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The Turkic strata of Salar: An Oghuz in Chaghatay clothes?

Arienne M. Dwyer

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As is often typical of geographically peripheral languages, Salar is both highly conservative (of premodern Turkic features) and innovating (through language contact). Its Turkic features represent several historical layers which reflect contact with different Turkic groups. With such a complex synchronic picture and with gaps in the historical record, Salar has been a difficult language to classify. This paper presents new evidence against a genetic affiliation of Salar with modern Uyghur (i.e. Southeastern Turkic), and evidence for (1) a genetic relationship with the Oghuz languages (Southwestern Turkic), and (2) sustained contact with South Siberian and Qipchaq Turkic.

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1. Overview

Salar (*salar gaɣɬa*) is a mixed language of Turkic origin with close to 70,000 speakers.¹ It is spoken primarily on the northern edge of the Tibetan plateau, in the modern-day Chinese province of Qīnghǎi. It is also spoken in neighboring Gānsù province and to the northwest in Eastern Turkistan (the Xīnjiāng Uyghur Autonomous Region).

¹ Official Chinese population statistics for 1990 record the total number of Salars as 88,697 (Bannister, *China's changing population*: 322-323, cited in Gladney: 224). However, the actual number of Salar *speakers* is probably closer to 70,000: most of those approximately 20,000 Salars who have settled in cities now speak Chinese or, for the 3700 Salars in Xīnjiāng, Uyghur.

Historical, ethnographic, and linguistic evidence suggests that the Salars originated in Western Turkistan, in the area south of present-day Samarkand. Salar is most likely related to modern Salor-(Salir-) Turkmen. While no known historical record directly links the Salors to the Salars, the legendary Salar ancestral leader Garaman is attested as a descendant of the Oghuz khan's grandson Salir.² From the *Ta'rikh-i Rashidi* and Chinese accounts, we also know that the Salars arrived in Amdo Tibet in the 14th c. C.E.³ They may well have been a contingent of the Mongolian army, given the timing and circuitousness of their migration, and given the relatively high status they enjoyed throughout the Mongol Yuan dynasty (Saguchi 1986: 112). In Amdo Tibet, the Salars intermarried with local Tibetans, and later with Chinese Muslims (Huís). They also adopted many local customs and a settled agricultural way of life. As a result of such sustained intercultural contact and blending, the Salar language evolved into a mixed language, adopting elements from Chinese and Tibetan at all levels of language: Phonology, morphology, syntax, and the lexicon.

Due to extensive language contact down to the present day, both the development of the Salar language and its synchronic phonology are complex. Its oldest and most basic linguistic stratum, Turkic, is overlain with heavy Chinese and Tibetan adstrata. The Turkic stratum of

² Polyakov: 96; *Encyclopedia of Islam* 4: 120, cited in *Sālāzú shǐliào jilù*: 3. The twenty-four Oghuz clans recorded in both Mahmūd al-Kāshgharī (11th c.) and Rashid ad-dīn (14th c.) were descended from Oghuz khan. (Note, however, that al-Kāshgharī's "Oghuz" grouping was lexically and morphology quite different from the modern languages described today as "Oghuz" (see Dankoff & Kelly 1982-1985).) Oghuz khan had six sons, each of whom had in turn four sons. Both authors list the names of the twenty-four grandsons, which include *Salγur* (according to al-Kāshgharī) or *Salor* (according to Rashid ad-dīn). The differing pronunciations of the same name simply reflects the loss of medial -γ-, a feature typical of Oghuz-Turkic, and the alternation of the vocalism *u ~ o ~ i*.

³ The *Ta'rikh-i Rashidi* mentions the Hūchū Salar, i.e., the Salar living within Hézhōu, China (chapter 89, cited in Saguchi 1986:55). Among Chinese sources, the *Míng shǐ* [History of the Míng dynasty], completed in 1735, dates the arrival of the Salars in Xúnhuà as the third year of the Hóngwǔ reign (1370) (*Míng shǐ*, cited in Mǐ 1981:60).

Salar is itself composed of Oghuz, Qipchaq, and Southeastern Turkic layers.

There are two dialects of Salar, Eastern (Qīnghǎi, Gānsù) and Western (Xīnjiāng) Salar. The presence of Salars in the Ghulja area of Xīnjiāng is due to several small migrations of Salars from Qīnghǎi to Xīnjiāng in the late 18th and late 19th centuries.⁴

Major previous studies on Salar include the following: grammar and texts (Tenišev 1964, 1976a); origin and evolution of the language (Drimba 1968, Hahn 1988); lexicon (Lín 1992); phonology (Dwyer 1996). The current study is based on field work during 1991-1993 in China.⁵

Modern Salar is fundamentally a mixed language. It is a creole in the sense that structures shifted from other languages have been incorporated into Salar and passed on to the next generation of Salar speakers. Any holistic study of Salar (such as a grammar) must take these language-contact features into account. While the present paper focuses only on the clarification of the Turkic elements in Salar, it should not be inferred that Salar consists only of Turkic features. To do so would be to overlook half of the language.

2. Salar stratigraphy and the classification of the Turkic languages

When a language is mixed, such as Salar, is *classification* into a branch still useful? I would maintain that it is indeed useful for anchoring a

⁴ While Eastern Salar has Chinese and Tibetan adstrata (especially in the lexicon and in phonology), Western Salar has Uyghur and Qazaq adstrata. For a detailed comparison of Eastern and Western Salar morphosyntactic adstrata, see Dwyer 1995a.

⁵ The bulk of the ethnographic and linguistic data in this article was collected by the author during fieldwork on the Salars in Qīnghǎi, 1991-1993. I am particularly indebted to the Qīnghǎi Education Commission, to Xīnjiāng University, and most of all to many Salar individuals for making this work possible. The research was generously supported by Fulbright (U.S. Department of Education) and C.S. C.P.R.C. (U.S. National Academy of Sciences) fellowships, 1991-92, and by a U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language Area Studies fellowship, 1992-1993; the analysis was supported in part by a U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities Dissertation Grant during 1994-1995. I am indebted to Jerry Norman, Marcel Erdal, and Claus Schönig for comments on earlier drafts of this article.

language's origins. However, at least equal attention must be paid to its other components. The geological metaphor of strata layered one on top of another suggests that languages consist of the sum total of accreted elements over time: Languages cannot be described merely in terms of their base, or language of origin; rather, they must be described in terms of all their elements.

Languages in contact usually adopt elements of other languages. When contact is heavy and sustained, as in the case of the once-mobile Salars, then such shifted and borrowed structures are nativized. After a few generations, it no longer makes sense to discuss whether such a language is presently "Oghuz" or "Qipchaq", since synchronically, it may well include features of several groups. We can only say that a language is, for example, Oghuz *in origin*, with "affinities with" or "features shifted from" languages X and Y.

Languages in isolation and / or those which have sustained heavy contact (such as Salar and Sarıgh Yoghur) have been problematic for traditional classificatory schemata. These "minor" languages have been termed peripheral or "transitional", since they possess features of two or more "major" groups. The classification of the Turkic languages has been based overwhelmingly on phonetic criteria. Early classifications by Samojlovič (1922) were modified slightly by Ramstedt (1957), Benzing (1959), Menges (1959), Poppe (1965), Baskakov (1969²), and Tekin (1989). The current paper, however, makes reference to important morphological and lexical criteria as well.

3. The position of Salar in the Turkic language family

The two Turkic language groups relevant to the classification of Salar are Southwestern (Oghuz) and Southeastern Turkic. Over the years, Salar has been considered to be: (i) an independent Northern / Southeastern Turkic (Qipchaq / Chaghatay-type) language (Korš 1910, Samojlovič 1922); (ii) an Eastern (Chaghatay-type) Turkic language (Grenard 1898, Poppe 1953, Menges 1959, Pritsak 1959, Thomsen 1959, Gabain 1963; also Ramstedt 1957 and Räsänen 1969); (iii) an Oghuz language with Qipchaq and Sino-Tibetan adstrata (Drimba 1968, Tenišev 1976a, Hahn 1988).

In this section, we present and critique the principal arguments for each hypothesis. Arguments for a particular classification center around the presence of a feature X which is unique to Salar and that Turkic branch, to the exclusion of other Turkic branches. Not surpris-

ingly, arguments *against* previous classifications are based on demonstrating the non-uniqueness of feature X to that Turkic branch.

Salar has the distinction of being the easternmost modern Turkic language in use. The Turkic speakers geographically closest to the Salar are the Sarıgh Yoghur (“Yellow Uyghur”), three mountain-ranges and as many days’ travel away. Geographically, it appears plausible that the Salar could be an isolated Uyghur group. However, the evidence presently available points to a basic affiliation with the modern Oghuz languages, and a later acquisition of features from Qipchaq, South Siberian, and Southeastern Turkic (here, Uyghur).

