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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 Daxinoh 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 循化 Salar (Sala 撒拉) 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 Daxinəh Aghəl,¹ 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 Daxinəh Aghəl typifies all Salar. Furthermore, we know little about wedding customs of Salar residing in Xinjiang 新疆 Uygur 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 *niqahə* (words signifying marriage), post-*niqahə* 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.

DAXINƏH AGHƏL

Daxinəh Aghəl, Jishi 積石 Township (*xiang* 鄉), Xunhua Salar Autonomous County, is in Haidong 海東 Region (*xingshu* 行署) located in the eastern sector of Qinghai Province. Approximately three kilometers from the village is the renowned Döyi Yul² (Camel Spring) in Majia 馬家 Village, Jiezi 街子 Township. Within fifty meters of the spring, the eminent Salar ancestors, Kharimang and Ahmang,³ are interred. Majia Village consists of 121 households, or 840

people, of whom more than 90 percent are Salar. The remaining residents are Hui 回 (Chinese Muslims) whose origins were unknown to our informants. The Hui are all surnamed Chen 陳 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 Shabutəng.⁴

All Daxinəh Aghəl residents are Muslims. Most follow the New Teaching of Sunnite. Parents have sent school-age children⁵ to the village mosque since its completion in 1980 to study Islamic scriptures in Arabic after school⁶ and 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*.⁷ 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, *hoghən*,⁸ noodles, *omix*,⁹ and *bilmah*¹⁰ 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 shul¹¹ (Yushu 玉樹) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Mgo log (Guoluo 果洛) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in southern Qinghai.

Like most Xunhua Salar residents, those who live in Daxinəh Aghəl wear clothing that closely resembles that of Han 漢 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*¹² and *hua'er*¹³ 花儿, 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 三叉 Market.¹⁴ 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*.¹⁵ Boys entertain themselves by wrestling and stone tossing games,¹⁶ while girls enjoy kicking shuttlecocks¹⁷ and a jacks-like game.¹⁸

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 *nikahə* 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 *suji*'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), *saghəsi*, or wedding songs (twelve lines), and nineteen lines of wedding speech. In both Ma Chengjun's and Han Jianye's articles, *saghəsi* 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 工 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 Daxinəh Aghəl he interviewed:

Han Zhanxiang 韓占祥 (b. 1941), a male Salar resident of Tuanjie 團結 Village. Mr. Han told *orəh 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 Daxinəh Aghəl, 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 Daxinəh Aghəl.

Baghər-ninu, an illiterate Salar female (b. 1920) and a resident of Daxinəh Aghəl, sang *saghəsi* 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 Daxinəh Aghəl, 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. Girls²⁰ 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, *ahərə*). Later, when the parents die and arrive in *ahərə*, 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*,²¹ and in the past marriage within the *kumsin*²² 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 *ferizə*, 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*²³ 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 (*sighə 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 *zongə²⁴ 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* 三裨台 tea.²⁵ During the 1920s and 1930s, feast food consisted of dried fruits, milk tea, fried bread, *sanzi*,²⁶ *youzao*,²⁷ sweet *baozi* 包子,²⁸ mutton *baozi*, bread, stewed mutton mixed with vegetables, and a small bowl of rice for each guest; later, *yangpan*²⁹ was added. Also, in the pre-Liberation era, during the contemporary formal wedding ceremony, after chanting *nikahə*, 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.

NIKAHƏ UHƏ (CHANTING NIKAHƏ)

After the feast, an *ahong* (*ahung*, religious leader) chants *nikahə* in Arabic to formalize the marriage. While the *ahong* chants, a tray of dates and walnuts is put on the *xiri*³⁰ 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 *nikahə* 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-NIKAHƏ UHƏ ACTIVITIES

The day after *nikahə uhə*, 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 *mallə qalə* 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.³¹ After breakfast, about ten o'clock relatives and friends come for *yinsin vur*. Members of the bride's *qumsin* 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 *qumsin* send 20–100 yuan each. On most occasions, when the groom's *qumsin* 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 *qumsin* 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 *qumsin* 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*³² 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.³³ 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 *saghəsi*.³⁴ 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

- ¹buḡun yighəlghən aghinəmlər,
- ²buḡungi gunde,
- ³mi avəme kux bangnixse,
- ⁴mal bangnighani orni da idər,
- ⁵ax bangnighani orni da idər.
- ⁶mi ijime bilmig̃inine,
- ⁷bur bildərḡuji qihse,
- ⁸görmig̃inine,
- ⁹bur gu usguji qihse,
- ¹⁰buḡungi gunde suzi bangnighani orni da idər.
- ¹¹kux bangnighani orni ḡam idər.

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

SONG TWO

- ¹sangisaghəxkhən, losadatkhən,
- ²sangisaghəxkhən, losadatji.
- ³aguquḡor kharan baxim,
- ⁴men baxime el khoyghuji,
- ⁵aguquḡor ah aḡ rini,
- ⁶khormax ete aqilghə yo.
- ⁷men baxime el khoyghuji,
- ⁸aguquḡor sari gizihniḡi,
- ⁹urlughu de aqilghə giḡu yiu.
- ¹⁰men baxime el khoyghuji,

¹¹aguquḥor khara gizihniḡi,

¹²urləh diu ḥulḡor giḡu yiu.

