



*Kazakh
and
Uzbek
Rugs
from
Afghanistan*

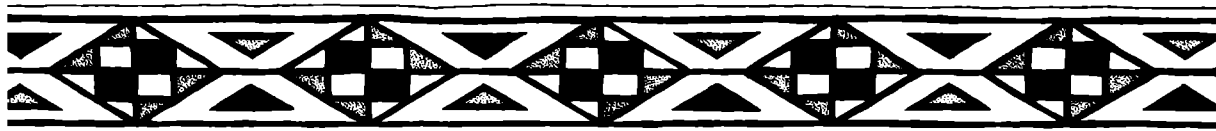
KAZAKH AND UZBEK RUGS FROM AFGHANISTAN

The world of rugs is exciting because there is always something new to be learned or different kinds of rugs to be discovered. There are weavings which have been overlooked, have never entered commerce, and suddenly appear in the marketplace. The rugs presented here represent just such a phenomenon.

In 1966, I began buying rugs in the bazaars in Afghanistan. In 1974, I "found" and purchased my first rug of a type shown here (No. 1). The rug I purchased was sold to me as a Khirghiz rug. The same year I purchased a donkey bag which I assumed to be Beshire Turkoman (No. 8). A few more of these weavings were purchased in 1975, and since 1976 increasing numbers of them have begun to appear. I have now seen over 500 pieces of these weavings. The rugs are given a variety of names by the Kabul rug merchants including Khirghiz, Uzbek, Kazakh, Arab, Tatar, and Aimaq. From this different and diverse group of rugs several distinct types are now becoming obvious. In the absence of any substantial published information on these weavings, it seems that a monograph is warranted which defines two distinct sets of weavings from this broad group. I hope that my tentative classifications will stimulate discussion, further the sharing of present in-

formation, and encourage primary field research on these rugs.

I believe that these rugs have not been studied, published or researched before for a variety of reasons. In most rug producing countries the local society and culture determine and influence the types of rugs available in the marketplace. The result is that each area undoubtedly has rugs or weavings which do not enter commerce because the local population and merchants do not like them or look down on them as inferior to other weavings. Often these rugs are woven in remote parts of the country and do not easily enter the market. The foreign buyer is unaware of them because they are simply not available. For example, in Turkey, Yoruk rugs have always been poorly represented in the bazaars *vis a vis* the products of the villages. In Iran the townspeople prefer the carpets of Tabriz, Kirman, Keshan and Meshad, to what they consider the *declassé* weavings of the Qashqai, Kurds, and Afshars. A good example of traditional weavings which recently began appearing is the Bakhtiari kelims in the double interlock tapestry technique which have appeared in the market only in the last 10 years. In Afghanistan, Turkoman and Baluchi rugs are the main weavings marketed. The rugs presented here come from areas and ethnic groups where the Kabul rug merchants have been unaccustomed to buying and which they hold in low esteem.



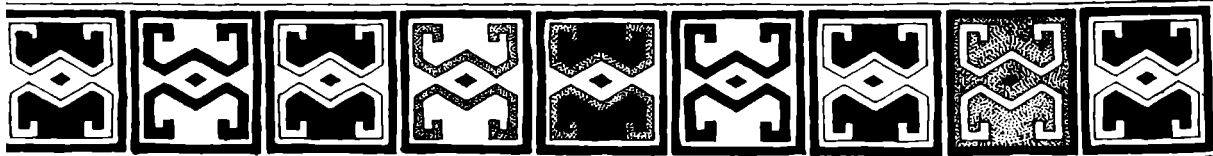
Kazakh Main Border—Pile

The question arises, "Why are they appearing now?" I believe the main reason is that rug dealers like myself have shown interest in the few which began to appear a few years ago. The rugs have been owned by the weavers or their families but until recently the Kabul rug merchants would not buy them. Further, many of the weavers live in remote areas, are nomadic or semi-nomadic, are relatively unincorporated into the socio-economic-political life of Afghanistan, have held these weavings because of their utilitarian value, and, I think, most importantly were unaware that they had commercial or trade value. Factors which have contributed to the breakdown of these constraints have been the development of a network of improved roads throughout Afghanistan, creeping economic development which has resulted in tribal settlement, exposure to manufactured goods to replace handmade products, a money as opposed to a barter economy, and lastly an influx of Western rug dealers in the 1970s interested in authentic nomadic and tribal weavings untainted in their manufacture by commercialism. These rugs fill the last requirement admirably and as a consequence the marketplace has responded.

The Rugs—A Question of Names

It was mentioned earlier that these rugs are called Khirghiz, Kazakh, Uzbek, Arab, Tatar, and Aimaq by the Kabul merchants. All of these tribes are found in Afghanistan but little is known about their crafts. Therefore, a precise determination of the actual sources of these rugs is difficult to make. My information about them in Afghanistan has come from the merchants. To my knowledge, no one has conducted any firsthand, primary field research on these rugs among the weavers. Given the variety of tribes apparently involved in the production, it is probable when field research is conducted that the names and classifications I am suggesting will be incorrect. In the meantime, I feel it is timely to offer a tentative classification based on secondary information sources and one primary source—the technical aspects of the weavings themselves.

Before proceeding to a discussion of these sources, some clarification of the ethnic groups suggested as weavers is necessary. All of the names used refer to ethnic groups who are part of the population of Afghanistan. They also constitute major ethnic populations in the Soviet Union as evidenced by the Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Khirghizia S.S.R.s. The Uzbeks are the largest and are one of the major ethnic groups



in Afghanistan. They are primarily urban dwelling, but there are also agricultural and semi-nomadic Uzbeks. The Kazakhs are less numerous and include a similar range of socio-economic lifestyles. The Uzbeks and Kazakhs are found throughout the northern parts of the country and in the major cities such as Kabul and Herat. The Khirghiz live in the high mountains of the Wakhan Corridor and are almost entirely involved in pastoral nomadism. The Aimaqs are a conglomerate group of nomadic and semi-nomadic people in western Afghanistan. There are ethnic Arabs in Afghanistan and Central Asia who have been assimilated socially and linguistically by other ethnic groups such as the Uzbeks and Turkomans. With the exception of the Arabs and a segment of the Aimaqs, the term Tatar could be a generic reference to the other groups as they are all of the Turko-Mongol race which is referred to as Tatar. All of these groups are known to weave but little factual documentation of their weavings has been researched. Some of these people have been living in Afghanistan for centuries and others are relatively recent newcomers after the Communist revolution in Russia. A question exists, therefore, about which of these weavings were woven by the indigenous Afghanistan groups and which may have been woven by the others either in Soviet Central Asia or after their arrival in Afghanistan.