3.1. Salar as a “Northern” or “Eastern” Turkic language

In the early classifications of Korš (1910) and Samojlovič (1922), Salar was grouped both with “Eastern Turkic” ([New] Uyghur, Özbek) and with Qipchaq (e.g. Qazaq, Qırghız). Drimba (1968:202), marshaling evidence against this hypothesis, notes that the Salar features cited as unique to North and Eastern Turkic (final $-\gamma$ in e.g. *tay* ‘mountain’; post-consonantal γ as in *qalyan* ‘left behind’) are found in other Turkic languages. Moreover, several typical Northern Turkic features are absent in Salar (e.g. Old Turkic $d > d$); Salar has *ajax* ‘foot’).⁶

3.2. Salar as an “Eastern” Turkic language

Until the late 1960’s, the prevailing view in Turcology was that Salar was closely related to or even a dialect of modern Uyghur. Grenard (1898), Poppe (1953), Pritsak (1959), Benzing (1959), Menges (1959), Thomsen (1959), and von Gabain (1963) all asserted or implied that Salar was closely affiliated with modern Uyghur. Benzing, Menges and von Gabain classified Salar with Uyghur; Pritsak and Poppe claimed Salar was an Uyghur isolate; Thomsen (1959) grouped Salar with its closest geographic neighbor, Sarıgh Yoghur (Drimba 1968: 203).

Poppe (1953) exemplifies the Eastern-Turkic hypothesis for Salar. As evidence for the claim that Salar was an aberrant dialect of modern Uyghur, he cited four phonological features common to Uyghur and Salar:

⁶ Salar has however $*d > d$ in at least one form, probably a borrowing from Northern Turkic: *jalan adax* ‘barefoot’.

1. *-j-* and *-γ* (from **d* and **γ*), i.e., both have *ajaq* ‘foot’ and *taγ* ‘mountain’ (Common Tkc **adaq*, **taγ*); (OT *ajaγ*).⁷
2. Both languages have initial *j-* (*jol* ‘road’), not *ǵ-* as in Qipchaq (*ǵol* ‘road’) (OT *jol*).
3. Both have *f* while Qipchaq has *s* (*taf* vs. *tas* ‘stone’, cf. CT **tjal* (Poppe),⁸ (OT *taf*).
4. Both often delete *r* in syllable-final position (e.g. *ete* ‘morning’, OT *ärtä*).

Even by Poppe’s own classification above, this evidence does not rule out the possibility of Salar being a Southwestern (Oghuz) Turkic language. Poppe himself notes that the Salar verb suffix *-mif* is generally not found in the easternmost Uyghur dialects. This suffix became one crucial piece of evidence in the other main view on Salar, that it belongs to the Oghuz Turkic group.

3.3. Salar as an “Oghuz” language

The Oghuz Turkic languages are said to possess the following phonological features: **-γ > γ* in initial syllable codas, e.g. Tkm. *day* ‘moun-

⁷ OT = Old Turkic. Other abbreviations used here are the following: *** = Reconstructed as ... ; *>* = develops from (diachronically); *<* = is derived from (diachronically); *<...>* = orthographic form; *°* = default epenthetic vowel (e.g. /var/ + *-°f* → [varif]); Anat = Anatolian; Az = Azerbaijani; Chag = Chaghatay (Poppe 1953); Chuv = Chuvash; CT = Common Turkic; C.Tv. = Tuva spoken in China; Kāš. = *Divān luyāt at-turk*, Mahmud al-Kāshgharī’s 11th century dictionary of Southeastern Turkic; ET = Eastern Turki (Poppe 1953); E. Tkc = Eastern Turkic; Mo = Standard Khalkha Mongolian; OT = Old Turkic (pre-13c. Turkic) (Räsänen 1969, Poppe 1953); poss = possessive (e.g. IIIposs = third-person possessive); Räs = Räsänen 1969; Qaz = Qazaq (Kazakh); Qir = Qırghız (Kyrgyz); SY = Sarıgh Yoghur (Sarı Yugur; “Yellow Uyghur”; Xībù Yùgùyǔ); Ten = É. R. Tenišev’s work on Salar; Tkc = Turkic language family; Tkm = Turkmen (Tekin et al. 1991); Tksh = modern standard Turkish (Redhouse 1890/1974); S.Sib.Tuv = South Siberian Tuva; XJ / C. Tuva = Xinjiang (Chinese) Tuva; Uy = modern standard Uyghur (Xīnjiāng dàxué 1992); Wmo = Written Mongolian; Xaq = Xaqas (Khakas) (Tenišev 1984). In addition, capital letters for obstruents denotes non-specification for voicing, e.g. *-DZi* = [-ǵj ~ -tʃi]; for post-palatal obstruents it also denotes non-specification for backness, e.g. *-Q* = [-kʰ ~ -qʰ]. For vowels, it denotes non-specification for backness, e.g. *-A* [-a ~ -ə].

⁸ The so-called Common Turkic **lʲ* in **tjalʲ* is one of two reconstructed varieties of **l*.

tain'; Std. Turkish (*dağ* [da:] 'id.', [*dayı*] 'mountain-3.sg.poss.'), but *-G > Ø in non-initial syllable codas, e.g. OT *jaday* 'on foot'; Tksh., Tkm. *jaja* 'id.'; Tksh. *ulu* 'great, high'; many *t > d and *k > g (e.g. Tkm. *gel-* 'come'); *ǰ (= *d) > j (e.g. Tkm. *qujruq* 'tail'), as in Qipchaq and modern Uyghur. In addition, it is assumed that a hypothetical pre-Oghuz language must have preserved Old Turkic phonemic vowel length, since vowel length distinctions exist in Turkmen. However, since no other Oghuz language today preserves Proto-Turkic vowel length, we cannot consider this an Oghuz feature *per se*.

The theory of Salar as an Oghuz language was first proposed by Malov (1957), followed by Tenišev (1963), who also noted the influence of Southeastern Turkic languages. Drimba (1968) suggested that Salar was an Oghuz language with a Chaghatay adstratum. Hahn (1988: 268) has proposed that two adstrata are superimposed on Salar's Oghuz base: A "medieval stratum" consisting of Chaghatay and Tuva-Khaqas features acquired during migration eastward across Central Asia, and an "eastern stratum" (consistent with Tenišev's analysis) of features acquired more recently by prolonged contact with Sino-Tibetan and Mongolic peoples.⁹

Salar possesses certain phonological and morphosyntactic features, as well as lexical items, which, it is claimed, are found exclusively in the Oghuz languages. To date, the major evidence for an Oghuz basis of Salar is its consonantism, the presence of the perfect / indirective suffix *-mif* and certain Oghuz lexical items. Each feature will be examined in turn below; we will find that some of these features reflect merely the preservation of Old Turkic archaisms rather than a relationship with the modern Oghuz languages.

⁹ While such a three-strata theory does provide an elegant explanation based on the existing linguistic evidence, historically it may be more problematical. If the Salar migration from Transoxiana to Tibet was indeed part of Mongol troop movements, it is doubtful that the Salar troops stayed long enough in Tuva-Khaqas speaking areas to have acquired an entire new stratum to their language. The Salars more likely simply borrowed individual lexical items.

4. Oghuz elements in Salar

4.1. Stop voicing (consonantism)

There are two interrelated issues with regard to the voicing of initial obstruents: Their correspondence, if any, to a possible Orxon Turkic initial obstruent voicing, and the theoretical issue of whether to describe the surface contrasts of initial obstruents in terms of voicing or aspiration. In sum, if we posit an initial obstruent voicing distinction in Orxon-Turkic, then it is preserved in a certain set of words in the Oghuz languages. In other Turkic languages including Salar, this has been reanalyzed as an aspiration distinction. While as a result Salar “sounds Chinese”, harmonic processes of consonant suffixes behave in a typically Turkic fashion. For this reason, the binary distinction of initial obstruents in Salar is best described as a voicing distinction, as I have argued extensively elsewhere (Dwyer 1996).

Taking the diachronic issue first, we note that the Oghuz languages have a subset of voiced initial consonants which correspond to voiceless homorganic initial consonants in other Turkic languages. This is also a feature of Salar. Words that have exclusively initial *t* in Uyghur, for example, correspond to a set of cognate words with initial *d*, and another set with initial *t* in Turkmen (Turkmen *daŋ* ‘mountain’, but *tut-* ‘to hold’, cf. Uyghur *tay*, *tut-*, Salar *day*, *ʃut-*).

Why this apparent distinction was preserved in certain Oghuz words and not others appears arbitrary. Some have theorized that these voiced initials were preserved when followed by another voiced consonant (e.g. Turkmen *daŋ*, *tut-*), but there are many counter-examples (e.g. Tkm. *dyf* ‘dream’). Others have suggested that initial obstruents are voiced before front vowels,¹⁰ e.g. Tkm. *gel-* ‘to come’, *dört* ‘four’; but a few counter-examples can also be found, such as Tkm. *köp* ‘much’, *tyket-* ‘to end’. This may indicate that Old Turkic actually contrasted **d* and **t*, although this distinction is not (or not consistently) reflected in the pre-13th century Turkic orthographies.¹¹

¹⁰ Excluding onomatopoeic words, such as Turkish *kekele-* ‘to stammer’.

¹¹ None of the orthographies used for pre-13th century Turkic consistently represented voicing contrasts in words of Turkic origin. Even with scripts which allowed representation of a four-way contrast in onsets (such as the Brāhmī and Ti-

In addition to the Oghuz languages¹² and Salar, Tuva and Sarıgh Yoghur¹³ also have this dual-reflex feature. However, in Salar and Sarıgh Yoghur the phonemic voicing distinction (*t-d*, *k-g* etc.) is realized phonetically as an aspiration distinction. Menges (1995²) and others have suggested that this reflects an Old Turkic fortis-lenis distinction. Nonetheless, the underlying contrast is one of voicing; e.g. Tuva *gel-* ‘to come’, *kelin* ‘bride’.