¹*Sangisaghəxkhən* *³⁵ mule is led over to take me,

²*Sangisaghəxkhən* mule is led over to take me.

³Girls, on my black hair,

⁴Those who put their hands on my head,

⁵Girls, it is like cooking unripe barley,

⁶Like baking barley before it has ripened *yo*.³⁶

⁷Those who put their hands on my head,

⁸Girls, please allow yellow rapeseed

⁹Enough time till it blossoms *yiū*.³⁷

¹⁰Those who put their hands on my head,

¹¹Girls, please allow black rapeseed

¹²Enough time till it ripens and seeds fall *yiū*.

¹sangisaghəxkhən,

²men baxime el khoighuji,

³aguquḥor ulə baghdiḡi,

⁴mudan jiqihde aqilghə yiu.

⁵kiqi baghdiḡi balə yiumixde,

⁶falaghu yiu.

⁷men baxime el khoighuji,

⁸ah khoyniḡi yanglitiuhli,

⁹u ḥraghur giḡu yiu.

¹⁰men baxime el khoighuji,

¹¹khara khoyni i yanglitiuli,

¹²uzaghur gi u yiu.

¹*Sangisaghəxkhən*, *

²Those who put their hands on my head,

³Girls, in the big garden,

⁴Please allow peonies time to blossom *yiū*.

⁵In the small garden, allow small plants

⁶Enough time to grow *yiū*.

⁷Those who put their hands on my head,

⁸Allow white sheep hair

⁹Enough time to grow *yiū*.

¹⁰Those who put their hands on my head,

¹¹Allow black sheep hair

¹²Enough time to grow long enough *yiū*.

- ¹sangisaghəxkhən losadatji,
²sangisaghəxkhən losadatkhən.
³buḡungi gunde,
⁴men ademe,
⁵sari giziḡni urlughu diuḡulər giḡu yiu,
⁶sari giziḡni urlughu aqilghə giḡu yiu.
⁷men ademe,
⁸sen qosən basboḡrəḡde basəlde endiḡi yiu.
⁹“nangari?” dese,
¹⁰bumurenni budəh sajaḡha yiu.
¹¹men ademe,
¹²basboḡrəḡde basəlde endiḡi yiu.
¹³“kemari?” dese,
¹⁴bumurenni khanat khurghu dir yiu.
¹⁵bumurenni uyinde ixgusor yohmese de,
¹⁶yiḡusor yohmese de,
¹⁷men ana yiu arəhən qiurəl yanderelmese,
¹⁸bur biḡini baskhuji yo,
¹⁹bur axəhni damnaghujji yo,
²⁰eḡenmale yandərgəhə yo.

- ¹*Sangisaghəxkhən* mule is led over to take me,
²*Sangisaghəxkhən* mule is led over to take me.
³On a day like today,
⁴Behind me,
⁵Allow yellow rapeseed enough time to ripen and fall *yiū*,
⁶Allow yellow rapeseed enough time to blossom *yiū*.
⁷Behind me,
⁸You relatives of the groom approach me like tigers *yiū*.
⁹“What are they doing?” people ask.
¹⁰They are branches and roots of this person *yiū*.
¹¹Behind me,
¹²Approaching me like tigers *yiū*.
¹³“Who are they?” people ask.
¹⁴They are wings and tails (relatives) of this person *yiū*.
¹⁵In this person’s household, if you my escorts haven’t had enough to drink,
¹⁶If you my escorts haven’t had enough food to eat,
¹⁷I, the girl, cannot turn my back to send you off from my husband’s home.
¹⁸Those people who make high places low *yo*,

¹⁹Those people who raise low places higher *yo*,³⁸

²⁰Allah 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

¹buḡungi gunde,
²ore uxse ulix yohkhən,
³axəh uxse orne yohkhən.
⁴buḡungi gunde,
⁵beḡe yülləghən beḡ avəm,
⁶hanne yülləghən han avəm.
⁷buḡungi gunde,
⁸duri donzighə 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,

⁵*Beḡe yülləghən beḡ avəm*,*

⁶*Hanne yülləghə han avəm*.*

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.

¹beġe yülləghə beġ avə,
²hanne yülləghə han avə,
³siniġi mingni vemimixde.
⁴buġungi gunde,
⁵duri donzi ixne bolankhuseda,
⁶aquhor yoharo,
⁷aquhor yohmese,
⁸yaruhor yoharo;
⁹yaruhor yohmese,
¹⁰ganglangor yoharo.

¹My father you acted like an official,
²My father you are the one whose words count at critical times,
³You haven't given me your blessings.
⁴On a day like today,
⁵Even if I were wrapped in a silk robe,
⁶I am listless;
⁷If I am listless,
⁸There will be no light;
⁹If there is no light,
¹⁰There will be no brightness.

¹buġungi gunde,
²vumurenniġi ixgusi yohmese de,
³suh su bur zanzi ixse de,
⁴seler bur yanix yiu.

¹On a day like today,
²If there is nothing to drink in that person's [household],
³If they only give you a bowl of water to drink,
⁴You [my escorts] please go back *yi*.