For the moment one must rely on the sources referred to earlier. The secondary sources are the Kabul rug merchants

and published materials. The Kabul merchants' information is unreliable because their interest is purely pecuniary, and they make no systematic effort to elicit ethnic, tribal, age, weaving area or dye source information from the sellers. Hence arriving at an attribution of type from this source is useful only as a cross reference and correlation with other data.

Published material on these rugs, of which I am aware, is extremely scanty. The only significant published volume is Moshkova's *The Carpets of the People of Central Asia*, 1970 (in Russian). Although this volume contains discussions of the weavings of the Uzbeks of Samarqand, the Khirghiz of Ferghana, and the Uzbek Tribe Turkoman (*sic*) none of the illustrated carpets are the same as those presented here. There are some designs which are shared with the Moshkova illustrations but minor elements and border patterns differ significantly. It is probable that these weavings are related but come from distinctly different regions and sub-tribal units which share a common heritage with those of Central Asia.

A second source, but one which relies heavily on Moshkova, Kabul rug merchants and some other Russian sources is *Uzbek* by D. Lindahl and T. Knorr. The weavings published by them are attributed to the Uzbeks. In general I agree with their attributions and have expanded the type of weavings which I believe are of Uzbek origin.

Other published examples of these rugs are rare, but these few examples demonstrate the need for more information. In



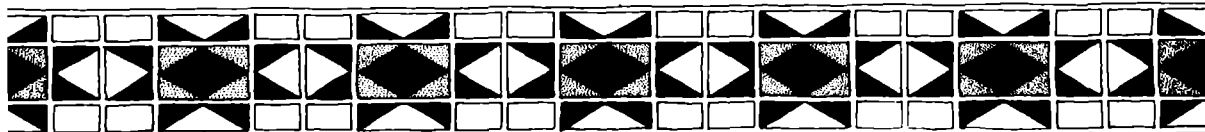
Gans-Rudin's *Antique and Oriental Carpets*, he illustrates a piece which he calls a Beshire Turkoman. Until recently I would not have questioned his attribution. However, when compared to the cover example it is clearly of the Kazakh group. In the February, 1979 auction catalog of Lefevre, Plate 12 is attributed as "possibly Ersari, first half 19th c." This piece too is a kelim of the Kazakh group. As this monograph was going to press the Winter 1978 issue of *Hali* arrived carrying a report with illustrations of an exhibition in Germany of Arab and Uzbek rugs from northern Afghanistan. It is mentioned that the rugs were originally called Khirghiz but through subsequent field work it was determined that they were Uzbek and Arab. The nature of the field work is not specified. The rugs labeled Arab, I would call Uzbek, and the rugs called Uzbek, I would call Kazakh. And so the confusion compounds itself. *Caveat emptor!*

The only readily available primary sources are the rugs themselves. I believe that it is possible to divide these rugs into specific, related groups based on structural, color and design features. From the rugs I have seen to date, I feel two groups are now emerging with well defined characteristics. These two groups I choose to call Kazakh and Uzbek. In rationalizing the two categories I have been guided by the characteristics of the rugs, correlative date in Moshkova, and names used by Kabul merchants whom I consider the most reliable.

The comments of Dr. Nazif Shahrani have also been instructive. Dr. Shahrani, an Afghan Uzbek from Badakhshan Province, holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Washington in Seattle. His doctoral research was on the Khirghiz of the Wakhan. Dr. Shahrani has confirmed the following facts about weaving practices of these various ethnic groups:

1. The Khirghiz of the Wakhan do not weave pile rugs but do make flatweaves, felts and needlepoint.
2. The Khirghiz collect and sell Yak hair to other groups for spinning into thread for weaving purposes.
3. There are Kazakhs in Afghanistan, some for many generations and others who came after the Communist Revolution in Russia.
4. The Kazakhs are found across northern Afghanistan as far west as Herat and in Kabul.
5. The Kazakhs weave pile and flatweave rugs.
6. The Uzbeks of Badakhshan weave only flatweaves, but it is possible that the Uzbeks further west in northern Afghanistan do weave pile rugs.
7. The term gadjari, which refers to a float warp technique of weaving, is a Khirghiz word and is used by all other weaving groups in Central Asia.

Based on these facts, I feel it safe to assume that none of these pile rugs are woven by Khirghiz, in spite of the at-



tributions of the Kabul rug merchants. Dr. Shahrani is in the process of publishing a book on the Khirghiz and one looks forward to further information on this interesting ethnic group.

Characteristics

There are several features of these rugs which set them apart from the weavings of the Turkomans and Baluchis, the best known rugs of Afghanistan. These features are colors, techniques, weaving materials used, and rug sizes.

Colors and Dyes

A feature of the Kazakh and Uzbek large rugs is the use of excellent reds, blues, yellows, and greens. The yellows are truly remarkable for their strength and clarity. In the Kazakh group this results in some of the best greens seen in rug weaving. White and brown comes from natural wool or Yak hair. In the best of these rugs these six colors are exceptional in their purity and brilliance. Some pieces do contain less clear colors and the more recent pieces contain synthetic dyes in orange, purple, and lavender-blues. Some of the oldest pieces have small amounts of a bright red which is most likely an early aniline dye. This red is found in Salor, Tekke and Saryk Turkoman weavings of the same period. In

general, it is my belief that the majority of the dyes used in these rugs are vegetable rather than synthetic.

