The Xunhua Salar Wedding

Abstract

The Salar, one of China’s fifty-six officially acknowledged nationalities, are a Turkic-speaking Islamic people living primarily in Xunhua Salar Autonomous County in the agricultural area of eastern Qinghai Province. The present article reviews previous Salar wedding studies and describes a wedding in Daxinah Aghol that includes songs and lengthy wedding speeches in the original Salar with English translation.

Key words: Salar—China minorities—Qinghai—Turkic—wedding—marriage—ritual
The Salar have been introduced in several recent publications (Hahn 1988, Li and Stuart 1990, Ma and Stuart 1996), but most of the information presented in those articles will not be repeated here. Briefly, the Salar are a Turkic-speaking, Islamic people living mostly in Xunhua Salar Autonomous County, Qinghai Province. In 1990, the total Salar population was 87,697. This article focuses specifically on a type of wedding that takes place in Daxinah Aghal, which is a Salar village in Xunhua County and the home of Ma Wei. There is variation between Salar villages in Xunhua and we do not suggest that the wedding in Daxinah Aghal typifies all Salar. Furthermore, we know little about wedding customs of Salar residing in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. We introduce the village of our study, review previous Salar wedding studies, describe our informants, and discuss general attitudes about marriage. We also describe the process of marriage, which includes engagement, sending “agreement tea,” the bride price, chanting nikah (words signifying marriage), post-nikah activities, escorting the bride to the groom’s home, reaching the groom’s village and home, a welcoming banquet, displaying the dowry, the recitation of “words of relatives [related] by marriage,” the bride’s return to her parents’ home, the bride’s relatives congratulating her, marrying a groom into the bride’s home, marriage of older people, and divorce. In the appendices, we present a second version of the “words of relatives by marriage” and the details of wedding expenses for a specific Xunhua Salar wedding in 1953.

DAXINAH AGHAL
Daxinah Aghal, Jishi Township (xiang 鄉), Xunhua Salar Autonomous County, is in Haidong Region (xingshu 行署) located in the eastern sector of Qinghai Province. Approximately three kilometers from the village is the renowned Döyi Yul (Camel Spring) in Majia Village, Jiezi Township. Within fifty meters of the spring, the eminent Salar ancestors, Kharimang and Ahmang, are interred. Majia Village consists of 121 households, or 840
people, of whom more than 90 percent are Salar. The remaining residents are Hui (Chinese Muslims) whose origins were unknown to our informants. The Hui are all surnamed Chen and have been assimilated to the extent that they speak fluent Salar. When Hui die, they are buried in a separate graveyard. Their separation from those classified as Salar is further accentuated by their being placed in a separate production team from the 1950s to 1980, when land was assigned among the villagers. Hui rarely marry Salar. Instead, they marry Hui from the four adjacent villages of Tobu, Xiangala, Tenbiqi, and Shabutong.

All Daxinäh Aghäl residents are Muslims. Most follow the New Teaching of Sunnite. Parents have sent school-age children to the village mosque since its completion in 1980 to study Islamic scriptures in Arabic after school· during school vacations. Certain parents know Arabic scriptures well enough to teach their children at home. This was done even before the 1980s. Adults often praise those who study well as “model children.”

Xunhua Salar typically live in flat-roofed adobe-wood structures. In recent years, certain financially well-off villagers have begun building brick homes. A single household commonly lives in an independent bazar. Mostly flat-roofed, the wooden roof-edges are decorated with carved patterns of birds and flowers. It is taboo to hang pictures of human beings or animals inside a home, but scenic pictures, depictions of mosques, and Islamic scripture in Arabic calligraphy are commonly seen.

Most Salar are farmers. Main crops include wheat, maize, barley, millet, buckwheat, potatoes, peas, broad beans, soybeans, rape, and sesame. The latter two are oil-bearing seed crops. The village has a number of apple orchards; these are a main income source. Pears, plums, apricots, grapes, and English walnuts are also produced. Other crops include watermelons, snake melons, onions, garlic, Chinese prickly ash, and chili peppers. Staple foods are made from wheat, barley, buckwheat, potatoes, and vegetables. Steamed bread, hoghän, noodles, omix, and bilmah are common prepared foods.

Women do most farm work. Families may own cattle, sheep, donkeys, mules, goats, chickens, ducks, and rabbits. Recently, villagers have been increasingly engaged in cattle raising because of the income from selling milk. Some males pan for gold in the Yellow River, while others leave home to earn money by operating stores and restaurants, doing seasonal construction work, and trading in livestock, meat, animal skins, and medicinal herbs. Certain better-off villagers have bought buses and trucks and work driving to and from such locations as Lanzhou 蘭州, Gansu 甘肅 Province and Lhasa. Men return home in winter and spring.
Though Salar is the everyday language of the villagers, nearly all men speak the local Chinese dialect. On the other hand, only a few women speak some Chinese. Furthermore, according to knowledgeable informants, approximately ninety percent of all Xunhua Salar males over the age of forty can speak Tibetan. Many do so fluently. As a thriving Chinese economy continues to provide opportunities, Salar men have been quick to use their Tibetan language skills and familiarity with Tibetan customs in trading in such areas as Yul shul (Yushu 貼樹) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Mgo log (Guoluo 果洛) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in southern Qinghai.

Like most Xunhua Salar residents, those who live in Daxing Aghal wear clothing that closely resembles that of Han Chinese, except for certain hats, veils, and turbans. Presently, males wear Mao and Western-style suits, blue caps with front trim, black-and-white skullcaps, and, when attending prayer, men wear turbans that are 40–50 cm long. Young females wear colorful clothes while elderly women wear plain-colored robes. Most women wear open-faced veils. Young women and newly married women wear green veils, middle-aged women wear black ones, and elderly women wear white ones. Both men and women wear fashionable leather shoes. It is taboo for men to wear clothes of such bright colors as red, yellow, and purple (MA and MA 1989, 5; ANONYMOUS 1995, 175–76).

Village folk recreational activities include singing yüri and hua’er, but their performance is forbidden in the home and village owing to their erotic content. In the early 1980s storytelling was a common pastime, but recently more people view television programs at home, watch video shows at video parlors, and play billiards in the nearby Jiezi, Sancha Market. This is especially true for young males. Other than swimming and chess, there are few other recreational activities for adult men. Children and youths of both sexes enjoy maqiu. Boys entertain themselves by wrestling and stone tossing games, while girls enjoy kicking shuttlecocks and a jacks-like game.

It is considered improper for women to gather in public, unless it is for labor. They do not visit mosques or graveyards. They do, however, visit each other to chat, knit and embroider. Another occasion on which they gather is when a household holds a banquet, and on such an occasion they may sit among the guests or work in the kitchen.

**PREVIOUS WEDDING STUDIES**

ANONYMOUS (1985, 88–90) gives a very brief, general introduction to idealized Salar wedding practices: engagement, sending agreement tea and betrothal gifts, chanting nikah lasting 5–8 minutes, escorting the bride to her new hearth, wedding banquets, and divorce. MA and MA (1989, 24–30)
provide a more detailed, but still brief, statement: the suiji’s (matchmaker’s) importance, sending betrothal gifts, escorting the bride to her new home, removing the bride’s veil in the wedding chamber, village youngsters teasing the groom’s arang (maternal uncle) and father, exhibiting the bride’s dowry in the groom’s courtyard, wedding speech (forty-four lines), and divorce.

The most detailed Salar wedding study we have encountered is HAN Jianye (1995, 183–88), but it ignores good words, divorce, second marriages, and the practice of grooms marrying into their wives’ homes. Han first presents various rules regulating Salar marriage, and these are followed by engagement, sending agreement tea, sending betrothal gifts, the formal wedding ceremony, escorting the bride to the groom’s home, removing the bride’s veil, feast for the bride’s escorts, exhibiting the bride’s needlework, döyi oyna (camel dance), saghasi, or wedding songs (twelve lines), and nineteen lines of wedding speech. In both Ma Chengjun’s and Han Jianyie’s articles, saghasi and the wedding speeches are incomplete, and the source of the materials and how they were collected is dissatisfying.

The only article we know of that focuses on a particular village is in ANONYMOUS 1985b (106–110). After a general description of the Salar marriage formula—using Jiezi Gong in November 1953 as an example—wedding expenses are presented in detail in Appendix Three.

INFORMANTS
During Ma Wei’s 1995–1996 field study in Daxinah Aghal he interviewed:

Han Zhanxiang 韩占祥 (b. 1941), a male Salar resident of Tuanjie 团结 Village. Mr. Han told orzh suzi (words of relatives by marriage) to Ma Wei in 1995. Ma Wei recorded it on cassette tape, from which he transcribed the Salar version.

Kerim, an illiterate Salar male (b. 1919) who now lives in Daxinah Aghal, provided the arang’s speech for Ma Wei at the time he removed the bride’s veil at the groom’s home in February 1996 in Daxinah Aghal.

Baghär-ninu, an illiterate Salar female (b. 1920) and a resident of Daxinah Aghal, sang saghasi to Ma Wei, who recorded it on cassette tape in the winter of 1996, from which he transcribed the Salar version.

Abudu, a Salar male (b. 1948), peasant and a primary school graduate living in Daxinah Aghal, provided valuable information.

