

FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD RITUALS

Wedding

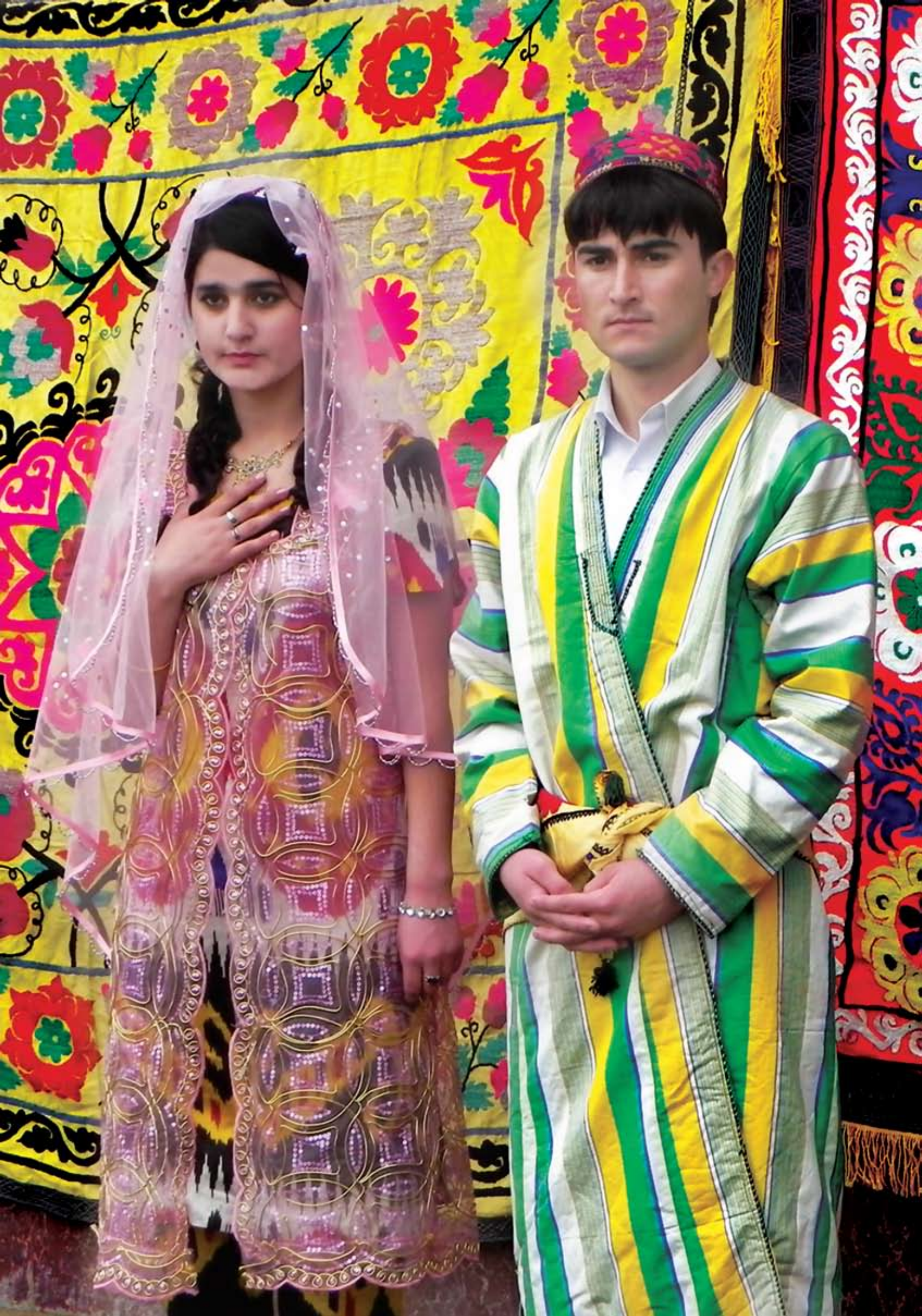
Wedding in Tajikistan is celebration in accordance to the geographical, cultural and religious contexts where it is held. The weddings are complex events encompassing ritual ceremonies and cultural and cheerful elements such as singing, dance and sometimes sport and other forms of communal activities.

Weddings have different segments and it starts by the choosing a bride, match making or bridal proposal, engagement family party called *nonshikanon* followed by *fotiha* that is religious event when prayers are made for the future of the bride and groom. In run up to the wedding day than is the ceremonies of bringing gifts to the bride that is a dowry given by a groom, *nonbandon* (baking bread for the wedding) *oshi nahor* (breakfast feast given on the morning of the wedding day), *sarshuyon* (washing the hair of bride and putting on her make up) *sartaroshon*

and *salabandon* for the groom (trimming the hair and beard of the groom and putting on him his special wedding clothes), *shahbari* (when groom comes to take his bride), *arusbiyoron* (wedding procession when the bride leaves her paternal home and goes to the groom's house).

All the ceremonies involved during the wedding have their own special songs that are sung by those present. The Tajik folklore is rich of the poems, quadrants and long song cycles dedicated to the wedding. For each ceremony that takes place individually either in the bride's or groom's house there are set of established and fixed rituals and singing that accompanies these. One of the most popular singing is called «Sartaroshon» (hair grooming). The «Sartaroshon» cycle includes themes of happy life, parent's prayers, separation of the bride from her kin, establishing a new family etc.





«Sartaroshon» is performed by a lead singer and chorus is sung by those present.

In the past this song was performed in the groom's house when someone honorable or elder of the family would stand by the groom and clip edges of his hair whilst those present, groom's friends and family would sing. At the end of the ceremony the man performing the ceremony is given gifts. In the song the singers would encourage those present and the groom's family members by naming them to do certain things such as bestowing money on his head as sign of prosperity or putting a hat on his head as sign of him becoming the head of the family.

Chorus:

*Ustoi langi sartarosh,
Sara pokiza tarosh.*





Lead singer:

*Khohari shah ba tu megum,
Ba sari shah tanga buchosh.*

There is similar in function a song which is sung during the bride leaving her paternal home, which is called «arusburor» (going out of the bride). The friends of the bride sing this. The theme of the song is devoted to the bride being taken away and her home being deprived of a helper, cook and someone kind etc.

Singer:

Buror, buror kholae,
Zudtar burorush kholae.

Chorus:

Sari degdoni baland,
Buzgholaboni ochae.

Weddings in Tajikistan have great regional characteristics each distinguished by certain cultural events performed. Many of the events

carry great symbolic meanings and represent deep philosophical perceptions of the Tajik people about wedding and what it means. For example, the new bride is kept behind a special curtain where she and her groom is given a sweet tea – symbolizing a sweet life or when the bride comes to her husbands home she circles a fire symbolizing a bright and warm life that awaits her.

Weddings involve lots of the expenditure and sometime hard for people with lower income to compile with the expenses traditionally expected for the wedding. Thus in 2007 (updated in 2017) the government of Tajikistan has accepted a special law on regulations of the traditional events and function which is directed towards the limited excess expenses and instead spending money towards things which would greatly benefit the new family. However, the cultural aspect of the wedding that is singing and dance and other rituals still continue in the same manner as these do carry huge economic loss.