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

¹mi avəmlər,
²mi anəmlər.

¹My father,
²My mother.

¹men khəzingni bu oyede,
²aji khurəmkema singgadidu?

³anide bur supsi vurse,
⁴u de duzəlghu gele.
⁵men khəzingni,
⁶bu dumkhən sukema,
⁷erkilğa didu?
⁸anide bur türi vurse,
⁹u de arəlghur doser.
¹⁰men khəzingni,
¹¹baximdi i motər saxim,
¹²hurəghəne guyilmadu?
¹³men khəzingni aghzindiği,
¹⁴khuzi tixi qüenlinginne guyilmadu?

¹I, the daughter of this family,
²Have I been regarded as dust?
³Even if you strike dust with a broom,
⁴It will scatter.
⁵I this daughter,
⁶Like retained water on the ground,
⁷Will it remain there?
⁸If you spoon it with a shovel,
⁹It will splash away.
¹⁰I, this daughter,
¹¹On my head, the hair has not been cut since my birth.
¹²Can't you wait till it grows full length?
¹³In this daughter's mouth,
¹⁴Can't you wait till my baby teeth have matured?

¹mi avəmlər,
²khəl jaduhlər burəlsi da,
³burhja yenxirro.
⁴sen avənglär,
⁵khaxi urhənlər burəljanı da,
⁶yenxirro.
⁷gang voghən piqihlär,
⁸kizilja yenxirro.
⁹gang voghən orəhlär,
¹⁰urəljanı yenxirro.
¹¹sen avənglär.

¹My father,

- ²Like twisting cow hair rope,
³Twisting, you talked me into marrying.
⁴You my father,
⁵Like twisting leather rope,
⁶You talked me into marrying.
⁷Like the steel-bladed knife,
⁸Chopping, you talked me into marrying.
⁹Like the steel-bladed sickle,
¹⁰Cutting, you talked me into marrying.
¹¹You 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 ozəhvurghə,
- ⁵urharə budəh jiyaghə,
- ⁶yaghkema khaynaghə,
- ⁷sutkema puhraghə;
- ⁸mingu ate qihkhə,
- ⁹sihkhu umusughə qihkhə,
- ¹⁰ixgu axe qihkhə,
- ¹¹giġu donne qihkhə.
- ¹²ughəl ush doghkhə,
- ¹³khəzi bex doghkhə.

¹My child will live in your household,

- ²Staying firm as stone,
³Seeping into your household like water,
⁴Taking root underneath,
⁵Sprouting branches upward,
⁶Boiling like oil,
⁷Boiling like milk;³⁹
⁸When riding, she will ride horses,
⁹When milking, she will milk yaks,
¹⁰When eating, she will have food to eat,
¹¹When dressing, she will have *don*⁴⁰ to wear.
¹²She will bear three sons,
¹³She 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 noodles⁴¹ 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 *zongə hay*, mentioned in "Offering the Bride Price," are displayed. The *zongə 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 *zongə 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.⁴² The groom's family is required to give money to young people who have helped to move the dowry. All the *zongə 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)

¹bu deyniği yahxi gunne,
²men selere orəh suzi ixgi aghəs yenxaghə:

¹Today, on a good day for a wedding,

²I'll say *orəh suzi* to you:

¹dunyade iqo kemne ulə etgusadisi?

²ahung erlinni ulə etgusa.

³nangni yolənde (e)dise?

⁴erlin mutalin yolənde surliħali gunne amənbəndini parlaghujade,

⁵bur haghətəni qiurisi,

⁶ixgi dūnnioni gōrgūjade;

⁷minbere qihe khuranni axi,

⁸amelini amənbədlghə chuanshou etgujade;

⁹yiriħni kiji khuyi,

¹⁰hudaghə yahən otkhujı kixade.

¹¹mu yolənde iqo ahung arlinni ulə etgusadiri.

¹In this world whom should we respect?

²We should respect imams and scholars.

³For what reason?

⁴Because on auspicious days imams and *mutalin*⁴³ are men who lead common people,

⁵By opening a piece of paper,

⁶They can see two worlds;

⁷Standing at the platform in the mosque opening the *Quran*,

⁸They teach sacred writings to common people;

⁹In careful ways,

¹⁰They live by Allah.

¹¹For this reason we should respect imams and scholars.

¹mundən tiuni gelji,
²kemne ulə etgusadise?
³aghəldiği hari-hurini ulə etgusadiri.
⁴nangni yolənde (e)dise?
⁵er gex mixd khoghə yūkuri,
⁶mixde khodiği sheriḥani fubang ite,
⁷jaolnəni zhizhang etgen kixiade.
⁸baxingə dasderni vuri,
⁹ujine asarni jinne,
¹⁰laməsniği ili ardine terbet khoghə aḥləm yetgujade;
¹¹balə-buləghə vulə dagh duzni ilinkhujari,
¹²aghəlniği khash-khushni etgujari,
¹³su aghzini khalghujari,
¹⁴yel aghzini khalghujaride.
¹⁵mu yolənden hari kix pisi ulə etgukeliğadiri.