In the following chart, the initial voicing contrasts in Oghuz are compared with Orxon Turkic, Salar, and Southeastern Turkic. (Note that Orxon Turkic did not contrast initial consonants for voicing; initial *p is unattested in Orxon Turkic.)

*Table 1. Voicing contrasts of initial Oghuz obstruents
(based on Menges 1995²)*

Orxon Turkic	Oghuz-Turkic	Salar	Southeastern Turkic
*b	b, v	/b/, /p/, /v/	b, p
*t	t, d	/t/, /d/	t, rarely d
*k/q (*K)	k, g	/k/, /g/	k
*ʃ	ʃ	/ʃ/	ʃ

A major subset of lexical items with initial phonemically voiced stops /b- d- g- g-/ in Salar correspond to *voiced* initials in the Oghuz languages, but largely to *voiceless aspirates* in non-Oghuz Turkic languages (represented here as *p*, *t*, *k* and *q*).

The underlying Salar forms are given below (parentheses indicate non-cognates):

betan scripts used), voicing contrasts were only systematically represented in *non-Turkic* lexemes.

¹² Sporadic initial consonant voicing also occurs occasionally in the Qıpchaq languages; e.g. Qumıq *ǵıfı* ‘person’, cf. Qaz., Qırgh., Turkish, Özb. *kıfı*; Qumıq *ǵel-* ‘to come’, *ǵor-* ‘to see’, *ǵır-* ‘to enter’, but *kır* ‘mud, filth’ (Tenišev 1984: 195).

¹³ Tuva is part of the South Siberian Turkic group; and Sarıgh Yoghur is probably related to South Siberian Turkic. On the latter, see Gëng & Clark 1992.

Table 2. Initial stop voicing in some Turkic languages¹⁴

CT	OGHUZ		SIBERIAN TURKIC				QIPCH	E. TKC	GLOSS
	Salar	Std. Turkish	Turkmen	Sarıgh Yoghur	S. Sib. Tuva	XJ Tuva	Qazaq	Uyghur	
*b	<i>bitir-</i>	<i>bitir-</i>	<i>bitir-</i>	<i>puttur-</i>	<i>bydyr-</i>	<i>bydy-</i>	<i>bitir-</i>	<i>pyttyr-</i>	'finish'
*b	<i>bol-</i>	<i>ol-</i>	<i>bol-</i>	<i>bol-</i>	<i>bol-</i>	<i>bol-</i>	<i>bol-</i>	<i>bol-</i>	'become'
*t	<i>tut-</i>	<i>tut-</i>	<i>dut-</i>	<i>tut--tuht-</i>	<i>tut-</i>	<i>dut-</i>	(<i>usta-</i>)	<i>tut-</i>	'grasp'
*t	<i>daf</i>	<i>taf</i>	<i>da:f</i>	<i>tas-tahs</i>	<i>daf</i>	<i>daf</i>	<i>tas</i>	<i>taf</i>	'stone'
*k	<i>gøz</i>	<i>gøz</i>	<i>gøz</i>	<i>køz</i>	(<i>karak</i>)	(<i>karak</i>)	<i>køz</i>	<i>køz</i>	'eye'
*q	<i>qif</i>	<i>kif</i>	<i>qif</i>	<i>qəs</i>		<i>kɣfɣn</i>	<i>qis</i>	<i>qif</i>	'winter'
*ʃ	<i>ʃix -</i>	<i>ʃik-</i>	<i>ʃiq-</i>	(<i>un-</i>)	---	(<i>ynø</i>)	<i>ʃiq-</i>	<i>ʃiq-</i>	'emerge'
*ʃ	<i>ʃiɖex</i>	<i>ʃiɖek</i>	<i>gyl</i>	<i>ʃyɖyk</i>	<i>ʃetfek</i>	<i>ɖeɖek</i>	<i>ʃefek</i>	<i>ʃetfek</i>	'flower'

As can be seen above, the voicing of initial consonants in words even within each language branch is not entirely consistent; in South Siberian Turkic, for example, Xinjiang Tuva has *dut-* but Literary South Siberian Tuva has *tut-* 'to hold'. Within the Oghuz languages, a similar inconsistency exists, e.g. Turkish *gymyʃ*, Xasarli Turkmen *ǵymyʃ*, but Literary Tkm. *kymyʃ* 'silver' (Tenišev 1984: 194). Comparing Turkmen and Sarıgh Yoghur, which both have underlying voicing, we have Turkmen *ʃatla-* 'to chop', but Sarıgh Yoghur *dzahp-*.

Next, there is the synchronic question: Do such initials contrast underlyingly in aspiration or voicing? Salar has underlying /b d g G/, realized initially as voiceless unaspirated [p t k q] or as semi-voiced [B D G]. In Salar, I would suggest that [+voice] is phonemic and [-voice, -aspirated] is phonetic. In most Turkic languages, obstruents are said to be distinguished by voicing (voiced vs. voiceless aspirated). The stops of most Tibetan and Chinese dialects are said to possess an aspiration distinction (voiceless unaspirated vs. voiceless aspirated). The two east-

¹⁴ The examples for this and subsequent tables are all drawn from the following sources unless otherwise indicated: Turkmen: Tekin et al. (1995); Azerbaijani: Azizbekov (1985); Turkish: Redhouse (1890/1974); Sarıgh Yoghur: (Léi 1992); S.Sib. Tuva: Tenišev (1968); Xinjiang (XJ) Tuva: Chén et al. (1985); Qazaq: Nurbek (1990), Axmetova et al. (1974); Uyghur: Xīnjiāng dàxué zhōngyǔwén xī (1982).

ernmost Turkic languages, Salar and Sarıgh Yoghur, are located within the Sino-Tibetan cultural area. They are possibly unique in the Turkic family in that the distinction of noncontinuant obstruents is based (on the surface at least) on aspiration. Examples from the Salar series $p, p^h, t, t^h, ʈ, ʈ^h, k, k^h, q$ and q^h in initial position follow:

[p]uref ‘wrinkles’	[p ^h]urni ‘nose’
[t]ox ‘lid’	[t ^h]ox ‘chicken’
[k]illa- ‘to be overly heavy’	[k ^h]illa- ‘to be hurried, urgent’
[q]uf ‘bird of prey’	[q ^h]us- ‘to vomit’
[ʈ]eɣna- ‘to steam’	[ʈ ^h]eɣna- ‘to become, turn into’

The distinction of noncontinuant obstruents on the basis of aspiration in Eastern Salar has resulted in extremely strong aspiration in the aspirated series, as in Sino-Tibetan. Thus the distinction in Salar appears to resemble Sino-Tibetan system, not the Turkic one.

In the small body of literature on Salar, most researchers have assumed that Salar (and Sarıgh Yoghur) obstruents are distinguished on the basis of aspiration, whereas obstruents of all other Turkic languages have a voicing distinction.¹⁵

This question of voicing vs. aspiration has been deemed so basic and obvious as to not merit attention: Only voicing is assumed phonemic in all other Turkic languages besides Salar and Sarıgh Yoghur. Here, however, I will entertain the hypothesis that the Eurasian continent is actually a *phonological continuum*, with a clear obstruent voicing distinction in the languages of the west (e.g. Turkish, or Russian), a clear aspiration distinction in the east (e.g. Mandarin Chinese), and a mixed system in between (e.g. Tuva or Salar).

¹⁵ See, for example, Tenišev (1976a: 57-60). Salar data is contrasted with several northwestern Chinese dialects and with Amdo Tibetan. Tenišev concludes that as a result of this language contact Salar has completely adopted the Chinese distinction based on aspiration. Poppe, on the other hand, assumed that Salar was an Uyghur dialect. He found it unusual that unvoiced Common Turkic stops develop into voiced phonemes (e.g. $*q > ɣ$), although this phenomenon “is common in Western Turkic” (1953: 443). Kakuk (1962:165), perhaps at the suggestion of the Salar linguist Hǎn Jiànyè, her primary informant attributes these word-initial contrasts instead to devoicing (Lín & Hǎn 1986²: 215, Lín 1985: 1).

Why would this be a likely hypothesis? Most dialects of Chinese and Tibetan clearly have a surface aspiration distinction. Mongolic and Turkic languages are generally described as having a clear voicing distinction, but in fact Mongolian and Uyghur initial voiced obstruents, for example, often surface as voiceless or semi-voiced (Jerry Norman, personal communication re Mongolian). I am suggesting that the area which encompasses Western China, Eastern Turkistan, and South Siberia is likely a voicing : aspiration contact zone. I further suggest that Salar has an underlying voicing distinction which has been obscured on the surface by the strong local influence of Sino-Tibetan aspiration.

Phonetically, Salar and Sarıgh Yoghur obstruents seem clearly [\pm aspirated]; but a voicing distinction in the other Turkic languages on the eastern periphery is much less clear-cut. Most studies of the Turkic languages assume categorically that obstruent distinctions are based on voicing; whether this view is based on acoustic reality or influenced by *orthographic* voicing distinctions in the Cyrillic and Arabic Turkic scripts remains to be seen.