All informants have participated in local weddings for years.
INTRODUCTION TO THE VILLAGE

Villagers believe life has three urgent duties: the deceased must be buried quickly, marriage should occur at a young age, and debts should be paid. Girls often marry when they are fifteen and boys when they are seventeen. If parents do not arrange for their children’s marriage and they die single, the dead children are thought to grow horns in the next world (Salar, \( ah\aro\)). Later, when the parents die and arrive in \( ah\aro\), the children will gore them. Consequently, parents feel relieved of a heavy burden after young people marry.

There are strong taboos against marrying inside the \( aghini\), and in the past marriage within the \( kumsin\) was also prohibited. However, with time, blood ties between \( kumsin\) members have weakened as the result of males marrying into the homes of young women and the adoption of sons. Presently, some villagers accept marriage within the \( kumsin\).

The frequency of marriage with Hui has increased, although Hui account for only a small percentage of all Salar spouses. The increase is due to young people working outside Salar areas who choose spouses themselves. Hui living in four adjacent Hui villages are reluctant to marry Salar because of differences in language and customs. Marriages to non-Muslims are very rare. When they do occur, they usually involve a non-Muslim woman marrying a Salar man. After marriage, conversion to Islam is expected to ensue in a formal ceremony. For some villagers, religious affiliation is a paramount concern when choosing spouses for their children.

It is believed that when a girl reaches the age of nine and a boy reaches the age of twelve, they are subject to \( feriza\), or “heavenly appointed duties.” When a girl is fourteen or fifteen, she is encouraged to learn embroidery and cooking at home. These are skills that can help her marry a more attractive man. There are few chances for young males and females to be alone together prior to marriage. Most marriages are arranged by \( suji\), who may be either male or female but generally they are male.

Kini yenxe (“Wife Talk,” or Engagement)

Kini yenxe is the first step in initiating a marriage. After parents find a suitable girl for their son, they ask his opinion. If he agrees, the parents ask one or two \( suji\) to visit the girl’s parents. When the \( suji\) arrives, he is seated at a table or on the \( otkang\) and tea is served. After general conversation, the \( suji\) broaches his concern. He might do this by asking if the girl of interest is engaged. If the answer is negative, he indicates which family is interested in her as a daughter-in-law. He adds that they much appreciate her manner, appearance, and family background and that her \( kumsin\), \( aghini\), and parents are held in high esteem. Next, the \( suji\) introduces the boy’s appearance, family
background, manners, economic status, adherence to Islamic rule, and, sometimes, the religious section the boy’s family belongs to. At this juncture, the girl’s parents tell the suji they need to consult with the girl’s arang and other important relatives, such as the father’s brothers or the girl’s grandparents. Then the suji begins his departure while setting another date for a visit.

Afterwards, the girl’s parents consult with important relatives. The arang’s opinion is given particular credence. If the boy lives in another village, the girl’s parents or arang probably visit it without the boy’s family’s knowledge. They desire to independently confirm information provided by the suji. The next time the suji visits, he directly asks about the family’s consultations. The girl’s parents may say that the girl’s arang and other relatives are satisfied with the boy. However, the suji may need to make two or three visits before the girl’s family gives final consent. Delay is usually caused by the girl’s family desiring more information about the boy and his family. If the girl’s parents disagree with the proposed match, they tell the suji that the girl is too young to marry, they have another prospective groom in mind, or the boy’s village is so far from the girl’s that visits between the two families would be inconvenient. Rarely does the girl’s family issue an uncamouflaged refusal.

**Dincha Ender (Sending Agreement Tea)**

If the girl’s family consents, the suji goes to the boy’s family to convey this message. An acceptable date is then agreed upon by both families. Next, the boy’s family asks the suji about dincha ender. The amount of dincha is 500 to 1,000 yuan.

In earlier times, after a girl’s family accepted dincha, the bride wore earrings (sigh÷ dah) or a scarf (botu dah), indicating that she was now betrothed and unavailable to be betrothed to other boys.

**Mal Ender (Offering the Bride Price)**

After dincha ender, the groom’s parents send an offer of a bride price to the bride’s parents through the suji. Typically, the dincha is valued at one-tenth of mal, which ranges from 5,000 to 10,000 yuan. In addition to cash, some families send several suits of clothes and, sometimes, a watch. Next, a mutually convenient date (usually on Djumah) is chosen. In return, the girl’s family gives zongs24 hay (dowry shoes) that consists of thirty to fifty pairs of handmade cloth shoes. On the wedding day, these shoes are given to the boy’s arang, the arang’s wife, and certain other relatives.

On Djumah, betrothal gifts are sent to the girl’s home. In addition to male members of the boy’s family, his arang, other uncles, and several aghini
members formally visit the girl’s home to present betrothal gifts. With the suji shuttling between the two sides, the number of people who present betrothal gifts is fixed after consultation. This number depends on the financial condition of the two families. The number of people who present betrothal gifts on the groom’s behalf decides the number of people who will escort the bride to the groom’s home. For example, if ten people present betrothal gifts, twenty people are expected to escort the bride to the groom’s home on the wedding day. If twenty people present betrothal gifts, forty people are expected to escort the bride. The bride’s family is expected to host a feast to receive guests who present betrothal gifts. Food on this occasion includes mutton (bones not removed) on platters, chicken, beef, various hot and cold dishes, as well as sanpotai 三神台 tea. During the 1920s and 1930s, feast food consisted of dried fruits, milk tea, fried bread, sanzi, youzao, sweet baozi 包子, mutton baozi, bread, stewed mutton mixed with vegetables, and a small bowl of rice for each guest; later, yangpan was added. Also, in the pre-Liberation era, during the contemporary formal wedding ceremony, after chanting nikah, the imam asked the suji if the agreed bride price had been paid in full to the bride’s parents. If it had not, the boy could not take the girl to his home. This might have caused a delay of one year or longer before the two actually lived together.

**Nikah Uha (Chanting nikah)**

After the feast, an ahong (ahung, religious leader) chants nikah in Arabic to formalize the marriage. While the ahong chants, a tray of dates and walnuts is put on the xiri in front of the ahong on the otkang. After chanting, he asks the groom, who now sits with his marriage-companion on a bench facing him, “Halime (bride’s name) is betrothed to you, do you agree?” The groom is expected to say, “I agree.” The bride’s answer is given by her father, for she should not appear in public. Next, the ahong asks the groom questions to judge his basic knowledge of Islam. If a man has no religious belief, even if the ahong has chanted nikah for him, his marriage is invalid. Next, everyone in and outside the room, including women and children, raise their hands, palms held up, and touch their foreheads with their open palms. Meanwhile, they lightly run their hands down their cheeks, saying “omine.” Usually women murmur, or say it silently. When saying “omine,” they also may wish Allah to bless the couple, or make a wish for themselves. After saying “omine,” the ahong shares handfuls of walnuts and dates from the tray on the table with elders sitting on the otkang; he then scatters what remains to adult men in the room and, through the window, to women and children in the courtyard, who scramble to snatch as many walnuts and dates as possible. Afterwards, in turn, the groom’s arang, uncles, and other relatives put
silk bands of red and green over the groom’s shoulder at the neck and then tie the ends together on the opposite side of his body at the waist. The groom says “salaam” as each elder ties a band on him. Led by his marriage-companion, he presents himself to the bride’s parents, grandparents, and her other important paternal relatives. Both the bride’s and groom’s families now give hadi (money). This might be in the form of giving the equivalent of one yuan for everyone present plus five to ten yuan directly to the mosque for the ahong. Or, each person might actually be given the sums just mentioned.

**Post-Nikah Uho Activities**

The day after nikah uho, the bride’s family invites relatives and certain villagers for breakfast. This is called yinsin yigh (receiving blessings). At dawn, all those attending morning prayer in the mosque are invited. If a man does not attend morning prayer, a member of his family must be invited. This invitation is known as malla qal in Salar. If someone is not invited, he is excused from yinsin vur (sending blessings). Breakfast consists of milk tea (or plain tea), sanzi, youzao, sweet baozi, lamb baozi, fried bread, and hot pot. After breakfast, about ten o’clock relatives and friends come for yinsin vur. Members of the bride’s kumsin and aghini come first, for they are the most closely related. After a meal, they stay and receive other guests on behalf of the bride’s parents. In the past, besides cash, clothes, and cosmetics were also sent to the bride’s family as yinsin. Nowadays, only cash is sent. The amount of yinsin differs according to the relatives’ financial condition and the closeness of their relationship. The elder brother of the bride (if he has an independent bazar) sends 200–700 yuan. Each of the bride’s paternal uncles sends less than this amount. Members of the bride’s kumsin send 20–100 yuan each. On most occasions, when the groom’s kumsin members come for yinsin vur, the meal they receive is similar to the one served after morning prayer, but now hot pot must be among the items served.

In the past, when the groom’s kumsin members departed, they were given portions of meat. The number of the meat portions they were given was related to the amount of money they brought. Around noon, if the arang comes from far away, members of the girl’s kumsin and aghini must meet him outside the gate. They say “salaam” to him one by one. The arang is deeply respected. In the past, before the wedding, the bride’s family was required to invite the arang and his family members to a separate dinner on another day. In Salar this is called arang ngda, meaning “inviting the arang to dinner.” This custom continues in the Qingshui 清水 Region. The arang and his family members eat the same food mentioned above. If the arang is distressed because, for example, he has not been adequately consulted about the engagement, or
he is not well received, the wedding will stop. In such an event the bride’s parents may ask important members of the kumsin and aghini to apologize.

