatives are called upon to dance, each one holding in their left hand a large wooden pot full of the sour milk called "trō•na cheār". As they dance, they slowly pour this milk bit by bit into their cupped right hands which they drink from repeatedly until the pots are emptied. This style of dancing, where one sways the body but restricts the movement of the arms is called "ka•le•ga•teng" (a Kati word).

This ritual of the flautist and the dancers seems a little curious, but one indicator of its meaning is the way in which the seven men dancers drink the sour milk. It is the same technique used by Kalash women to drink fluids because their mouths are believed to be impure.

It seems likely that this method of drinking in the ritual indicates that these seven men are imitating, or are substitutes for the women. According to a Kalash informant women may not enact this special ceremony themselves because of their 'normal' impure status. This same informant also claimed that the flautist represents a woman, the dead man's widow. Sometimes, at the funeral of a slightly less prestigious but still high-ranking man, the widow will take his silk robe (symbol of his rank) and, putting one sleeve over her head in the same manner described above, sing of her grief. The empty sleeve and body of the garment symbolize the absence of her husband. Seated upon the ground, the woman will sing a dirge,
"oh mai bε•ru o, Kh£• im?", "Oh! my husband, (now that you are dead), what will become of me?" The tune played on the horn flute ("tu•tu") is meant to be a musical representation of this song.

As discussed in the chapter on religion, the dead man, by giving feasts during his lifetime, elevated his position not only socially and politically but, spiritually as well. Those feasts which are pre-requisites to performing "sha•rū•gah", particularly "bira mor", are called "on•jesh•ta", "sacred" and because of this sanctity, the most important aspects of these feasts, performed at the Sajigor altar, exclude women entirely. By giving these sacred feasts, the spiritual status of the man is elevated to a point which must, in certain situations, inherently exclude women. Becoming more pure also means becoming more vulnerable to pollution. Women, who are the exemplars of the impure realm, are potentially dangerous and thus it follows that, in situations of greater purity, an even greater distance, if only symbolically, must be kept. I suggest that is is for this reason that women are not permitted to play the parts in the "sha•rū•gah" funeral feast that they ordinarily fulfill at less elaborate funerals, and therefore men must be substituted into their roles.

When this ritual is completed, the body is taken away to the graveyard where prayers called "par•wā•ţieu" are offered to accompany the dead man's spirit on its journey to the underworld home of the ancestors. Throughout the three or five days of the proceedings, the guests who may number from 1,000 to 1,500 people, must be fed by the deceased man's clan. They are given another meal after the body is put in the graveyard and once more a few days later at a feast called "cha•ri" comprised of bread, cheese, and butter.

One full year after the death of this high-ranking individual, wooden figures are carved representing him. These are human effigy figures which may take several different forms depending on the rank of the dead man. One standing
type called "gan·douw" indicates a slightly lower rank than another kind which is seated on a horse. If the deceased individual achieved an even higher rank, with several large merit feasts to his name, then the horse upon which the effigy sits may be carved with two heads. This figure is called "du·shi·shi" ("two-headed horse") "is·to·rē" ("equestrian figure") (see Illustration #24).

At the same time that this figure is being prepared the artist will also carve another figure called "kun·du·rēik" (Illustration #25). This also represents the deceased depicted sitting upon the low Kalāsh stool, "han·yak", (a symbol of respect). The facial features of both the equestrian figure and the "kun·du·rēik" are, however, crudely intended to resemble those of the deceased 'man of rank'. One metaphorical expression, amongst many others which the Kalāsh use to refer to death is "pçe·rə·zeiy" meaning "to transform oneself (into a wooden statue)". This notion pervades the ceremonies which mark the completion of these statues. There the figures are treated as though they are infused with the spirit of the dead 'man of rank'.

At these three-day festivities which ensue after the completion of these carved pieces, only the standing or equestrian figure "gan·douw" is unveiled. The festivities are essentially the same celebrations as at an ordinary funeral, and during this time the carver must be recompensed for his efforts with the payment of one cow. At the end of this three day dance, the carved figure, in the same manner as a corpse, is borne off to the graveyard. It is erected

*There is some resemblance between this figure and the one mentioned in Chapter Three which represents the Kafir goddess, "De·san·i". Both are seated on these special stools and while the goddess holds two long goat's horns in her hands, the Kalāsh figure hold onto two vertical arm rests that are embellished with a carved cross-hatching design representing the crossed horns of goats.
beside the dead man’s (above-ground) coffin and once again, the "par·wā·ziēu" ("sending off") prayers are offered. When the men return from the graveyard, the final meal of these three day festivities is served which must include not only butter and cheese but "o·shā·lā", "cream" considered by the Kalaş to be a great delicacy.

The next day the second seated statue "kun·du·rēk" is also unveiled and the dance celebrations will begin anew. At the end of that day this statue (which is fixed to a long wooden post), is borne on the shoulders of the men and erected either at the entrance to the village where the deceased 'man of rank' lived, or in one of his fields. A full-grown male goat is brought to this location and, after it is ritually sacrificed, the blood is thrown into the face of the seated statue in the same manner as men are purified or baptized in blood ("is·toŋ·gis"). This ceremony is like a symbolic final gesture, a closing parenthesis to the potential ranks and statuses which a man may, and in this case had achieved in his life. When a young boy is first presented to the sacred male community his baptism in blood symbolically created an initial parenthesis; the start of a man's ritual activities. Between these two end points are all the 'optional' ranks and statuses which a man, as a member of the "grō·wei", "sacred male community" may achieve in his life if he (and his clan) so wishes. Following this goat sacrifice, the valley community is fed one last time during a feast that once again prescribes the inclusion of cream. This concludes the total ritual complex for "sha·rū·gah" which was begun the previous year.

The last "sha·rū·gah" made in Rombour Valley was sometime between 1910 and 1930, and was done by the Dra·mē·se clan for the grandfather of Abdul Salam, the latter individual being one of the men forced to convert to Islam who then later gave a 'man-killer' feast. His grandfather's name was Raja Shaiy and his "sha·rū·gah" was performed for him by his three sons
Safar (Sawar), Durum Shah, and Suki Bek (Suke). According to the oral histories of Rombour, the Dra-më-së clan has performed "sha•ru•gah" twice since Rombour was settled. It is not hard to imagine from the large amounts of wealth demanded for this feast that it is difficult to afford and thus relatively uncommon.

For a "sha•ru•gah" hosted by the prestigious Bad•Ye•kaiy clan of Brun village, Bomboret for the father of Zarim Bek in the 1940's, the expenditures were considerably less than the clan now lays claim to, and also less than the formally prescribed amounts. All told, an accurate estimate is: twenty-one goats (including the one sacrificed for the seated "kun•du•reik"); approximately eight hundred and eight-two kilos of wheat (twenty-one "mäun"); one hundred and ten kilos of butter (six "tim"); three hundred and thirty-two kilos of cheese (six "mäun") and a total of five hundred rupees worn in the hats of the praise-givers and other orators. (The carving in Illustration #25 is the actual "kun•du•reik" from this "sha•ru•gah", still standing at the entrance to the village.)

As a final note to this subject of "sha•ru•gah", because Kata Sing in November, 1977, gave "bira mor" in his own father's name, when this latter individual called "Buda" dies, his sons and Mu•ti•mi•rëh clan brothers will perform "sha•ru•gah" for "Buda".

vii) a) "Pi•më•së":

"Pi•më•së", like the "ju•në (live) sha•ru•gah" is, a funeral ceremony performed by a man before his actual death. The feast is most probably a loan from the Bashgal, where the Kati used to perform a similar event called "Mi". (Palwal, 1977:223) The holder of this rank was called "Mi-mach", and the secluded forest location where a man went to begin this feast is called "mi-së" in Kati. (Ibid) In the pre-conversion Bashgal when a man held a "Mi" feast, he
fed his community for a total of twelve days, five of which were at the time called "Ke" ("Ki") in late January, (rendered as "Pi" in Kalasha?). During the following account of the Kalasha "Pi·mā·sā", I will point out similarities and differences with the Kati "Mi" feast. The information on "Pi·mā·sā" was provided by a Rombour orator, Kush Nawaz of the Ba·Ir·r clan (Illustration #12).

If a man has left no sons, and his brothers are already dead, leaving him with no immediate close male relatives to ensure the 'grandeur' of his funeral, he can choose to perform his own funeral, "Pi·mā·sā", before his actual death. He is required to go into the forest away from all human habitation, where he remains secluded for seven days. He is accompanied to this spot be several of his closest clansmen.* They help him to take to this seclusion place seven two-year old goats, nine large wooden pots filled with clarified butter, and approximately eight kilos (three batti) of wheat flour, and four to six silk robes.**

He spreads on the ground half the robes, then lies down upon them. He covers himself up with the others from head to toe. He must remain lying in this fashion like a corpse for six nights and seven days. His male relatives take turns attending him throughout. During this period of time, they slowly kill off the goats and consume them with the butter and flour made into breads. On the seventh day all his male relatives go to his side and during a final feast,

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* In the Kati "Mi" feast, his accompaniment are men who have either already achieved the rank of "Mi-mach" or are themselves attempting to qualify for it.

** These goods amount to somewhat less than the expenditures of a man's funeral held upon his actual death. In the latter instance, an average amount of foodstuffs, distributed by the clansmen of the deceased might be: one thousand kilos (twenty "māun") of wheat, three bulls (or eight to ten goats), eight-four kilos (two "māun") of cheese, (or seventy kilos (four "tim") of clarified butter. 
pierce his ear. They dress him in a new set of clothes, "sa·ri·fā", (an actual dead man is always buried in new clothes), wind a cloth turban around his head, and then he dons a pair of "shā·ra kund·ā·li", "markhor-hide moccasins", which, be performing this feast, he is entitled to wear. (Illustration #13).

The entire gathering, including the aspirant, then returns to the man's village and hosts the valley community to a feast called "pa·raŋ·ga·sāl", which completes the requirements for "pi·mā·sā na·mōos", "the rank of 'pi·mā·sā'".

I am unaware of any men in Kalash valleys who have earned this title of late. However popular the feast may have been in the past, it has presently fallen into dis-use. It appears moreover, in pre-conversion Nuristan, that the Kati feasting complex was more elaborate than the Kalash system traditionally seems to have been. For example, in the Bashgal, when a man had performed "Mi" eighteen times, he became known at "shticuri-nam". (Ibid:224) Palwal also claims that some Kati men had done "Mi" between thirty and forty times.

A question which arises when examining feasting exchange systems exhibited by various non-monetized, technically simple societies such as the Kalash, is the relative importance of each of the various functions which this complex phenomenon fulfills, e.g. its political, social, economic, and religious dimensions. Whereas I have tried to argue that all these factors come into play at each event, and to differing degrees depending on the type of feast being held, some other views concerning this universal exchange complex lay a heavier emphasis on its economic function. These interpretations do not exclude the other dimensions, but place the re-distribution of large amounts of foodstuffs from the wealthier, higher-ranking host clans to the poorer groups in society as the central function of the feast.

In the formal eulogies given at Kalash feasts, an oft-
used phrase is that the feast-givers are the 'care-takers' of the poor people. However, the degree to which there is actually a continual process of equalization of material goods due to feasting is presently not so apparent. Because so many of the 'optional-type' feasts in the twentieth century became defunct due to population decline and impoverishment, it is unlikely that the frequency with which these feasts are being performed nowadays can result in a substantial re-distribution or equalization of goods between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' in Kalasha society. The 'prescribed-type' of feasts occurring regularly throughout the year, presently perform this function to a greater degree than do the less frequent 'optional' feasts. Although the latter involve much larger amounts of foodstuffs, these are rapidly perishable thus preventing 'optional' feasts from functioning over time as an 'equalizer of wealth'.

It is possible that in the past the Kalasha 'optional' feasts may have been more critical to the economy as evidenced from the situation in the pre-conversion Bashgal. The frequency with which the "Mi" feasts were performed is only one example of a large number of Kati feasts. The lower 'caste' populations such as the "bari" "craftsmen" who owned neither goat herds nor fields, were to large extent dependent upon the wealthier, upper 'caste' groups, who re-distributed substantial amounts of foodstuffs while vying for status between themselves. It remains true, however, that now Kalasha 'optional' feasts are being done on a much smaller scale as compared to both the earlier Bashgal situation, as well as traditionally amongst the Kalasha themselves. The 'prescribed' feasts presently fulfill a greater re-distributive function than the sporadic 'optional-type' merit feasts.

vii) b) "Gont Wass":
One last type of 'optional' merit feast which a Kalasha
man may perform is called "goht wass", (a Kati name for which I do not have a translation). For a ten day period, the aspirant goes alone to his goat sheds, where he makes large quantities of the special cheese "ki·lār". (This cheese has already been described in the discussion on the "sha·rū·gah" merit feast, section vi.)

As the end of the tenth day approaches, two Kalash 'elders' go to the man's goat sheds to be fed a meal of hot milk mixed with flour call "ish·poŋ·yuk". They then sacrifice a goat and all three sleep in the sheds that night.

After eating meat the next morning, the two 'elders' count the total number of 'ki·lār" produced. Then the number of cheese rounds is divided by ten which give the average number made per day. Each of the two 'elders' received one day's worth as his cost for 'witnessing' the industriousness of the "goht wass" aspirant. This individual is then dressed by the 'elders' in a new set of clothes, "sa·ri·fa", including the "shā·ra kund·ā·li", "märkhor moccasins" (Illustration #13). Afterwards they all return to the man's village, where he proceeds to feast the valley community, thus completing the requirement for "goht wass".

This feast is presently not being performed in Kalash valleys. Its central theme seems to be associated with a subject discussed in the introduction to this chapter. A feasting idiom appears to be aligned with a concomitant ethic of competitive production. An individual's personal

*There is one other smaller feast performed only occasionally in Bomboret (but not Birir or Rombour), called "shāh nisi", "the seating of a (common) man as king" for about a two-day period. To qualify, the man must minimally sacrifice a full-grown bull (or more if he chooses), and then feast his village with the meat. It is a role reversal type of event and the 'king' orders prestigious people about, including Muslims officials. He also makes numerous requests which may often be entirely unreasonable or humorous.
application and industriousness, inspired by a competitive drive (culturally determined), results in the production of large amounts of foodstuffs which are then re-distributed in a feasting exchange system. Merit is associated both with the production and distribution stages.