Since obstruents contrast underlyingly in *voicing*, obstruents here are represented as *p/b*, *t/d*, *tʃ/dʒ*, etc as follows:

Table 3. Representation of initial stop voicing in Salar

Underlying	Represented as	Surface	Gloss
/bitir-/	<i>bitir-</i>	<i>pu^htr-</i>	'to finish'
/purun/	<i>purni</i>	<i>p^hurnə</i>	'nose'
/tut-/	<i>tut-</i>	<i>t^hut^h-</i>	'to grab, hold'
/daʃ/	<i>daʃ</i>	<i>taʃ</i>	'stone'
/gøz/	<i>gøz</i>	<i>køz</i>	'eye'
/giʃ/	<i>giʃ</i>	<i>qɪʃ</i>	'winter'
/ʃat-/	<i>ʃat-</i>	<i>tʃ^haʃ^h-</i>	'to chop'
/ʒiʒek/	<i>ʒiʒex</i>	<i>ʒiʒeç</i>	'xyloid flower'

The underlying Salar forms match those of Turkmen. Yet there are at least two other languages which, like Salar, possess this set of voiced initial stops. Neither Tuva and Sarıgh Yoghur are Oghuz languages. Yet both have Salar-type (i.e. Chinese-type) phonetic implementation rules: The surface forms in Sarıgh Yoghur and Tuva are distinguished primarily by aspiration, not voicing. In the case of Tuva, it appears that one subset of stop-initial words is distinguished on the basis of voic-

ing, another by aspiration. (Studies of Tuva have not consistently indicated these distinctions.) Until we have more ample data on Tuva, we can tentatively conclude that Tuva stops may be of a transitional type, whereby Chinese / Tibetan-type phonetic rules are inconsistently applied to the lexicon.¹⁶

Does the fact that the subset of voiced-initial words in these languages largely coincides indicate a common origin or the later acquisition of a regional feature? Salar consonantism provides evidence to reinforce the probable direct relation of Salar to the Oghuz languages. Although these features are also found in non-Oghuz languages (Tuva and Sarıgh Yoghur), only Salar has in addition the Western Turkic adjectival suffix *-lɪʔ* (as in *taylɪ* ‘mountainous’, *dahlɪ* ‘sweet’, cf. Tksh. *tatlɪ*; Az. *dadlɪ*; Uy. *tatlıq*). This constitutes Poppe’s third classificatory criterion, **IVɣ > -lɪ, -lu*.¹⁸

Here I hypothesize that stop voicing *does* support the Oghuz hypothesis. Nonetheless, with some more precise transcriptions of Tuva and Sarıgh Yoghur data, we could see whether or not these two languages, like Salar, have an underlying voicing but surface aspiration distinction. If so, then the latter phonetic implementation rules have become a regional feature of the Eastern Central Asian area.

4.2. Other phonological features

1. Weakening of **b > v*: A subset of monosyllabic verbs with initial **b* are spirantized to *v*- in Salar. This spirantization also occurs in West Oghuz (Turkish and Azerbaijani), and Khalaj (a Turkic isolate). In Turkmen, **b > v* is sandhi-conditioned, which suggests a likely path of development for this sound change in the other Oghuz languages.

¹⁶ Most scholars (e.g. Menges 1995²) see Tuva as having a voicing distinction. These voiced initials correspond to Mongolic and Tungusic **d-*. This may indicate that the less voiced, (i.e. voiceless unaspirated) set in Tuva reflects a contact-induced change (or remnant) under Mongolic influence.

¹⁷ Western Turkic includes Oghuz, Qipchaq (except Qırghız), and Chuvash (Schönig, in this issue). Hahn (1988: 261-262, 268) suggested that *-lɪ* was exclusively an Oghuz feature.

¹⁸ **adaq* is also mentioned, but this feature is also not exclusive to Oghuz.

* <i>bar</i> 'to have, to be'	Sa. <i>var</i> ~ <i>bar</i> , Anat., Az. <i>var</i> , E. Tkc <i>bar</i>
* <i>bär-</i> 'to give'	Sa. <i>ver-</i> , Tksh. <i>ver-</i> , Az. <i>vär-</i> , cf. Öz. <i>ber-</i>
* <i>bar-</i> 'to go'	Sa. <i>var-</i> , Tksh. <i>var-</i> , Öz. <i>bar-</i>
* <i>baq-</i> 'to watch, look at'	Sa. <i>vax-</i> , Tksh. <i>bak-</i> , Öz. <i>baq-</i>

2. Prothesis of *v* initially before a rounded vowel: Sa. /ur/ > /vur/ 'hit', Tksh. *vur*, cf. Kāš. <ur> (Poppe 1953: 465).

4.3. The perfect / indirective verbal suffix *-mif*

This suffix has a dual function in Salar as a perfect tense-aspect marker and as a pragmatic modal of indirect experience: The speaker's knowledge of the event is secondhand, inferred, brand-new, or indirectly-perceived; cf. Dwyer (forthcoming 1998).

Sa. *U ge:mif* 'S/he came' (marked; often implies 'I heard / I think / it seems')
cf. *U ge:ǵi* 'S/he came (I saw)' (unmarked; often implies 'I know / saw / am certain')

The presence of this dual-function *-mif* suffix in Salar has been central to arguments for an Oghuz origin for Salar (e.g. Hahn 1988). It has been claimed that this suffix is a typically Oghuz feature, and does not occur in non-Oghuz languages. Actually, although *-mif* occurs in Turkish (and as a perfect marker in Azerbaijani and Gagauz), it is not a characteristic of spoken Turkmen (though it occurs as an indirective marker in the literary language). Furthermore, *-mif* does occur in non-Oghuz languages such as Yakut (as a perfect) and Chaghatay (as a perfect / inductive). Hence *-mif* is neither typical of nor exclusive to Oghuz Turkic.

The suffix *-mif* in Salar is best considered an archaism, and reflects the preservation of the Old Turkic perfect *-mif*. Indirectivity was likely a secondary though early development; the oldest Turkic inscriptions have examples where *-mif* has a discourse-pragmatic function and clearly marks more than just anteriority or perfect aspect. Modern Salar *-mif* retains both of these functions.

The functional parallelism of *-mif* in Oghuz-Turkic (particularly Turkish) and Salar suggests a similar pattern of development, but does not constitute enough evidence to prove a genetic relationship between Oghuz and Salar, since the suffix is absent in some Oghuz languages. In the Black Sea dialects of Turkish, for example, only the perfect

function of *-mif* is preserved as an archaism from Old Anatolian Turkish (Brendemoen 1997).

That *-mif* does *not* occur (or occurs only sporadically) in Southeastern Turkic as an indirective marker is, however, noteworthy. In modern Uyghur and Özbek, the functional and semantic scope of *-mif* has been severely narrowed, and perfect aspect and evidentiality / inductivity are marked otherwise.¹⁹

Thus, evidence suggests that indirective *-mif* in Salar is an Old Turkic archaism; that it indicates at least a parallel development with some Oghuz languages; and it suggests a different development from that of Southeastern Turkic. As such it constitutes more a further argument against the Salar-as-an-Uyghur-dialect hypothesis rather than a solid argument for Salar as an Oghuz Turkic language.

4.4 Serial verb constructions + particle *DE* in the imperative

The particle *DE* (realized in Salar as *da ~ de ~ ta ~ te ~ ti*) functions as both a verbal connective particle (*conjunct*) and as the conjunction ‘also’ (and by extension ‘both’ and ‘neither’). In verb complexes *DE* occurs between an uninflected main verb V_1 and a directional complement V_d , as in (NP) V_1 *DE* V_d -*TAM*. Intervening material such as NPs is highly restricted. (Modern Salar has lost the conjunctors *-°p* and *-A* (the latter except with iterative actions); uninflected verb stems are juxtaposed, and only the last verb in a series bears tense/aspect/ modal markers).²⁰

When *DE* optionally occurs between an uninflected stem and a finite directional verb, it creates semantic distance between the two verbs and indicates a light temporal sequentiality of action. Where *DE* is obligatory, however, is in serial constructions in the imperative: *ifte*

¹⁹ In modern Uyghur, *-mif* functions only as a dubitative, expressing the speaker’s contempt for and/or doubt that the subject had the ability to accomplish the action, e.g. *u ke(l)mif* ‘S/he supposedly came (but I don’t believe it)’.

²⁰ Through intensive contact with Uyghur and Qazaq, complex verb forms in Western Salar behave differently than in the main Eastern dialect; some speakers, for example, sporadically use the conjunct *-°p*. *DE* functions as in Eastern Salar, but can also occur between two finite verb forms. (These are not coordinated constructions semantically, as the V_2 is a complement to V_1 , e.g. *Dimur jol jasamif de toglamif* ‘The railroad was fixed and (became) passable’.)

de gel 'Look [for it] and come back!', *al te var* 'Go and get it!'. Such forms are attested in late 19th-century Salar as well (Grenard 1898). Oghuz languages, unlike Northeastern Turkic (e.g. Uyghur) also have such an imperative construction (modern Turkish *al da gel* 'Bring [it] here!').