Techniques of Weaving

One finds both the Turkish and Persian knot in the pile rugs. Several technical features are not found in other groups. These are:

1. **EDGES.** In Kazakh pile rugs, if there is a selvedge, the weft threads connect the pile to the selvedge by enclosing only the first warp of the selvedge rather than being worked through all of the selvedge warps. In many pieces, particularly the Uzbek, there is no selvedge and no overcast.
2. **PILE AND KNOTTING.** The pile in most of the knotted rugs is long and shaggy and the knotting coarse. The pile threads are S plied rather than loose as in other rugs. Because of the coarseness of the pile threads, the ply has loosened in old pieces and can only be observed near the base of the knot. The knots are tied and cut by the weaver and a second clipping is not done. Knots may be tied on adjacent warps or may be tied around every other warp. This latter technique results in a very coarse fabric. The Persian knot is normally used for finer weaving and usually pieces woven in this knot are small and do receive a second



Kazakh Secondary Border—Pile

clipping to make a uniform and shorter pile.

3. WEFTS. The number of wefts between each row of knots may vary from 1 to 5. They may be plied or consist of two loose Z spun threads. Some of the Uzbek pieces have a weft under the row of knots in addition to between each row of knots. In this technique the design and knots are hardly visible on the back of the rug. Warp and weft threads are normally of the same diameter.

Materials

A unique feature of many of these rugs is the use of Yak hair for warp and pile. Yak hair is dark, lustrous, brown, and extremely durable. In the oldest pieces it is inevitably longer than the dyed wool areas. The presence of Yak hair is an indicator of age of a piece as well. The pieces which have been made within the last 20-40 years rarely have it. In more recent pieces it is replaced by brown wool.

The warp and weft of these rugs is usually a dark brown wool or Yak hair. It is of medium to coarse diameter which contributes to the low knot count of these rugs.

The wool used, although coarse, is highly lustrous and

durable. In the oldest Kazakh and Uzbek pieces, it has an extremely high sheen which enhances the glow of the colors.

Sizes

The utilitarian pieces such as the tentbags and tentbands are similar in size to the weavings of the Turkomans. The floor rugs, however, appear to be distinctive. Of the Kazakh rugs, there are two sizes. The long pile rugs, which are the largest, are typically between 4-5 feet wide and 8-9 feet long and woven as one piece. The short pile rugs are between 3 feet wide and 4 feet long. Flatweave rugs are long and narrow being typically twice as long or more than wide, e.g. 6' x 12'.

The Uzbek rugs are of two types. One type is a floor rug. They are in general 6 feet by 11 feet. They are woven in three strips which are sewed together, two side border panels and the field panel. Yak hair is used for the warp and pile in these types. A second type is a long runner which may have been made as a bed or divan cover. This type is typically made of three strips which are sewed together although 4 or 5 strips are not uncommon. Cotton warp and weft are common in some of these pieces. White cotton is also used for the pile.



Age of the Rugs

Dating of these rugs is purely speculative. To date I have not seen a rug of this type with a date woven in the pile nor have I been able to find someone who had owned one of these pieces for a specified period of time, as an age verification. My dates therefore are based on the number of rugs I have seen, putting those in a chronological relationship to one another, and using techniques dealers apply with rugs of other types, e.g. color qualities, polish of pile wool, feel of the back and technical features.

In general, I have not seen a piece which I could comfortably date earlier than the last quarter of the 19th c. The majority, I believe, are early 20th c. It is also my belief that the weaving of these pile rugs ceased about 20 years ago. A few new kelims of a type similar to No. 9 are being woven, but synthetic dyes are being used and the color sense is entirely different from the traditional, vegetable dyed ones illustrated here.

The oldest rugs of these types have the following characteristics:

1. Colors. The six main colors—red, blue, yellow, green, ivory, and brown—in pure tones are used. The brown would probably be Yak hair.
2. Wool quality. The pile has a high sheen and is exceptionally lustrous.
3. End finishes. In the Kazakh large rugs there are kelim ends

from 6 to 9 inches wide which are usually red with yellow stripes and occasionally blue stripes.

4. Wefts. Dyed wefts in yellow, blue, red and green may be found in the oldest Kazakh rugs. In Uzbeks rugs, the ones without cotton for warps, wefts, and pile are probably the oldest.

The Kazakh Rugs

The Kazakh group represents a very complete set of weavings. It includes both floor rugs and utilitarian weavings in pile and flatweaves. These weavings in design, materials, colors and variety of utilitarian pieces are indicative of a nomadic group. The pieces illustrated include the following:

- A. Pile Rugs
 1. Short Pile
 2. Long Pile
- B. Flat Weave Rugs
- C. Carrying Bags
 1. Pile
 2. Flat weave
- D. Flat Weave Utilitarian Pieces
 1. Tent bands
 2. Horse covers

Although both the Persian and Turkish knot are used, there is a tendency to use the Turkish knot with long pile rugs and the Persian with short pile rugs.



In the flatweaves two techniques are used. One is the kashkari weave, which is called double interlock tapestry. It is a rarely encountered technique. It is used by the Bakhtiari and Lori tribes in Iran, but to my knowledge, is not used extensively by other groups. On most pieces with this technique the back of the piece is finished rather neatly with few loose hanging threads. However, it is not uncommon to find numerous loose threads that are long and dense creating a shaggy back on some pieces. It is possible this was done deliberately so as to create a pad and insulator in cold climates.

The gadjari technique is a supplementary floatwarp face tapestry. In this type of weaving two or three sets of warps are employed. The face of the piece is flat and contains a clear set of geometric designs. The back shows no distinct pattern because the sets of warps are exposed. Weavings in this technique are composed of bands 1 to 15 inches in width. The bands are usually about 40 feet long and are cut into the desired lengths and sewed together to create rugs, covers or horse covers (No. 20). Typical colors of these bands are red, yellow, green, white and blue. The white may be cotton or wool.