This concludes the discussion of the different kinds of "naːmoos", "rank" which a man may achieve in Kalash society except for "bira mor" which is the subject of the subsequent, final chapter of this thesis.
Chapter 5 - "Bira Mor" ("Sacred Male Goat Sacrifice Feast")
i) **Introduction:**

The 'optional-type' merit feast "bira mor" has already been referred to in several places and, in the chapter on religion and the section concerning the warrior complex, in quite considerable detail. In the introduction to the previous chapter, I suggested that while feasting type societies lay down certain broad guidelines with respect to how many goods should go to who, and in what order, etc., there must inherently be a certain degree of flexibility within these rules which permits them to be adjusted according to the specific circumstances of each particular feast. I mentioned that one reason for this essential flexibility was the availability of a limited number of prestige objects compared with the number of individuals whose custom prescribes should be honored by being presented with gifts at feasts. Another possibility might be an occasion where vertical gift-giving to the other 'big men' must be curtailed in order to meet the demands of a more horizontal type of presentation to affines, who, according to the preferences of Kalash marriage patterns, are clans of approximately equal social stature and wealth.

Both of the above circumstances arose at Kata Singh's "bira mor" and showed signs of disrupting the proceedings. I will give some specific examples of strategies adopted by the host in order to resolve these potential conflicts and contradictions. The ability to deal with these situations is related to the capabilities and personality of the feast-giver himself. A brief character sketch of Kata Singh and how he reflects the 'ideal' qualities of a Kalash 'man of rank' will bring a deeper understanding to the dynamics of the feast.

Moreover, in this chapter I will discuss some ideas that emerged from the "bira mor" about the Kalash people's
own conceptions concerning wealth, generosity (and its opposites), and the reasons for giving merit feasts. These ideas will be approached phenomenologically in the sense that I will include a composite dialogue using phrases which the Kalash themselves would typically use to discuss this subject. This will be comprised of metaphors, idioms, and other local expressions which embody their indigenous concepts about wealth and feasting.

The final area of concern will be the continuation of a subject already touched upon in other chapters concerning the appropriateness of certain subjects discussed at large public gatherings such as the merit feasts, e.g. the content of the shaman's dialogue at Sajigor altar, references to a single, all-powerful God, and Kata Sing's announcement of his status as a 'man-killer'. These ideas and several others also to be explored here are, for a variety of reasons, reserved for and brought up at these occasions.

One factor which determines the appropriateness of subjects are their potential negative social ramifications. In a face to face society such as the Kalash, where persons are born and eventually die living beside the same neighbours, a self-sustaining, self-regulating internal cohesiveness is essential. This balance may frequently depend upon sublimation, 'turning the other cheek', or perhaps at times, a complete bracketing off of certain personal differences. Some subjects which might have negative repercussions often cannot be thrashed out in a personal confrontation between the two (or however many) contending individuals. If one's honor must be preserved by an inevitable resort to violence, and village or even valley factionalism results, this is too high a cost to pay. Large public gatherings serve the function of providing a platform or a forum to air personal opinions, special

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*This point also pertains to the various Kalash yearly festivals, however, the details of this latter subject are too complex to be explored in a thesis on merit feasting.
announcements, and long harboured grievances or apologies. The forms of expression on such occasions tend to be highly ritualized, and the presence of large numbers of people, and therefore the ultimate publicity of these revelations, seems to expiate or dissipate their possible negative effects.

The above themes will be woven throughout the following detailed description of Kata Sing's "bira mor". Being a woman, I could not attend some of the events, which were explained to me later by informants. Because I was obviously able to gain a deeper contextual understanding at the events which I was actually permitted to observe first-hand, there are in some places, some unavoidable differences in the way certain sequences are described.

ii) The Host:

Before a man can publicize his intentions to host a "bira mor", he must first obtain a consensus from his clansmen whose economic and moral support will be needed throughout the entire proceeding. Kata Sing, presently in his early forties, is very young to have already given a "bira mor". He was that much younger when he made his "me·yät", ("promise") at Sajigor altar in 1969, during the "bira mor" of Saidaman, of the Ba·L£r£h clan. During the ensuing eight years of preparation for this feast, Kata Sing grew in the stature and presence required of a man intending to perform such a difficult

*After a lengthy illness in April, 1977, Saidaman converted to Islam. He had been repeatedly warned and eventually convinced by the Muslims that his illness was related to his 'infidel' ("Kafir") status. His actions came as a shock to Kalash people because, having achieved high formal rank he had been an example to others, (as part of the present cultural renaissance) who are also trying to distinguish themselves in a more traditional mode. His conversion was interpreted as polluting to Kalash tradition because he renounced the most sacred ritual, done during "bira mor", of casting the sacrificial blood from a male goat into a juniper wood fire at Sajigor.
feat. However, in his early thirties, when he made his promise, he must already have appeared sufficiently convincing to gain the confidence of his clan. And what is even more unusual is that KataSing was chosen to take the credit for this feast at a time when his father and paternal uncles are all vital, living individuals and who, as household heads, still control the family (clan) wealth. It seems more natural that one of these older men would have wanted to receive the glory associated with hosting such a prestigious feast. Instead, these older men chose to back KataSing much like a political candidate, as being the man most likely to succeed in carrying out their wishes to raise the prestige of the whole clan by publicly expending their substantial wealth in a "bira mor". This usurpation was resolved by KataSing, by dedicating his feast to his uncles and, most particularly, to his father, Buda, who now becomes eligible to have a "sha•ru•gah" performed for him upon his death (Illustration #26).

Mutimir, great grandson of Rombour's founder Adabok, and the apical ancestor of the Mut•ti•mi•r£h clan had two sons, D£•rum and Liŋ•ga•s£. The two major lineages of the present day Mut•ti•mi•r£h clan descended from these two brothers. KataSing's family derived from the Liŋ•ga•s£ while the shaman, Janduli Khan, is a descendant of the D£•rum line. Where there are fewer sons, the family wealth over time is divided between fewer heirs and as a result, KataSing's father and his three uncles are presently among the wealthiest men in all three Kalash valleys.

One uncle is a Muslim convert. Another uncle, Garda, is without sons (the same man who gave prayers at Sajigor asking for one during the shaman's trance, Chapter 3, section iv). And the third uncle has a much younger son. Buda himself has only one son, KataSing, who is therefore extremely important to all these four men. In Kalash kinship terminology, one's own father and all his brothers are called "da•dã"
("father"). For example, "gār·dā dā·dā" means "older father", "chu·ti·yāk dā·dā", "younger father", etc. It is apparent that Kata Sing, from a very early age, has been groomed by all his fathers for his present position of prominence. Because he is an only son born into great wealth, the Kalash say he is a lucky man; but not with the luck of most people which, like a leaf, comes out in the spring and drops off in the fall. Kata Sing's luck is perennial like an evergreen or a stone oak and has so far worked for him throughout his lifetime.**

Physically Kata Sing is a tremendously strong and youthful man. Over forty, his black hair has no traces of grey, and although he is short in stature, he has a strong wiry build with the energy and agility equal to any man ten to fifteen years his junior. He is reputed never to have been sick a day in his life, not even with a headache. His various activities keep him constantly in motion and it is quite usual for him to walk about twenty miles in the course of any one of his average work days. His endurance and stamina are quite remarkable. Despite not having slept for three or more days, he took an active part in the strenuous sports competitions held at his "bira mor" and held his own. (Illustration #27). His sexual prowess is so renowned in Kalash valleys that while women are definitely attracted, they also express a certain fearfulness of him.

His manner is perpetually aggressive. He speaks in an abrupt, authoritative fashion, full of sarcasms and accusations and his remarks are constantly prefaced or

* For such individuals the Kalash use an idiomatic expression, "the fox has twelve sons, but the lion has only one".

** One other factor that has favored Kata Sing are the alliances formed by the marriages of his three sisters into the other most prestigious clans in Rombour. These affines have him to greatly extend his influence.
punctuated by phrases such as: "Now you look here!", "Now you listen to me!", "What do you know?", or "...and I'll make up my own mind, (thanks very much)!". Animated by rapid arm movements and a sharply pointing finger, his conversations frequently sound like a self-parody (Illustration #28). He is willful, proud, self-confident, and extremely ambitious, exhibiting all these characteristics as he goes about his daily round of activities. The Kalaşş have a special expression for the walk of such a proud man, who they say swaggers about with his head turning from side to side in a motion separate from the movement of his arms and shoulders.

From his two wives, both living, Katal Sing has two daughters and seven sons, the latter number considered to be ideal and very auspicious. (There are several Kalaşş men who either have just this many sons or are themselves one of seven.) Katal Sing's children, all intelligent and attractive, are, by force of circumstance one presumes, extremely capable and industrious. His house is known for its hospitality throughout the Kalaşş valleys, as well as among the Chitrali Muslims. When his two wives are not working in their fields, they are engaged in constant rounds of bread-making to feed all the guests who are constantly dropping in.

Even a character as aggressive as Katal Sing has his gentler side, a dimension which I became aware of through a popular love song which he composed about fifteen years ago for his second wife. She is still a beautiful woman despite suffering from tuberculosis. Unhappy in her first 'arranged' marriage, she was much sought after by Kalaşş men from all three valleys, including Katal Sing, all trying to persuade her to go "a la şing" ("elope") with them. Katal Sing's own words describe that situation:

"Oh, red rose, gazing upon your fair complexion how en-amoured I've become! The light from your silken hair Gleams like the morning star and, Were you as difficult to behold as an ancient cluster
of distant stars,
No mountain look-out would be too high to conquer.

Only you can make my life replete,
Only you can help me make a future world free from burning sorrows or desires.
But if these, my hopes, are not fulfilled
Like a stream of milk soaking into dry and thirsty earth,
I will lose my precious youth.

They tell me on your father's farm
A young partridge is whistling before she breaks into flight. ("a la shing")
Is it true, or do they tell a lie?

And, if it's true, that the clouds are waiting to close in around you,
Then shine your light through all that darkness - Illuminate only me!

I will go and sit beside your father, and, if he will agree,
My future will shine brilliant like a star.
Oh! think of me good people:
Should her father's resistance prevail!
Hey Flower! Then no matter:
I shall still break into your garden and snatch the shiniest feathered plume for myself.

And then the news will ring in everyone's ears!"

Despite the often brusque exteriors of these seemingly rough and aggressive hillmen, their gentler, more emotional sides are assigned a high value in Kalash culture. A man who often exhibits these particular qualities is referred to be a very special appellation, "sa·ri a·mēr·yuk jīr". "A·mēr·yuk jīr" is the (sweet) milk (magically) given by a new born lamb. "Sā·ri" is a spirit animal which lives in Kalash valleys, but, being very shy, is rarely sighted and then only by the luckiest of individuals. Sometimes it appears in the shape of a beautifully radiant bird, which in a moment can transform itself into a new born lamb or a baby goat. The Kalash claim that if this animal is captured and eaten, the person will be blessed for the rest of his life with the ability to speak the secret languages of all creatures in the animal world. A man who is referred to as "sā·ri a·mēr·yuk-
jīnī", as sweet as "the milk from a new born spirit lamb" is a very gentle and sensitive individual. During his "bira mor", Kata Singh was referred to by this term not, one assumes, because of his own character but because he belongs to the Musti mirgh clan who, when a blight destroyed the wheat crop, once fed the entire population of Rombour until the next harvest. The reputation of his clan finds Kata Singh deserving of this expression.

iii) The Proceedings: a) Preparations

An aspirant for the rank of "bira mor" customarily makes known his intentions to give this feast at another man's "bira mor". The future host takes off a brass bell "gān gā e" tied to the neck of one of the male goats destined to be sacrificed to Sajigor at the feast. This he rings loudly amid the all-male gathering at the god-site, thus publicizing his intentions. How much time the aspirant estimates will be required to accumulate the necessary wealth determines the date of the event. Kata Singh estimated eight years.

To increase his annual yields of food grains, during that time he made a new field "nok pētī dur" in a more remote, smaller side valley adjoining Rombour, close to his winter goat sheds. Because these new fields are so isolated, his womenfolk would be too vulnerable there, so the men in the family took full responsibility for its cultivation. The women continued to cultivate his eight "cha kai" of land called "Chēt Guru" in lower Rombour Valley.

In an average year, twenty kilos of wheat seed can produce approximately five hundred kilos of wheat on one "cha kai" and from the second crop of corn later in the season, the same field yields about eight hundred and forty kilos. Because his family only requires the produce from about six "cha kai" this leaves a surplus of grains each year that can be stored away for feasts. If a family is attempting
to save towards a feast, they will consume on a day-to-day basis more corn and hoard as much wheat as possible.

Kata Singh gave a "sa·ri·čk" feast for his daughter within the first two or three years after announcing his intentions to host a "bira mor". After that feast was completed, all surplus grains were stockpiled toward the upcoming "bira mor". In dry conditions, grains can be safely kept in the cool, dark storage areas in Kalash houses from four to six years. Food grains from the other Mu·ti·mi·rgh clan’s fields were also added to the wheat dispensed at the "bira mor".

Stockpiling grains is only one concern of the aspirant feast-giver. Before a man is permitted to give "bira mor", he must prove in a 'witnessing' ceremony called "pie pa·shai·ık" ("to show female goats") that he owns "20 x 20" or four hundred goats. A man who is giving "bira mor" is referred to in the praises as "ha·zār ka·shi·ri cheä́r pi·ouw", "he who drinks milk from his one thousand (snow) white goats." As a form of poetic exaggeration, his herds are always referred to as "čk ha·zār", "one thousand", however, it is understood that this means only four (five) hundred.

Such a large number of animals is required not only for prestige but for practical reasons as well. Large amounts of dairy products are needed to distribute at the feast, goats are required as gifts to the "ja·mī·li", (clan daughters), for Sajigor (Chapter 3, section iv) and several dozen animals are killed in the first two days for meat to feed the 1,000 to 1,500 guests. In 1974, Kata Singh brought a Kalash shepherd

*The Kalash now claim that the required number of animals is five hundred goats or their equivalent, for example, a bull is worth twelve goats and a walnut tree is worth eight. However, the traditional amount required in the Bashgal among the pre-Muslim Kati was always "20 x 20" (four hundred) goats - an amount which probably also applied to the Kalash who have the same counting system.
from Bomboret on a contract basis to take responsibility for his rapidly increasing herds. (Chapter 2, section ii). He is a well-seasoned and capable herdsman who enthusiastically set about helping Kata Singh increase his livestock's fertility and productivity, allowing the aspirant feast-giver more free time to organize other details of the upcoming celebrations.

iii) b) "Counting the Goats/Refurbishing the Sajigor Altar"

In the autumn of the year in which an aspirant has elected to make "bira mor" (if he decides he has sufficient resources to proceed), some two to three weeks prior to the festivities he must arrange a ceremony to show the male community his goat wealth.

One evening, calling upon the assistance of several of his clansmen, they take about forty-two kilos of wheat (one "maun") up to their goat sheds. During the night these men cook five hundred breads and the next morning summon the "gro•wel" ("male community"), to the sheds. As they arrive, they shower formal praises upon the host and his clan, recounting the past deeds and ranks of their ancestors. These formal praises, called "ish•ti•kξk", go on intermittently throughout the entire two to three week celebrations.