4.5. Oghuz lexical items in Salar

A number of lexical items are typical of the Oghuz languages. Some are given below:

Table 4. Oghuz lexical items in Salar

	'sparrow'	'lips'	'deaf'	'hand'
OGHUZ				
Salar	<i>seçie</i>	<i>dodax</i>	<i>sayır</i>	<i>el</i>
Turkmen	<i>serfe</i>	<i>do:daq</i>	<i>ker</i>	<i>el</i>
Azerbaijani	<i>sär fä</i>	<i>dodak</i>	<i>sayır</i>	<i>äl</i>
Std. Turkish	<i>serfe</i>	<i>dudak</i>	<i>sa:ır</i>	<i>el</i>
SIB. TKC				
Sarıgh Yoghur	<i>qoşaş ~ gohgaş</i>	<i>dämsəy</i>	<i>teŋə</i>	<i>äləy</i>
S. Sib. Tuva	<i>bora-xirilee</i>	<i>erin</i>	<i>dylej, kula: qadiy</i>	<i>xol</i>
QIPCHAQ				
Qazaq	<i>toryaj</i>	<i>erin</i>	<i>saŋaraw</i>	<i>qol</i>
E. TKC				
Uyghur	<i>qufqaŋ</i>	<i>kalpuk; lep</i>	<i>gas</i>	<i>qol, ilik</i>
	'right (side)'	'mud'	'leg, shin'	
OGHUZ				
Salar	<i>six</i>	<i>palfix</i>	<i>inçix</i>	
Turkmen	<i>say</i>	<i>palfik</i>	<i>bu:t</i> 'leg'	
Azerbaijani	<i>say</i>	<i>palfig</i>	<i>baçag</i> 'leg'	
Std. Turkish	<i>sa:</i>	<i>balfik</i>	<i>ençik</i> 'lower part of the leg', <i>baçak</i> 'leg'	
SIB. TKC				
Sarıgh Yoghur	<i>oŋ</i>	<i>şolbaq</i>	<i>but ~ bət</i> 'leg'	
S. Sib. Tuva	<i>oŋ</i>	<i>ŋil ŋiriq</i>	<i>but</i> 'leg, foot'	

QİPCHAQ

Qazaq	<i>oŋ</i>	<i>batpaq</i>	<i>but</i> 'leg'
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E. TKC

Uyghur	<i>oŋ</i>	<i>batqaq</i>	<i>put, paŋak</i>
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The correspondence of Salar *seǰie* 'sparrow' with Oghuz <serŋe> is particularly important. Al-Kāšgharī (folio 541) gives <seǰe> as the Oghuz form of Arabic 'sparrow', and Clauson noted that Oghuz *r* in this and other examples must be intrusive; the modern Salar form constitutes solid evidence of this (Marcel Erdal 1997, personal communication).

There are a number of lexemes which are found other historical and modern Turkic languages besides Oghuz (particularly in Chaghatay, i.e. Eastern Middle Turkic (Drimba 1968)), but not in modern South-eastern Turkic. Tatar also has *sau* 'right'. 'Hand' is found in Orxon Turkic as <älig>, in Chaghatay as <älik>; 'shoulder' in Chaghatay is <jayır>. For 'leg, shin', Chaghatay has <inǰyk>; Qarachay *inŋik* 'ankle'; Balqar *inǰik* 'id.' (Räsänen 1969: 172); Bashqurt *ensek* <*inŋik> (Poppe 1953).

While these examples are not exclusive to Oghuz, they still show that (1) these lexemes are not regional borrowings from Uyghur, Qazaq, or Sarıǵh Yoghur, and (2) that Salar preserves a similar set of lexemes as Oghuz, and Western Qipchaq (e.g. Bashqurt).

In Salar there are also other cognates to Eastern Middle Turkic forms which do not correspond to modern forms in the Oghuz languages:

<i>biǰin</i>	'monkey'	Uy., Öz., Ta., Tksh. <i>majmun</i> ; Az. <i>mejmun</i> ; Tkm. <i>majmın</i> ; Qaz., Qır. <i>majmıl</i> ; S.Sib. Tv. <i>sarabafqın</i> , XJ Tv. <i>meŋfin</i> ; SY <i>bedǰin</i>
<i>gølex</i>	'cow, ox'	Orxon Turkic <kølik> 'cart, vehicle'; Kāš. <kølyk>; Qaz. <i>kølik</i> 'beast of burden, pack animal' (not attested in mod.Tksh., Tkm., Std. Uy., SY, or Öz.)

Both are examples of Old Turkic archaisms preserved in Salar. In the other Turkic languages, *majmun* is a Persian loan, and <gølyk> 'beast of burden' is attested in 14-17th c. Ottoman Turkish.

5. Qipchaq and South Siberian Turkic elements in Salar

The Turkic component of Salar suggests an archaic and partly Oghuz base overlain with some miscellaneous features which are characteristic of the modern Qipchaq and South Siberian Turkic languages. (Salar also shares certain phonological features with modern Uyghur, such as vowel devoicing; these are areal features incorporated into Salar as the result of language contact.)

The Qipchaq and South Siberian Turkic elements in Salar are here described as sporadic or miscellaneous, since all appear to be isolated borrowings and frozen forms which do not conform to general patterns of Salar phonology or morphology.

5.1. Siberian Turkic-type elements

Certain Salar lexemes preserve remnants of Old Turkic which also appear consistently in South Siberian Turkic: *d* (in Tuva, Qaragas), *z* (in Khaqas, Shor), *č*, and *n* (from Old Turkic **d*, **d*, **t*, **j*, respectively). While systematic in Siberian Turkic, Old Turkic **d*, **t*, **j* usually result in *j* (*ajax* ‘foot’), *t* (*tix* ‘to emerge’), and *j* (*jirix* ‘heart’), respectively, in Salar.

Table 5. Siberian Turkic-type elements in Salar

OLD TURKIC	*d	<i>*adiγ</i> , Kāš. <ađiγ>
S. Sib. Turkic	<i>d</i>	S.Sib. Tuva <i>adig</i> , C.Tuva <i>advx</i>
Salar	/t/	<i>atix</i> ‘bear’ (cf. Tksh., Az., Tkm. <i>aji</i>)
Old Turkic	<qud->	
S. Sib. Turkic	<i>t</i>	Sojon <i>kut</i> ~ <i>kudar</i> ;
	<i>z</i>	C.Tv. <i>kut</i> –; SY <i>goz</i> –; Uy., Qaz. <i>quj</i> –
Salar		<i>xoder</i> – ‘to pour’
Old Turkic	<adaq>	
S. Sib. Turkic	<i>z</i>	SY <i>jaləŋ azaq</i>
Salar	/d/	<i>jalaŋ adax</i> ‘barefoot’; (cf. Tksh. <i>jalın ajak</i> ; Az. <i>jalın ajag</i> ; Tkm. <i>ajak jalaŋaŋ</i>)
Old Turkic	Kāš. <jad->	
S. Sib. Turkic	<i>z</i>	SY <i>jaz</i> – ‘to spread, spread out, to sun’
Salar	/z/	<i>jaz</i> – ‘to sow, spread’ (cf. Uy. <i>jaj</i> – ‘to spread out’)

OLD TURKIC	*ʃ	Chag. <äʃä> ‘elder sister, younger aunt’
S. Sib. Turkic	ç	Khaqas <i>içä</i> ‘mother’; SY <i>içli</i> ~ <i>eçli</i> ~ <i>eçe</i> ‘aunt’; cf. Yakut <i>ijä</i> ‘mother’
Salar	/ç/	<i>iça</i> ‘mother’; cf. WMo. <i>eçi</i> ‘mama’; Tkm. <i>äʃä</i> ‘wife, mother’
OLD TURKIC	*j	Käš. <jäm> ‘fodder, food; herbal medicine’
S. Sib. Turkic	n	Shor <i>näm</i> ‘bait’; Khaqas <i>ne-mis</i> ‘bait’
Salar	/n/	<i>neme</i> ‘food’
Old Turkic		<i>jene</i> ‘again’
S. Sib. Turkic	j	Uy. <i>jene</i> ; SY <i>ene</i>
Salar		<i>nene</i> ‘again’

From both a structural and semantic standpoint, the most recent source for Salar *iça* may well have been Mongolic, though this does not rule out an Old Turkic origin for the lexeme. *jene* ‘again’ underwent a different phonological development in modern Turkish: *gene*, *gine*, *jine*.

5.2. Non-Uyghur elements

There is a set of features in Salar which occur in the modern Qipchaq and Oghuz languages, yet not in Southeastern Turkic (at least not in modern Uyghur). Since there is such variation in the correspondences with Qipchaq and Oghuz (some Salar features occur in both, some in only one branch, and some in certain Oghuz or Qipchaq languages, but not others), this set of features in Salar is most saliently described as being *non-Uyghur*.