The arang’s respected position means that he should also give the yinsin vur of greatest value. In the past, it amounted from 10–30 silver yuan. Now it is 200–1,000 yuan. Also, members of the arang’s kumsin and aghini (one person from each family) are required to send yinsin. The sum of money they send ranges from 10–50 yuan. They merit the same food as the arang; this is called arang neme in Salar, meaning “Whatever the arang eats, they can eat.” The least amount of money sent in yinsin vur is by villagers who are not the bride’s relatives (5–10 yuan). However, they enjoy the same food as the bride’s relatives.

A sheep is butchered on the same day. After its skin and internal organs are removed, the sheep is hung upside down and then the joints of its hind legs are cut open. From this position, following the natural lines of the flesh, the back part of the sheep is ripped off by hand. At the second rib, counting from the bottom of the chest, the whole back part is cut off following the spaces between the bones. This part of the sheep, which is called uji kut in Salar, accounts for two-fifths of a whole sheep, and it is considered the best meat. Its four corners are tied with thread and, after being boiled, it is sent to the arang. Remaining parts are cut into equal portions and sent to other guests. The amount they receive differs according to the amount of money they send. Some brides’ families butcher as many as ten sheep.

In the afternoon, members of the bride’s kumsin and aghini invite guests from outside the village to their homes for supper. The food is almost the same as in the earlier banquets, with one exception: if the hosts are able, they butcher sheep for the guests. The groom’s side holds a similar banquet for their own relatives and friends the following day.

**YENKENAGU UZAT (ESCORTING THE BRIDE TO THE GROOM’S HOME)**

About noon on the same day, the groom’s side sends five to eight men to escort the bride to the groom’s home. A horse or a mule is required for the bride and each of her marriage-companions to ride and to transport her dowry. Marriage-companions are usually the bride’s sisters, sisters-in-law, and aunts. They assist her and instruct her how to behave during the wedding. Shortly before the bride leaves, some of the young men from the groom’s home take the bride’s dowry to the groom’s home. Women, old and young alike, now gather in the bride’s room. Some make her up while others comb and plait her hair, which is wrapped around her head. This makes it convenient to put on a hat and veil. They ensure that none of her hair is exposed outside the veil. While the bride is being dressed, she laments her fate in saghisi. The bride is dressed in colorful clothes, wears earrings, finger
rings, bracelets, and silver ornaments on her head. Her head and neck are covered by a green veil. Underneath, she wears a pink or white hat and a colorful lace-trimmed shawl. Assisted by her arang and another uncle, with lowered head and bowing, she slowly backs out of the home compound. Simultaneously, she laments in song:

SONG ONE

1. bugün yighalghən aghinəmlər,
2. buğungi gunde,
3. mi avəm kux bangniəxse,
4. mal bangnighani orni da idər,
5. ax bangnighani orni da idər.
6. mi ijime bilmığınine,
7. bur bildərəyəji qıhse,
8. görmığınine,
9. bur gu usguji qıhse,
10. buğungi gunde suzi bangnighani orni da idər.
11. kux bangnighani orni ḳam idər.

1. My relatives gathered here today,
2. On a day like today,
3. If you assist my father at the wedding,
4. It’s like helping my father (by sending) money,
5. It’s like helping my father (by providing) food.
6. My mother doesn’t know wedding rules,
7. How wonderful if someone who knows comes and shows her,
8. For what my mother hasn’t seen,
9. How wonderful if someone comes and shows her,
10. On a day like today, it’s an occasion to help us speak,
11. It’s an occasion to help us in the work of the wedding.

SONG TWO

1. sangisaghəxkən, losadatkən,
2. sangisaghəxkən, losadați.
3. aguqəxə hor kharan bəxim,
4. men baxime el kəxoqəxuji,
5. aguqəxə hor ah ah rini,
6. khormax ete aqılgə yo.
7. men baxime el kəxoqəxuji,
8. aguqəxə hor sərlı gizinəğı,
9. urluxə de aqılgə gıgu yiu.
10. men baxime el kəxoqəxuji,
Sangisag̲həxkhən mule is led over to take me,
Sangisag̲həxkhən mule is led over to take me.
Girls, on my black hair,
Those who put their hands on my head,
Girls, it is like cooking unripe barley,
Like baking barley before it has ripened yo.36
Those who put their hands on my head,
Girls, please allow yellow rapeseed
Enough time till it blossoms yiu.37
Those who put their hands on my head,
Girls, please allow black rapeseed
Enough time till it ripens and seeds fall yiu.

Sangisag̲həxkhən,*
Those who put their hands on my head,
Girls, in the big garden,
Please allow peonies time to blossom yiu.
In the small garden, allow small plants
Enough time to grow yiu.
Those who put their hands on my head,
Allow white sheep hair
Enough time to grow yiu.
Those who put their hands on my head,
Allow black sheep hair
Enough time to grow long enough yiu.
Sangisaghəxkən mule is led over to take me, Sangisaghəxkən mule is led over to take me. On a day like today, Behind me, Allow yellow rapeseed enough time to ripen and fall yiu, Allow yellow rapeseed enough time to blossom yiu. Behind me, You relatives of the groom approach me like tigers yiu. “What are they doing?” people ask. They are branches and roots of this person yiu. Behind me, Approaching me like tigers yiu. “Who are they?” people ask. They are wings and tails (relatives) of this person yiu. In this person’s household, if you my escorts haven’t had enough to drink, If you my escorts haven’t had enough food to eat, I, the girl, cannot turn my back to send you off from my husband’s home. Those people who make high places low yo,
Those people who raise low places higher yo,\(^{18}\)

Allah will accompany you back yo.

Outside the gate, she walks around the mount once, scattering wheat about the ground, symbolizing a prosperous harvest in her parents’ home taking root in her husband’s home. Afterwards, with the help of her arang and uncle, she mounts a horse or mule. Her two female marriage-companions also mount. Noisily and boastfully, the party marches toward the groom’s home. The bride’s escorts include representatives of all aghini members, one male and one female member per family from the kumsin, the arang and his wife, brothers-in-law, other aunts and uncles and, most members of the bride’s family. Additionally, one or two of the young men sent earlier by the groom’s family lead the party to the groom’s home. This is usually a group of thirty to forty people. Meanwhile, the bride sings:

SONG THREE

1bugungi gunde,
2ore uxse ulix yohkhɔn,
3axɔ̃ uxe orne yohkhɔn.
4bugungi gunde,
5bege yullghɔn beg avɔm,
6hanne yullghɔn han avɔm.
7bugungi gunde,
8duri donzighɔ bolankhuseda,
9si ming yohmamixde,
10aquhor yoha;
11aquh yohmese yaruh yoha,
12yaruh yohmese ganglang yoha.

1On a day like today,
2Flying high there is no ulix,*
3Flying low there is no place.
4On a day like today,
5Beɣ yullghɔn beɣ avɔm,*
6Hanne yullghɔ han avɔm.*
7On a day like today,
8Even if I were wrapped in a silk robe,
9Without your blessing,
10I am listless;
11If I am listless there will be no light,
12If there is no light there will be no brightness.
My father you acted like an official,
My father you are the one whose words count at critical times,
You haven’t given me your blessings.
On a day like today,
Even if I were wrapped in a silk robe,
I am listless;
If I am listless,
There will be no light;
If there is no light,
There will be no brightness.

On a day like today,
If there is nothing to drink in that person’s [household],
If they only give you a bowl of water to drink,
You [my escorts] please go back yiu.

If a girl is sent to be married at a very early age, she might sing:

My father,
My mother.

If men khâzingni bu oyede,
aji khurâmkema singgadidu?
I, the daughter of this family,
Have I been regarded as dust?
Even if you strike dust with a broom,
It will scatter.
I this daughter,
Like retained water on the ground,
Will it remain there?
If you spoon it with a shovel,
It will splash away.
I, this daughter,
On my head, the hair has not been cut since my birth.
Can’t you wait till it grows full length?
In this daughter’s mouth,
Can’t you wait till my baby teeth have matured?

My father,
Like twisting cow hair rope,
Twisting, you talked me into marrying.
You my father,
Like twisting leather rope,
You talked me into marrying.
Like the steel-bladed knife,
Chopping, you talked me into marrying.
Like the steel-bladed sickle,
Cutting, you talked me into marrying.
You my father.

ARRIVAL AT THE GROOM’S HOME

Women originally from the bride’s village who have married into the groom’s village wait at the village entrance. They hold trays of *bilmah* in welcome. Upon the bride’s arrival, they secretly relate to the escorts how the groom’s side plans to block the bride’s entry later at the groom’s home. The escorts pause to eat *bilmah* and plot how to circumvent the groom’s side’s plans. The bride’s family should express gratitude for this information by offering money to those who provide it.