The praises are comprised of a series of oft-repeated phrases and metaphors, interspersed with stories and anecdotes about clan personages. The following eulogy, taken from Kata Singh's feast, illustrates this type of formalized praise-giving. It is delivered phrase by phrase in loud, staccato shouts.

"Hah! bravo to all you grandsons of the great Mutimir, In a never-ending line you brought full bags of grain from your fields, And you filled up your two-storey fort (house). In abundance, these grains now lie panting in your cellars. Oh! bravo to you twenty times lucky Kata Singh, Your old fortunes rise and fall as every autumn you give a feast. Your animals are too numerous to count and you divide them up only loosely,
When giving away shares to your sisters.
Oh! bravo to you who eats oil that drips from the bone
marrow of your sacred male goats,
You 'blood-drinker' ('man-killer'), you butter-eater, you
owner of male goats with big crossed horns.
Oh! bravo to you who gives such bad times to the cruel
(Nuristanis) and the arrogant (Chitralis)...

The host feeds the assembled male guests a generous
meal of bread and cheese called "ish-pei-ri" on this occasion
(see Chapter 4, section iii-a). Three men then come forward
from those who have themselves (or their fathers or paternal
grandfathers) given a "bira mor" feast. These men are to act
as "sa·liss", "witnesses" in the goat count. The host presents
them with silk robes, after which two of them go into the
corral, and one is seated on a "han·yak", "stool", on top of
the goat shed roof with the other 'men of rank' **(Illustration
# 14). This latter individual keeps the actual tally with
"bat", "small stones" each one representing twenty goats.

As the two men in the corral count off each group of
twenty animals, they give a stone to this roof-top 'tally-
keeper'. When twenty (or twenty-five) stones are lying on
the ground in front of him, the host is considered to have
proved that he has sufficient goat wealth. Except for one
large male goat kept back to sacrifice, the shepherds then
take the flocks out to graze. After the meal the men disperse
back to their respective villages.

Within the next ten days, the aspirant host will re-

*In the past these robes (worth one goat) came from Badakhshan
province in North-Eastern Afghanistan, an area famous
for its silk since the time of the Chinese rule (before
the seventh century A.D.). Now they are made of the
readily available Pakistani "art" silk (synthetics) or
cotton/silk and although symbolically are still prestige
items, have somewhat decreased in actual monetary value.

**Goat shed roofs, (where goat sacrifices are performed),
are one of the most sacred Kalash spaces. Only the highest
ranking individuals are permitted to sit on stools in these
locations.
quest some men to go up into the forest surrounding the valley and cut down two very large trees, plus some other smaller ones. These are brought down to a location near Sajigor and for the next two days, two carvers prepare wooden sculptures. The two large trees are hewn into long plank benches to be installed around the edges of the Sajigor site. On festive occasions at Sajigor, the highest ranking sit upon a piled stone mound, and the men of lesser rank are seated on these ground level planks (See Sketch #2). The smaller trees are carved into four upright, two-dimensional, flattened 'posts' called "ma·lγ·ri" (which are about one metre high and thirty centimetres wide). These are placed at the god-site intermittently along the length of the wooden planks (Illustration #29; Sketch #2).

The "ma·lγ·ri" carvings are abstract anthropomorphic shapes, with a top portion representing a Himalayan pheasant's feathered plume, below which is a 'head' incised with a Gordian knot type design, and on the lower portions are several other incised geometric designs. Each time a large "bira mor" is hosted, the plant benches and "ma·lγ·ri" at Sajigor must be renewed.

When these objects are complete, the male community is called and installed at the god-site. Custom prescribes that the host sacrifices a full grown bull and male goat for this occasion. While this meat is cooking, the carvers are honored by the host (amidst praises from the other men), with long cotton (silk) neck scarves. The completion of this installation ceremony is the point after which the aspirant host cannot go back on his plans to give "bira mor". However, by the time this ceremony is performed, the feast-giver is confident that he has the necessary wealth and support to go ahead. Sajigor has been a witness to his commitment and the full risks are now unavoidable.

iii) c) The Festivities:

These above preparations for the feast (except where I used specific examples from Kata Sing's activities) apply to
"bira mor" feasts generally. Although the same types of problems may arise at other feasts, the following discussion pertains specifically to Kata Siŋg's "bira mor". The personalities of the individuals at this feast and their particular needs have determined the unique turn of events.

A few days after the Sajigor 'installation' ceremonies, on or about November 10, 1977, the Mu•ti•mi•rêh clan called their "ja•mî•li" and those women's daughters (if they had any) back to their natal homes. About twenty persons were called. With them they brought the finger-woven sashes, garlands of walnuts and apricot seeds, and large amounts of walnut breads which they presented to the men (Illustration #30).

For three days, hundreds of kilos of wheat were brought out from the basements onto the roofs where it was dried, cleaned, and then taken to the mills. The women took shifts guarding these huge quantities of flour from Gujar nomads who, not having fields of their own, are always on the lookout for unattended mills as they pass up and down the valley.

While the women worked, large numbers of men went to Kata Siŋg's village and called out the "ish•ti•kêk" ("formal praises") to the Mu•ti•mi•rêh clan and were fed meals of bread and cheese by the host for their contributions. On the third afternoon of this work-bee, the flour was made up into batter in huge wooden tubs and the bread-making began. This went on until about noon of the following day (Illustration #20) and the "ja•mî•li", together with the wives of the Mu•ti•mi•rêh clansmen, cooked about two thousand kilos of bread. Afterwards, with their dresses caulked with dried batter and soot-blackened faces, these women were too exhausted to take part in the merry-making of the feast. On the morning of the third day of these festivities they went to the goat sheds to receive their "waiy", "shares" of the livestock in appreciation of their efforts (Illustration #31).
On the fourth day of the preparations, before the breads were finished, the guests, after a four to five hour walk over the passes, began to arrive from the other valleys four to five hours away by foot. These men began to assemble on the roof of one of the Mu'timi判定 houses. (Illustration #31). Meanwhile, jammed inside the small guest room attached to Kata Sing's house, the host had called together his clansmen, representatives from all the other Rombour clans, and several important valley 'elders' - about thirty to forty men.

iii) d) Potential Conflicts - The Host as Manager:

Several potentially-serious problems had arisen and Kata Sing, rather than risk being accused of heavy-handedness, was attempting to throw open to debate how these problems might be resolved. It appears, however, that Kata Sing had already made up his mind previously as to what was to be done, because, with some well-concealed manipulations, the group gradually came around to supporting all of his 'suggestions'.

The previous week, Kata Sing had been in Chitral buying cloth to make robes for the most important guests. (One robe requires four to five metres and at the feast twenty-eight robes were distributed.) He had also purchased about one metre of cotton for each of the eighty-three households in Rombour, plus nine additional metres which were torn up into strips to be given as kerchiefs to the less important male guests. Because there is only one tailor in Rombour who can make up these robes, Kata Sing had left some of the cloth at a tailor's in a Muslim village near Chitral to be sewn up. After making a bad job of two garments, the Muslim got fed up, and sent those two plus the rest of the cloth back to Rombour with a small boy. Not only were there fewer robes ready than Kata Sing had anticipated but, worse, over a dozen high-ranking men from the other valleys had arrived in Rombour that morning without specific invitations from Kata Sing. Strict custom prescribes that they too should be honored with
gifts of high value.

In the few weeks preceding the feast Kata Sing had sent our some invitations to seven persons from Bomboret valley and six from Birir. Most of these men were affines e.g. Kata Sing's mother was Badei kai from Brun (Bomboret) and his grandmother was Shara kut from Krakal (Bomboret), etc., and the heads of these families were invited with the intention of honoring them with gifts of silk robes and goats.

At this "resource allotment" discussion, a furious disagreement ensued over what should be done about these uninvited 'big men' who came "hoping to get something for nothing". This problem of too few prestige items in relation to the number of potential recipients had also arisen in Rombour. However, the solution devised there could not be used in the case of outside guests. In Rombour, Kata Sing had decided to give a robe and a goat to one representative of each previous feast, either to the host himself if he was still alive, or to one living male descendant within the last two generations. Many more men were customarily entitled to receive these objects but, to satisfy those individuals, Kata Sing asked each of the seven clans in Rombour to choose amongst themselves one representative. That individual would receive an additional token robe and goat on behalf of all those deserving men in the clan who rightly should each receive these prestige items. This plan was an improvisation on traditional custom, attempting to deal with the problem of a larger population than was ever feasted in the past. It could only be successful if Kata Sing obtained a consensus from the men in the valley.

There are about twelve distinct clans in each of the other two valleys. Several of the guests who had been invited by Kata Sing were affines who belonged to the same clan. After they had received their gifts, there were not enough objects to go to a representative from each of the
other fifteen to eighteen clans in Bomboret and Birir. Because the uninvited men of rank could not be completely ignored, there was a great deal of heated discussion as to how this dilemma should be handled. Some members of the Mu•ti•mi•rgh clan were insisting that their "bira mor" was not only for their affines but for "na•mōös", "rank", legitimized by recognition from those already of high rank.

Kata Sing himself was employing a purposeful detachment from this chaotic discussion. Then, very strategically, by way of a question directed to the entire group, proposed a solution. "Do those two valleys, as we do in Rombour, divide themselves into two groups, those villages from "wē•hunk", ("upstream") and those from "prē•hunk" ("downstream")?

Anyone who has lived in Kalash valleys for more than forty years and visited the neighbouring valleys hundreds of times knows that this distinction is common to all three valleys. The question was seized upon and within minutes it was decided 'by all' that four robes and four goats would be given out, one to the downstream villages and one to the upstream villages in each of the two valleys. These gifts would suffice to honor all the 'men of rank' who had come uninvited. They were to decide amongst themselves who would actually receive the objects. This strategy of repeatedly requesting each group to decide for themselves who would represent them, shielded Kata Sing from any accusations which might arise. Each of these 'natural' groups had previously employed a decision-making process which enabled them to act as a united body and Kata Sing was clever enough to make use of the existing structures.

In this manner, wherever necessary throughout the feast, he could avoid accusations of injustice. On other occasions during the feast Kata Sing forcefully exerted his authority, making it quite apparent that he had his mind made up how things should be done. One such occasion was on the last
morning of the festivities at the goat sheds. He and his clansmen were giving the "wały" share of the livestock to their "ja·mî·li" (clan daughters/sisters). Standing on the roof of the shed overseeing the activities both inside the corral and outside its entrance, where several hundred people had gathered, he warned everyone to speak up if they had not been given their fair share. Afterwards would be too late to complain, he said. In response, some men began to offer suggestions as to who had been overlooked, whereupon Kata Sing exploded, shouting out angrily: "Alright! Alright! Just leave me alone! Don't I have my own memory about this or what?" This angry outburst left his assistants speechless and the clamour momentarily subsided. The host had perceived this as an occasion where it was necessary and opportune to assert himself, emphasizing his power and his position as the executive director of this complicated and difficult ceremony.

Kata Sing's compromise of gift giving to important men, by having each clan select their own representative, was being referred to as "Tai bêsh ka·rôôn", "your new/extra custom", and was at first, not acceptable to everyone. Some clans are numerically much larger than others who have only a few households in Rombour. In the bigger clans, which also tend to be wealthier, more 'men of rank' were being overlooked. Moreover, one individual in particular, Bashara Khan, was proving to be a large thorn in Kata Sing's side. This man was insisting upon being honored with prestige objects despite the fact that neither himself nor his father or grandfather had ever given a "bira mor". His demands were interpreted by the other Kalâsh men of rank as "n' wêsh", "against custom" and these men threatened to make a fuss if Kata Sing succumbed to his demands.

Bashara Khan, an important man in a major branch of the Balâsh clan, is the uncle of Kata Sing's ex-son-in-law.
This man is tediously verbose, and although presumably well-intentioned, is essentially a great swaggering buffoon given to endless self-exaltation. He is, however, the most renowned Kalash man in the whole Chitral District, not it seems because of any outstanding qualities, except perhaps his naivete or gullibility.

He rose to fame as a result of hosting foreign tourists in Rombour for a number of years. To the savings from his charges he added his wife's wages who cooked for the Pakistan Government irrigation project crews for two or three summers at his insistence. With this money he added to his assets by building a new house and then with a bank loan purchased an old Ford jeep in Chitral, thus acquiring the dubious fame of becoming the first Kalash in history to possess an automobile. There are no roads in Rombour and Bashara Khan began to spend most of his time in the Chitral Valley. Not having an inkling how to operate a jeep, he was forced to rent it out to Chitrali drivers. Perceiving him as being an 'illiterate infidel', he was 'taken for a ride' by the drivers, mechanics, and the other financiers with whom he was forced to become increasingly involved as his debts (and notoriety) rapidly grew.

In May of 1977, when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto announced that there were to be second, 'fair' elections, some local people fronted Bashara Khan as a second Pakistan People's Party candidate to contest with the sitting PPP member of parliament, Qadir Nawaz. A split PPP vote would favor a strong united vote for the opposition Pakistan National Alliance candidate, thereby accomplishing the real aims of Bashara Khan's backers.

The election was indefinitely postponed when martial law was imposed in June, 1977, but not until several hundred election posters with Bashara Khan's picture had been run off. The man became a celebrity, a 'man of rank', but by
highly unorthodox criteria according to the status hierarchy of traditional Kalâš Kafir society.

Having achieved such notoriety, Bashara Khan was emphatic that he would not attend Kata Sing's "bira mor" unless he was individually presented with a robe and a goat. Various emissaries were sent by Kata Sing to try and reason with him. Finally, on the first morning of the actual festivities he reneged and arrived unannounced on the roof of Kata Sing's house.

To an outsider, the scene which ensued was highly amusing. It is, however, just this type of potentially hostile or negative situation which may be dissipated through ritualized verbal exchange at large public gatherings. Both men stood several feet apart, facing each other but loudly shouting past each other to the various loosely assembled guests. Bashara Khan's "ish·ti·kêk" "eulogies" tend to be an unimaginative stream of stock phrases which he delivers enthusiastically: "Bravo to you twenty times lucky brave man...your flood of honey...your river of butter...your long line of goats...!" thus conveniently managing to ignore Kata Sing's response. The latter, in very carefully chosen language, was expressing his sentiments concerning Bashara Khan's earlier position. Kata Sing said that if he had continued to pursue his previous course, it would have been neither here nor there at his, Kata Sing's great "bira mor"! Neither man made any overt responses to what the other was saying. Thus each outwardly at least, had preserved his honor.