5.2.1. Phonological elements

One feature of Salar phonology that is common to both Qazaq-Qipchaq and South Siberian Turkic, yet differs from Uyghur, is the deaf-fricativization of Common Turkic *ʃ > ʃ syllable-finally:

<i>aʃ</i> - ‘to open’	< * <i>haʃ</i> -; EWT <aʃ-;>; Uy. <i>aʃ</i> -; C.Tv., Qaz. <i>aʃ</i> -; SY <i>a(h)ʃ</i> -
<i>eʃgu</i> ‘goat’	C.Tv. <i>øʃgy</i> , SY <i>gugə</i> ~ <i>gugu</i> ; Qaz. <i>eʃki</i> ; (but Qir. <i>eʃʃki</i>); cf. Uy. <i>øʃke</i> ; Tksh., Az. <i>keʃi</i> , Tkm. <i>geʃi</i>

leſgi ‘slender’²¹ < **inſkă* = Kāš. <jinſge>; Uy. *inſike*; C. Tatar *iniſke* ~ *niſke*;
C. Qaz. *ǧiſike*; C. Qirg. *iſke* ~ *niſke*; SY *fiſi* ~ *fiſe*
[metathesized]; C.Tv. *ǧiſiſi*; Tksh. *inǧe*, Az. *inǧä*, Tkm. *i:nǧe*

While such deaffricativization is not unique to Qipchaq and South Siberian Turkic (also occurring in Anatolian dialects, e.g.), it does show Salar’s divergence from Uyghur. The second and third examples above also show Salar’s phonological divergence from both Uyghur (in vocalism) and Oghuz (in consonantism).

Another salient feature of Salar is the lack of vowel-raising. Common Turkic **a* in initial syllables before a following *i* (historically) is preserved in Salar, as it is in both modern Qipchaq and Oghuz languages. This differs from modern Uyghur, where **a* in such an environment is raised to *e* or *i*:

<i>xari</i>	‘old’	ET80 <i>qārī</i> , SY <i>qarə</i> ~ <i>qar</i> ; Tksh. <i>kari</i> ‘old woman’; Tkm. <i>garri</i> ; cf. Uy. <i>qeri</i>
<i>xatun kiſi</i>	‘woman’	Tksh. <i>kadın</i> , Az. <i>gadin</i> , Tkm. <i>ha:tin</i> ; Öz. <i>xatin</i> ‘wife’; cf. Uy. <i>xotun</i>
<i>dayi</i>	‘still’	Qır. <i>dayə</i> ; SY <i>dahγə</i> ; Tksh., Az. <i>daha</i> ; Tat. <i>taſi</i> ‘again’; cf. Uy. <i>texi</i> ; cf. WMo. <i>dakin</i> ‘again’
<i>jaxin</i>	‘close, nearby’	Kāš. ET76 <jaqin>; Tksh. <i>jakin</i> ; Az. <i>jaxin</i> ; Tkm. <i>jaki:n</i> ; Uy. <i>jeqin</i>
<i>jaſil</i>	‘green’	Tkm. <i>jaſil</i> , cf. Uy., Tksh. <i>jeſil</i>
<i>aǧir</i>	‘heavy’	Tkm., Tksh. <i>ayir</i> (and Qaz. <i>awir</i>), cf. Uy. <i>eſir</i>

5.2.2. Lexical elements

Lexical features of Salar tend to group with the modern Qipchaq and Oghuz languages rather than with Southeastern Turkic. These include the formation of denominal compound verbs with *et-* ‘do’ rather than *qil-*, and a set of lexical items.

In many Turkic languages, compound verbs can be formed from multisyllabic and / or foreign nouns by the addition of a generic action verb *et-* or *qil-* ‘to do’. There is a significant isogloss between the languages which tend to employ *et-*, those that use *qil-*, and those that use

²¹ While the initial *l-* in *leſgi* is peculiar in the Salar form, it likely reflects the areal influence of Qīnghǎi / Gānsù Chinese, which does not distinguish *l* and *n*.

qıl- or *et-*. At the very least, the *et-* / *qıl-* isogloss may help in identifying a loan stratum in Salar. In modern Salar, compound verbs are formed only with *et-*, while *qıl-* is entirely absent. The following languages group together:

N + <i>qıl-</i>	S. Siberian Tuva, Qaragas, Yakut
N + <i>et-</i>	Salar, Tksh., Az., Tkm., Tatar, Qaz. e.g. Sa. <i>if et-</i> 'take care of matters'
N + <i>qıl-</i>	Sarıgh Yoghur, Uyghur ²² , Özbek, e.g. Uy. <i>if qıl-</i> 'take care of matters',
~ <i>et-</i>	but Uy. <i>af et-</i> 'prepare food'.

Salar groups with Oghuz and Qipchaq rather than with South Siberian Turkic and Southeastern Turkic. From this synchronic evidence, it appears that this is evidence *against* the earlier theory that Salar was a Southeastern Turkic language.

qıl- does occur in some late 19th c. historical Salar texts. *The History of the Salars* (Tenišev 1976b) (but not in the *Türk Feizaili* (Hán 1989)) has *tø:be qıl-* 'to repent' and *nazixat qıl-* 'to teach'. If indeed these written sources reflect spoken Salar of the time, the presence of *qıl-* suggests that it was the original generic action verb in Salar. Modern Salar *et-*, then, would be due to comparatively recent (within the last century) contact-induced shift from Qipchaq, the only "*et-language*" in contact with Salar.

In addition, there is a set of lexical items in Salar which are typical of both the Qipchaq and Oghuz languages:

<i>kifi</i>	'person'	Tkm. <i>kifi</i> , but Tkm. dialects <i>gifi</i> ; C.Tv. <i>gifi</i> ; SY <i>kəsi</i> ; Bashqurt, Tatar <i>kiñi</i> ; Uy. <i>adam</i>
<i>uyu</i>	'owl'	Qaz. <i>yki</i> , Qır. <i>yky</i> , Bashqurt <i>ökö</i> ; Tksh. <i>puhu</i> 'eagle owl', <i>bajkuñ</i> 'owl'; Tkm. <i>ba:jɯf</i>
<i>kijix̣ kix</i>	'gazelle'	Qaz. <i>kijik</i> , Tkm. <i>kejik</i> , C.Tatar <i>kijik</i> ; Uy. <i>çeren</i> ; cf. Tksh. <i>gejik</i> 'deer'
<i>ʃija-</i>	'spread out'	Qaz. <i>çaj-</i> ; Uy. <i>jaj-</i> ; C.Tv. <i>çordɤ</i> ; cf. Kăš. <jad->; SY <i>jaz-</i>

In the latter example, Salar initial *ʃ* corresponds to Common Turkic **j*. Since this does not appear to be a systematic change in Salar, it was

²² *et-* is much less frequent in for example Uyghur, but still occurs.

likely borrowed from a **j* (> *ǰ*) > *ʃ*-initial language (cf. Tatar *ʃirän-*, Tkm. *jiryren-* ‘to abhor’), or it is simply not cognate to these forms at all (Dwyer 1996: 261).

5.2.3. Morphology: Dative -A, -KA

The Salar case system mirrors the Old Turkic system fairly closely.

However, Salar appears to have *two* dative suffixes, -A (seductively like Turkmen -A and Turkish -*j*(A)) and -KA (like Southeastern Turkic, Qipchaq, and Old Turkic -KA). Could this be an illustration of Salar’s multistratal nature, with -A reflecting an older Oghuz stratum, and -KA reflecting contact with, say, Southeastern Turkic?

Synchronically, the alternation is phonologically and morphologically conditioned: Salar -a / -e occurs after consonant-final stems (*beǰiŋ-e* ‘to Beijing’, *bel-e* ‘to the waist’, *bagrax-a* ‘to the clothes’), -nA after the third person possessive suffix -(s)I (*ama-si-na* ‘to his / her mother’), while -ge / -ya / -qa / -ye occurs after vowel-final and homorganic consonant-final stems (*bala-ya* ‘to the child’, *gajiq-qa* ‘to the boat’).

Modern Turkmen²³ has -A (-a / -e / -ε) after both consonant-final and vowel-final stems: *baf-a* ‘to the head’, *gøz-e* ‘to the eye’; /ata/ [ata:] ‘to the father’; /berdi/ [berdä:] ‘to Berdi’. Dative -A is also found in Turkish as -(j)A, with -jA following vowel-final stems, e.g. *Ali-j-e* ‘to Ali’. Comparing Salar only with Oghuz, one could conclude that Salar -A is a phonologically-conditioned weakened variant of -KA, which might have passed through the following stages: -KA > -jA > -A.

If we consider Salar’s contact languages, however, a number of competing hypotheses emerge.

Southeastern Turkic has only -GA (-ya / -gä / -ka / -kä): Uyghur *ati-ya*, *berdi-ge*. At first glance, this appears to suggest that Salar was originally an -A variety of Oghuz (as in Turkmen) which later acquired -KA from other Turkic languages, likely from Southeastern Turkic. However, in his study of the late 19th century Salar documents stored at the Qīnghǎi Minorities College, Hán (1989) asserts that *only* dative -KA appears in these documents. If these are truly representative of an earlier stage of Salar, then we would have to assume that -KA is the original dative suffix, and that -A was a feature or an allomorph ac-

²³ Examples from Hanser (1977: 41) and Baskakov et al. (1970: 107-117).

quired in the last hundred years. The latter is unlikely, since there are no known parallel examples of post-consonantal *K*-weakening in the language.