¹After this,
²Whom should we respect?
³Old people in the village should be respected.
⁴For what reason?
⁵From morning to night they go to the mosque's gate,
⁶They do good things at the mosque's gate,
⁷They live our faith.
⁸Wearing turbans,
⁹Holding walking sticks,
¹⁰Visiting graveyard gates before and after prayers;
¹¹Ascending mountains and watching fields,
¹²Concerned about the village's important and trivial affairs,
¹³Staying at water sources mediating disputes,
¹⁴Enduring the wind.
¹⁵For these reasons we should respect elders.

¹mundən tiuni gelji,
²kemne ulə etgusa (e)dise?
³iqo janggili kixe ix yanxaghujini ulə etgusadiri.
⁴nangni yolənde dise?
⁵er gex mulane,
⁶gejisi gundisi uhlənmi,
⁷pixdəng pungdiği kushni qihari,
⁸ulə ixni kiji etgujari,
⁹kiji ixni yohkhən etgujari,

- ¹⁰jadəl ghanini vulaghujari,
¹¹daghəlghanini baghlaghujari,
¹²sunkhanini khadaghujari,
¹³xidilanini yamaghujari,
¹⁴yazəlghanini yighkhujari,
¹⁵diuġlinginini tixgujari,
¹⁶bughəlġini yiurġujari,
¹⁷yihilġini tiġujari.
¹⁸mu yolənde semisanə pisi ulə 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.

- ¹mudən jiuyine gelji,
²kemne ulə etgusaderi?
³ixgi arangni ulə etgusideri.
⁴nangni yolənde (e)dise?
⁵kix qihse ixgi arangden qiheri,
⁶dimur qihse oqih kuriħden qiher deri,
⁷siniħniġi isade.
⁸mu yolənde semisane pisi ulə 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.

¹mundən tiuni gelji,
²kemne ulə etgusadiri?
³ixgi sujini ulə etgusadiri.
⁴nangni yolənde (e)dise?
⁵asmənde bulət yohmese rehemet yoh der diri,
⁶yerde suji yohmese orəh yoh der diri.
⁷bihi daghkhə to tigujari,
⁸ah kuxleghə khangər tahkhujari,
⁹ah ate yin talaghujari,
¹⁰yang mixde miralu tiḡgjaride.
¹¹mu yolənde semisane pisi aghəs etkeliḡa.

- 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.

¹mundən tiuni gelji,
²buḡun mangə geḡen yirəhdiḡi khonəh,
³kem kem geḡen aghini kumsin,
⁴nigu gigu selaniḡi altun surətəngni qeyittari,
⁵altun adənglani khoshəlməghane,
⁶altun khangninglani bur tixmiḡide,
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,

⁵Your honorable names we do not know.

⁶Do not harbor unhappiness in your honorable minds,

⁷This is what I want to say.

¹me deli kixniġi yenxaxari,
²deli atniġi unaxari,
³kharənkhudən qihkhən suzari,
⁴suzini qutaləri,
⁵vahni qutəlmuri,
⁶buġun me vahkhə iriġide,
⁷seleghə halghə ixgi qeybaghə,
⁸suzi bu der.

¹What I, an ignorant man, said,

²Is as cumbersome as an ignorant colt struggling to walk.

³Words spoken at night,

⁴Words should be weighed.

⁵I can't use time well.

⁶Today I use this occasion,

⁷And leave greetings.

⁸These are the words.

¹shi ba qian yangniġi mehulu ixinde,
²zhiguijiġi nangari?
³iqo adan balasari.
⁴nangni yolənde zhiguiari?
⁵enangniġi husaghənde dukhəs ayni kudari,
⁶on ayniġi yarughəni guri,
⁷yeri engu eto enoniġi gunde,
⁸dürliḡ dürliḡ niġi namət tangne,
⁹khomətni tiule,
¹⁰shənrənni ardini basi bangkəni ohə,
¹¹isiliamuniġi baghləghəni vure.
¹²berketniġi yolənden,
¹³altə yidighi yetgu mixd khoghə yükure,
¹⁴arlinḡhakimət orġine,
¹⁵hudaniġi bərligine danəghən suzinde,
¹⁶iqo adan balasi zhigui deri.

¹Of eighteen thousand kinds of animals,

²Which is the most respectable?

³We children of Adam.

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

- ¹unixigi unish yetgu,
²ughəl vusi bele alə,
³khizi vusi ele deri,
⁴iqo ixge atinaniği yaghnəndaghə gədənəni xieliğusi,
⁵suzi bua diri.
⁶gurğinqih vo(l)si ongani vahghəri,
⁷orəh vo(l)si oziğini vahghəri.
⁸seler ixgi qimsəng bur burni angnax akili,
⁹tiut yenshighən dukhəs həkani basi akili,
¹⁰biḥ sidənde labsi dorlaji (e)diri.
¹¹hadi yenshighən uzən ozənni basi akili,
¹²dar yorde kumur qoyjidiri.
¹³seler liangja-səng ah gin ixinde gumush dangnəghən kema dangnə gile,
¹⁴khum ixinde altun dangnəghə n kema dangnə gile.
¹⁵seler ixgi qimsəng diğixidiğin suzi bu der.