The first two days of the actual festivities were held in Kata Sing's village, Kalâshagrom, where the guests arrived and gave formal praises. Some were honoured with gifts of 'silk' robes, woven neckbands, garlands of nuts and seeds, and cloth handerchiefs, (Illustration #'s 30 & 31) and all were fed with a meal of bread, cheese, and meat on the first
day and meat and bread on the second.*

The guests danced and sang throughout the three days of festivities. The dancing was predominately Chitrali (Muslim) style with single dancers challenging each other to the best performance, and the repertoire of songs both in form and content, was much sparser than they had been at the Dra·mē·sē clan's "sa·ri·ēk" ("clan daugher's") feast the previous month.

At this "bira mor" the men played sports, both during the activities in the village and again at the Sajigor altar on the third day, while waiting for some of the meat to cook. Popular was "ra·jūk hon·chēk" ("rope-pull"), a tug of war done by two teams of about six persons on each who were either men from one clan pitted against another clan, or Kalash against Chitrals or Nuristanis. These activities heightened the very competitive atmosphere prevalent throughout the "bira mor". Not only was the honor of the host and his clan at stake, but many 'important' guests demanded to be recognized and honored with gifts or special attention.

Speech-making (and praise-giving), eating huge quantities of cooked foodstuffs, presentation of goats to the 'clan daughters', and immediately after, the sequence of events at Sajigor altar on the third day (Chapter 3, section iv & v) were the highlights of the "bira mor".

iii) e) The Function of Feasting as Public Forum:

Speech-making went on recurrently throughout the various festivities but there were times when a group of about a dozen 'elders' monopolized the attention of the crowds and spoke extensively about the politics of this feast (plus other current topics). On the first day of these speeches, an old grudge

* Kata Sing expended about one hundred and eight-three kilos (seventy "batti") of cheese, killed twenty goats, and cooked about one thousand five hundred kilos of wheat on the first two days alone, for between one thousand and one thousand five hundred people.
was aired after more than five years. Similar to the exchange between Kata Sing and the local 'celebrity' Bashara Khan, the public nature of the disclosure preserved the reputations of the individuals concerned.

Chapter Four (section v) describes the circumstances under which Kata Sing had performed a "sa·ri·ēk" feast for his daughter some six years prior to "bira mor". Some of the more influential valley 'elders' had refused to attend on the grounds that it was being held solely for the self-aggrandizement of Kata Sing, who showed an insensitivity to his young daughter and his in-laws whose positions were not yet secure. Those men who had boycotted that feast were presently attending Kata Sing's "bira mor" and giving it their whole-hearted support. One of these elders was Baraman, the present holder of the informal title of valley priest (Illustration #12). He is a social, political, and religious leader in the community and his boycott of Kata Sing's "sa·ri·ēk" had not been a passing matter.

Early on in the "bira mor" speeches, Baraman stood up and publicly broached the subject of his absence six years earlier. This being an awkward and potentially embarrassing subject, rife with personal animosities, he had never spoken personally to Kata Sing about it. Baraman now announced to a crowd of nearly one thousand people that this "tastefully" executed performance of "bira mor" had, in his eyes, redeemed its host entirely. As a result of this present feast, he now knew that Kata Sing had been well intentioned all along and that the common good of the entire community was integral to his quest for status and rank. Baraman was offering only a partial atonement for his previous boycott by using the accomplishments of the present "bira mor" as the reason for his more truthful or accurate insight into the real nature of Kata Sing's quest for rank. It was a cleverly phrased apology which excused both himself and Kata Sing, who heard this announcement from amid the crowds, thus saving both men form a personal confront-
ation over the issue.

Baraman's purpose had been to explain the contradiction between his previous absence and his present unqualified support. It was essential that he cleared the air on this issue before going on to make a further priestly announcement. This next proclamation was Kata Sing's intention to rebuild the Rombour menstrual hut the following spring.*

This building had fallen into disrepair and was causing some inconveniences to the women users. For more than five years, the local state authorities had been negotiating with the Kalash in all three valleys to rebuild it with monies taken from a special fund for Kalash tribal uplift and development which Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had set aside for them in the early 1970's. Negotiations had broken down because the Chitrani craftsmen and builders, who wanted the money and were thus prepared to do the job, were then boycotted by local Muslim religious leaders incensed about Muslims re-building pagan menstrual huts. Certain Kalash factions further complicated the issue by insisting that if the government would just turn over the monies to them, they would rebuild their own menstrual huts, making ritual purification sacrifices wherever necessary in order to do the job.

With this latest plan, Kata Sing had found a perfect opportunity to ensure that his name would be recorded for posterity in the annals of Kalash oral history. Not only was he performing the largest "on·jesht·a ('sacred') bira mor" in more than fifty years, but during this major accomplishment in the sacred realm, was promising to refurbish the most central

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*Kata Sing's eldest daughter was in confinement in the menstrual hut throughout his "bira mor" having just given birth to his first grandson, Yasir Arafat. The baby was the son of the young man whose conversion to Islam Kata Sing had tried to force as revenge for this boy taking his daughter "a la shing" after Kata Sing's "sari·ek" for her and her first husband.
symbol of the impure domain, the women's menstrual hut. Both the plan and the timing of its announcement are indicative of Kata Sing's adroitness and ambition.

Several other speeches at the "bira mor" concerned a balance between purity and pollution. In patronizing tones, the Kalash women were publicly chastized for courting the attentions and affections of Muslim men. Because the Muslims consider the Kalash to be "smelly, country bumpkins", said one speech-maker, it is degrading for the whole tribe that their women behave in this way. This same speaker also attributed difficult births, the frequent deaths of newborn infants in the menstrual hut, and the increase of disease amongst the goats to the dalliances of Kalash women with their Muslim lovers.

The above statements are an expression of the felt need for the Kalash to regain a hold of their destinies, perhaps to re-polish their tarnished integrity before the dissolution of their culture becomes hopelessly irreverisble. The very occurrence of the "bira mor" in November, 1977, is one indication of a cultural revival which is occuring at least in Rombour Valley. This renaissance, although giving inspiration to the whole tribe, is partially in response to the rapid social breakdown in the other two valleys, particularly Bomboret.

iii) f) Kalash Concepts of Wealth and Feasting:

The following discussion will articulate Kalash explanations of how one acquires wealth and for what ends. While people may offer more idealistic explanations for actions which actually are acquisitive in intent, it is my purpose here to account for their explanations rather than ulterior motives, many of which have already been discussed in earlier sections in this chapter.

Throughout the dialogue at this feast, several indigenous attitudes about wealth emerged which, not unexpectedly, are closely linked to the reasons why the Kalash say they must give feasts. Because "bira mor" is considered to be a religious event, some of these concepts about wealth were given a particularly interesting emphasis during the feast. Formal praises and
speeches were replete with phrases which exaggerate, glorify, and sanctify wealth. The host of the "bira mor" was praised as being a "drinker of milk from his sacred male goats" or even more poignant, "milk from his sacred, one-year old goats", or "eater of their 'ku·n·da'*, a cheese made from the milk magically produced by these one-year old animals.

The Kalash maintain that wealth is god-given, and if its owner is moral and industrious it becomes animated and grows of its own accord. There are many songs and stories which describe food grains, when placed inside storage bins, that begin to multiply, "panting" in their growing abundance, ever expanding or "swarming" (like bees), and "boiling up" (like hot milk) until the lids burst off the bins and the grains spill out in profusion. Skin bags of grain will sometimes dance on the roof tops where they were threshed, golden birds fly out from bee hives, and snakes emerge from sealed pots of cheese.

This kind of animated, magic wealth is called "on·jesh·ta mili·lit", "sacred wealth" and its meaning is illustrated in the following incident. Early one spring, a young teenage boy from Rombour went to visit his "mo·a" ("mother's brother") in Krakal village, Bomboret. One day while dutifully caring for his uncle's goats in the hills above the village, he came upon a small glade of prematurely-ripened winter wheat. Deciding to surprise his uncle with some fresh wheat breads, he harvested it and took it to the mill near the village. He left the cleaned grains in a bowl inside the mill while he went outside to release the water which turns the grinding stone attached to an anterior wooden water wheel. When he went back inside, to his surprise the wheat grains had turned into juniper berries. Rushing off to bring his uncle, when the two arrived back they found instead a bowl full of "ku·lish peik te·t", "glowing red embers".

*Ku·n·da" is a very strong-tasting dairy product made by placing newly made goats' cheese into clay pots. These are closed up with a stone 'cork' and then tightly sealed with a thick slip of clay. In cool basement storage areas, it becomes bacterial within a month and if kept tightly sealed, may be stored five or six years.
This phenomenon the Kalash attribute to the work of fairies. If an individual, by making certain animal sacrifices, can get a fairy working for him, he can become very wealthy. Some people claim that Saidaman, (now a Muslim) who gave the "bira mor" in 1969 at which Kata Singh made his own announcement to give a similar feast, had "bhut", powerful "malevolent spirits" working for him to help gather together the wealth which was required for that event.

Saidaman is said to be in possession of a "bhut gōr", a "devil's foot" which is an extremely powerful and potentially dangerous object. They can sometimes be found near rivers or irrigation channels, in or around the watering places of fairies. They are made out of a hard, black obsidian type stone, the size of a small child's foot but with unusual features. The ankle appears reversed because the foot, instead of extending naturally from the front, projects from the back of the heel. If a man finds or is given "bhut gōr", and is not willing to make regular sacrifices to it, he should either pass it along to someone else who is willing to do so or else throw it into the river. The Kalash believe that not to sacrifice to this object will invite disaster.

Saidaman was reputed to keep his "bhut gōr" in his goat sheds and annually, every spring festival, he did "su·chi ma·rat", "fairy sacrifice" to it. This usually entails the ritual killing of a single newborn lamb although a goat may be substituted. There are several other families in the valleys who also annually perform "su·chi ma·rat" at each spring festival.

If a man is industrious and is able to accumulate foodstuffs from year to year, the goods are called "bā·loush de·wat·lat", "old wealth". "Bā·loush" also means "smelly" and if a house has large stockpiles of foodstuffs stored in its basement cellars, the whole house will be pervaded by a strong organic aroma given off by these food reserves. As
the following brief incident illustrates, there is a certain point beyond which an individual is no longer respected for his ability to hoard food reserves.

Five generations ago, in the Dra·më·së clan there was a man, Ma·hat·tu·mär, who was continually boasting that the wheat grains which he had in his storage bin were the same age as one boy in the family who was about fourteen years old. One day, Ma·hat·tu·mär proudly extracted this grain, ground it, and had his wife make it into breads for him which he then consumed with relish. "So great was his wealth, ha! ha! ha! ha!" said a Kalash orator, "that he died instantly!"

It is not enough to save and to have wealth: 'uncooked wheat has no value', and 'an animal with its skin still on, is of no use'. The Kalash use an enigmatic phrase "us·teik 漖 ni·seik" which literally means "to stand up and to sit down". It is an idiom about wealth that is used on several different levels. Not only does it refer to the stockpiles of wealth which rise and fall, as one works towards saving it and then giving it all away at feast, but it also refers to the constant round of guests coming day by day to one's house, and sitting down (upon a "han·yak", "stool") to have a meal, and then standing up to leave again. The term means public and private generosity and hospitality.

Some men acquire a reputation for day to day hospitality, which they favor more than hoarding their food to gain the momentary glory achieved at a single merit feast. Others, like the Mu·ti·ri·gh clan, are known for their generosity at home as well as for their extravagant merit feasts. Others do not uphold this spirit of giving at all, and about those people the Kalash say that: "if a mouse (guest) were to accidentally fall through the smoke-hole into such a stingy man's house, it (he) wouldn't even be offered a meal of ashes from the fire!"

iii) g) The "Duty" of Feast-giving:

If a man begins to save his wealth for a feast, the Kalash
say he is 'no longer able to 'eat his wealth quietly'. Such a man becomes shiftless and restless, a worm is wriggling inside him, compelling him to make a "nā·mōo·nā kromb", a "strange, (deranged) work".

During the feast, his behavior is like a man possessed, as he 'recklessly' dispenses with his and all his clan's wealth. The latter observe him with some trepidation, however he is beyond their control because to curb his actions at that point, would be to destroy their reputation and honor. The eulogies about the feast-giver go on to say that this is not 'madness', however, but the fulfillment of the man's "ər·mən", his "sorrow" or "longing" to comply with the wishes of god and his fundamental spirit of generosity.

The Kalasli say that god gives man wealth but he also gives him a heart which he must follow. To go through life simply collecting wealth and indulging in self-praise, is to merely become old. Feasting is what life is for: it makes life complete and gives it worth. Only through feasting will our names live on.

Much of the earlier discussions and explanations in this thesis have been concerned with the less altruistic reasons why the Kalash partake in feasts. A reconciliation between their ideals and the acquisitiveness in day-to-day life provides the truer picture.

iii) h) Summary of "Bira Mor" Merit Feast:

The chronological sequence of the events at the "bira mor" has been broken down in this discussion into a more thematic treatment of the content of the various ritual sequences. To summarize briefly, the first two days of speech-making were followed on the third and final morning of the festivities by the presentation of the 'clan daughters/sisters' with their share of the livestock. (Illustration #18). Forty-one animals, mostly female, and one-year old goats, lambs, and sheep, were given away to the clanswomen and the representatives of clans
from other villages and valleys, who in the past, have given their daughters in marriage to the Mu•ti•mi•r£h clan.

The entire assembly of guests then proceeded up the valley to the Sajigor altar driving the host, Kata Sing mounted on horseback (symbol of his new rank), and his herd of thirty 'scared' male goats in front. (Illustration #8). The women turned back at the last village before the god-site. For the rest of the day, the men remained at Sajigor sacrificing the animals (Illustration #10 & Chapter 3, section iv and v), and playing games, such as rock throwing (shot-put), wrestling, and tug of war. They returned to their villages in the early evening, carrying large carcasses of uncooked 'sacred' goat meat, consumed over the next few days to the exclusion of their women.

Thereafter Kata Sing is permitted to go about his daily affairs in the valley mounted on horseback. At festivals he is entitled to wear a pair of "shā•ra kundy•li" (markhor hide shoes - Illustration #13) which custom prescribes he, his sons, and grandsons must also be buried in. At festivals and feasts he may wear "das•tar", a large cloth turban wound around his head. This, however, is not a garment that a personality such as Kata Sing's would likely take to wearing naturally!