If the dative *-A* is a later-acquired second dative marker rather than an allomorph, there are three possible sources. One is the Qipchaq languages (such as Qazaq, which has *-a* / *-e* after the possessive suffix, and *-na* / *-ne* after the third person possessive suffix *-(s)I*). Another is early Mongolian, which has *-a* / *-e* as one form of the dative-locative (and fossilized in such forms as Mo. *effin-e* ‘secretly’ (Jerry Norman personal communication, 1996)). One other possible (though less likely) source for Salar dative *-A* is Amdo Tibetan, which also has a harmony-sensitive dative suffix */ε/* (Sun 1986: 92). However, despite the length and intensity of contact between the Salars and Amdo Tibetan speakers, this is not a likely option, since Tibetan harmony is conditioned by height (tongue root height) rather than backness. Of the three options, a Qipchaq source for *-A* is the most likely, as Salar has certain other Qipchaq features, e.g. the archaic *n* before dative, ablative, and possessive suffixes (see immediately below).

It is equally possible that Salar dative *-A* is merely an Old Turkic archaism and an allomorph of *-KA*. Old Turkic also had *-GA* (*at-qa* ‘to the name’), *-n-KA* > *-ŋA* (*baf-i-ŋa* ‘to the head’), and *-A* (*äbiŋ-ä* ‘to your homeland’) (Tekin 1968: 131).

5.2.4. Possessive *-(s)I* + *n* + oblique cases

The preservation of the Old Turkic possessive suffix *-sIn* and the Old Turkic oblique case suffixes *-ndA*, *-ndAn*, and *-ngA* is also characteristic of Oghuz and Qipchaq, but not of Southeastern Turkic:

Turkmen

baf ‘head, beginning’, *baf-i* ‘its head, its beginning’,

baf-i-n-da ‘on its head, at the beginning’

søz ‘word(s)’, */søz/+lAr/+l-(s)I/* → *søzlør-ø* ‘its words’,

/søz/+lAr/+l-(s)I/ + */Dan/* *søzlør-ø-ndøn* ‘from its words’

Salar

daf-i ‘outside’, *daf-i-n-da* ‘on the outside’

begrax ‘clothes’, *begrax-i-n-da* ‘on / with his / her clothes’

6. The relationship of Salar to Turkmen

A structural comparison of Salar and Turkmen reveals a number of similarities. Most are *not* unique to these two languages, but are found in other Turkic languages as well. With the evidence compiled to date, I can only state that Salar and the Oghuz branch *as a whole* have a *likely* genetic relationship, although they share as many differences than similarities. Salar shares more features with Turkmen than it does with any other Oghuz language (i.e., Turkish, Azerbaijani, or Gagauz), but the correspondence is not absolute. These Turkmen-type features in Salar include obstruent voicing and certain lexical items.

6.1. Similarities between Salar and Turkmen

6.1.1. Obstruent voicing

Common Turkic $*b *t *k *ʃ > *b *d *g *ɟ$. While the voicing of a subset of Common Turkic initial voiceless (except $*b$) obstruents is typical of the Oghuz branch as a whole, a higher percentage of Turkmen lexemes correspond to the initial voicing of cognates in Salar. If we look at CT $*t$, for example, we find that Salar initial *d* regularly corresponds to Turkmen *d* but Turkish *t*. (In Tuva and Sarıgh Yoghur, these surface as *t*- and *d*- in equal numbers.)

<i>daf</i>	'stone'	Az. <i>daf</i> , Tkm. <i>da:f</i> , but Tksh. <i>taf</i> , Gag. <i>taf</i>
<i>duz</i>	'salt'	Az., Tkm. <i>duz</i> , Tksh. <i>tuz</i>
<i>der</i>	'sweat'	Tksh. <i>ter</i> , Az. <i>tär</i> , Tkm. <i>der</i>
<i>dar</i>	'narrow'	Tksh., Az., Gag. <i>dar</i> , Tkm. <i>da:r</i>
<i>dox</i>	'full, satiated'	Tksh. <i>tok</i> ; Az. <i>tox</i> ; Tkm. <i>dok</i>
<i>daniŋ-</i>	'to get acquainted, know'	Tksh., Az., Tkm. <i>taniŋ-</i> (but cf. Tksh. <i>daniŋ-</i> 'to consult')

6.1.2. Lexical items

Space does not permit an exhaustive study at present, but one example should suffice to pique our interest: Salar has *sufse* ~ *suhse* 'broom', and only Turkmen has the form *sybse*, while other Turkic languages have cognate but dissimilar forms: Kāš. <syprgy>; Tksh. *sypyrge*, Az. *sypyrġä*; cf. C.Tv. *firbiŋ*, SY *forγə*.

6.2. Differences between Salar and Turkmen

Salar and Turkmen exhibit a number of *differences* as well. If Salar and Turkmen are genetically related, these differences must be attributed to divergence over time. The differences include the following features.

6.2.1. Primary long vowels

Although Turkmen is one Turkic language which has preserved Common Turkic vowel length, modern Salar no longer has phonemic long vowels in native Turkic vocabulary. Salar may once have had such long vowels, claims Tenišev (1976a). According to his 1958 field study, Tenišev (1976a) recorded four or five long / short minimal pairs in Qīnghǎi Salar, such as *sa:rɪ* ‘side’ and *sarɪ* ‘yellow’. The existence of these pairs, corresponding to long / short pairs in Turkmen, strengthened Tenišev’s argument for the Turkmen origin of the Salars. However, in 1992-1993 I detected *no* length difference for these words in Eastern and Western Salar. It is entirely possible that during the last 35 years Salar has lost this primary vowel length distinction. The Salars could also have lost the distinction much earlier.

6.2.2. Rounding (labial) harmony

Literary Turkmen has consistent rounding harmony, e.g. *gøðym* ‘my eye’, *otlor* ‘grasses’, *dyjölördö* ‘on their camels’ whereas Salar does not: *gøzim* ‘my eye’, *otlar* ‘grasses’, *dyjälärdä* ‘on their camel(s)’. Salar only has palatal (backness) harmony. However, harmonic processes are notoriously instable and subject to language-contact effects (even northern Turkmen dialects for example show little rounding harmony), so this feature should not be given excessive weight.

6.2.3. Nasal spreading (assimilation) across word boundaries

Turkmen (and Qipchaq) have such assimilation, Salar does not, e.g. for /baʃ/:

Turkmen (Hanser 1977: 53)	[θennen <u>ma</u> ʃya ba:rmɪ]	‘Is anyone else there except you?’
Salar	[senden baʃqa varmu]	‘id.’

6.2.4. Personal Pronouns

6.2.4.1. Personal pronouns *biz* and *siz*

Turkmen has *biz* [bið] and *siz* [θið]. Historically, these are plural forms of Common Turkic *män* ‘I’ and *sän* ‘you-sg.’ In colloquial modern Turkmen, the plural is added to the first person plural personal pronoun to form a ‘double plural’: *bizler*, *sizler*. Such first- and second-person pronouns formed with plural +*lar* are found systematically in Salar’s geographically closest Turkic neighbor Sarıgh Yoghur, as *mister* ~ *mis* ‘we’, *seler* ‘you (pl.)’.

Like Turkmen, Salar has *piser* ‘we’ (likely from *biz+ler*), but not *biz*. Late 19th-century documents indicate that Salar once had *biz* ~ *bizler*, but not *siz* (Hán 1989). In modern Salar, *sen* is used universally for the second person singular pronoun.

6.4.2.2. Plural possessive suffixes -^o*mIz*, -^o*ñiz*

Most Turkic languages have first and second person plural possessive suffixes; Turkmen has /-(I)mIz/ e.g. *gøð-ymyð* ‘our eye’, *gøð-yñyð* ‘your (pl.) eye’. Premodern Salar documents also indicate that Salar also once distinguished singular and plural possessive suffixes: sg. -(I)*m*, -*ñ*, -(s)*i*, plural -(I)*miz*, -(I)*ñiz*, -(s)*i* ~ -*lAri* (Hán 1989: 177). But modern Salar does not mark the possessed noun at all: *piserniyi gøz* ‘our eye’, *miniñi gøz*, ‘my eye’, *selerniyi gøz* ‘your (pl.) eye’. Instead, possession is marked by the obligatory personal pronouns in the genitive: *miniñi*, *seniñi*, *aniñi*, etc. Only a decade ago Lín (1985) indicates that while plural and singular possessives were not distinguished, they were at least marked with -*m*, -*ñ*, -(s)*i* (see also Lín & Hán 1986²: 222). The omission of these redundant possessive suffixes must therefore be a fairly recent change in the language. Typologically, it amounts to change from a synthetic to an analytic language. As Tenišev noted (1960: 557), it is a pattern remarkably like that of Chinese.

We can outline three stages: First, possessed nouns are fully and redundantly marked (and a preceding genitive personal pronoun is optional); then, plural suffixes merge with those of the singular (personal pronoun obligatory); and finally, possessed nouns are not marked at all (personal pronoun obligatory), see Table 6.