- ¹At the age of twelve to thirteen,
²A boy takes a bride into his home,
³A girl marries out of her home.
⁴We two parents shoulder this responsibility,
⁵That's the reason.
⁶Pigeons study the nest,
⁷Relatives study the roots of each other's ancestry.
⁸You two families have asked about each other,
⁹As Tibetans say, after examining nine mountains,
¹⁰Then put prayer-flags on one mountain top.
¹¹As Han Chinese say, after looking down a long river,

- ¹²Build a bridge at the narrowest point.
¹³You two families have examined each other like looking for silver
amongst white lead,
¹⁴Have examined each other like picking gold from sand.
¹⁵This is the reason why you two families have become relatives.

¹yilniği ixinde yilni dangnə,
²ayniği ixinde ayni dangnə,
³gunni ixinde yahxi gunni dangnə,
⁴yüzigun saghənkənni bur gun polani.
⁵buğun-eti geli gun yaghlaji,
⁶ey yaghlaji,
⁷ha girmiji hu girmiji,
⁸buğun-etiniği gunshi seler ixgi qimsəngniği 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 diğmiji,
²uzən saxni urha düğə,
³pisi hariqo bas burəhdə basgelse,
⁴se uqi huy kema duri bas kema zele.
⁵bihqihzele uliqih ite,
⁶me uqine suğune otasine khoye,
⁷se uqi yerde tihile,
⁸xiraniği diot ayaghə qidimaghə ite,
⁹namət ixdine namətəni tangne,
¹⁰jaləh ixdine jaləhni jarə,
¹¹uja ixdinde ulixni khoyghin vumi,
¹²aghini kumsəndən oy oye jamnəghani,
¹³men kharivashili adəm yandərmes,
¹⁴mi yaniximne burqihalaḥu selere,

¹⁵bur ixdine bex,
¹⁶bex ixdine on,
¹⁷on ixdine yüz,
¹⁸yüz ixdine ming,
¹⁹selere yaquqıh yanderbeğane.
²⁰suz bu dər.

¹My daughter is still young to enter your home,
²Wrapped her hair up,
³We old people sent her over here.
⁴Like a forest your household members came out to receive us,
⁵Received and highly respected us.
⁶Our family sits on the *otkang*,
⁷Your family stands on the floor.
⁸Four table legs can't support the food's weight,
⁹You have cooked dish after dish,
¹⁰Have slaughtered sheep after sheep and ox after ox,
¹¹Portions of mutton were added to *uji kut*,
¹²Have invited *aghini* and *kumsin* to one household after another house hold.
¹³I won't have a bad reputation since you are so generous,⁴⁴
¹⁴Thanks to Allah I will repay you,
¹⁵Repay five for one,
¹⁶Repay ten for five,
¹⁷Repay one hundred for ten,
¹⁸Repay one thousand for one hundred,
¹⁹You should be richly repaid.
²⁰These are the words.

¹xiraniği diot ayaghə qidimaghə ite,
²unniği yiliğini ale,
³jaləhniği simusini ale,
⁴yaghniği durisini ale,
⁵beliği etse,
⁶khuləh shi mi uqiniğari,
⁷lonba⁴⁵ shi se uqiniğari.

¹Four table legs can't support it,
²You have used fine flour,
³You have used fat animals,
⁴You have used clear rapeseed oil,

⁵In this way,

⁶Our reputation has been enhanced by your generous banquet,

⁷Betrothal gifts now belong to your family.

¹guzhuniği diot ayagh qidimaghə ite,

²jinsini beylese,

³bu jinsin shi longə iderdiri.

⁴mini agu gemder lormanı jangne,

⁵khuliniği damurnı qoskhungqıh,

⁶bur yiğni bur yiğni xirghən oltang iderdiri,

⁷guziniği yaghni diohgungqıh,

⁸qiraluh jiuyinde bur yiğni bur yiğni xir,

⁹kiqir yiğni guzindən yisinne utər yiuri,

¹⁰bur yiğni bur yiğni jaləghən jiqıh dəri.

¹¹khuləh shi me uqiniğari,

¹²lonba shi se uqiniğari.

¹The four legs of a tall table can't support the dowry's weight,

²When the girl's family displays needlework,

³The needlework is part of the dowry.

⁴My daughter untangled linen thread,

⁵Nearly broke her arm tendons,

⁶Needle after needle made these soles,

⁷Her eyes nearly ran out of oil,⁴⁶

⁸Needle after needle sewn under the lamp,

⁹She put threads through eyes of small needles,

¹⁰Needle after needle she used in embroidering.

¹¹Our reputation has been enhanced by your generous banquet,

¹²Betrothal gifts now belong to your family.

¹munda seler ixgi qimsəng bur burniği adini khoighu yiura deri,

²bur burni kolaghu yiura deri,

³hadi yeshiri:

⁴rən guo liumin 人過留名.

⁵yan guo liushvñ dəri 雁過留聲.

⁶kix utbarse adi khalbarəri,

⁷tərni utbarse uni khalbarər dəri.

⁸mundə seler ixgi qimsəng,

⁹bur burniği adini yanxaghu yiuri deri,

¹⁰bur burniği khulaghəni tiğgu yiuri deri.