When they reach the groom’s gate, the groom’s male relatives and friends are waiting to receive them. Firecrackers crackle from the roof edges. Children rush forward, attacking the bride and her marriage-companions, attempting to put soot on their faces. Now, the marriage-companions dismount. The bride remains mounted and her *arang* and uncle attempt to lead her through the gate, but are blocked by a pair of young men. Although the bride almost always rides into the groom’s home, it is believed that if the groom’s family can force her to enter on foot, she will be subservient, whereas if she rides into the courtyard, they lose face. Conversely, the bride’s side believes that the wedding day is the most precious in the bride’s life, therefore she should be allowed to ride inside comfortably, rather than be forced to walk in. One side insists on the bride riding through the gate, and the other side insists that she walk. They are locked in a heated argument and bodies clash. Sometimes, there is mimic fighting. When the attempt of the bride’s side fails, there is talk of taking the bride back home. At this point, the groom’s parents invite an *ahong* or village elders to mediate. If the bride’s side remains dissatisfied, the groom’s parents formally apologize. Satisfied, finally, the mounted bride and her escort pass through the gate. During the whole process of the bride’s side forcing their way through the gate and the groom’s side blocking their way, the groom is on the roof over the gate. He stamps his feet, causing dirt to fall onto the bride’s head, ensuring his
absolute authority over her, otherwise, he will be unable to control her.

In the courtyard, an elder from the groom’s side carries the bride directly to the otkang of her new wedding room. Men from both sides stand facing each other and say “salaam” in unison. In the past, women from the groom’s side stood holding four bowls of milk tea. Women from the bride’s side stood facing them. The two sides bowed to each other three times, and then the women from the bride’s side sipped a little milk tea from the offered bowls. Next, the bride’s female escorts would move near the kitchen, where they stood for a while with the bride before escorting her to the bridal chamber.

A WELCOMING BANQUET

Now all the guests are seated, except for the bride’s younger sisters and, perhaps, female cousins and marriage-companions, who stay in the wedding chamber. Women are never allowed to sit with men. They are seated in rooms where they cannot easily be seen by male guests. With the members of the groom’s family, aghini, and kumsin serving, the banquet begins. The food served is similar to the feast food served at the time of betrothal gift giving.

During the entire banquet, the bride must stand at an inside corner of the otkang in the bridal chamber. Before she gets on the otkang, two girls from the groom’s side are already standing at each of the two inside corners. The bride’s companions give them money and they depart. The bride now stands facing one corner. Her head remains covered with the veil. During the midpoint of the banquet, the bride’s arang comes to her bridal chamber. While holding a pair of chopsticks in one hand and a bowl of water in the other, he circles the chopsticks round her head several times and says:

1mini agu sini oyingde,
2daxkema tixge,
3sukema singge,
4tiuni oz̄hvurgho,
5urvah̄ bud̄h jiyagh̄a,
6yaghkema khaynagh̄o,
7suktema puhragh̄;
8mingu ate qihkh̄a,
9sihkhu umusugh̄ qihkh̄a,
10ixgu axe qihkh̄a,
11gį̄gu donne qihkh̄a.
12ugh̄al ush doghkh̄a,
13kh̄azi bex doghkh̄a.

1My child will live in your household,
Staying firm as stone,
Seeping into your household like water,
Taking root underneath,
Sprouting branches upward,
Boiling like oil,
Boiling like milk;
When riding, she will ride horses,
When milking, she will milk yaks,
When eating, she will have food to eat,
When dressing, she will have don to wear.
She will bear three sons,
She will bear five daughters.

Next, he lifts the veil with chopsticks and, holding the chopsticks, he demands a fee for removing the veil. If the groom’s side is reluctant, or the fee is inadequate, he threatens to break the chopsticks, which is considered unlucky. Therefore, the groom’s side meets the arang’s demands. Satisfied, the arang returns the chopsticks to the groom’s side.

When the banquet for the bride’s side is nearly concluded, female escorts of the bride are served long noodles and the banquet for the bride’s side ends. Now, members of the groom’s kumsin and aghini are seated and served a meal. They should be served exactly the same food that guests from the bride’s side received. If the groom’s family sends meat portions to the bride’s side, these members of the groom’s kumsin and aghini deserve the same number of meat portions.

DISPLAYING THE DOWRY
Following the banquet, tables are placed in the courtyard center in full view of everyone. The bride’s dowry is displayed. It includes two finely painted wooden chests, two suitcases, quilts, cotton-padded mattresses, white felt rugs, embroidered pillow covers, and other household necessities ranging from cups to mirrors. It might also include a washing machine if the bride’s parents can afford it. Cosmetics are also included in some bride’s dowries. Also zong hay, mentioned in “Offering the Bride Price,” are displayed. The zong hay for the groom’s parents and all the aghini members are usually one pair of shoes and one pair of socks per person. The groom, his parents, and the suji each receive an extra pair of pillow covers. The zong hay are locked in the two wooden chests. The bride’s younger brother has the keys and does not relinquish them until he is given a satisfactory sum of money from the groom’s family. The groom’s family is required to give money to young people who have helped to move the dowry. All the zong hay and other
dowry items are displayed. *Zongə hay* are given to members of the groom’s side who are present. To show their gratitude, the groom’s side asks the bride’s side to sit on the *otkang* and at tables that are on the floor.

**Words of Relatives by Marriage**

While having tea, the bride’s side entrusts an experienced speech-giver to speak on their behalf. The ensuing speech teaches the need to respect *ahong*, elders, matchmakers, maternal uncles, and all who enthusiastically work for the public (Ma and Ma 1989, 28; Yan and Wang 1994, 922).

**Orəh Suzi (Words of Relatives by Marriage)**

1. *Bu deyniğə yahxi gunne,*
2. *Men selere orəh suzi ixgi aghəs yenxaghə:*

1. Today, on a good day for a wedding,
2. I’ll say *orəh suzi* to you:

1. *Dunyade iquo kemne uə etgusadisi?*
2. *Ahung erlinni uə etgusa.*
3. *Nangni yolände (e)dise?*
4. *Erlin mutalin yolände surlihali gunne amənbandini parlaghujade,*
5. *Bur haghənə qirisi,*
6. *Ixgi dünnioni görəgüjade;*
7. *Minbere qihe khuranni axi,*
8. *Amelini amənbadlıghə chuanshou etgujade;*
9. *Yirihni kiji khuyi,*
10. *Hudaghə yahan otakuji kixade.*
11. *Mu yolände iquo ahung arlinni uə etgusadiri.*

1. In this world whom should we respect?
2. We should respect imams and scholars.
3. For what reason?
4. Because on auspicious days imams and *mutalın* are men who lead common people,
5. By opening a piece of paper,
6. They can see two worlds;
7. Standing at the platform in the mosque opening the *Quran,*
8. They teach sacred writings to common people;
9. In careful ways,
10. They live by Allah.
11. For this reason we should respect imams and scholars.
1. After this,
2. Whom should we respect?
3. Old people in the village should be respected.
4. For what reason?
5. From morning to night they go to the mosque’s gate,
6. They do good things at the mosque’s gate,
7. They live our faith.
8. Wearing turbans,
9. Holding walking sticks,
10. Visiting graveyard gates before and after prayers;
11. Ascending mountains and watching fields,
12. Concerned about the village’s important and trivial affairs,
13. Staying at water sources mediating disputes,
14. Enduring the wind.
15. For these reasons we should respect elders.
10jadɔl ghanini vulaghujari,
11dagɔlghanini baghlaghujari,
12sunkhanini khadaghujari,
13xidilanini yamaghujiari,
14yazɔlghanini yighkhujari,
15ɗuŋlinginini tixgujari,
16bughɔlgi ni yjurγjujari,
17yihilgi ni thgjujari.
18mu yolɔnde semisane psi ulɔ etgusideri.

1After this,
2Whom should we respect?
3We should respect those who work for us peasants.
4For what reason?
5They toil from morning to night,
6Not sleeping day and night,
7Using all their strength,
8Transforming big disputes into small disputes,
9Turning small disputes into nothing,
10Joining that which has fallen apart,
11Tying together that which is scattered,
12Repairing that which is broken,
13Mending that which is ragged,
14Gathering that which is scattered,
15Untying dead knots,
16Opening that which is wrapped,
17Righting that which is fallen.
18For these reasons we should respect you elders.

1muɗɔn jiuyine gelji,
2kemne ulɔ etgusaderi?
3ixgi arangni ulɔ etgusideri.
4nangni yolɔnde (e)dise?
5kix qihse ixgi arangden qiheri,
6dimur qihse oqi qurihden qiher deri,
7sininĩi isade.
8mu yolɔnde semisane psi ulɔ etgusadiri.

1After this,
2Whom should we respect?
3We should respect the two arang.
4For what reason?
5Because men come from arang,
6Iron comes from a furnace,
7And arang are the masters of their nephews and nieces.
8For these reasons we should respect them.

1mundôn tiuni gelji,
2kemne ula etgusadiri?
3ixgi sujini ula etgusadiri.
4nangni yolände (e)dise?
5asмонде bulat yohmese rehemet yoh der diri,
6yerde suji yohmese orah yoh der diri.
7bihi daghkhö to tigujari,
8ah kuxleghö khangar tahkhujari,
9ah ate yin talaghujari,
10yang mixde miralu tihgujaride.
11mu yolände semisane pisi aghas etkeliğa.