I left the Kalash valleys to return to Canada within a few weeks after Kata Sing had completed his "bira mor" and therefore was unable to document the effects this was to have upon his life. The most immediately noticeable change as a result of this accomplishment was the respectful attitude which people of the valley community showed towards him, either in chance encounters on pathways of if he happened to visit their houses. The news of Kata Sing's large outlay of wealth (which, incidentally, by no means reduced him to penury), had spread throughout the Chitral Valley. The Deputy Commissioner of Chitral and his staff had been Kata Sing's guests for one night during the "bira mor", when they all visited the valley at his request. His reputation and position had therefore been enhanced not only among the Kalash, but in the larger Chitral District.
About ten days after the feast, a hunting party comprised of local Chitrali government officials arrived in Rombour. They had come to shoot markhor which are forced down by heavy snows from the higher altitudes of the Hindu Kush to winter in the hills above the Kalash valleys. These men came directly to Kata Sing's house where they expected to be put up in his guest room and fed. Kata Sing, who immediately had to slaughter more animals (rams) to feed these guests, expressed privately that this is what his reputation as a great host had brought him, still further expenses! There are, however, eventual pay-offs for him in co-operating with these contacts. In future, local government officials in charge of duties such as issuing cutting permits in the forests, or dispensing AID wheat and other government subsidies, are more likely to be responsive should Kata Sing ever approach them with requests.

With a road and its encumbent developments such as tourist hotels and stores pending in Rombour, there are already a number of Kalash men in the valley scheming to become a part of these future changes. One of these men is Kata Sing's own brother-in-law. It is impossible to say from this distance what involvements Kata Sing, as one of the most influential men in the community, is likely to have in these developments. Although hospitable by custom, he remains aloof from tourists and at times is even contemptuous and mocking of outsiders. His enhanced powers and influence now permit him to call upon a wider circle of men and resources, but I suspect he is more likely to apply his energies to traditional pursuits such as rebuilding the "ba·shā·lé" (menstrual hut), a promise which he made at the feast.

Moreover, Kata Sing is entering a time in his life where his production of foodstuffs must be substantial to meet the needs of his extended family. His offspring are still relatively young and the family is not likely to disband in the near future. Two of his seven boys married the same year as the "bira mor"
and Kata Sing had to pay bride-prices for both new wives. This also means that soon there will be more children to provide for. One other son he is supporting at a government school in the Chitral Valley and he soon intends to send a second son there. Their boarding expenses must be met in cash and one school boy is too costly an undertaking for most Kalash families, not to mention the expenses of two.

Kata Sing dedicated his "bira mor" to his father, Buda who is at present an old man. The family must begin to save their wealth now in preparation for giving Buda a "sha•rū•gah" funeral feast, the most difficult and costly undertaking in Kalash culture (see Chapter 4, section vi). The actual repercussions in Kata Sing's life as a result of hosting "bira mor" is a task for future fieldwork.

iv) Conclusion:

This thesis has explored the complexities of merit feasting, a multi-functional exchange phenomenon which links economic, social, political and religious dimensions of Kalash culture. I have tried to show that while their habitat has the potential of supporting such an exchange system, individual industry in agriculture and animal husbandry is the critical economic factor. The wealth produced as a result of this human labor must then be redistributed and thus transformed into prestige and power—religious, social and political—by means of the institution of the feast.

Individuals achieve high positions in an informal Kalash political hierarchy by developing and exhibiting such qualities as, for example, insight into the structural working of their society coupled with organizational skills, which also make feast-givers successful aspirants for 'rank'. Feasting also reflects Kalash social organization, particularly their bilateral kinship structure and the lifetime attachments of women to their natal clans.

Ample details and examples have been included which indicate
that feasting is more than a secular event. The Kalash assert that wealth is god-given, and must be generously redistributed through individual hospitality and public feast-giving, if the gods are to continue to bestow their blessings upon a man, his family, and clan.

The feasts function as a kind of cultural performance, and provide the opportunity to partake in the artistic forms evolved within this technically austere but orally rich cultural tradition. Feasts also provide a forum at which the Kalash tribal community may share information and ideas in a broader ambience than the limited circle which day to day intercourse usually permits.

The historical and cultural riches of these people deserve better than their present ethnographic obscurity. Due to the lack of written sources on the Kalash, and a total absence of documentation on the subject of their feasting exchange system, I have frequently favored exposition over brevity in this thesis in the hope that this work might provide a first step towards making one of the Kalash's main forms of celebration more widely appreciated.

Due to rapid social changes, there appears to be an ever-diminishing opportunity in which it will be possible to document these last vestiges of Kafir culture. However, it is not yet too late, and it is my sincere hope that the first signs of a cultural renaissance, which is presently occurring among certain groups of the Kalash population, will bear fruit for their sakes and because it will generate further opportunities for documenting this unique way of life.
Appendix 1: Poetry and Metaphor

i) Poetry:

Conversion to Islam is on the increase among the Kalash. Tribal people of all ages and for a variety of reasons - illness, poverty, threats from Muslims - are opting for conversion as the solution to their life crises. The following vignette describes the conversion to Islam of one of the most famous contemporary composers and singers from Rombour Valley, a community which preserves more of the traditional Kafir beliefs and practices than the other two valleys. However, increasingly rapid conversion to Islam is only one indication that Rombour society is threatened by the same changes that are breaking down traditional culture in Birir and Bomboret. It is this type of cultural wealth which is being lost when people deny their traditional culture by converting to Islam.

While still a Kalash, Jouw Shah composed three love songs for his wife, a woman with whom he was deeply in love, but, so it seems, remained with him more out of social convention than personal preference. Shortly after composing the last of these songs in the early 1960's, he suddenly converted to Islam.

While he had been caring for his goats in the high pastures he dreamt of making love with a mountain fairy. Jouw Shah's goats were later found abandoned on the slopes by some other Kalash shepherds. It was not until afterwards that they came to know he had fled to Chitral and converted to Islam. He was always considered to be a highly emotional man, perhaps a little imbalanced, and his personality is described as "a·sh·ki", very romantic and passionate.

He now roams about the Chitral District as a "ma·lung" or Muslim holy man. The Chitralis have given him the name "Buzuruk" (Baraka), "the one in touch with the spirit", more in fun than fact. The Chitralis, as do the Kalash, consider him now to be completely deranged. He is the constant object of mockery and teasing by the merchants as he passes through the Chitrali bazaar with his wild and unkempt appearance. Since his conversion
he has never again spoken a word of Kalasha. His wife married again to a Kalasha man from Bomboret and his two teenage children are cared for by their grandfather in Rombour Valley. They avoid mentioning him and ignore the frequent teasing that accompanies reports of their father's doings in the Chitral Valley.

**Jouw Shah's Love Songs:** (Sung in a melodically sparse, epic style of singing called "dra·zeiy·lik")

Listen to these words my sweet,  
If it were up to me our love, yours and mine,  
would last until the end of time.

Even if just as brief as the moment  
when the cadmuim cadence blackbird,  
Alights and balances upon a green nimbus slender willow,  
I long to catch a glimpse of you.

The blossoms of the silver sallow and the pale fuchsia grape  
have a fragrance as similar as two sisters.  
That fragrance, like our love  
I want to hold cupped inside my hands forever.

That beau of yours, he's just a wild flower  
and I give to you this warning:  
'there are no surprises in his promises.  
Tomorrow morning his love for you will blossom  
but by that same evening, it will have withered away and died'.

My love for you is all ecstacy  
matched only by the brilliance of the first ray of light  
that breaks over the mountain top at dawn.

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This next song was composed later and slightly predates Jouw Shah's conversion to Islam.

I've searched but cannot find the alpine grass  
that makes all women ache for men.  
Oh! how I've searched to find that grass  
and put some in my pocket.  
And once again, I then recall that love me she does not -  
Oh! how I long to leave this earth!  
But, only if I had that 'love grass'  
She's never look again into the fact of any other.

In despair, I went up to the alpine meadows  
looking for a fairy lover,  
And when I came upon her - captured by her youth and grace  
She only said to me:  
"But you already have a lover! How is it that she does not fill your thoughts?"
Then I denied I had a wife, feigned ignorance, pretended I had none. Only then would she take me and I lied so I could bury my sorrow in her sweetness.

ii) **Metaphor:**

The focus on merit feasting in this thesis has inevitably limited the possibilities for exploring other subjects also documented while doing fieldwork among the Kalash, particularly the wealth of oral forms; songs, poetry, eulogies, etc. Kalash oral traditions are abundantly rich in metaphor and the following are just a few example of this cultural wealth.

a) **Effects of the local ecology (fauna) upon poetic imagery:**

The feathers of the Himalayan pheasant are prized as symbols of bravery and rank. In Kalash stories and songs the image of the pheasant is a double metaphor used to denote several different things, depending upon the context in which it is used. It may mean the act of "beating a man", with the blood running from the victim's head perceived to be as colorful as the pheasant's head. In another context, a poet might intend the word to refer to a "beautiful woman" whose braids of hair "chû.e ăk" are likened to the rich, iridescent top knot which distinguishes the plumage of this monal pheasant. Only the name of the bird will be mentioned in the songs and the listener understands the meaning from the context of the whole story.

b) **Position as an ethnic minority:**

The Kalash were 'bondsmen' of the Chitrali rulers for centuries. Speaking a separate language gave them a certain privacy or protection against these more numerous and dominant Kho people, the opportunity to express their true feelings despite the presence of 'outsiders'. Metaphors, many of which are understood only among themselves, further facilitates this type of honest public disclosure. There are more than a dozen different such expressions by which the Kalash refer to their Muslim neighbours, both Chitrals and Nuristanis. One name for
the Chitralis, and particularly the royal family, is "go•ra pa•chçek•rik bouw", "the army of white butterflies". This image captures their impression of the Chitrali royal courts whose administrators, dressed in fine clothes, strolled about issuing orders to subjugated people including the Kalash upon whose labor they maintained their lives of leisure. Euphemistically, Kalash conversing to Islam is called "pæk go•ra pa•chçek•rik bouw thi ouw", "a sudden 'transformation' into pure white 'Muslim' butterflies". c) Kinship:

In Chapter 3, section viii, I mentioned that I was unaware of any Kalash terms which refer to a kinship group larger than the "ku•shün" (extended family) but smaller than the "kum" (clan) such as major or minor lineage branches. There are, however, in Kalash poetry and song several metaphors which refer to different aspects of these extended patrilineal kinship groups. One example is "ma•chçek•ik mær", "honey-bee hive". This symbolizes all the male members who comprise the major economic units within a clan. If the clan is numerically small, this expression would refer to all the clan brothers, but if it is large, then it means all the men of a major lineage branch who pool their energies and resources. In light of the particular symbolic values expressed in Kalash culture, this is a very poignant metaphor. Men are the sole keepers of the bee-hives usually built into the walls of the goat-sheds, areas which are out of bounds to women. The queen-bee is called "wazir", a "minister", who for the Kalash, is definitely male. Honey is a sacred substance that is never consumed by women. This restriction is part of a multiple association between the sacred male community, "gró•wei", honey, and the male goat, symbol of the wealth of the clan, whose meat is also strictly forbidden to women. The image conjured up by this metaphor, is the productivity of the bees, 'men of the lineage (or clan)' whose individual works add to the prosperity of the whole hive, ('clan'). In a slightly different form it is called "ba•loush ma•chçek•ik mær", "old bee hive", indicating that it is the older,
more established hives, (extended households) that are the wealthiest and most productive. "Ma·chêr·ik ḟeṣ", the "line of honey bees" or "ma·chêr·ik mâr ū·gu·zis", the "swarming honey bee hive" symbolizes the expansion of the number of male members in a clan. Another most effective poetic usage is "ma·chêr·ik mâr am·bru·chi sa·nō", the "bee hive covered by vines laden with grapes" symbolizing the "men of a clan blessed with a sufficient number of women, sisters, wives, and daughters". Bunches of grapes on a vine are a metaphor also used to describe a woman who is wearing a very ornate costume. If a man calls out across a field to a woman thanking her for bringing him grapes, he is playfully inviting her to be his lover.

Another metaphor used to symbolize a prosperous extended household involves the special way in which doors are constructed for domestic dwellings. These doors, hewn from single slabs of wood, are not attached with hinges but use an axle design found throughout Kafiristan. There are, from this same piece of wood, projections on the top and bottom of one edge which are inserted into sockets in the door frame. When opening and closing the door, these wooden projections revolve inside the two sockets. This feature, called "pa·gōi·yuk dur ("pa·gōi·yuk shoo" is walking with a limp!) is used metaphorically to mean the prosperity and continuance of the occupants of the household "ku·shūn". If the household is a large one then presumably the door swings open and closed frequently with all their comings and goings.
Appendix 2: History & Language

1) History:

Although presently confined to three small, secluded valleys, the Kalash people have lived in the Chitral area for about a millenium. Most of the information in the following brief historical account has been taken from a history of the area called *Tarikh-e Citral* written some years ago by a Persian, Ghulam Murtaza. Because this account is only available in Persian or Urdu, Wazir Ali Shah kindly translated some relevant portions for me in 1977.

It was an area close to "two of the most important migration routes used by the Indo-Aryan invaders: the Oxus-Wakkan Corridor in the north, and the Kabul Valley in the south." (Jettmar, 1974: ix) In the first millenium B.C., the area was controlled by the early Darian Iranians, and was the most easterly extension of their Zoroastrian province centered in the Balk, close to the present Afghan town of Mazar-i-Sharif. (Murtaza, 1961) The Chinese assumed power in the first century B.C. but were themselves overcome by the Kushans, under King Kanishka in the second century A.D. Along with the early pagan (perhaps Kafir) religion of the region, Buddhism also flourished under the Kushans, notably in the Swat Valley and Taxila.

In the seventh century A.D. the Chinese again re-annexed the area, which they called 'Balor'. After establishing their suzerainty they made the local populations pay annual tribute to them, including boxes of a special type of silk worm. In order for local rulers to rise to power, they had first to appease the Chinese. At the beginning of the eighth century, during the rule of one such local chief, much of the area was converted to Islam by invading Arab forces who eventually pushed as far north and east as Chinese Turkestan.

Also according to Murtaza's Persian history, the Kalash

*According to early Chinese records, one famous expedition into this area was led by a General Kao Hsien-Chih in 747 A.D. (A. Stein, 1912:65)
arrived in the Chitral area from the Bashgal region in the tenth century. They had been pushed out by other Kafir tribes (presumably the Kom and the Kati) who were in turn being pressed by invading Islamic groups from the west. The latter groups were probably the Pathans, one of the earliest Middle Eastern peoples to embrace Islam. They themselves moved into the eastern regions of Afghanistan from about the ninth to the twelfth centuries A.D. (O. Caroe, 1958)

In Kalash oral histories they came originally from a place called 'Tsiam'. Some informants guessed that it was the area around the town of Chaga Sari in present day eastern Afghanistan. This seems doubtful, however, and Chaga Sari was probably an area which they inhabited having migrated originally from further north. Tsiam is reputed to be the original home of the Kalash prophet messenger god, "Balumein", who returns annually to the valleys during the winter solstice festival, "Chau Mats", to receive the people's prayers.