The designs of Kazakh rugs are totally geometric. However, the number of designs used for the field and borders is rather limited. On large rugs the design is a latchhook polygon with a star in the center. The colors used for these are normally used on a diagonal although a few with a vertical color axis have been observed. The main border usually consists of large stars set within squares. On smaller rugs and bags there are more designs employed. (Cover, 3,

and 8). The number of borders also is greater. One can see some design relationships between the designs of the short pile bags (No. 3) and the flatweaves in kashkari technique (No. 9). The designs used in the gadjari technique are more complex and unrelated directly to the other weavings.

The colors used in Kazakh weavings usually are six: red, blue, yellow, green, white and brown. The yellow may go from pale to gold; the green from a lime green through dark green to blue-green; the red from mid red to dark; the brown if mid brown in tone is probably wool, if a dark brown it is probably Yak hair; and blue is typically a mid to dark blue. In more recent pieces one can find oranges and purples which are most likely synthetic dyes. A pink to magenta red occurs only rarely. Typically the colors of these rugs are primary and have a clear intensity. The silky lustrous wool of the older pieces heightens the clarity of the colors.

The Uzbek Rugs

If the Kazakh rugs reflect a nomadic society, the Uzbek rugs are more reflective of a settled people. These weavings are primarily floor rugs or long runners which appear to have been made as bed or divan covers. There are no utilitarian pieces such as donkey bags, large carrying bags, saltbags, etc. The Uzbeks weave both pile and flatweave rugs. Only the pile weavings are illustrated. There are kelims from Afghanistan which are referred to as Maimana kelims which are woven by Uzbeks.



There are two distinct types of pile rugs in both design and materials. The first type of rugs are large floor rugs typically 6 feet by 11 feet. They are made in three strips which are sewed together. The center strip contains the field designs and the end borders. The side borders are additional strips which are sewed to the center panel. This type of rug may have Yak hair in the pile and for the warp threads. The design of the field is latchhook polygons similar to that found in the large Kazakh rugs (No. 1 and 16). The wools are lustrous, the pile long, and there is no selvedge or overcast edge. The colors are a dark red, a bright red, yellow, blue, white, brown and occasionally a blue-green.

The second type of rug is a long runner. In this type two or more bands are woven and then sewed together. They differ from the large rugs because the field designs are not woven as a separate unit with the borders attached. The field area is usually matched in the center. The border design may be in the same strip as half of the field design or it may be an additional strip. The designs vary from diamonds (No. 18) to complex forms (No. 14) or to no design at all (No. 16). They vary in width from 2 to 3 feet and in length from 8 to 12 feet. Usually there is no fringe or kelim finish although the unpatterned ones do have braided fringes occasionally. The colors used are much more varied and range from

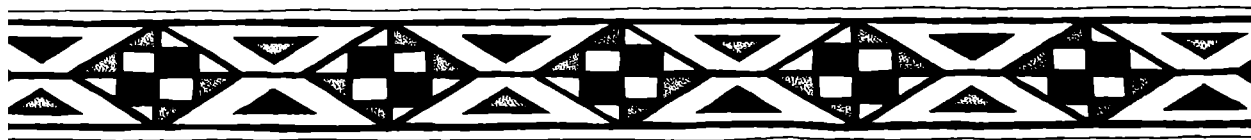
light to strong intensity. Vegetable dyes are common in many of these pieces but there are also synthetic dyes in many of the later pieces. Warp and weft may be wool or Yak hair as well as cotton.

The knots and wefts of both of these rugs are unusual. The Turkish knot is used but it is tied around alternate warps and with a warp left between each knot on the horizontal. There is a single weft between each row of knots but there is also an additional weft under each row of knots. This results in a very low knot count. The design is not visible on the back of the carpet because the base of the knot is almost entirely covered by the additional weft.

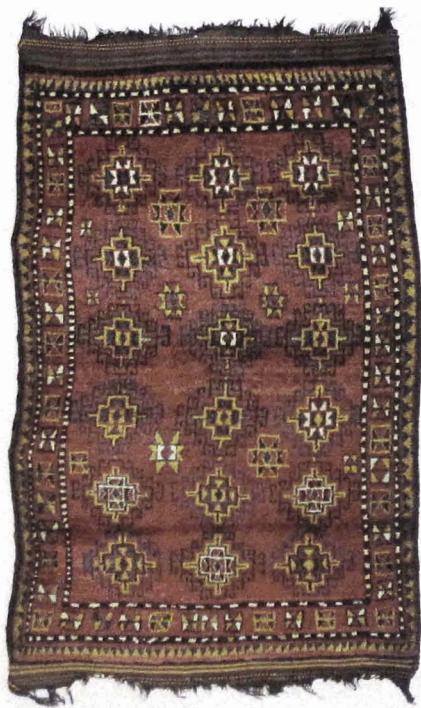
Related Rugs

Two rugs not clearly belonging to either the Kazakh or Uzbek group have been included to illustrate some variations which exist within this group of rugs. In design and technique they differ from these two groups. (No. 18 and 19). However, they are quite clearly related. They may represent unique pieces or the products of a weaver who decided to do something different. They do show that there is great variety in this newly emerging group of rugs and that much more is still to be learned about them.

GEORGE W. O'BANNON
June 1979



Kazakh Main Border—Pile



No. 1

Kazakh

Circa: 1880

This rug is a typical large floor rug of the Kazakh group. It exhibits the best features of color, lustrous wools and bold, simple design of the oldest rugs of this group. The latch hook polygons are in blue and green with the colors used diagonally. In addition to these aspects, the age of this rug is reflected in the striped kelim ends and the dyed wefts. The brown of the pile and the warps are of Yak hair.

Size: 5'5" x 8'7"

Knot: Turkish: 20 per sq. inch, 3-4 vertical, 5-6 horizontal; 1" (25mm) long

Warp: Yak hair; brown; 2 z-yarns, light s-ply

Weft: Wool; red, yellow, brown, green: 2 z-yarns loose; typically 4, rarely 3 shots

Edges: Selvedge: 7 warps, outer 2 regular warps z-ply;
5 regular warps, supplementary weft covering,
ground weft only around inner warp

Ends: Beginning end: 5" brown, red, and yellow
striped kelim with two stripes of red and yellow
wool brocading plus 4" warp fringe

Finishing end: 6" brown, red and blue striped
kelim with two stripes of red and yellow wool
brocading plus 5" warp fringe

Colors: RED, white, dk. brown (Yak hair), yellow,
green, blue

No. 2

Kazakh

Circa: 1900

This rug shows the extent to which there is little variation in the design of the large rugs of the Kazakhs. It differs from No. 1 in having no secondary field designs, a shorter pile, and deeper greens and blues. The axis of the color used for the polygons is vertical in this piece. Otherwise it is the same design in the field and borders.