1After this,
2Whom should we respect?
3We should respect the two suji.
4For what reason?
5If there are no clouds in the sky there is no sign of rain,
6If there are no suji in this world there are no relatives.
7They are the ones who establish steles on high mountains,
8The ones who tie bells on white sparrow hawks,
9The ones who brand white horses,
10The ones who build minarets in new mosques.
11Therefore, we should respect them.

1mundôn tiuni gelji,
2buğun mangö geğen yirahdiği khonah,
3kem kem geğen aghini kumsin,
4nigu gigu selaniği altun suratangni qeyittari,
5altun adönglani khošolmoghane,
6altun khangninglani bur tixmiğide,
7suzi bu der.

1After this,
2Today relatives are here from far away.
3Each aghini and kumsin member,
4We are unfamiliar with each of your honorable faces,
Your honorable names we do not know.
Do not harbor unhappiness in your honorable minds,
This is what I want to say.

What I, an ignorant man, said,
Is as cumbersome as an ignorant colt struggling to walk.
Words spoken at night,
Words should be weighed.
I can’t use time well.
Today I use this occasion,
And leave greetings.
These are the words.

Of eighteen thousand kinds of animals,
Which is the most respectable?
We children of Adam.
4 Why are we respectable?
5 In the mother’s belly nine months,
6 The tenth month we see light,
7 On a certain month and a certain day we step on the ground,
8 We make every kind of food,
9 Chant prayers,
10 Call to prayers invoke the Prophet’s name,
11 Wear turbans symbolizing our faith in Islam.
12 With Allah’s blessing,
13 At the age of six to seven we visit the mosque gate,
14 Study knowledge and manners,
15 Learn of Allah’s loving-kindness,
16 Thus we children of Adam are respectable.

1 At the age of twelve to thirteen,
2 A boy takes a bride into his home,
3 A girl marries out of her home.
4 We two parents shoulder this responsibility,
5 That’s the reason.
6 Pigeons study the nest,
7 Relatives study the roots of each other’s ancestry.
8 You two families have asked about each other,
9 As Tibetans say, after examining nine mountains,
10 Then put prayer-flags on one mountain top.
11 As Han Chinese say, after looking down a long river,
Build a bridge at the narrowest point.
You two families have examined each other like looking for silver amongst white lead,
Have examined each other like picking gold from sand.
This is the reason why you two families have become relatives.

1(yilni) ixinde yilni danga,
2ayni ixinde ayni danga,
3gunni ixinde yahxi gunni danga,
4yüzigun saghünk honni bur gun polani.
5bugun-eti geli gun yaghlaji,
6ey yaghlaji,
7ha girmiji hu girmji,
8bugun-etiniği gunshi seler ixgi qimsangniği der,
9suzi bu der.

1(You) selected the year from among years,
2Selected the month from among months,
3Selected the day from among days,
4The thing expected for a hundred days has now finished in a day.
5These days the sun shines,
6The moon is bright,
7Nothing wrong has happened,
8These days are for you two families (to complete the boy’s and girl’s marriage).
9These are the words.

1mini agu oye vaja yash da dirmiji,
2uzon saxni urha dügo,
3pisı hariqo bas burødha basgelse,
4se uqi huy kema duri bas kema zele.
5bihqihzele uliqiḥ ite,
6me uqine suqune otasine khoye,
7se uqi yerde tihile,
8xiraniği diot ayagho qidimagho ite,
9namat ixdinı namatı ni tangne,
10jalıh ixdinı jalını jara,
11uja ixdinde ulixni khoyghin vumi,
12aghini kumsandın oye oye jamnaghani,
13men kharivashili adım yandermes,
14mi yaniximne burqiḥalahu selere,
My daughter is still young to enter your home,
Wrapped her hair up,
We old people sent her over here.
Like a forest your household members came out to receive us,
Received and highly respected us.
Our family sits on the otkang,
Your family stands on the floor.
Four table legs can’t support the food’s weight,
You have cooked dish after dish,
Have slaughtered sheep after sheep and ox after ox,
Portions of mutton were added to uji kut,
Have invited aghini and kumsin to one household after another household.
I won’t have a bad reputation since you are so generous,
Thanks to Allah I will repay you,
Repay five for one,
Repay ten for five,
Repay one hundred for ten,
Repay one thousand for one hundred,
You should be richly repaid.
These are the words.

Four table legs can’t support it,
You have used fine flour,
You have used fat animals,
You have used clear rapeseed oil,
In this way,

Our reputation has been enhanced by your generous banquet,

Betrothal gifts now belong to your family.

The four legs of a tall table can’t support the dowry’s weight,

When the girl’s family displays needlework,

The needlework is part of the dowry.

My daughter untangled linen thread,

Nearly broke her arm tendons,

Needle after needle made these soles,

Her eyes nearly ran out of oil,

Needle after needle sewn under the lamp,

She put threads through eyes of small needles,

Needle after needle she used in embroidering.

Our reputation has been enhanced by your generous banquet,

Betrothal gifts now belong to your family.

Here is the place you two families obtain your reputations,
The place to praise each other,
Han Chinese say:
When a man dies his name will be remembered,
When a wild goose passes its soul remains.
Here you two families,
Should praise each other,
Create your reputations.

After this,
Why did my daughter marry into this family?
Looking up, the rock cliff is high,
Where white sparrow hawks grow wings;
Looking at the mountain forest, it is big,
A good place to hunt;
Looking down, the clear river is broad,
A good place for fish to play,
Sluicing gold and rafting,
A good place to live;
Looking at the mountain, the mountain is big,
Looking at the plain, the plain is broad,
It is the place for animals to get fat,
The place to plant grain;
This gate is the place to tie white horses,
Where yaks defecate to their heart’s content,
Where imams and scholars emerge,
For this reason my daughter married here.

Granny Khod÷bo, are you listening?
My daughter is from a poor family of a humble place,
Came to your door,
To take the handle of a wooden-shovel from your hands,
To take the wooden-pail from your back.
She is still ignorant,
And knows little.
Teach her what she doesn’t know,
Show her what she hasn’t seen.
If she behaves improperly take it like the wind and let it blow away,
If she behaves improperly take it like water and let it flow away.
Your responsibility is to feed her baked wheat and turn her into an eagle,
Your responsibility is to feed her lamb and turn her into a sparrow hawk.
What I, an ignorant man, said,
Is as cumbersome as an ignorant colt struggling to walk,
The way people conduct things,
The way people pull bows,
The way people throw stones,
The way water flows.
The head comes but the foot doesn’t follow,
The foot comes but the waist doesn’t follow.
My speech can’t be measured by the kuri,50
My speech can’t be measured with a scale,
My speech can’t be measured with a rope.
If there is something wrong with what I said,
Let’s chat leisurely in Allah’s noble language,
Esseliamualikum!51

AFTER RECITATION OF “WORDS OF RELATIVES BY MARRIAGE”
In the past, men from the groom’s side next performed shizi 獅子 oyna (lion dance), which told of the Salar ancestors’ migration from Central Asia. In the Mengda Region, döyi oyna told the same story.52 Now, members of the groom’s aghini separately invite guests from the bride’s side to their homes.53 The guests are served food and tea again. This is also an opportunity for them to become better acquainted with the family that will host them for the night.

At supper time, the groom’s family invites the guests from the bride’s side back again for a meal of long noodles. After they finish eating, the groom’s aghini and kumsin eat. Meanwhile, in the wedding chamber, a female member of the groom’s side brings a basin of water to the bride. The former stirs the water with a pair of chopsticks and tosses a coin into the basin. In Salar this is called gijir qoy (throwing earrings).54 The bride gives money to this person, who later shares it equally with other females of the
groom’s side. Afterwards, the bride is left with her marriage-companions and her younger sisters. All the other guests of the bride’s side are invited to the homes of the groom’s aghini and kumsin to spend the night.

The groom persuades the escorts to leave and, in most cases, he must bribe them to do so. If his persuasion is unsuccessful, the groom must wait to sleep with the bride the following night. When the new couple do spend the first night together alone, young males of the groom’s village listen outside their room. Some joke in low tones about the activity, real or imagined, inside. If one of the young men is married, he may instruct the new couple through the window. The young men do not leave unless the couple gives them money. The next day, in an exaggerated way, those who listened tell other young male villagers about what they heard that night. This is called dingna (eavesdropping).

The following morning, guests have breakfast in the home they have stayed in the previous night. Later, the groom’s family invites all the guests to their home to have chagh÷ yighbur (tea gathering). This consists of tea, fried bread, and baozi. After the guests eat, the groom’s aghini and kumsin members have the same food. At about noon, the groom’s elder brothers (who have independent bazar) and uncles invite the guests to their homes for lunch (Salar, khon÷h et or “inviting guests”). If the groom has a dozen brothers and uncles, they divide the guests and entertain them in their respective homes. At this time, meat portions should be sent to each guest. The best part goes to the bride’s father. Next, in order, portions are given to the arang, uncles, and others. Late in the afternoon, guests all gather at the groom’s home to have tola÷gh÷n cha (sending off tea). Food consists of fried bread, baozi, and stewed mutton mixed with vegetables. Afterwards, the tables are cleaned and the groom’s side prepares for sending off the escorts. The bride’s parents make a list of those to receive gifts of cash. The suji takes the money from the groom’s parents and distributes it mostly to women escorts. (In Mengda and Qingshui male escorts also receive cash.) The bride’s mother generally receives the largest amount. Just before the guests depart, representatives of both sides discuss the time and number of escorts from the groom’s side that will accompany the bride upon her return to her parents’ home.55

Kho yan (The Bride Returns to Her Parents’ Home)
Seven to ten days after the wedding, the bride’s parents send representatives with livestock to invite the bride to her parents’ home. They are received with the same sort of food used during the wedding in the groom’s home. Later on, closely related members of the bride’s aghini and kumsin separately invite the guests to their homes for a meal. They give money to each guest
they invite. No meat portions are given on this occasion. A time for toxi (congratulations) is agreed upon shortly before guests from the groom’s side leave. The time agreed upon is usually two days later.