Morgenstierne was told in the field that the women's custom of wearing cowrie-studded caps also originated in Tsiam, where the Kalash lived before coming to live in the Waigal, a valley in present day Nuristan. (1973:161)

The Kalash oral histories mention another place known as 'Yarkhan', which one Kalash conjectured to be somewhere in the ancient province of Badakhshan. Yarkhand, of course, was an ancient Buddhist center located in present day western Sinkiang province of China. Many Kalash beliefs and institutions are thought to have originated in Yarkhan. One example is the practice of shamanism, which, as legend has it, was taught to a Kalash boy named Jan Du rask by the famous Yarkhan shaman, Rai helk Ja ra heim. This legend "says" that Ja ra heim was supposed to have died suddenly after placing the small cutting from a grape-vine into his mouth. The grape-vine sprouted out of his coffin and grew grapes from which the Kalash made wine, their traditional intoxicant. Presumably, from the above evidence, this intoxicant was also a favorite in Yarkhan.

Kalash oral history also refers to a metal pillar, "chim br tay", which emerged out of the earth at a place in
Yarkhan. This quasi-history describes a violent wind that blew in Yarkhan for several days. It did not subside until the blood of a sacrificial bull had been poured into a strange hole that had mysteriously appeared in the earth. Subsequently, this slender (a half metre in diameter) metal pillar, covered with intricate designs called "ri·ki·ni", emerged out of the hole. The famous Kalash shaman, Nagga Dhar, (said to have lived for over five hundred years), copied the motifs from this Yarkhani metal pillar by carving them into a piece of wood. He then brought the wood to 'Wet·desh". a place in modern-day Nuristan. There he ordered a temple, "han" to be built and beautified by using these "ri·ki·ni" motifs. This temple was then dedicated to the Household (Clan) Goddess, Jeshtak, which became the first clan temple, "ri·ki·ni han" (Jeshtakhan) in the area. In order to build similar clan temples when the Kalash migrated to their present habitat, branches of holly oak, symbol of Jeshtak, were brought from 'Wet·desh" to consecrate the new temples. According to Robertson, near a great temple in 'Wet·desh" (in 1892) there was a famous hole that the Kafirs said went down into the under-world. "Occasionally, not more than once in many years, a horse is obtained and sacrificed at this spot. " (1896:393) (See Sketch #1).

There is, however, no conclusive evidence as to where these places were actually located. Their real origins must be traced through other avenues, such as extensive linguistic or archeological research.

Louis Dupree, an American Field Staff Officer in Afghanistan up until 1978 says that:

"It is possible that the Kafirs represent the easternmost extension of the first major explosion (3rd-2nd millenium B.C.) of Indo-European speakers from South Russia and Central Asia." (975:10-11)

The relationship of the Kalash to the other Kafir groups requires further study, particularly the tribes located in the Waigal and Prasun valleys of present day Nuristan.

Morgenstierne claims that the Kalash moved from Tsiam
to the Waigal Valley before moving to the Chitral District. The Waigalis (now also Muslim since 1896), are one of the five Afghan Kafir groups who speak a separate language which they themselves call 'Kalashum'. This is not to be confused with the language the Kalash speak, which they call 'Kalasha'. More linguistic work needs to be done to compare what is known about both these languages before anything definite can be said about their relationship.* Throughout Kafiristan, there have been a wide range of unique cultural features, some of them restricted to particular locations and others shared by many or most of the various Kafir groups. (Morgenstierne, 1974) The Kalash are presently neighbours of the Kom/Kati tribes who live in the Bashgal Valley. From works such as Robertson's classical ethnography on the area plus a few other sources, it is possible to draw some parallels between the Kalash and the Kom/Katis which was done in this thesis throughout the discussions on merit feasting.

On their arrival into what is now the Chitral District, the Kalash claim that they encountered an indigenous population living in the Kunar area and its smaller side valleys whom they called "Ba•la•lik (leik)". The latter were a short, "darker-skinned" people whom the Kalash subjugated, co-opted into their armies, and eventually intermarried with. "Lik (leik)" is a diminutive suffix in Kalash language, and it seems too much of a coincidence that these 'little' or perhaps 'lesser Bala' were not the same people who occupied the earlier Chinese Empire called "Balor".

Some of the most powerful Kalash shamans are believed to have been Ba•la•lik. In Bomboret Valley, the only village on

*There is presently a clan ('Wa•ko•kaïy') in Balanguru village in Rombour Valley who are said to have come directly from the Waigal and who (until the time of the conversion to Islam) held ancestral lands there. It seems also that before the conversion, there was some exchange of women between Kalash valleys and the Waigal and some Kalash men had "da•ri", or "blood brothers" amongst the Waigalis.
the south bank of the river, "Sarikjouw", (literally, the 'gathering place'), reputed to have been an old Baishlylik settlement, was the birthplace of the very famous shaman, Nanga Dhar.*

Until the fourteenth century, the Kalash controlled the whole of the southern Chitral District, known as Kashgar,** from Ashret near Lowari Tops Pass (4,500 metres altitude) which leads over Swat Valley, north to the village of Reshun which marks the division between upper and lower Chitral. This area includes some major side valleys which were also once Kalash speaking, such as Shishi Kui, Jinjoret, and Urtsun and the many villages of Drosh, Gahirat, Ayun, Urgotch, and Chitral town itself. According to Wazir Ali Shah's translation of the Persian manuscript, the last Kalash King of Chitral was "Bu•ṣr•sin•ga". He was the apical ancestor of the present day Kalash clan of Brun village in Bomboret Valley, also called "Bu•ṣr•sin•ga".

In 1320 A.D., most of Upper Chitral was conquered by an Ismaili Mongol Chief, Taj Mugul, and since then the majority (about 80%) of Chitralis have belonged to the Ismaili sect of Islam. About the same time, a Sunni Moslem of the Rais 'tribe', called Shah Nadir, (probably a Turkoman Chief), also swept down from the north and occupied the area up to and including Chitral town. The Kalash King Bu•ṣr•sin•ga was pushed back into Bomboret Valley. From then on, the Muslims continually encroached upon the Kafir Kashgar region until gradually all of the southern centers except Birir, Bomboret, and Rombour had been converted to Islam.

*This village gets its name from a ritual called "Saratzari", performed at the onset of the Kalash winter solstice festival. On this day all the young people go into the forest to collect wood and in the late afternoon, the boys and girls build two huge separate fires close to "Sarikjouw". The object is to see who can raise the biggest volume of smoke. If the smoke blows up and into the jungle, this is an auspicious sign that the forest harvest, ie. mushrooms and a type of edible conifer seed will be plentiful, and that health and prosperity will come to the Kalash in the New Year.

**Kashgar is also the name of an ancient town located near Yarkhand in Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang).
The Kalash oral histories, which are still sung at the festivals, are full of references to these Muslim conquests of the area.

ii) Language:

Due to the isolation of the human populations in this mountainous region in north west India, many separate languages and dialects have evolved over the millenium. Except for Burushaski, the language of Hunza which has no known relatives, all the languages of this region belong to the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European languages. The languages of the Rig Veda in India and the Avesta in Iran are the oldest surviving representatives of these Indo-Iranian languages. (Morgenstierne, 1974:1)

Morgenstierne's analysis shows that the languages of the Kafir (now Muslim) tribes west of the Hindu Kush are a sub-group called 'Kafiri' which separated off much earlier from Indo-Iranian than did the languages of the Kalas or the Chitrals. This linguist claims that the 'Kafiri' languages, of which there are four or five; Kati, Prasun (Wasi), Waigali, Ashkun, (and Demeli) represent the languages spoken by the advance-guard of Indo-Iranian invaders moving south from Central Asia. They form a link between the ancient Avestan (Iranian) languages and Old Sanskrit, and contain elements which suggest an even earlier prototype of the ancient Indo-Iranian mother language. Not being a linguist, I am not competent to deal with the basis of this argument. However, without going into too much detail, one example of this is the Avestan palatal  \( k \) which becomes a palatal and dental sibilant  \( sh \) in Sanskrit but, in Kafiri it is a dental affricate  \( ts \). This latter sound opens up a whole new range of possibilities as to what the prototype of ancient Indo-Iranian was like. (Ibid:6-7)

Kafiri languages gave up all traces of Indo-Iranian aspiration at a very early pre-Vedic time (Ibid:6) whereas 'Kalasha', the language of the Kalash, has retained a great many of the aspirated sounds. There has been much controversy amongst linguists about how to classify the numerous language groups of
this area. Current views among other experts on this region favor Morgenstierne's claim that Kalash is a purely Old Indian language which separated off about or after the time of Vedic Indian. Structurally, Kalash is closely related to Khowar and along with this language, plus Kashmiri, Kohistani, Gawar-Bati (of the lower Kunar Valley), Pashai, and Tirahi (spoken between Jalalabad and the Khyber) are conveniently labelled as a subgroup of Old Indian called Dardic. Dard, however, rather than being a linguistic category is a geographical one with quite indistinct boundaries. The distinguishing features of this language sub-group is their retention of many ancient sounds such as the aspirant sh. One of the group, Khowar, spoken by the Chitralis is:

"in many respects the most archaic of all modern Indian languages, retaining a great part of Sanskrit case inflection and...many whole works in nearly Sanskrit form." (Ibid:3)

Because Kalash language is historically so closely connected to Khowar, all the Kalash are bilingual and, with the ever-increasing mingling between the two people, it is inevitable for an admixture to occur. I mentioned that this is presently happening in Birir Valley and Khowar and may eventually absorb or obscure Kalash language altogether, as has been the case in many of the previously Kalash pockets in the Southern Chitral Valley.
Illustration 1: Men butchering goats at a merit feast using a technique of cleaning the intestines by blowing water through the coils. This technique has sparked a poetic metaphor "cha·kur·una uk kadda", meaning a Kalash who cleverly works him or herself into favour with an unsuspecting person like "water being blown through the coil-intestines of a slaughtered animal".
Illustration 2: Kalash orators from Rombour and Birir valleys gathered together at a "sa•ri•gk" merit feast for "clan daughters" in Rombour, October 1977. The man in the center, Uk Pim ("Drink Water") is one of the most renowned singers in Birir. As all his 'gifts' ('treasure' money, seed garlands, cotton kerchiefs, and woven neck bands) indicate, his skills are much appreciated in Rombour valley where the oral traditions are still a very vital aspect of the culture.
Illustration 3: Three Kalash dancing girls at the Spring Festival, Joeshi, in Bomboret Valley. Their dress illustrates the exaggeration of costume that has occurred due to the ill-effects of tourism in the tribal valleys. The heavy fluted silver neck rings, worn by the two girls on the left are objects traditionally reserved for the highest ranking warriors in the Bashgal Valley, now in Nuristan. These symbols and others, such as the chains around their skirts which once symbolized a "bira mor" type feast done in the Bashgal, have now been freely adapted by Kalash women as decoration. The girl on the extreme right has since converted to Islam.
Illustration 4: A view of the corral and shepherd's living quarters called "is-thā" in the alpine meadows of the Hindu Kush in an area known as "Chi-mik son". This shed, made of gnarled juniper logs, is used annually by the men of the Zuf clan of Balanguru village, Rombour Valley. At about 14,500 feet in altitude, it is the highest pasturage and is utilized from July to September before moving the animals back down to about 12,000 feet. These lower areas are used at the start of the alpine season and again at the end.
Illustration 5: Two clan plaques of the Mu·ti·mi·rgh (Kalashagrom village) and the Ba·l£·r£h clan (of Grom village) in Rombour Valley. The apical ancestors of these two clans, Mutimir and Ba·l£ were brothers and two of the four sons of Bä·ji. This latter individual was the grandson of the founding ancestor of Rombour, Adabok.