¹Here is the place you two families obtain your reputations,

- ²The place to praise each other,
³Han Chinese say:
⁴*Rən guo liumin?*
⁵*Yan guo liushan?*
⁶When a man dies his name will be remembered,
⁷When a wild goose passes its soul remains.
⁸Here you two families,
⁹Should praise each other,
¹⁰Create your reputations.

- ¹mundən tiuni gelji,
²mini agu bu khoghv veġen gu nang dəri?
³urhari uxirse dax khay biari,
⁴ah khuxniġi khanat khurghə uzaghu yiura dəri;
⁵daghkhə uxirse huy jadəhhari,
⁶ardəh vurghu yiura dəri;
⁷tiuni uxirsi goĥmoren konna diri,
⁸shangzui baluh unaghu yiura deri,
⁹altun shalə fazi balə,
¹⁰gangyin dalaġu yiura deri;
¹¹daghkhə uxirsi dagh jadəhhari,
¹²düzə uxirsi düz konnari,
¹³mal khushi qihkhu yiura deri,
¹⁴janggi eĥkhu yiura deri,
¹⁵bu khodə ah at baghlaghu yiurari,
¹⁶goĥ umusu zəng jaghlaghu yiurari,
¹⁷ahung erlin qihkhu yiuraride,
¹⁸mu yoləndən mini aguni verse veġen gu bu iderdiji.

- ¹After this,
²Why did my daughter marry into this family?
³Looking up, the rock cliff is high,
⁴Where white sparrow hawks grow wings;
⁵Looking at the mountain forest, it is big,
⁶A good place to hunt;
⁷Looking down, the clear river is broad,
⁸A good place for fish to play,
⁹Sluicing gold and rafting,
¹⁰A good place to live;
¹¹Looking at the mountain, the mountain is big,
¹²Looking at the plain, the plain is broad,

- ¹³It is the place for animals to get fat,
¹⁴The place to plant grain;
¹⁵This gate is the place to tie white horses,
¹⁶Where yaks defecate to their heart's content,
¹⁷Where imams and scholars emerge,
¹⁸For this reason my daughter married here.

¹khodəbo nino se mundə dingniburmu?
²mini agu kul qel zimən yoh qimsəngdən,
³sini khongə gile,
⁴iləngdiği kuriḥ sabni ale,
⁵biləngdiği siqihni zeleğene boləryashi,
⁶görmeğani azari,
⁷bilmeğani atuhhari.
⁸bilmiğini se bur bildərkhusə,
⁹görmüğini se bur guğuskhusə.
¹⁰biḥsini se yelər etyi,
¹¹axaghənə se suor etyi.
¹²khormush yija uğu qingnətkhur dese si ujingde varri,
¹³et yija khush qingnətkhur dese yon si ujingde varri.

- ¹Granny Khodəbo,⁴⁷ are you listening?
²My daughter is from a poor family of a humble place,
³Came to your door,
⁴To take the handle of a wooden-shovel from your hands,
⁵To take the wooden-pail from your back.
⁶She is still ignorant,
⁷And knows little.
⁸Teach her what she doesn't know,
⁹Show her what she hasn't seen.
¹⁰If she behaves improperly take it like the wind and let it blow away,
¹¹If she behaves improperly take it like water and let it flow away.
¹²Your responsibility is to feed her baked wheat and turn her into an eagle,⁴⁸
¹³Your responsibility is to feed her lamb and turn her into a sparrow hawk.⁴⁹

¹men deli kixni yenxaxari,
²deli atniği unaxari,
³kixniği utixxari,
⁴uhuniği datixari,

⁵daxniği vurixari,
⁶suniği yürixari.
⁷baxi gelse ayaghə gimuri,
⁸ayaghə gelse bili gimuri.
⁹kurighə uxilmuri,
¹⁰omenne vurilmuri,
¹¹urhəanne saləlmuri.
¹²mini gaqəm bijiriqi ħornixmese,
¹³iqo hudaniği guy selamulane ason gaqiləxa,
¹⁴esseliamualikum!

¹What I, an ignorant man, said,
²Is as cumbersome as an ignorant colt struggling to walk,
³The way people conduct things,
⁴The way people pull bows,
⁵The way people throw stones,
⁶The way water flows.
⁷The head comes but the foot doesn't follow,
⁸The foot comes but the waist doesn't follow.
⁹My speech can't be measured by the *quri*,⁵⁰
¹⁰My speech can't be measured with a scale,
¹¹My speech can't be measured with a rope.
¹²If there is something wrong with what I said,
¹³Let's chat leisurely in Allah's noble language,
¹⁴*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 *qumsin* 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 *qumsin* 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 *chaghə yighbur* (tea gathering). This consists of tea, fried bread, and *baozi*. After the guests eat, the groom's *aghini* and *qumsin* 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, *khonəh 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 *toləghən 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 *sujī* 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 *qumsin* 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 *pamən 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 həli* (water money) for females who fetched water from the village spring, *yihdə həli* or money for young men who served as waiters and chopped firewood, and *kəhazanbax həli* (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, *nikahə* 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 Daxinəh Aghəl 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 *nikahə* in such a marriage is the most important element. Other steps are either missing or simplified.