**Toxi**

At the agreed upon time, the bride’s side visits the groom’s home to toxi with money. Toxi follows this order: the bride’s parents, brothers, and sisters are in the first group, called pamam toxi (congratulations from the bride’s side); they are followed by one or more maternal uncles, who are received with the same sort of food used on the day of offering the bride price in the bride’s home, and, finally, members of the groom’s aghini and kumsin come to toxi with money.

Several days after toxi, the groom and bride visit the bride’s parents with tea and crystal sugar. The groom’s and bride’s parents send money to those who have helped in the wedding. This money includes su heli (water money) for females who fetched water from the village spring, yihdo heli or money for young men who served as waiters and chopped firewood, and khazanbax heli (kitchen money) for women who worked in the kitchen.

After the wedding the suji is rewarded. Salar believe the suji’s accomplishment in arranging a marriage is comparable to building a mosque minaret. The bride’s and groom’s sides both send the suji a pair of shoes, a pair of socks, and a pair of pillow covers. This is known as suji vənla, or satisfying the suji.

**Kini Yiur (Divorce)**

A man may divorce his wife by repeating three times “I don’t want you, I divorce you.” However, certain ahong insist that a marriage is tied together by three strands of rope. If a man repeats 100 times, “I don’t want you, I divorce you,” on one occasion then one strand of rope is broken. He must then do this twice again on separate occasions before the divorce is genuine. If a divorce does occur, the couple cannot live together. Divorce is accomplished solely by males. Even if a female obtains a legal divorce, other males will likely not marry her because custom holds that she remains married until kini yiur has been done. When a female is divorced, she must wait several months before remarrying. This is largely out of fear that she may be pregnant from her former husband. If a couple does divorce, it is almost impossible for them to remarry each other.

**Muhu Yigh (Marrying a Groom into the Bride’s Home)**

A male marries into his bride’s home when the latter’s parents have no son. First, however, the bride’s parents ask if any families in the kumsin and aghini
are willing to marry a son into the bride’s family. If there is a positive response, this is given preferential consideration because it decreases the possibility of future disputes over property division. When a groom is taken into the bride’s home, nikah is chanted in the bride’s home. The groom’s rights and obligations are similar to that of a son, but he is usually denigrated by the bride’s aghini and kumsin.

Men who married-in to their wife’s home are often from impoverished families. One informant stated that his great grandfather had married into Daxin\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textregistered}}\)h Agh\(\text{\textregistered}\)l and that his children bore his father-in-law’s surname. Though the great-grandfather participated fully in marriages and funerals, the members of his wife’s aghini and kumsin still kept a considerable distance from him. Our informant’s grandfather continued to feel this reservation. By the third generation, however, there was no evidence of discrimination. A married-in groom gains relatives’ trust by long years of being filial, honest, and hardworking. In recent years, the village has had no such grooms. Evidently, better economic opportunity has provided alternatives to this unattractive marriage form for prospective grooms.

**MARRIAGE OF OLD PEOPLE**

If an older person’s spouse dies while middle aged, the surviving spouse is expected to remarry as soon as possible, for a single life is discouraged. The chanting of nikah in such a marriage is the most important element. Other steps are either missing or simplified.

**NOTES**

1. Chinese: Shitoupo 石頭坡 “stoneslope.” Salar lexical items are rendered according to the system devised by Professor Han Jianye, Qinghai Nationalities Institute, Xining, Qinghai. Appendix One presents the IPA equivalents for the Salar written system.
2. Chinese: Luotuo Quan 烏陀泉 “Camel Spring.”
3. HAHN (1988, 239) offers “Garamang” and “Aqman” for the same names.
4. However, two years ago, a Hui woman from the Chen clan married a young Salar man living in Majia Village, Jiezi Township.
5. Most pupils are boys. A few girls do attend, but generally for only a short time.
6. Daxin\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textregistered}}\)h Agh\(\text{\textregistered}\)l has a primary school where Chinese is the language of instruction.
7. An earthen wall home compound with a small flower plot in the middle encircled by stones or a brick wall. The remainder of the space is used for a vegetable garden. A bazar is generally composed of a main room, kitchen, guest room, and stable. Bazar may also refer to the family living in the house (Ll and STUART 1990, 43).
8. Thin, round pieces of baked bread the size of a fully extended hand.
9. Made by slowly stirring barley flour into boiling water and cooking.
10. Prepared by stirring flour mixed with cool water, oil, and salt over a low fire.
11. We are grateful to Mr. Dpal ldan bkra shis for his Wiley renderings of Tibetan terms used in this paper.
12. A traditional Salar ballad. Yüri derives from the ancient Turkic er, which originally referred to “poem.” Possibly because Salar lost a written language, making it impossible to write poetry, yüri gradually lost the meaning of “poem” and came to denote “love song.” In Salar, hua’er is known as yüri. Tibetan layi (Tibetan: la gzhas) is also called yüri (Tibetan: gzhas) (SIMALI and MA 1996, 19).

13. Sometimes hua’er is called hadi yüri, meaning in Chinese “love songs.” For more on hua’er see FENG and STUART 1994.

14. By the time we completed this article, two video parlors in Sancha Market had been destroyed by Salar, owing to the noisy nature and objectionable content of the parlors’ offerings. Subsequently, snooker tables were quickly withdrawn from roadsides into their owners’ courtyards.

15. A maqiu is a thumb-thick, 6-to-7 cm long rod with two pointed ends, resembling a jujube pit. A 70-cm-long, 6-cm-wide, sword-shaped board known as banbur is also used. Players are divided into two groups. Each group has more than two players. From the base camp (a circle drawn on the ground), players from the attacking group hit one end of the maqiu with the banbur in turn, thus making it bounce above the ground. When the maqiu rises to waist height, the batter hits it up and forward. A player from the defending group then attempts to catch it. If he succeeds, the batter is out. If the maqiu is not caught, the player that attempted to catch it must pick it up from where it fell and throw it back towards the base camp. If the maqiu does not land in the base camp circle, the batter hits it as far as he can. The distance from base to where it landed is measured in units of banbur length. This length, for example, thirty banbur, is the score gained. The winning group is the one with the highest score (MA and MA 1989, 66).

16. The players are divided into two groups. Palm-sized stone targets are set up on the ground that are equal in number to the number of the players in one group. From a distance of 5–20 meters, players from one of the groups attempt to hit targets in turn. Players who hit a target continue to play. Those who fail to hit a target are replaced by one of their teammates. The winning team is the one that hits the most targets (MA and MA 1989, 68).

17. A feather shuttlecock. Using feathers from a cock’s neck is taboo, however, as it is thought that this will lead to a leak in the large cooking pot in the offender’s home (MA and MA 1989, 71).

18. A game similar to jacks played by teenage girls, in which five smooth apricot-pit-sized pebbles are used.

19. For a recent study of döyi oyna, see MA and STUART 1996.

20. Owing to the young age at which Salar marry, we frequently employ the terms “girl” and “boy” when referring to the bride and groom.

21. The fundamental Salar social organization, the aghini is composed of two to ten households sharing the same family name. Because aghini members are close relatives sharing the same blood tie, marriage is taboo between its members. At such times as when selling a home, aghini members enjoy the most favored status. If there is collective agreement in the aghini, a member may sell his home. Also, it is the duty of the members of the same aghini to help each other in activities ranging from birthgiving to funerals (ZHU and ZHOU 1994, 474).

22. Also known as oütimu (“patristical clan”). One to twenty aghini form a kumsin, a basic Salar social organization. Two or more kumsin may form an agzla, a union of village hamlets. Each kumsin has its own common graveyard. During such activities as farm work, members of the same kumsin assist one another. During a wedding, it is the duty of kumsin members of the bride’s household to escort the bride to the groom’s home, while members of the groom’s kumsin welcome and provide accommodations for the bride’s retinue. During a funeral, members of the deceased’s kumsin make funeral arrangements, including digging the grave and burying the corpse. Members share the most favored status in matters of trade within
their own kumsin. In the village mosque each kumsin has a representative to assist in arranging religious activities for its members (ZHÚ and ZHOU 1994, 474–75).

23. A heatable platform made of brick and dirt equivalent to the Chinese käng 烏; the otkang is a place to sit, sleep, chat, and eat.

24. Zongo bears considerable resemblance to three Amdo Tibetan terms for “dowry”—brdzangs ma (to give things), skal rdzongs (to give a part or proportion) and gnas brdzangs (to give when someone marries out of a family).