Third person/deictic pronoun *ol*: Turkmen, Qıpchaq, and Sarıgh Yoghur all have *ol* ‘she, he, it’ as personal pronoun, but also *ol* ~ *o* ‘that’

as a deictic pronoun. Salar has *u* (< *ol*). Southeastern Turkic uniformly has *u*.²⁴

Table 6. *Reanalysis of Possessive Suffixes*

Stage I: Full marking (Not attested for Salar)

Singular		Plural	
(<i>mini</i> ʔi)	-(<i>I</i>) <i>m</i>	(<i>piserni</i> ʔi)	-(<i>I</i>) <i>miz</i>
(<i>seni</i> ʔi)	-(<i>i</i>)ʔ	(<i>selerni</i> ʔi)	-(<i>i</i>)ʔiz
(<i>ani</i> ʔi)	-(<i>s</i>) <i>i</i>	(<i>ularni</i> ʔi)	-(<i>s</i>) <i>i</i> ~ - <i>lAri</i>

Stage II: Sg/pl merger (Premodern Salar)

<i>mini</i> ʔi	-(<i>I</i>) <i>m</i>	<i>piserni</i> ʔi	-(<i>I</i>) <i>m</i>
<i>seni</i> ʔi	-(<i>i</i>)ʔ	<i>selerni</i> ʔi	-(<i>i</i>)ʔ
<i>ani</i> ʔi	-(<i>s</i>) <i>i</i>	<i>ularni</i> ʔi	-(<i>s</i>) <i>i</i>

Stage III: Loss of plural marking (1985)

<i>mini</i> ʔi	-(<i>I</i>) <i>m</i>	<i>piserni</i> ʔi	-
<i>seni</i> ʔi	-(<i>i</i>)ʔ	<i>selerni</i> ʔi	-
<i>ani</i> ʔi	-(<i>s</i>) <i>i</i>	<i>ularni</i> ʔi	-

Stage IV: Loss of all possessive suffixes (1991)

<i>mini</i> ʔi	-	<i>piserni</i> ʔi	-
<i>seni</i> ʔi	-	<i>selerni</i> ʔi	-
<i>ani</i> ʔi	-	<i>ularni</i> ʔi	-

Deictic pronouns: Both Turkmen and Salar have reflexes of **bu* ‘this’ and **ol* ‘that’ (Turkmen and Salar *bu*; Turkmen *ol* ~ *o*, Salar *u*). In both languages, the oblique cases pattern similarly **bu-n* > *mu-n*, e.g. Turkmen *munu*ʔ ‘this-gen.’, *munda* ‘here (‘this-dat.’), *munno* ‘this-dat.’, and Salar *muni*ʔi ‘this-gen.’, *munda* ‘here (‘this-dat.’) *muna* ‘this-dat.’. Differences between Turkmen and Salar deictic pronouns can be attributed to secondary developments: Turkmen also has *ʃu* ‘that here,

²⁴ Within a comparative Turkic framework, the conventional wisdom is that modern Turkic (e.g. Salar, Uyghur) *u* is derived from **ol*. However, if we also admit evidence from Tungusic and Mongolic (i.e., Altaic), there is an alternate analysis: Modern Turkic *u* derived from a Common Altaic demonstrative **u*. Compare Manchu <utala> ‘this many’; Early Written Turkic <una> ‘here, now’ (Nadeljaev et al. 1968: 612), possibly < **u* + oblique case *n* + dative *A* (Jerry Norman 1996, personal communication).

that already referred to', *fol* ~ *fo* 'that' (< presentative *uf* + *ol*), and *xol* 'that, that there'; Salar only has the distant deictic *diuyu* 'that over there'.

6.2.5. Accusative case

The accusative case in Salar, unlike in Turkmen and Old Turkic, is always *-nl* (*-ni/ni*). Turkmen has accusative *-nl* after vowel-final stems (*dunjä:-ni* 'world-ACC'), and *-l* after consonant-final stems (*at-i* 'horse-ACC'). But Salar and Southeastern Turkic have only *-nl* irrespective of the stem-final segment (Salar, Uyghur *dunja:-ni*, *at-ni*). Since the modern Uyghur accusative reflects the generalization of Old Uyghur pronominal *-nl*, it is likely that the Salar accusative is the result of sustained language contact with Northeastern Turkic. In contrast, Turkish has retained the Old Turkic accusative *+(X)g* as *-jXg*.

7. Summary of Salar features by type

Salar has a complicated history, with both Turkic and non-Turkic adstrata. Considering the available morphological, lexical and historical evidence, Salar is clearly a language which (1) preserves a large number of Old Turkic features, likely due to its isolation from other Turkic languages; that (2) shares a number of features with either Eastern (Turkmen) or Western (e.g. Turkish, Azerbaijani) Oghuz languages, but often not both Oghuz groups. While it is tempting to connect Salar directly with Salır-Turkmen, we do not (at least yet) have adequate evidence. Basic historical and ethnographic (as well as linguistic) research on the modern Salır-Turkmen dialects is needed. Such data would clarify the position of Salar vis-à-vis the Oghuz branch as a whole.

Salar also has a number of features that can be interpreted either as Old Turkic archaisms, or as a Qipchaq and/or South Siberian Turkic adstrata. It is clear that a number of lexical items in Salar are loans from South Siberian Turkic and Qipchaq, for they conform to the phonology of the latter language groups. For morphological features, however, the balance weighs in favor of Old Turkic.

What emerges most clearly from the data is that Salar *differs from Uyghur* (i.e., Southeastern Turkic) at three major levels of language—phonology, morphology, and the lexicon. Although Salar now shares a number of phonological and lexical features with modern Uyghur (such as vowel devoicing and consonantalization (Dwyer 1996) and

lexical items), these are almost certainly areal phenomena, as they are found in other languages, including non-Turkic languages, of the Northwest Chinese / Eastern Central Asian region.

Table 7. *Archaic features*

Feature	Turkish	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Sarığh Yoghur	Qazaq	Uyghur
Perfect /in- directive - <i>mif</i>	+	+	+	+	–	–	–
OT lexeme <gölik>	–*	–	+	+	–	+	–
OT lexeme <biŋi:n>	–	–	+	+	+	–	–
Dative -(n)-GA	–	–	+	+	(-(ŋ)-GA)	+	-(GA)

**gølyk* is also attested in Ottoman Turkish

Table 8. *Oghuz-type features*

Feature	Turkish	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Qazaq	Uyghur
Initial obstruent voicing	+	+	+	+	–	–
Primary long vowels	–	+	?+	–	–	–
* <i>b</i> > <i>v</i> (<i>var</i> - ‘go’)	+	–	–	+	–	–
Ø > <i>v</i> / <i>ini</i> (<i>vur</i> - ‘hit’)	+	–	?		–	–
Oghuz lexemes	+	+	?	+	–	–
Adjectival * <i>-IK</i> > <i>-I</i>	+	+	+	+	–	–
Imperative conjr. <i>DE</i>	+	+	?	+	–	–

Table 9. Turkmen-type features

Feature	Turkish	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Qazaq	Uyghur
Doubled I p.pl.PN	– (<i>biz</i>)	<i>bizler</i>	?* <i>bizler</i>	pisar	– (<i>biz</i>)	– (<i>biz</i>)
Doubled II p.pl.PN	– (<i>siz</i>)	<i>sizler</i>	* <i>sizler</i>	siler	<i>sizder</i>	<i>siler</i> *
<i>sypyrge</i>	<i>sypyrge</i>	<i>sybse</i>	?	sufse ~ suhse	<i>sibirtki</i>	

* *sizler* is also found in some Uyghur dialects.

Table 10. Non-Uyghur features (= Oghuz / Qipchaq features)

Feature	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Qazaq	Uyghur
* <i>a</i> > <i>a</i> in initial syllables	–	?	–	–	+
Rounding harmony	+	?	–	+	–
Nasal assimilation	+	?	–	+	–
Locative -ndA/V_	–	? –	+	+	–
Ablative -ndAn/ V_	–	? –	+	+	–
III p. poss. -n-(s)I	+	+	+	+	–
Proximate deictic + gen.	<i>munuŋ</i>	<i>muniki</i>	munıy	<i>munıŋ ~ buniŋ</i>	<i>buniŋ</i>
Proximate deictic + loc.	<i>munda</i>	<i>munda</i>	munda	<i>munda ~ bunda</i>	<i>buniŋda</i>
Proximate deictic + dat.	<i>munno</i>	<i>muŋa</i>	munə	<i>buŋan</i>	<i>buniŋxa</i>

Table 11. Uyghur-type features

Feature	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Qazaq	Uyghur
Vowel devoicing	-	?	+	-	+
III p.sg. 's/he/it'	<i>ol ~ o</i>	<i>*ol</i>	u	<i>ol</i>	<i>u</i>
= abst. deictic PN 'that'					
Accusative <i>-nl</i>	<i>-nl / V _</i> <i>-l / C _</i>	<i>-nl</i>	-nl	<i>-n(I)/-tl</i> <i>/-dl</i>	<i>-nl</i>

Table 12. Pan-Turkic features

Feature	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Qazaq	Uyghur
Possessive suffixes	+	+	-	+	+
Distant deictic: 'that'	<i>fu</i> (cf. <i>fol</i>)	?	-(u)	<i>sol</i>	<i>fu</i>

Table 13. Non-Turkic features

Feature	Turkmen	Premod. Salar	Salar	Qazaq	Uyghur
Middle deictic: 'that'	<i>fol ~ fo</i>	?	-	<i>sol</i>	<i>fu</i>
Distant deictic 'that there'	<i>xol</i>	?	(diuγu) *	<i>ana</i>	<i>awu</i>

*Mongolic loan.

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