Size: 5'7" x 6'9"

Knot: Turkish; 40 per sq. inch, 5 vertical, 8 horizontal;
.32" (8mm) long

Warp: Yak hair; brown; 2 z-yarns, S-plied

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-yarns loose, 2 shots

Edges: Selvedge: 4 warps, outer 2 regular warp s-plied,
inner 2 regular, supplemental weft covering,
ground weft only around inner warp

Ends: Beginning end: 1½" brown kelim with two
stripes of red and yellow wool brocading plus 5"
twisted, uncut warp fringe

Finishing end: 1½" brown wool kelim with two
stripes of red and yellow wool brocading plus 5"
loose warp fringe

Colors: RED, ivory, brown (wool), dk. brown (Yak
hair), yellow, blue-green, dk. blue



No. 3

Kazakh Juwal

Circa: 1890

The Kazakhs made a variety of carrying bags of different sizes. The juwal is the largest of these. They belong to the short pile type of weaving in which the pile is clipped a second time after the initial tying of the knots. The design most commonly found on the juwals is the one used here. The wide kelim panel may have the chevron pattern seen here or other flatweave designs.

Size: 2'6" x 4'6"

Knot: Persian, open right; 45 per sq. inch, 7 vertical, 6-7 horizontal; .12" (3mm) long

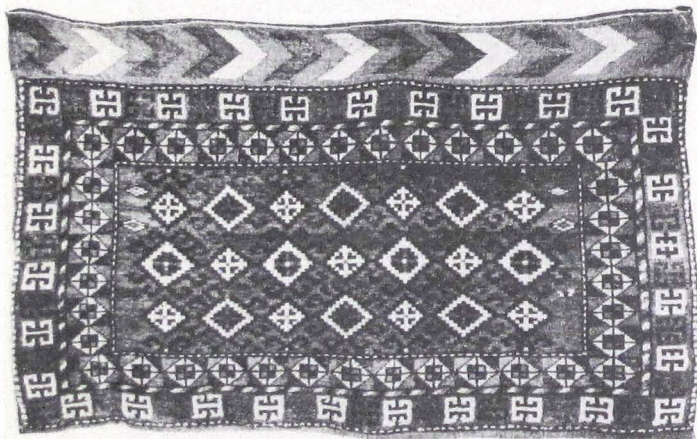
Warp: Wool; brown; 2 z-yarns, s-ply

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-yarns, s-ply; 1 shot

Edges: 3 regular warps plus wefts, no supplementary threads for overcast or selvedge

Ends: Beginning end: Back of bag, 2'10" ivory and brown striped kelim with 1½" red next to pile
Finishing end: 5" red, green, brown, ivory yellow, blue wool kelim in chevron design

Colors: RUST RED, red, ivory, gold, lt. yellow, dk. green, brown, blue



No. 4

Kazakh Juwal

Circa: 1880

This juwal differs from the previous example in several respects. The red of this piece is in the magenta range and is rarely found in Kazakh weavings. The pile is longer and the border designs are different. The design of the field is one not seen in any other example. This piece has been lovingly finished with tassled fringes at the top. A supplementary band of macrame fringe has been added to these sides. Pieces of metal are attached which tinkle when the bag is moved.

Size: 2'4" x 3'3"

Knot: Persian, open right; 22 per sq. inch, 5 vertical, 4-5 horizontal; 56" (.14mm) long

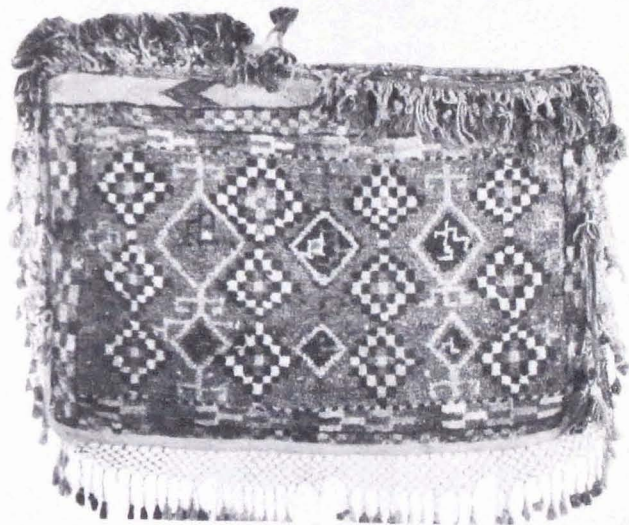
Warp: Wool; brown and white; 2 z-yarns, s-ply

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-yarns loose; 2 shots

Edges: Beginning end: Top of bag, uncut, twisted warps wrapped in pile threads to form 4" tassels plus 1" of brown wool kelim, the 2'½" red, ivory, yellow, blue kelim in chevron design

Finishing end: Back of bag, 2'2" ivory wool kelim with four stripes in red and yellow

Colors: MAGENTA, ivory, gold, blue, brown





No. 5

Kazakh Mafrage

Circa: 1920

The pile section of this bag is a small weaving which was made to serve a variety of purposes. Here it has a piece of kelim attached for a top and back to create a rectangular carrying bag or cover. The term mafrage is applied to this type of bag. Pieces of this type were also used by the entrance to leave shoes on or made into smaller bags which the women kept personal items in. A band of *gadjeri* weaving is also attached to the bottom of this bag.