25. Ingredients are chunjian (loose leaf green tea), lumps of crystal sugar, dried longan pulp, raisins, red Chinese dates, the fruit of Chinese wolfberry (Lycium chinense), apricot kernels, and litchi. Sanpotai is drunk from a round cup without a handle that sits in a saucer. When sanpotai is served, boiling water from a kettle, not a thermos, must be served, otherwise the host is considered impolite.

27. Fried dough in which a red date is wrapped. It is about the size of an egg.
28. Steamed stuffed buns.
29. Yangpan is a dish consisting of a layer of square radish pieces placed on a plate with two layers of meat on top.
31. In the last two to three years, the hot pot course is rare.
32. A recent trend is for elder brothers-in-law to give more money in yinsin vur than the arang.
33. If the distance between the two sides is far, a tractor, car, or truck may be employed.
34. If a bride does not sing saghāsi she will be ridiculed. The song expresses her reluctance to leave her parents. If she does not sing, it suggests that she is unfilial. Her aunts teach her how to sing some weeks before the wedding.
35. An asterisk * indicates that the meaning eludes us.
36. This is a romanization of a sound that she makes while singing.
37. This is a romanization of a sound that she makes while singing.
38. This line and the one above allude to those who solve problems and make peace.
39. Sentences 6 and 7 suggest that “your family will be very prosperous.”
40. A long robe worn by women.
41. Salar, Yenkenagu neme ix (new-wife food eating).
42. Salar, besang ax (open dowry chest).
43. Scholars of Islam.
44. The lavishness of the speaker’s reception is a reflection of his status in the community.
45. Probably derived from the Tibetan nom pa, denoting “property,” “treasure.”
46. Suggesting that her eyes became dry and irritated from concentrating on sewing.
47. Groom’s mother’s name.
48. An idiom meaning “live a life of high status.”
49. An idiom meaning “live a humble life.”
50. A unit of dry measure for grain (1 kuri = 1 deciliter).
51. Salaam.
52. It is unclear why Salar in Daxinsh Aghāl and Jiezi Region did the lion dance. Lion dancing is common among Han Chinese, certain Amdo Tibetans, and certain Monguor.
53. This is called jamna (sharing) in Salar.
54. Today, people use a coin rather than an earring. Nevertheless, this is still called “throwing earrings.”
55. To further illustrate tola, the name for this ritual, we provide an example from 1979, when a girl in Daxinsh Aghāl married. The groom’s side sent 350 yuan and a suit of clothes
to the bride’s mother, who then returned 80 yuan to the groom’s side. The bride’s sisters and aunts and the wives of several arang each received 30–40 yuan. Furthermore, everyone received a portion of meat. The bride’s father and arang each received uji kut.

**APPENDIX 1:** The Salar Written System’s IPA Equivalents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salar Character</th>
<th>IPA Equivalent</th>
<th>Salar Character</th>
<th>IPA Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ü</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>ö</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>k'</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>tj</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>tj'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
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<td>Z</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s, c'</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KH</td>
<td>G, G'</td>
<td>gh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋ</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>v</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>p'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Parentheses around a letter in the text indicate that the letter is not voiced. It is added in parentheses to avoid confusion in spelling.

2. Borrowed Chinese words are spelled in Chinese pinyin (e.g., *linzhicao*); however, as the pinyin sound *c* does not exist in Salar, it is rendered *s*. 
APPENDIX 2: Uruh Soz

While writing this paper we found Han’s (1996) uruh soz, which we present here. Han provided a free Chinese translation that Ma Jianzhong translated into English. A note offers these comments:

_Uruh soz_ means “words of relatives by marriage” and may be freely translated as “congratulatory wedding speech” or “wedding ceremony words of praise.” It is rich in poetic rhymes and folk song characteristics, with usage of sincere language, graceful wording, and appropriate metaphors. _Uruh soz_ is widespread among the common people. Delivery of the _uruh soz_ is one of the most joyful events of a Salar wedding. Han Jianye, Associate Professor, Qinghai Nationalities Institute, transcribed this version from tape-recorded material supplied by Comrade Ma Xueyi. Professor Han Jianye translated this version into Chinese, so as to satisfy the need of readers. (Han 1996, 55)

We have not attempted to reconcile spellings or punctuation in Han’s published Salar version with what we offer in Salar.

**TRANSLATION**

Men bu doyini guni selere uruhsoz ixgi ah÷z yanxi biigi.
On an auspicious and happy day like today I’ll say _uruh suzi_ for you.

I

_Dunyada kemni ah÷s alghi dise, ahun alimni algli diri,_
_iqo aman bandini zulihalinigi yolundan, mudi haynigi yoluna baxlaghan, hudanigi sun-netni zullaghujı jomuenni zhizhang etguji, bir hah÷tni qiurese ixgi dunyani gorgan danix-men alimari de, muni yolundan seliini ah÷s alghi diri._

I

_In this world whom should we respect?_
_Learned ahong of noble character and high prestige._
_They are the wise ones who open men’s minds,_
_by prophets’ revelation and guidance;_
_They are the ones who live the Faith by revering holy scriptures,_
_by opening a single piece of paper,_
_They see clearly the universe’s origin._
_For this reason they are specially respected._

II

_Mundan Tiuyine gelse, agh÷ldagh÷ har÷—har÷ larni ah÷s alghi diri._
_Seler er—kex mixit Khoni Xüguri, mixit Khodigi xerhakni fubang iti, jomunni zhizhang etKen Kix ari de, muni yolundan seliini ah÷s alghi diri._

II

_Who else should be respected?_
_The old people in the village._
_Though weak and advanced in age, they devoted themselves to the five meritorious services,_
_They are the basestones of Islam,_
_The Faith is lived by their full support._
For this reason elders should be respected.

III
Mundan tiuyine gelse, ixgi arangni ahås alghi diri,
Haji yanxiri: “tie chu lu jiaa ran chu wei jia”. muni TürKi sozla yanxisa, “dimur qåhsa Kurih aghzindan qåh÷r, Kix qåhsa ixgi arangdan qåhwar” diri, biïhi dalnigi uzigi bar, arang sinihni isidir, mani yolundan arangni ahås alghidiri.

III
Two arang also should be respected.
For what reason?
An old Chinese saying has it that, “Iron comes from a furnace, men come from arang.”
Though reaching high to the sky, the trees have roots,
Arang are the owners of our bones,
We should seek the arang’s advice in everything.

IV
Mundan tiuyine gelSe, ixgi sojini ahås alghi diri,
Haji yanxiri: “tian shang Wu yün, baxa yü, diïa Wu mei buchång qin”. muni TürKi sözla yanxisa, “asmanda bulut yohmasa rahmet yohder, ziiminde Soji yohmasa uruh yohdar” diri, biïhi daghKha to tihgújia diri, ozen qelde asit yasaghújia diri, ahKhux Walasina Khongar dahKhu jia, ah atda yin basKhujia de, muni yo lundan seliyi ahssalghi diri.

IV
Also, let’s mention the two suji. Han Chinese say, “If there are no clouds in the sky there will be no rain, if there are no suji there will be no relatives.” In Salar this is asmanda bulut yohmasa rahmet yohdar, ziminde soji gohmasa uruh yohdar.
They are the ones who establish steles on high mountains,
Who turn barren stony fields into farmland,
Who tie whistles on birds’ necks,
Who brand white horses,
For this reason we respect them.

V
Mundan tiuyine gelse, bugji munga yighil ghan ulu—Kixji, hara—hura, nigu-nigu, yahjuh adnångga ad Khoxulmughannigi, Seli (r) nigig altun gongglara bir aghørlanKhuma digen soz budir.

V
Also, I want to mention all the villagers here,
It’s truly difficult to indicate each one’s respected name.
I wish that on your golden pure hearts,
A tiny black flaw would never fall.

VI
Dunyaghæ gælæ shi ba qian yang megheluKhø ixínde zhiguyjægægæ nang æri dise, iqø adøm æri, iqø anangi husaghænda døKhus ayni Kotiri, on ayni gi yaþuñi goriri, yere en’ gi alin mutuhænigi iliide Khomèt banKenë oha, Shønønigi arðinefluñi iti, muni yolundan iqø adøm zhiguy æri.
VI
Among ten thousand kinds of things in this world, which is the most precious?
Man, who differs from other animals.
Why is man the most precious?
Mothers are pregnant for ten months and bear us,
As soon as we step on the ground we open our eyes,
Sagacity drives us to learn how to survive,
And the wise lead us to the correct path of life,
Doing good deeds with the guidance of holy scriptures.

VII
Bala Wolsa alto yide yanxighu, mixit Khogha Khola, alin haKimetni orgiti hudani bir ligini
danaghusdir, on ixgi on ux yetgu oghul Wolsa bele ali, Khaz Wolsa ele beri, islamni baghlaghini
Wuri, guande etgusi, sen eto—enoni Wàxìndigli bûr—ixgi Ken geden ari digen soz budir.

VII
When we reach the age of six or seven our parents send us to school,
In our innocent minds,
Receiving all sorts of knowledge,
See the origin of humans and knowing Allah;
Reaching the age of twelve to thirteen,
We should take the business of marriage seriously.
This is the responsibility put on parents’ shoulders,
It’s also the rule of our Islam.