These plaques are placed on a sacred altar, "ma·de·rā", which is incised with "ri·ki·ni chot", "carved designs" (see Chapter 3, footnote #1), and then placed inside the Clan/Household Goddess Temple, "Jeshtakhan". These objects are adorned with branches of sacred holly oak, symbols of "Jeshtak". The present habitat of the Kalash is not suitable for raising horses however, the carved horse-heads, a common motif on most Kalash altars, indicates their early origins as Vedic equestrian herdsmen of Central Asia.
Illustration 6: A "ja·mi·li"("clan daughter") finger-weaving a decorative neck band called "shu·man" or "chi·troy·uk", which are presented at merit feasts to 'men of rank' by the women and by their own clan brothers. The latter request their sisters to make these prestige items in advance as they prepare to host a merit feast.
Illustration 7: The sacred holly oak tree located at the center of the 'mandala-type', open-air site of Sajigor in Rombour. This tree has a correspondence with the magical pillar which leads to the underworld home of the ancestors. The goat horns attached to the trunk are metaphorically called "Sajigor sa·ri·fa", "the gift of (new) clothes for the god". These are horns from male goats sacrificed to Sajigor at certain merit feasts, for example, "bira mor". They symbolize the obeisance of the feast giver to the god.
Illustration 8: Driving the sacred male goats, during a "bira mor" merit feast up the valley to sacrifice them to the god, Sajigor. These mature male goats are the most sacred wealth of the Kalash and their sacrifice symbolizes the essence of feasting. The host has put four to six years of labor into raising these animals, only to then surrender them in a few short hours as sacrificial offerings to the god.
Before a man can ritually sacrifice a goat, he must purify himself by first washing his arms and legs. Then a second man splashes him with water that must pass through the smoke of a burning juniper branch before it strikes him. After this ritual, the individual is called "on•jesh•ya moch" and may touch only the goat, the knife, and the sacrificial blood. Both these men, father and son, belong to the hereditary priestly lineage of the Ba•l£•Ý£h clan in Rombour Valley.
Illustration 10: The sacrificial scene at the Sajigor altar during Kata Sing's "bira mor" feast. A sacred male goat is being killed by an "on·jesh·ta moch", "purified man" (see Illustration 9), who after pours cupped handfuls of the blood onto the juniper fire and then the god's altar (off the picture to the left). The men behind are calling prayers to ask Sajigor to accept the offerings of the goats. Photograph by Saifullah Jan, Bâ·ga·li·ä clan, Rombour.
Illustration 11: The Rombour shaman "dehar", Janduli Khan of the Dę-rum lineage, Mu•ti•mi•regh clan. While working in Karachi in the late 1960's, this individual dreamt he was seduced by fairies. He returned immediately to Northern Pakistan and became a shaman. He is famous for his ability to have prophetic dreams foretelling such things as natural calamities.
Illustration 12: Orators at a "sa·ri·eck" ("feast for the clan daughters"), re-telling the accomplishments of the ancestors of the host's clan. On the right is Baraman, son of the now deceased Lampson who is still described as being "as sweet as the milk of a spirit lamb". These men belong to the hereditary priestly lineage of the Bala·l£·zh clan. Baraman is presently the holder of the "gatch", "secret songs", given to him by his father and which he will pass on to one of his own seven sons. The man on the left (foreground) is Kush Nawaz, Bala·l£·zh clan, and presently the most talented orator in all three Kalash valleys.
Illustration 13: "Shā•ra kund.ţi•li", the "markhor hide (hair) moccasins", symbols of rank which may be worn only after a man has performed certain feasts. If an individual, his father or grandfather, has done "bira mor", then this man (or boy) may wear these moccasins at festivals and he must also be buried in them when he dies. Other feasts which then qualify the host to wear these shoes are "sha•rū•gah" (Chapter 4, section vi), "gōnt wass", and "pi•ma•sa", (Chapter 4, section vii, a) and b).
Illustration 14: Feeding the guests at "sa·ri·gk" feast for the clan daughters' hosted by the Dra·mg·se clan in October, 1977. (See Chapter 4, section v.) After a man (or his father or grandfather) have achieved a certain rank by performing feasts, they are permitted to sit outside the house on a "han·yak", the low Kalash "stools". Witnessing the host's 'goat wealth' at a "bira mor", those men who have previously done this feast sit on "han·yaks" on the 'pure' roofs of the goat sheds, this being one of the highest distinctions that a man may achieve. (See Chapter 5, section iii a.)
Illustration 15: Cowrie-shell whorl called "kə̀ra" (shield) sewn on the back of a Kalash woman's headdress. Traditionally in the Bashgal, this shield symbol was reserved for men of the "ley-mach", "man-killer" rank. An old Kalash story recounts the bravery of a "ja·mi·li" ("daughter") of the prestigious Bar·a·mōuk clan in Bomboret. A "ti·ri·wē·ri", "bad spirit", was eating the babies in the menstrual hut and the woman plotted and killed it. Achieving the rank of 'man-killer', she was the first woman permitted to wear the shield symbol on her headdress, "ko·pās".
Illustration 16: "Cheish" ("plume") made from braided wheat stalks and tipped with the iridescent feathers of a Himalayan pheasant. Women sometimes make "cheish" for their lovers (like the one in the photograph) which the man will affix to his hat brim. When a man is giving a feast celebrating killing a leopard, the "cheish" has three feathers (stalks) or if the victim was a man, then the plume, called "a·se·mal" has nine feathers.
Illustration 17: A Kalash woman convert to Islam, "Shaikh", the widow of the deceased Dramec clanman, Gulap Din. (See Chapter 4, section iv.) Despite being forced to become Muslim in the mid-1950's for killing a man, Gulap Din was the last Kalash to give a 'man-killer' merit feast, celebrating the occasion. The wives and children of the three men involved in this incident were also forced to convert. Twenty years later, this woman, excluded from Kalash festivities, still bemoans her loss of 'Kafir' status.
Illustration 18: A "ja·mi·li", "daughter/sister" of the Mu·ti·mi·rgh clan at Kata Sing's "bira mor" feast, kissing her "waïy", "share" of her natal clan's livestock as it is being presented to her. In appreciation of the woman's work at her brother's feast, custom prescribes that she be given at least one, year old goat. This act is part of the Kalash concept of "ri·zaï", "duty" of a brother towards the women of his clan. If he is generous towards his 'sisters', they will pray for his future health and prosperity.
Illustration 19: Distributing 'clarified butter' at the Dra'mε.sq clan's "sa·ri·צק", feast for the "clan daughters", in Rombour, October 1977. Only a man who has himself performed this feast is permitted the honor of distributing the portions, giving an extra ladleful to each man who has performed the big feasts, e.g. "sa·ri·צק", "bira mor", or "sha·רְפְגָה". The 'ghee' is kept hot in a "krish·na chi·دين", an "iron cooking pot" (worth five female goats), made by a Bashgali craftsman in pre-conversion Nuristan.
Illustration 20: "Ja·mi·li", "sisters/daughters" of the Mu·ti·mi·rgh clan performing their "ri·zäl", "duty" to their natal clan by cooking the large, 'double-handful' breads called "dro·chë·nik", (symbols of wealth and generosity) at Kata Sing's "bira mor" in Rombour, November 1977. (See Illustration 18.)
Illustration 21: The "mi·ein moch", "divider-men" of food apportioning all the correct shares to each individual in the Rombour community, plus Muslims and Kalash guests from other valleys. These 'divider-men' must know all the persons in the valleys, as well as their ranks and statuses. They will give those who have achieved formal rank extra portions of meat and butter.
Illustration 22: Two basketfuls of food, distributed at the Drami clan's "sa·ri·gk" feast and destined for one Rombour household. Each family sends two baskets, one for the women and one for the men, plus a third basket if any men are off up the valley caring for the goats. Each valley resident (Kalash) or guest receives three of the 'double breads' at each meal served at the feast, plus a portion of whatever garnishing accompanies them, in this case; salt gravy, meat, and clarified butter.
Illustration 23: Costume worn by a Kalash 'man of rank'. Attached to the soft, wool Chitrali cap is a Himalayan pheasant feather plume, symbol of a leopard or 'man-killer'. Around his neck are "shu·män", "bands" (symbols of respect and prestige) woven by the 'clan daughters', who also make the garlands of walnut and apricot seeds, gifts which they give to honor prestigious men and guests. He is wearing the loose, white sheep's wool pants, "bōot", which stand for his membership in the "grō·wei", "sacred male community" of the Kalash. On his feet are the markhor hide moccasins, that only men who have performed certain big merit feasts are permitted to wear. The barrel-shaped drum, called "dā·hū" is beaten with a stick held in the right hand of the "na·moosi", ranked man. The symbols woven onto the puttees wrapped around his calves represent horns of the sacred male goats.
Illustration 24: A commemorative grave effigy called "gan·douw", depicted wearing all the Kalash symbols of rank. This figure is carved one year after the death of a high ranking man who has either done the "sha·ru·gah" merit feast, or had it performed for him as a funeral by his clansmen, (sons and brothers). This particular figure is in the graveyard in Krakal village, Bomboret valley.
Illustration 25: Commemorative ancestor figure called "kun•du•reik", carved one year after the death of a man who has performed the merit feast "sha•ru•gah". The figure is seated upon a low stool, "han•yak", symbol of rank. It is placed either at the entrance way to the village of the deceased man or in one of his fields. After installation, the sacrificial blood of a sacred male goat is splashed onto its face. This statue, at the entrance to Brun village, Bomboret, is for a Bad•zei•kaiy man who died during the 1940's.
Illustration 26: Buda, a patriarch of the Mustimiyrg clan and father of the host of the 1977 Rombour "bira mor", Kata Sing. Because this latter individual dedicated his feast to Buda, he is now eligible for the special funeral feast, "sha·rū·gah". Mounted on horseback, a privilege reserved for those who have hosted "bir mor", he is wearing symbols of rank including a 'silk' robe, neck bands and garlands, and a (pheasant) feathered hat plume.
Illustration 27: An exhausted but successful aspirant for the rank of "bir mor", Kata Sing, giving a speech on the final morning of the three day festivities. A "ja\text{mi\text{\textbullet\text{li}}}" ("daughter/sister") of the Mu\text{\textbullet\text{ti\textbullet\text{mi\textbullet\text{r\textbullet\text{e}}}h} clan is about to honor him with another apricot seed garland.
Illustration 28: A candid shot of Kata Sing (seated on the left), host of the "bira mor" merit feast, with a character so tough and resilient he often appears as an exaggerated self parody.
Illustration 29: Carved wooden "mā·lē·ri" post erected at Sajigor altar, and symbolizing a "bira mor" merit feast. Each time a man hosts "bira mor" in Rombour valley, he must refurbish the Sajigor site with two new, wooden benches and four "mā·lē·ri" posts. These are carved in abstract, anthropomorphic shapes with a 'feathered plume' top-knot ("cheish" - see Illustration 16), a Gordian knot design incised on the 'head' and on this example, a cross-design on the 'torso'. The holly oak grove in which the Sajigor altar is located is pictured in the background.
Illustration 30: On the first day of the actual festivities of Kata Sing's "bira mor" when the Mu·ti·mi·r̠n "ja·mî·li"("clan daughters/sisters") returned to their natal village and garlanded their clan brothers with apricot seed necklaces and finger-woven bands.
Illustration 31: The scene on the roof of one of the Multi·mi·rgh clansman's house on the first morning of the festive proceedings of Kata Sing's "bira mor". All the men of rank from the other two valleys, Birir and Bomboret, gathered on this roof top to be formally greeted by the host and given gifts appropriate to their rank.
The Kalash attribute many of their beliefs and institutions including wine making, shamanism, and certain religious decorative motifs, to an ancient cultural center which they call Yarkhan. This drawing illustrates a design called "ri·ki·ni chot" which, according to Kalash oral histories, was engraved into a slender metal pillar that emerged out of the earth at a place in Yarkhan. This metal pillar is said to have led down into the underworld. The legend says that a famous Kalash shaman, Nanga Dghar, copied the motifs by carving them into a piece of wood, which he then brought to "Wet·dghsh" (Parsun Valley) in former Kafiristan. There he ordered temples dedicated to the clan/household goddess built and beautified with these designs. When the Kalash migrated to the Chitral District a millenium ago, they built clan temples and decorated them with these "ri·ki·ni chot" designs. The form in the drawing on which these "ri·ki·ni chot" are shown is a "dā·dush", "capital", one of which caps each of the four central wooden pillars that support a Central Asian lantern-type roof in the Kalash clan temples, "Jeshtakhan" (see Appendix 2: History and Language).
Sajigor's Altar

Sacred Deodar Tree (Raja Wai's black arrow)

Sacrificial Juniper Fire (Illustration 10)

Rock-pile Seat for 'men of rank'

"Sajigor.ās sa·ri·fā" (Illustration 7) Sacred Holly Oak Tree (Pillar to the 'underworld', "pa·la·loiy")

"ma·lē·ri" (Illustration 29)

Wooden Plank Benches for lesser 'ranked men''

SKETCH # 2 - Sajigor Altar, Rombour Valley.
Orthographic Guide to Kalâš Language

I have broken Kalâš words into syllables, a technique which proved to be of value while learning this non-literate language in the field and later, for remembering where the stress falls in the words. Dots which are placed 'mid-line' are used to indicate these syllabic breaks, for example "ja•mi•li" (clan daughters/sisters). This word also illustrates the notations to show length of vowels - an "i" is a long vowel and "i" is a short one. The syllable in which a long vowel is indicated is most often the one given the stress in the word. Vowels are frequently nasalized and this is indicated by a wavey line above the letter, for example "gr•wei" (sacred male community).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Kalâš Vowels:</th>
<th>English Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i (or í)</td>
<td>as the ee in beet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>as the i in bit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a (or á)</td>
<td>as the a in father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>as the a in what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u (or oo)</td>
<td>as the oo in boot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>as the u in put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>as the o in bow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e (or e)</td>
<td>as the e in keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>as the e in ravel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as the e in get</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between the a in hat and the e in get.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are also many in-between vowel sounds, e.g. ei, ai, ou, which are pronounced as a single sound rather than a diphthong as are the following. In the text, diphthongs are indicated by a ç drawn below the vowels, for example jeo (line). English equivalents are provided wherever possible.

| ie                      | as in the word   |
| eü                     | as in the word lieu|
| eë                     | as in the Christian name Leo |
| oü                     | as in the word coin |
| aí                     | as in the word out |
Consonants in Kalash: (Kalash is a branch of Old Indian – and since many of the consonants are similar to modern Hindi, they could be accurately rendered in devangri script.)

k, kh, g, gh, c, ch, j, jh, d, dh, n, nj (as the "ng" in the English word sing), t, th, p, ph (fh), b, bh, s, sh, m, l, h, w, y.

Retroflex:

t, th, d, dh, n, ch (as the "ch" in church), sh (as the "sh" in the English word shade)

γ - the retroflex γ is commonly found after many nasalized vowels e.g. "mgγ" (hive). In some instances this retroflex γ is barely voiced as in the word "phγ(r)γun·deik" (man-killer stick).

r - because in Kalash language it is always a rolled r, I have left it unmarked.

z - is like the "s" in pleasure or the "z" in azure.

X - is a gutteral aspirated sound also rendered as kh, for example, Khan.

For a fuller guide to the phonology and grammar of Kalash language see Georg Morgenstierne's "Notes on Kalasha", in Indo-Iranian Frontier Languages. (1973)
GLOSSARY OF KALASH WORDS & IDIOMS

Literal meanings wherever included are indicated by single quotation marks. See orthography for guide to pronunciation.

ai•ya mal: 'mother (double) bride-price' - the expensive (heavy) objects part of an original bride-price and recompensed in an elopement settlement to the previous husband (see 'dond').

ai•yn: millet.

A•laiy o kia ai•ya•li ža•wa dai ā?: What are you doing over there? (fucking your mothers?)

a la shing: to elope.

ar•mān: longing or unfulfilled sorrow.

a•s£•mal: Himalayan feathered plume with nine stalks, symbol of 'man-killer' rank.

atrozān: Kati nobility class in pre-conversion Bashgal.

Bad•žei•kaiy: prestigious clan in Brun village, Bomboret Valley.

Ba•gā•li•ā: low ranking clan with small number of households in Balanguru village, Rombour Valley.

Ba•gisht: protector god, responsible for irrigation and animal sacrifice in pre-conversion Kafiristan. Son of fertility Goddess De•san•i (equivalent of Sajigor).

bai•ra: violators of the Kalash incest rules which forbid marriage within seven generation in the patriline (outcaste 'slaves').

Ba•la•lik: indigenous inhabitants occupying the present Chitral District when Kalash migrated into the area about tenth century A.D.

Ba•lch•h: one of three high ranking clans in Rombour Valley.

ba•loush d•wa•lat: 'old (smelly) wealth'.

ba•loush ma•ch•r•ik mēf: 'old honey bee-hive', metaphor for the prosperity of long-established clans.
Ba·lu·mein: Kalash prophet messenger god who annually comes on horseback from Nuristan to Bomboret and Rombour Valleys during the winter solstice festival to receive the people's prayers.

ba·ri: artisan craftsman 'caste' of pre-conversion Nuristan.

ba·shā·lē: Kalash women's menstrual hut.

bash·i·kēn: women's funeral dirge.

bat: stones used to count objects, e.g. one stone represents twenty goats.

bat·yak: less than one year old goat.

ba·ya·ka·tā: 'permanent type' land sale.

ba·zu·rē rouw ṣā·ti,gā·aiy dra·nē: to slip in unnoticed through someone's sleeve (the king's) and come out at his neck with him in full, unsuspecting support.

bē·gār: traditional forced labor of Kalash men to King of Chitral.

bē·gar·us: a witness.

bhut: a malevolent spirit (bad fairy).

bhut goor: a small black stone shaped like a foot and regarded as the magical foot of a bad spirit.

bira mor: 'sacred male goat sacrifice' merit feast, prerequisite to performing 'sha·ru·gah'.