Size: 1'2" x 3'8"

Knot: Persian, open left; 56 per sq. inch, 7 vertical, 8 horizontal; .38" (10mm) long

Warp: Wool, gray and brown, 2 z-yarns, s-plyed

Weft: Wool, brown, 2 z-yarns, s-plyed, 1 shot

Edges: 10 regular warps plus wefts

Ends: Beginning end: 10" wool kelim

Finishing end: None

Colors: DK. RED, ivory, gold, dk. green, indigo, dk. brown (Yak hair)

No. 6

Kazakh Mafrage

Circa: 1890

This piece illustrates clearly the shape of a mafrage weaving. It consists of a major center panel with two smaller panels on each end. These smaller panels have wider bands of kelim weave on three sides and are separated from the center panel by 1" to 1/2" of kelim weave. That this piece was a bag at one time is shown by the remains of embroidery over this kelim between the panels. The design of this piece is a fairly common one for mafrage. The Uzbeks also wove mafrage.

Size: 1'2" x 4'1"

Knot: Persian, open right; 64 to 80 per sq. inch, 8 vertical, 8-10 horizontal; .16" (4mm) long.

Warp: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun, s-ply

Weft: Wool, brown; z-spun loose; 1 shot

Edges: 6 regular warps plus wefts

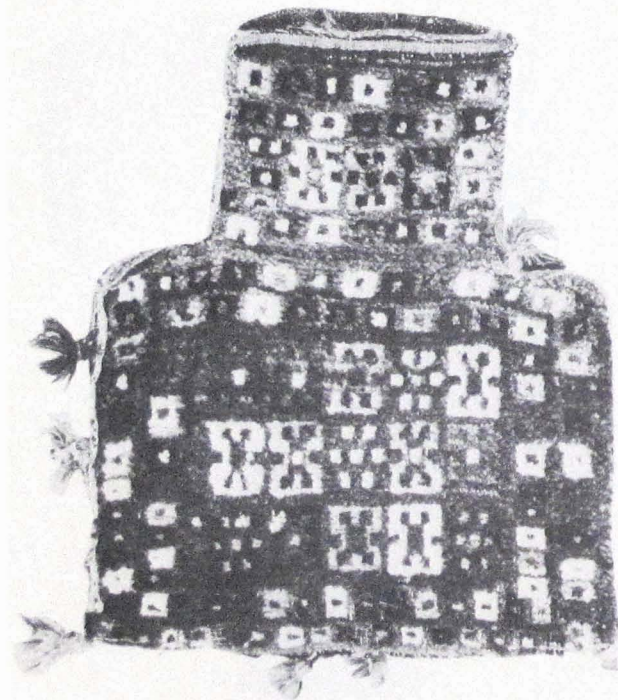
Ends: Beginning end: 1/2" brown wool kelim

. Finishing end: 1 1/2" brown wool kelim

Colors: RUST RED, ivory, salmon, lt. yellow, dk. blue, brown

Cf. Allen, M. *The Mysterious East*, Canadian Museum of Carpet and Textiles, Toronto, 1977; Saddle Rug #20, p13





No. 7

Kazakh Salt Bag

Circa: 1890

The existence of salt bags as a type of weaving made by the Kazakhs is evidence of their nomadic lifestyle. This one is made of wool of the best quality. It is soft and lustrous. The field design of small squares is particularly effective in a small piece of this type. The edges are finished all around with a red and yellow braid to which the tassels are attached.

Size: 1'4" x 1'6"

Knot: Persian, open right; 56 per sq. inch, 7 vertical, 8 horizontal; .32" (8mm) long

Warp: Wool; gray and brown mixed; 2 z-spun, s-plied

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun loose; 2 shots

Edges: 1 regular warp plus wefts

Ends: Beginning end: Top of bag, 1½" of red and blue-green wool striped kelim

Finishing end: Back of bag, 1'7" of red, blue-green, blue, yellow, ivory and brown wool kelim in varied width stripes

Colors: RED, ivory, brown, yellow, blue, blue-green

No. 8

Kazakh Donkey Bag

Circa: 1900

Donkey bags were woven in quantity by the Kazakhs in both pile and flatweaves. In this example, the weaver was able to be effective with the diagonal use of color seen in the large floor rugs. The center panel between the two bags contains a chevron design seen on the juwal. Pile donkey bags may have pile weaving in this area as well.

Size: 1'11" x 4'1"

Knot: Persian, open left; 48-56 per sq. inch, 8 vertical, 6-7 horizontal; .38" (10mm) long

Warp: Wool; brown and red; 2 z-spun, s-plyed

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun, s-spun, s-plyed; 2 shots

Edges: 6 regular warps plus wefts, and originally covered by stitched on supplementary braided band

Ends: Beginning end: 1" of plain brown wool kelim

Finishing end: 1" of plain brown wool kelim

Back: Bands of brown and white wool kelim

Closure: Round, braided loops of Yak hair inserted through ground weave

Colors: RED, lt. red, ivory, lt. yellow, orange, indigo, blue-green, dk. brown

Cf. Schurmann, U., *Oriental Carpets*, Octopus Books, 1979, Karakalpak (*sic*) p. 215





No. 9

Kazakh Kelim

Circa: 1900

Kazakh kelims like the pile rugs are usually woven as one piece. This is one of the finest examples of their flatweaves. The colors are bright and clear. An unusual aspect of the design is the use of yellow to create two diamonds in the center of the field. Normally, kelims of this type have a random or diagonal use of color. In addition to the colors, the age of this piece shows in the use of Yak hair for the warps and the intricate color detail of the sawtooth outer border.

Size: 5'8" x 11'6"

Warp: Yak hair; brown; 2 z-spun, s-plied; 13 per inch

Weft: Wool; 2 z-spun loose; 20 per inch

Edges: 4 bundles of 2 regular warps, supplementary wefts of Yak hair, ground weft connected to selvedge by double interlock

Colors: RED, ivory, dk. brown, gold, blue, lt. blue, gree

Cf. LeFevre and Partners Catalogue, London, 1979; Turkoman Kelim, possibly Ersari (*sic*) #12.