NOTES

1. Chinese: *Shitoupo* 石頭坡 "stone slope." 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* 駱駝泉 "Camel Spring."

3. HAHN (1988, 239) offers "Garamang" and "Aqmang" 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. Daxinəh Aghəl 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 (LI 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 *hadı 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 birthing to funerals (ZHU and ZHOU 1994, 474).

22. Also known as *oulimu* (“patriarchal clan”). One to twenty *aghini* form a *qumsin*, a basic Salar social organization. Two or more *qumsin* may form an *agala*, a union of village hamlets. Each *qumsin* has its own common graveyard. During such activities as farm work, members of the same *qumsin* assist one another. During a wedding, it is the duty of *qumsin* members of the bride’s household to escort the bride to the groom’s home, while members of the groom’s *qumsin* welcome and provide accommodations for the bride’s retinue. During a funeral, members of the deceased’s *qumsin* 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 (ZHU and ZHOU 1994, 474–75).

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

24. *Zongǎ* 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* 春尖 (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.

26. Fried long-and-thin coiled bread.

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.

30. A short-legged wooden table used on the *otkang*.

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 *saghəsi* 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 Daxinǎh Aghǎl and Jiezi Region did the lion dance. Lion dancing is common among Han Chinese, certain Amdo Tibetans, and certain Monguor.

53. This is called *jamma* (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 Daxinǎh Aghǎl 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 Equivalents¹

Salar Character	IPA Equivalent	Salar Character	IPA Equivalent
a	a	o	o
e	e	o	o
I	I	u	u
ü	y	ö	ø
b	p	m	m
f	f	d	t
t	t	n	n
l	l	g	k
k	k'	h	x
j	tʃ	q	tʃ'
x	ʃ	zh	ʦ
ch	ʦ'	sh	ʂ
r	Z	z	z
s, c ²	s	ng	N
KH	G, G'	gh	
ḡ	v	v	v
Y	j	w	w
h	h	p	p'

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* 靈芝草); 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 馬學義. 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 ahəz yanxi biigi.

On an auspicious and happy day like today I'll say *uruh suzi* for you.

I

Dunyada kemni ahəs alghi dise, ahun alimni alghi diri,
Iqo aman bandini zulihalinigi yolundan, mudi haynigi yoluna baxlaghan, hudanigi sun-
netni zullaghuji jomuenni zhizhang etguji, bir hahətni qiurese ixgi dunyani gorgan danix-
men alimari de, muni yolundan seliini ahəs 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, aghəldaghə harə—harə larni ahəs alghi diri.
Seler er—kex mixit Khoni Xüguri, mixit Khodigi xerhakni fubang iti, jomunni zhizhang
etKen Kix ari de, muni yolundan selini ahəs 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,¹
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 ahəs alghi diri,
Haji yanxiri: “tie chu lu jiaa rən chu wei jia”. muni TūrKi sozla yanxisa, “dimur qəhsa
Kurih aghzindan qəhər, Kix qəhsa ixgi arangdan qəhər” diri, bihi dalnigi uzigi bar, arang
sinihni isidir, mani yolundan arangni ahəs 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 ahəs alghi diri,
Haji yanxiri: “tian shang Wu yün, baxa yü, diha Wu mei buchəng qin”. muni TūrKi² sözla
yanxixa, “asmanda bulut yohmasa rahmet yohder, ziininde Soji yohmasa uruh yohdar”
diri, bihi daghKha to tihgujia diri, ozen qelde asit yasaghujia diri, ahKhux Walasina
Khongar dahKhu jia, ah atda yin basKhujia de, muni yo lundan seliyini ahsəalghi 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 yohdur, ziminde soji gohmasa uruh yohdur:

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, harə—hurə, nigu-nigu, yahjuh
adəngnga ad Khoxulmughannigi, Seli (r) nigi altun gonənglara bir aghərլanKhuma 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

Dunyagha gelgen shi ba qian yang megheluKhə ixinde zhiguyjugu nang ari dise, iqo adəm
ari, iqo anangi husaghənda doKhus ayni Kotiri, on aynigi yarughini goriri, yere en' gu alin
mutahinigi ilinde Khomet banKenı oha, Shənrənnigi ardinefuhə iti, muni yolundan iqo
adəm zhiguy ari.

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 altə yide yanxighu, mixit Khogha Khola, alin haKimetni orgiti hudani bir ligini danaghusedir, on ixgi on ux yetgu oghul Wolsa bele ali, Khəz Wolsa ele beri, islamni baghləghini Wuri, guande etgusi, sen eto—enoni Waxindigi bir—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: “Kunqie Kua modan rən Kua qinqi, ma Kua nanzhuang, dao Kua xao, zhuang Kuo Kua fangWu” diri, muni türKi Sozla yanxisa, “KunsiKolasa modanni Kolar, Kix Kolasa urughini Kolar, at Kolasa engirini Kolar, pixjah Kolasa Khrrni Kolar, bazir Kolasa yütüni Kolar” diri, Sen ixgi liangjiasing bir-birni Kolaghusi 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 dāng wanli min, honghə bian zeihua gəngzi shəng.” mani turKi sozla yanxisa, “bihi daghda qiralüh diixerse yirahda xeller, ulü derya Khərgənda jiejh zeylese ozih umjasi tirang’a” diri.

tiuyit yanxiri: “tüha gugu lahsa, nirin gugu newu, lowa xangsa, nigu gisa” diri. muni turKi sozla yanxisa, “doKhus haKanigi; lahsara, doKhas beynigi urugha, jonggini qing-naghu yera, uruhni qəhlaghu yera” diri.