Brun: largest village in Bomboret Valley consisting of 35 extended households, 'Ku·shūn'.

Bu·dā·lēk: fall festival of the 'virile'shepherds in Birir Valley.

Bu·gē·siŋ·ga: small clan in Brun village descended from the last Kalash king of Chitral, Bu·kē·siŋ·ga.

bu·teil i·dhon: heavy iron tri-pods with twisted legs made by Bashgali craftsmen, considered to be 'ai·ya mal'.

cha·go·rum: Chitrali measure of land equalling 27 metres by 27 metres square.

chak·aiy: Kalash name for 'cha·go·rum'.
cha·kur·una uk kadda: working one's way into favour with an unsuspecting person in a round-about fashion like 'water being blown through the coiled intestines (of a slaughtered animal)'.

cha·ra·da moch: a man whose grain harvests last season to season.

Cha·tro·ma mu·ng: a goat horn flute common to the Cha·tro·ma, the Kalasṭ name for Bashgalis.

Chau Māus: Kalasṭ winter solstice festival.

Che·bin: 'Kilār' cheese skewered onto the end of a long sharpened stick.

Cheišh: a hat plume made from woven wheat stalks which are tipped with Himalayan pheasant feathers.

chim·br tūr: mythical metal pillar to the underworld.

Chi·mik Sōn: alpine pastures used by some Rombour herdsmen.

chit: decision.

chit·ti·la kromb: well-thought out work, e.g. a successful merit feast.

chū·e·ak: a (women's) hair braid.

chu·chu: 'dry goods' such as baskets or pots (used as part of a bride price).

chum tara dun·i·yā: 'earth-top world' (see 'pa·la·loiy')

da·da: 'father' - ġārda da·da - father's older brother; chu·ti·yūk da·da - father's younger brother.

da·hū: barrel-shaped drum.

da·i·ruk: clan brother.

da·ren: a flood.

das·tar: twisted cloth head turban.

das·tur: Kalasṭ tribal custom or law.

dē·har: shaman.

dēn: closure by valley magistrates on produce until ripe.
De-san-i: goddess of fertility in pre-conversion Nuristan, Mother of Ba-gisht.

degva lok: divine beings.

De-zālik: Kalasha goddess of parturition.

De-zāu: omnipotent, omnipresent creator god.

dēzik: 'to create'.

dītaiy be'aiy moch, sheta-si muza-ro ṣ: the man born from amongst those energetic seeds.

dopd: the doubling of the bride-proce 'mal' when a woman has eloped, paid to previous husband of new husband.

Dra-peg-sa: high-ranking clan of Rombour Valley.

draziylik: 'to drag' out one's work, epic style of singing.

dri-gā zaiy, uk, nāśi n'dra-neu: (a story) like 'the water flowing in a long irrigation channel, never comes to an end'.

du-shi-shi is-tore: (uzuwa-mut in Kati language) a two-headed horse including an equestrian rider, symbol of rank; commemorative graveyard effigy.

gadziy-ra-khan: 'respected elders'.

gah: cow in Kati; irrigation channel in Kalasha.

gan-douw: carved standing anthropomorphic figure; commemorative graveyard effigy (for men of 'sha-rūgah' rank').

ğanj-ğā-e: brass bell.

gatch: secret song (dangerous to 'uninitiated').

gir-a-wē: impermanent land transaction (land as collected on loan).

Gish: Kafir (Bashgali) god of war.

ğont wass: Kalasha merit feast emphasizing industry in dairy process.

go-ra pa-chē-rik bouw: 'the army of white butterflies' - the Chitralis.
go·ri lōush Kho·sha·ne: the happiness of the in-laws.

Gosh·i·dojy: protector god of the goats in the alpine pastures (see 'Sur·i·zan').

griŋ·ga: heavy silver fluted neck ring, symbol of rank.

grō·wei: Kalash sacred male community.

ha·li·vai: a person outwardly as sweet as candy.

han·yak: low stool, symbol of rank if used outside house.

har·wa: spirit or soul of the dead ancestor.

ha·zar Ka·shi·ri chear pi·ouw: drinker of milk produced by a thousand snow white goats (man with the rank of 'bira mor').

iŋ·grock: fireplace

iṣh·pa·shor: father-in-law (borther-in-law).

iṣh·pe·ri: feast of bread and cheese.

iṣh·poŋ·yuk: porridge-type food made from cooked hot milk and flour.

iṣh·ti·ķk: Kalash formal eulogy.

iṣ·toŋ·gis: purification baptism of men and boys with the sacrificial blood of an animal (laṃb, goat).

ja·mī·li: clan daughters/sisters

ja·mo: son-in-law.

jan: Chitrari word of 'soul'.

jāu·ro: walnut bread.

Jazhi (Jashi): indigenous peoples of the Bashgal Valley prior to the Kati/Kom migrations (see Ba·la·lik).

Jesh·tak: Household/Clan Goddess.

ji·reip: Persian land measure (same as 'cha·go·rum').

jizya (ū·shur, zā·kut): 'Kafir' infidel head tax.
junō sha·ru·gah: funeral merit feast held while the 'host' is still living (see nash·ta sha·ru·gah).

Kalasha: the name Kalash call their language.

ka·le·ga·tōj: (Kati) dance done by swaying body but restricting arm movement.

Kalimah: oath spoken when converting to Islam.

karus: type of millet.

Kashgar: name Kalash used historically for their 'Kingdom', Ashret to Reshun in the Chitral Valley (also ancient town in Sinkiang, China).

khōji·kas: arranged marriage.

khul·ta·bar·i: in-laws.

kilēr: type of cheese made with powdered colostrum.

kopas: Kalash women's cowrie-studded headdress.

krish·na chi·din: heavy black iron cooking pot made by Bashgali 'bari'.

kū·ak kū·ak: the less expensive 'child' objects of a 'dond' paid to cuckolded husband after an elopement.

ku·in·da: strong tasting bacterial cheese made in clay pots.

kulish peik ṭēt: glowing fire embers

kūm: patrilineally organized clan with single male spical ancestor.

kun·du·reik: carved commemorative effigy of 'man of rank' depicted seated on a 'han·yak'.

kushun: patrilocal extended household.

Ku·tu·waïy: clan in Brun village, previously major lineage of the Bad·ze·kaiy clan.

ley mach: 'man-killer' (Kom/Kati).

lik: Kalash diminutive suffix.
ma·chɛr·ik mɛr ambru·chi saanō: 'bee-hive covered with grapes' - metaphor for patrilineal clan with an abundance of women, wives, sisters, daughters.

ma·chɛr·ik jɛjo: 'line of bees' metaphor for numerically large clan.

ma·chɛr·ik mɛr u·gu·zis: 'swarming bee-hive' - metaphor for numerically expanding clan.

ma·gi·ouw: walnut breads cooked by 'jamili' for their natal clans.

Ma·handeg: Kalasha god of warfare and agriculture (Rombour and Bomboret Valleys only).

(oh) mai bɛ·ru Kḥi·im dai: 'oh my husband (now that you are dead) what is to become of me?'

mai n'a·sa·luk hiʉ: 'I don't want to remain (here on this earth) any longer'.

mai ghʉri ja·gai, kɔ pa·laiy parra?: Why do you flee from me when you see my goat hair coat?

Ma·jam: a pass between Kalasha valleys and the Bashgal Valley.

mā·kā: someone who has violated Kalasha incest rules by marrying into their mother's clan within five generations.

mal: bride-price.

ma·lɛ·ri: carved anthropomorphic post installed at Sajigor for 'bira mor'.

maun: local weight approximately forty-two kilos.

me·yit: 'promise' to give a merit feast.

mi·rak pa·chouw: banner of silk robes the circumference of a field or village, symbolizes rank.

mo·a: mother's brother.

mush·tya·ruk·gum·tà: communal grazing areas (certain holly oak forests).

Mu·ti·mi·rë: high-ranking clan in Rombour Valley.

na·moo·na kromb: strange deranged) work.
nāsh.ta sha.ru.gah: merit feast funeral done for a man who has performed 'bira mor' in his lifetime.

daggers traditionally used for hand to hand combat.

ni.shan: 'mark' (written carved symbol) of god.

nok pē.ti.dur: new field made from previous 'jungle' (or forest) land.

nom tā touw how·ow: (a good man's)'name that remains behind' (after his death).

n'wēsh: against custom ('das·tur').

on·jesh.ta bira mor: sacred male goat sacrifice merit feast.

on·jesh.ta drā.mi: certain roofs considered to be pure space and out of bounds to women.

on·jesh.ta mi·lit: sacred (magic) wealth.

on·jesh.ta mach: ritually purified man.

on·jesh.ta wah: sacred space in Kalāsh houses dedicated to Household/Clan goddess Jeshtak.

ō.shala: cream.

ōu.stat: wood carver.

pa·goi·yuk shoo: the axle of the door of the family home - metaphor for the prosperity of the extended household.

pa·la·loiy: underworld home of the ancestor spirits.

pa·ran·ga·sāl: feast for the (valley) community.

pa·ri·ān: mountain fairies, herdswomen of markhor.

patch mal: feather wealth (see 'Cheish')

par·wa·zā (zeju): prayers said at the graveside to accompany the deceased to the underworld.
para'zely: 'to transform oneself' (into a wooden statue).

peri-shan: Urdu word in Kalâş meaning both joy and sorrow.

phann: grain storage bin (basement).

phâ (r)·gun·deik: carved willow stick placed a 'Shing Mou' symbolizing achievement of 'man-killer' rank.

pie pa·shai·ik: to show one's female goat wealth before giving a merit feast.

pi·mâ·sâ: funeral feast of a man who is without close male heirs, given before his actual death.

pin X·a·ouw: a meal of bread and cheese given to the village (or valley) community on the occasion of a birth.

pra·cheish: annual autumn feast performed by the wealthiest clans in the valleys.

pre·chî·na kotch: extra ladleful of clarified butter given to all men of rank at feasts.

pre·hunk: downstream.

pti·stm: cowrie-studded fillet for Kati/Kom man of rank in pre-conversion Bashgal.

Pûr: annual harvest festival in Birir Valley.

pûre: paper-thin type of 'birch' bark used to line willow bark cheese moulds.

Ra·chi·Kosht dari: high ranking clan of Krakal village in Bomboret Valley.

ra·juk hon·chêk: 'rope pull', tug of war between two teams of men.

ra·pou·ush: Chitrali word for 'purdah' (seclusion of women).

ri·ki·ni (chot): intricate geometric designs carved on wooden pillars, altars and mantlepieces (brought originally from Yarkhan).

rqi·y: annually appointed valley magistrates (police) who guard fruit and vegetables (see 'dên').
Sajigor: god (Kalâsh equivalent to Bagisht) protects Kafir religion, livestock, hydraulic system - central to merit feasts.

sa•liss: witness.

sa•ri a•mçy•yuk jîr: a person as sweet as the milk (magically) produced from a new-born spirit lamb.

sa•ri•çk: merit feast given by a man for his daughter.

sa•ri•fâ: gift of new clothes presented at merit feasts to 'men of rank'.

Sarikjow: village in Bomboret reputed to be old 'Ba•la•lik' settlement.

sa•rus: 'sacred' juniper.

sêwala: potters and leather tanner of the pre-conversion Waigal Valley.

sha•gai (sturi): silver chains now worn decoratively by Kalâsh women - traditionally Bashgali symbols of rank.

Shâh ni•si: one day feast in which common man presides as 'King'.

shâ•ra kund•â•li: markhor hide (hair) moccasins, symbols of high rank.

shâ•ra shiğ•una: (silent/unheard) inside a markhor's horn.

shâ•ru: autumn.

Sha•ma•kut: clan in Krakal village, Bomboret.

Shing Mou: markhor horn altar in Rombour.

shish ouw: 'head breads' made by men to ritually purify their women at the winter solstice festival.

shi•ri•stan na•ta•a•louw: funeral dance done on (unharvested) grains, preferably millet, ritual denoting high rank.

shticuri/nam: Kati term of rank for a man who has done at least eighteen times, a feast similar to the Kalash 'pi•mâ•sâ'.

shu•ra moch: (formal rank) 'man-killer'.

shu•ra uphor: dance performed to achieve 'man-killer' rank.

Siah Posh: wearers of the black robe, applies to Kalâsh, Kom, Kati.
so•ol•lo: man's wicker burden basket.

sta•nk ku•chêk: women's divination technique done with a brass bracelet.

stri•ja u•bat: trouble caused in a household be dissatisfied women.

sū•ā zaj: 'golden irrigation channel' in Rombour Valley.

such! such!: prayer spoken at ritual to purify.

su•chêk: to make a ritual purification ceremony.

sur mach: Kati term for a 'man-killer' with numerous killings to his name.

Su•ri•zan: 'goat shed god' who protects livestock wintering in the valleys.

Su•tarâm: Bashgal (and Waigal) god, father of goddess De•san•i.

thum ku•chêk: men's divination technique done with goat hair bow.

tro•na•chēar: sour milk.

trash ni•una uk: (a person) working his or her way into another's good graces by being as unnoticeable as 'water flowing between the roots of wheat plants'.

Tsiam: the original homeland of the Kalash.

U•chow: dairy festival in late August in Bomboret and Rombour Valleys.

um•bu•lgk: 'to raise (oneself) up' - refers to shamanic trance state.

us•telk ni•sêlk: generosity and hospitality at feasts and in one's own home.

Utah: hereditary priest from one high-ranking lineage of pre-conversion Bashgal.

Vêtr: Kati word for fairy.
waiy: daughter/sister's share of her natal clan's livestock.

Wäko:käly: clan in Rombour Valley that had ties with pre-conversion Waigal Valley.

wâ:n: two 'maun' or approximately eighty-four kilos.

wâ:sun:giy bur: 'arrow sheath' (of a successful warrior) - metaphor for solidarity and co-operation of the clan.

wâ:hunk: upstream.

Wâ:tâ: kâsh: Kalash name for Prasun Valley in present day Nuristan.

Xo:dai: Persian (Urdu) word for God.

Yarkhan: ancient location from whence many Kalash customs come, for example, wood carving designs, wine-making, shamanism.

za:na:mat: fine imposed by 'respected elders'. in attempting to resolve a dispute.

Zoe:shi: Kalash spring festival (May).

zôr be:a:nâ: moch: man (born from) strong/forceful seeds.
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GENEALOGICAL CHART

II) Mairs of Sal clan host of "Birmar" merit feast, November 1977 at Kalekhargon Village, Rembu Valley, Pakistan

(Grah also includes P. P. Agh clan of Gren and Kalekhargon Villages)

For priestly lineage in Rembu see P. P. Agh clan - descendents from Sharota

LEGEND:
* Individual without inheritors ("la wha ta")

The following ancestors of the present clans in Rembu are underlined.