No. 10 Kazakh Kelim Circa: 1940 (1/2 detail)

Not all of the Kazakh kelims are woven in an all-over design executed in the double interlock technique as in No. 9. Some of the kelims consist of alternating bands of solid color with patterned areas in double interlock weave as in this example. The most common design found on Kazakh kelims is the crab motif seen in the widest bands of this rug and in No. 9. Variations of this design occur in Kurd and Yoruk rugs as well, and it would seem to be an extremely ancient and primitive one used by nomadic peoples.

Size: 5'4" x 14'2"

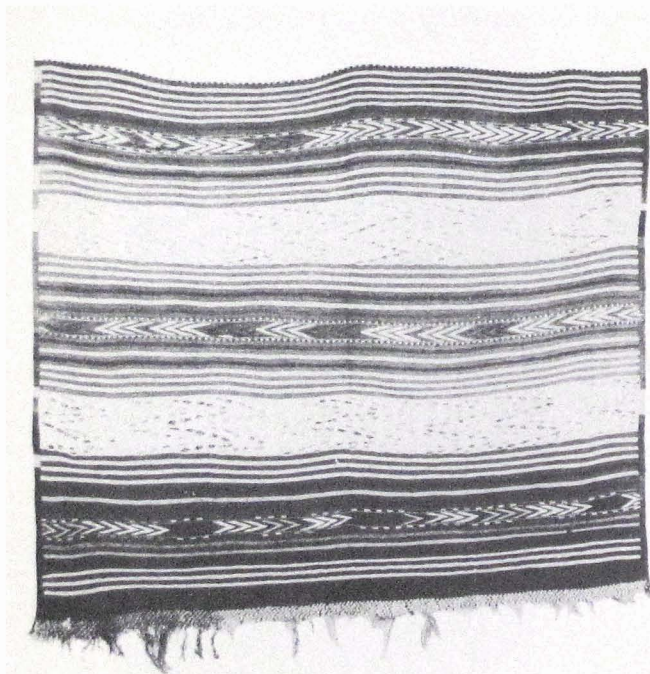
Warp: Wool and Goats hair; brown; 2 z-spun; s-ply;
11 per inch

Weft: Wool; 2 z-spun loose; 40 per inch

Edges: 6 bundles of regular warps with supplementary
wefts of wool, ground wefts connected to
selvedge by double interlock to 1st bundle

Colors: RED, ivory (wool and cotton), brown, green,
blue, yellow, blue-green





No. 11 **Kazakh Kelim** **Circa: 1910 (1/2 detail)**

Kelims woven predominantly in white occur rarely in Kazakh weaving. Typically they are in sizes as seen here. It is probable that they served as soffres or eating cloths. In Afghanistan, the term dast-i-khan is used for weavings serving this purpose. Several techniques are used in this rug. The plain bands are a simple tapestry or kelim weave. The chevron bands are in double interlock weave. The designs on the white bands are in soumak weave. There are several narrow bands in brown and white in a float weft technique. Typically kelims of this type are lighter in weight than the others.

Size: 4'2" x 10'

Warp: Wool; white and gray; 2 z-spun, s-plyed, 12 per inch

Weft: Wool; 2 z-spun loose, 43 per inch

Edges: 2 bundles, outer two of four regular warps with supplementary wefts of wool in various colors of ground wefts, connected to ground weft by simple dovetail tapestry around innermost warp.

Fringe: 6" each end, one end twisted and looped, the other cut and loose. Knotted next to ground with 6 rows of "fishnet knots".

Colors: IVORY, dk. brown, red, yellow, lt. green, blue-green, blue

No. 12 Kazakh Donkey Bag Circa: 1910 (Half Detail)

Compared to the donkey bags of other weaving groups such as the Turkomans and Baluchis, these bags are exceptionally large. Wertime has theorized that the large bags of the Bakhtiari and Lori are the result of their having cows and donkeys as beasts of burden rather than camels. This could be a possible explanation for the size of the Kazakh bags as well as they move over rocky and cold regions which are not suitable for camels. Designs of these bags are similar to the floor kelims. The mellow colors, outer border pattern, and absence of cotton for white are indicators of age in this piece.

Size: 2'9" x4'10"

Warp: Wool and Yak hair; brown; 2 z-spun, s-ply; 12 per inch

Weft: Wool; 2 z-spun, s-ply; white and brown, 2 z-spun loose, 35 per inch

Edges: Simple weft selvedge, covered by multicolored overstitch to close sides of pockets

Colors: RED, ivory, brown, dk. brown (Yak hair), gold, blue-green, lt. blue, dk. blue





No. 13

Uzbek

Circa: 1920

The majority of Uzbek rugs from Afghanistan are of the type seen here. They are woven in several different designs. The diamond forms are one of the primary ones. These rugs are woven in strips which are then sewed together. In this example, the right half of the rug is one strip, the left half of the field is a second and the third is the left blue border. The use of white cotton for the pile is one reason this piece is not dated earlier as cotton was introduced as a cultivated crop only in the early 20th c. in northern Afghanistan.

Size: 2'2" x 8'3"

Knot: Turkish; 12 per sq. inch, 3 vertical, 4 horizontal;
.48" (12mm) long

Warp: Wool; lt. brown; 2 z-spun, s-plyed

Weft: Wool; lt. brown; 2 z-spun, s-plyed; 1 shot and
one beneath each row of knots

Edges: Two warps plus ground weft

Ends: On some strips cut and sewed under, on other
1½" of simple kelim weave sewed under

Colors: BROWN-RED, white (cotton), brown, gold,
blue-green, blue

Strips: 13", 10", and 3" wide

No. 14 Uzbek Circa: 1930 (3/5 Detail)

The design of this type of Uzbek rug is less common than the one in No. 13. Not only is the field design unusual but the juxtaposition of colors in the borders creates a dynamic and sense of movement which gives the piece energy. Because these rugs are woven as strips, the abrash, or color changes, do not go across the full width of the rug in a straight line, but only across the strip. In this piece, there are several shades of red which change randomly throughout the rug.

