

Tibetans. The Tibetans practised human sacrifices, but for different motives from what we have observed in the Satluj valley. Oaths at important treaties were emphasised by human as well as animal sacrifices. New houses were inaugurated by immuring human beings and a person was killed when a house was first inhabited.¹ Thus, at the village of Poo, a lama had only recently beheaded his own father while asleep, to make the new house he had built, properly habitable.

The Shar-rgan sacrifices as well as the human sacrifices in the Satluj valley and in Lahul are of a very different character. To understand them, it is necessary to investigate the character of the deities in whose honour they are celebrated. Śiva and Kālī, as we find them in the Himālayas, are personifications of the creative powers; they do not only produce the harvest of the fields, but also bless the women with children, especially sons. In this respect, the principal deities of the pre-Buddhist religion of the Tibetans, in particular Ke-sar and 'aBru-gu-ma, resemble Śiva and Kālī. For as I have shown previously,² Ke-sar and 'aBru-gu-ma were both invoked by the people to grant children. This explains the union which was formed between the Tibetan pre-Buddhist and the aboriginal Śiva-Kālī religion, as we find it represented in the Shar-rgan hymnal. (The word *shar-rgan* means "young and old".) But Ke-sar and 'aBru-gu-ma were not of the fierce character of Śiva and Kālī. The latter were only ready to grant a blessing, when a portion of what they had given, was returned to them. Hence not only a portion of the harvest of the fields, or some of the lambs of the flock had to be returned to them in sacrifice, but they also claimed some of the children with whom they had blessed the village. Almost invariably the traditions speak of children who were sacrificed. Here at Poo, the sacrifice had to be made on the occasion of a festival which is still now-a-days recognised as a festival or thanksgiving for the blessing of offspring. In Lahul, the prayer on the occasion of such sacrifices was apparently intended more as a thanksgiving for a good harvest in the fields.

The old Shar-rgan place is exactly above the site of the ancient castle of Kalagtrung and probably belonged to it. The new Shar-rgan place is situated a little above the road from Poo to Rizhing. At the latter place, there are a few old pencil-cedars, and a number of rough altars, furnished with horns of goats and wild antelopes, and pencil-cedar twigs. They look exactly like the *lha-tho* of Ladakh. A third place which is connected with the same festival is found in the middle of the village of Poo, and is called Dralang (*sGra-lang* (?) 'raising the voice'). It is used for dancing and has a pole in the middle. On two sides of the place, there are *lha-tho* like those on the new Shar-rgan place, and two perpendicular stones, one showing traces of an inscription seemingly *Om-a-hum*. The other plain one is probably a rude kind of *lingam*, like those in Manchad. Not far from it, there are holes or pits where again children used to be sacrificed. (Plate IX, b).

The people of Poo although they are Buddhists, do not always cremate their dead, but bury them in certain cases. There are two burial places outside the village, one for

¹ The Dard Bridge, see my *History of Western Tibet*.

² *Z. D. M. G.*, Vol. LXI, pp. 583 ff.