VIII
Mundan tiuyine gelse Haji yanxiri: “Kunqüe Kua modan răn Kua qinqi, ma Kua
nanzhuang, dao Kua xao, zhuang Kuo Kua FangWu” diri, muni türKi Sozla yanxixa,
“KunSiKolasa modanni Kolar, Kix Kolasa urughini Kolar, at Kolasa engirini Kolar, pixjah
Kolasa Khrnni Kolar, bazir Kolasa yüñi Kolar” diri, Sen ixgi liangjasin bir-birni
Kolaghushi ira diri:

VIII
An old Chinese saying has it that
People are praised for their relatives, and birds for their feathers,
Horses are praised for their saddles and harnesses, and swords for their sheaths;
Bazar are praised for their tall houses,
Two sides of relatives by marriage expect the new couple to live happily.

IX
Haji yanxiri: “gau shan shang dian dang wanli min, honghò bian zeihua gàngzi shàng.”
manì turKi sozla yanxixa, “bìhi daghda qiralûh dixesser yirahda xeller, ulû derya
Kharghanda jîch zeyele ozîh umjasi tirang’a” diri.

Haji ygxixi: “Wangshang Kan shinai gao, beiniao zhanchibang; Waghga Kan heshui
Kuan bei yù Kuan xinling”. muni turKi sözla yanxisa “orige üxirse dax Khaya bihari,
akhKhux walasi khanati-khurghù uzagha yera; axaghàna üxirse gohmoren uliari, xangsi bal-
ahni (gi) guni jilaghù yeradiri.
IX

Han Chinese say,
Lighting lamps on high mountains, the light shines ten thousand li away,
Planting flowers by the river, their roots reach deep.
Tibetans say,
The peaks of nine mountain ridges,
Are our ancestors who lived nine generations ago;
Fields where seeds can sprout,
Is the place where crops can grow.
Han Chinese say,
Looking up, rocky cliffs are high,
Where birds spread their wings;
Looking down the river, it is wide;
Fish swim leisurely.

X
Muni yolundan mini agumni uzun saxini KhisKha sax iti, bas-burchKa basi gelese, sen oqii huqKama duri, baskama jügle, men oqiiini Khox ilingla zeliji, men oqini shangxigha Khoyi. sen oqii haxida oteri, jamagnune Khaynati yangyaugdli nemeni tängnatiulu etqanbolur ya. dağh mangə öngnanmi, aghine—Kumsan nigu—nigu oqine jamnati, jama gune öngna jejang yejangni jaro, ulu etginini men Khara waxili adam yandırılmes ya.

XI
Mini agum sini Khoda, SuKanma singgi, daxKama qixgi, yaghKama puhraghi, SutKama Khaynaghi. orige budah jiyaghi, axaghana ozih falaghi, aṙi baghdigi yimuxKa durgha, ah aṙfanin(gi) KhormaxKa aqilgha, Ki dolghu oğhul—Khizgha wurgha, duz dolghu mai—axxe wurgha, gumuxni (gi) KoriaghindaotKha, altunn (gi) agharlighina tixgi, gi(l)—gujinzi zeligi, wa(r)ghujini ızatKha, warranggigi gunini ılgagh Khə.
XI
I wish that when she is in your household,
Our girl will settle down like drizzle permeating layers and layers of soil,
Like shiny jade being firmly placed at its proper place,
Respecting elders, her heart should be like boiling oil without a single drop of water in it,
In dealing with others, her feeling should be like milk: white and pure,
I wish our girl to be like a prickly ash tree in the backyard,
After several years it will bear abundant seeds,
I wish her to be like barley growing by the Yellow River,
To blossom within a year.
Downward, roots reach deep,
Upward, it breaks the soil and sprouts, grows, and blossoms.
I wish our girl to be like silver tableware,
Gold hair ornaments,
She will receive guests with proper etiquette,
Always remembering the dates of birthdays and memorial days of the deceased,
She will make the deceased rest peacefully and delight the living.
I wish the two sides related by marriage to visit each other frequently,
The new couple to respect and love each other,
I also wish that in your household both people and livestock will increase and flourish.

XII
Khudabo nina sen dingnabur mu? mini agum boyi qingnaji, yaxyi digmiji, bilmigini bir
orget bihiisi yelor et, axaghini su’or et.
Men oyqi xiranigi dot ayaghba qidamaghu iti, jinsinni beilese, Khulahshi sinigi ari,
lombashi men ogqinigiari.
Bu wolsa men delli kixnigi sozsa, delli atnigi ognaxara, qingnga wurulmuri,
dongzigha dongdalmuri, chizigha wuralmuri, baxi gelse biili gi(l)nui, biili gelse, ayaghgi
gi(l)muri. bijiriqüh ornaxmasa daaq÷hlan Khama da hudanigi guy seliamula ason Kajilixa.

XII
Our girl’s mother-in-law, please listen carefully:
Though tall, our girl remains immature,
She does not know how to conduct herself,
It is for you to teach her this lesson,
If she speaks improperly,
Treat it like wind and let it blow by your ears,
If she speaks improperly, do not mind.
So much colorful needlework is displayed in the courtyard,
It is so heavy that the tall table cannot stand its weight,
This needlework fully represents our girl’s talents and hard work,
It also conveys the deep feelings we relatives’ have toward you.
The above are an ignorant man’s foolish words,
Like a colt learning how to walk,
(If what I said is) light or heavy, it can’t be measured with a scale,
Cheap or valuable, it can’t be measured with a scale,
Long or short, it can’t be measured with a ruler,
White or black, it can’t be distinguished by the eyes,
If there is anything wrong in what I said, pardon me.
NOTES

1. The five meritorious services are expressing belief in Allah by saying “There are no gods except Allah, and Mohammed is Allah’s messenger,” religious services done five times daily, observing Ramadan, tithing, and pilgrimage to Mecca.

2. In the past, Salar referred to their language as Turki. Now, however, this is almost never heard. Instead, the term “Salar” is used to refer to the language.

3. One li equals 0.5 km.

APPENDIX 3: Expenses for a 1953 Salar Wedding

Anonymous (1985) presents detailed expenses for a 1953 Salar wedding in Jiezi. This is possibly the only published record of wedding expenses at that time. The groom’s aghini consisted of eight households, and their expenses differed according to how closely they were related to the groom’s household. Four out of the eight households each butchered a sheep, four households each bought two jiao of beef (one jiao refers to a quarter of an ox), and two households each bought one jiao of beef. Expenses for entertaining guests occurred in two ways: a sheep cost fifteen yuan and one jiao of beef cost forty yuan, thus a total of 118.5 yuan was required. Two households closely related to the groom each provided three dou of flour, three jin of cooking oil, and two jin of starch noodles for a total value of 20.8 yuan. Six extended households each provided two dou of flour, two jin of cooking oil, and one jin of starch noodles for a total value of 39.6 yuan.

Expenses for seeing off the bride’s relatives the day following the wedding banquet amounted to 10 yuan in cash for the bride’s mother, 1.5 yuan for the bride’s arang, and 1.5 yuan for one of the bride’s aghini. A long robe for the bride’s mother cost 3.5 yuan, and three marriage-companions each received a piece of cloth that, in total, were valued at 7 yuan. Thus, the total expense was 23.5 yuan.

During the ritual of chanting nikah at the girl’s bazar, fifteen guests from the boy’s side attended and were received by eight households of the girl’s aghini. The boy’s family provided 14 yuan for expenses, and the girl’s family provided 7 yuan (6 yuan of which were given to the ahong), for a total expense of 21 yuan. Furthermore, the girl’s immediate family and her aghini spent a total of 80 yuan.

Articles the bride’s side sent to the groom’s family included a pair of leather shoes (3 yuan), a pair of socks (1 yuan), two pillow covers (2 yuan), and thirteen pairs of shoes for the groom’s relatives (13 yuan) for a total value of 19 yuan.

There were also gifts for the suji provided by the groom’s family—a piece of cloth and a pair of shoes (Anonymous 1985, 106–10).
1. This table, and the next two tables, are taken from ANONYMOUS (1985, 107–108).
2. 1 \( \text{chi} = 33.3 \) cm.
3. A square, flat, round-cornered silver lock hung on the chest as an ornament.

### Table 1: Expenses for Dincha (Agreement Tea)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Yuan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brick tea</td>
<td>Two bricks</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton scarf</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powder puff</td>
<td>One case</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rouge</td>
<td>One case</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfumed soap</td>
<td>One bar</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thread for tying plaits</td>
<td>Six ( \text{chi} )</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earrings</td>
<td>One pair</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver lock on a chain(^{1})</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Expenses for Mal (Bride Price) and Clothing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Yuan (1953)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td></td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>23.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satin quilt cover fabric</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veil</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waistcoat</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter coat</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen clothes</td>
<td>One</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material for robe</td>
<td>Seven ( \text{chi} )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement clothing</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouser fabric</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>120.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. 1 shi = 1 cubic meter.
2. 1 jin = 0.5 kilogram.
3. Noodles made from bean or sweet potato starch.

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LI Xuewei and Kevin STUART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Yuan (1953)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>33.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ox</td>
<td>One and a half jiao</td>
<td>37.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>Two shi</td>
<td>36.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>Twenty jin</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick tea</td>
<td>one half</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>Two and a half jin</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fentiao</td>
<td>Five jin</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>137.50</td>
</tr>
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