Haji ygnxiri: “Wangshang Kan shinai gao, beiniao zhanchibang; Wahgha Kan heshui Kuan bei yü Kuan xinling”. muni turKi sözla yanxisa “orige üxirse dax Khaya bihiari, ahKhux walasi khanati-khurghü uzagha yera; axaghəna üxirse gohmoren uliari, xangsi bal-ahni (gi) guni jillaghu yeradiri.

IX

Han Chinese say,
 Lighting lamps on high mountains, the light shines ten thousand *li*³ 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-burehKa basi gelese, sen oyqi huyKama duri, baskama jügje, men oyqini Khox ilingla zeliği, men oyqini shangxigha Khoyi. sen ogqi haxida oteri, jamagunne Khaynati yangyaugdli nemeni tängnatiulu etqanə bolur ya. daghə manga əngnanmi, aghine—Kumsan nigu—nigu oyine jamnati, jama gunc əngna jeyang yeyangni jarə, ulu etginini men Khara waxili adəm yandırilmes ya.

X

For the reasons just mentioned,
 Our girl has dressed and has smartly made herself up,
 Tying up her hair and married into your household.
 With a crowd escorting the bride's big horse,
 We sent her to her new home,
 At your gate people crowded about like a forest,
 Sticking out their necks, everyone waited for the new wife.
 You reached out two hands in welcome,
 Invited each of us to a banquet,
 Boiled delicious milk tea,
 Cooked all sorts of food,
 Received us warmly and thoughtfully,
 We are so happy that in our heart it blossoms.
 Still, this is not the end of your hospitality,
 We are invited to the households of *aghini* and *kumsin*,
 A wether is slaughtered, and wild goat is hunted,
 Fat fresh lamb is put on the table for us to taste,
 We escorts are overwhelmed by your favor,
 We don't know how to return the host's kindness.

XI

Mini agum sini Khoda, SuKanma singgi, daxKama qixgi, yaghKama puhraghi, SutKama Khaynaghi. orige budah jiyaghi, axaghəna ozih falaghi, arji baghdigi yimumKa durghə, ah arfani(gi) KhormaxKa aqilghə, Ki dolghu oghul—Khizgha wurghə, duz dolghu mal—axxe wurghə, gumuxni (gi) KorjiaghindaotKhə, altunni (gi) aghərlighina tixgi, gi(l)—gujini zeliği, wa(r)ghujini üzatKhə, wanrəngigi gunini gilaghə 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, yaxi digmiji, bilmigini bir orget bihisini yelor et, axaghini su'or et.

Men oyoqi xiranigi dot ayaghə qidamaghu iti, jinsinni beilese, Khulahshi sinigi ari, lombashi men ogqinigiari.

Bu wolsa men delli kixnigi sozsa, delli atnigi ognaxara, qingnga wurulmuri, dəngzigha dəngdalmuri, chizigha wuralmuri, baxi gelse biili gi(l)nui, biili gelse, ayaghi gi(l)muri. bijiriqūh ornaxmasa daaqəhlan 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* 角 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* 斗 of flour, three *jin* 斤 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 *niqahā* 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).

TABLE 1: EXPENSES FOR *DINCHA* (AGREEMENT TEA)¹

Item	Quality	Yuan
Brick tea	Two bricks	12.00
Cotton scarf	One	3.00
Powder puff	One case	0.50
Rouge	One case	0.30
Perfumed soap	One bar	0.50
Thread for tying plaits	Six <i>chi</i> ²	0.15
Earrings	One pair	0.50
Silver lock on a chain ³	One	3.00
Total		19.95

1. This table, and the next two tables, are taken from ANONYMOUS (1985, 107–108).

2. 1 *chi* = 33.3 cm.

3. A square, flat, round-cornered silver lock hung on the chest as an ornament.

TABLE 2: EXPENSES FOR *MAL* (BRIDE PRICE) AND CLOTHING

Item	Quantity	Yuan (1953)
Cash		50.00
Sheep	One	23.00
Satin quilt cover fabric	One	18.00
Veil	One	
Waistcoat	One	
Winter coat	One	20.00
Kitchen clothes	One	
Material for robe	Seven <i>chi</i>	
Engagement clothing	One	3.30
Trouser fabric	One	6.50
Total		120.80

TABLE 3: EXPENSES FOR RECEIVING THIRTY-FOUR OF THE BRIDE'S RELATIVES

Item	Quantity	Yuan (1953)
Sheep	Two	33.00
Ox	One and a half <i>jiao</i>	37.50
Barley	Two <i>shi</i> ¹	36.00
Cooking oil	Twenty <i>jin</i> ²	20.00
Brick tea	one half	3.00
Sugar	Two and a half <i>jin</i>	2.00
<i>Fentiao</i> ³	Five <i>jin</i>	5.00
Spices		1.00
Total		137.50

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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