Size: 2'6" x 7'10"

Knot: Turkish; 14 per sq. inch, 3 vertical, 4-5 horizontal; .6" (15mm) long

Warp: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun, s-ply

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun, s-ply; 1 shot between each row of knots and 1 beneath each row of knots

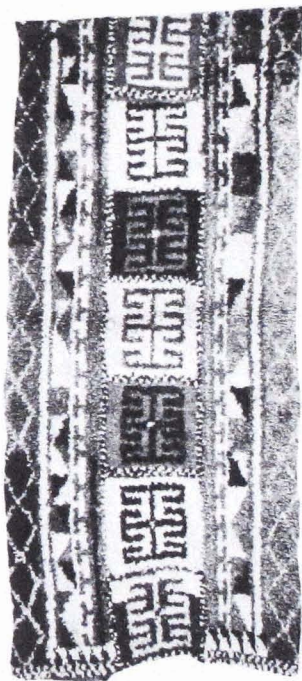
Edges: None, knots on outer two warps

Ends: 1½" of simple kelim at each end of each strip

Colors: White (cotton), brown, gray, rust-red, orange, dk. green, dk. blue, camel, limegreen

Strips: Three strips each 10" wide

Cf. *Hali*, Winter, 1978, Arab (*sic*), Photo 3, p. 364





No. 15 Uzbek Circa: 1900 (2/3 Detail)

The design relationship of this Uzbek rug to the Kazakh rug (No. 1) is quite striking. It contains the same type of latchhook polygons. However, the relationship ends there. In the Uzbek rug, the red of the ground is much more a chocolate brown. This contrasts sharply with the use of a bright, clear red in the polygons. The Kazakh rugs employ only one red. Although the yellows are comparable, the dark and bright reds give the yellow of the Uzbek rug a deeper intensity. Technically, the rugs are very different as well. This rug is woven in three bands which are sewed together whereas the Kazakh rug is woven as one piece. Yak hair is used for the warps as well as the deep rich browns of the pile.

Size: 5'3" x 10'

Knot: Turkish; 15 per sq. inch; 3 vertical, 5 horizontal;
.8" (20mm) long

Warp: Yak hair; brown; 2 z-spun, s-plied

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun loose

Edges: None, knots tied to outer warp

Ends: Both, 1 inch simple kelim; 6" loose, cut fringe

Colors: DK. RED, red, yellow, ivory, dk. blue, brown
(Yak hair)

No. 16

Uzbek

Circa: 1900 (Half Detail)

Rugs of this type are rare. The wool used in them is like the wool in the Kazakh long pile rugs. It is highly lustrous and silky. Typically, this type is in two colors but they may be red/blue, red/green, yellow/red, or yellow/blue. They differ from the others in having the warps and wefts dyed in the same color as the knots. In some of these rugs, the pile threads are still plied rather than having opened up. In those instances, the rugs are not as glossy although they have the same lustrous wool.

Size: 3'3" x 8'6"

Knot: Turkish; 15 per sq. inch, 3 vertical, 5 horizontal;
.8" (20mm) long

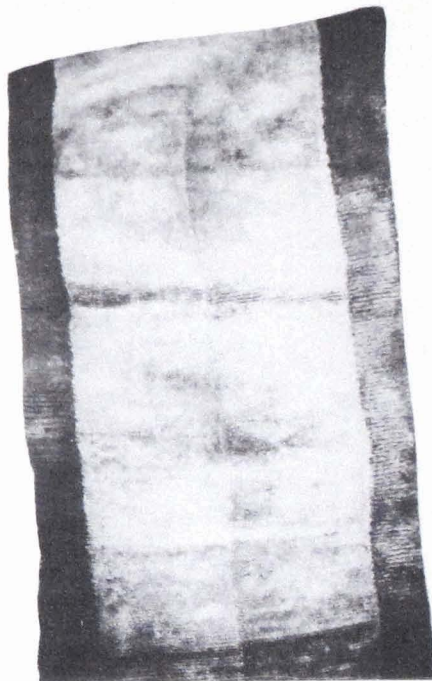
Warp: Wool; red and blue; 2 z-spun loose

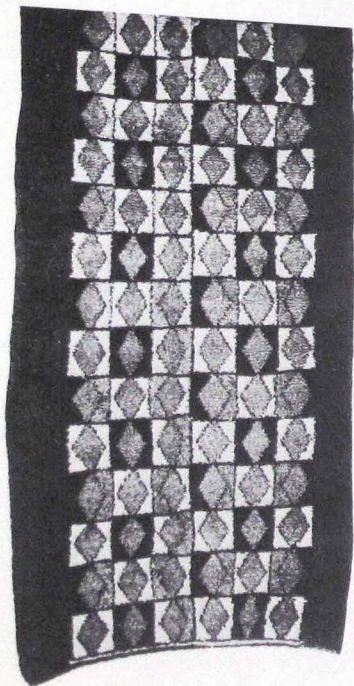
Weft: Wool; red and blue; 2 z-spun loose, 1 shot
between each row of knots and 1 beneath each
row of knots

Edges: Not original, new overcast

Colors: RED, blue

Strips: 2'13½" and 2'6" wide





No. 17

Uzbek

Circa: 1920 (3/5 Detail)

The square design is another common one in the Uzbek rugs. The pile of this rug is all wool. The warp and weft are both cotton. Although cotton is used in these rugs, it should be noted that the cotton threads are all handspun rather than machine spun. This indicates that they were made within a village or nomadic environment which did not have access to machine spun fibers.

Size: 3'2" x 8'10"

Knot: Turkish; 17 per sq. inch, 3 vertical, 5-6 horizontal; .6" (15) long

Warp: Cotton; white; 2 z-spun, s-plyed

Weft: Cotton; white (faded from pink); 2 z-spun, s-plyed; 1 shot between each row of knots and 1 beneath each row of knots

Edges: Knots on outer two warps

Ends: 1½" plain kelim turned under and stitched

Colors: DARK BLUE, ivory, brown, dk. red, orange, yellow, blue-green

Strips: 2 13" wide and 2 5" wide

No. 18

Kazakh or Uzbek?

Circa: 1900

In design and technique, this rug is unlike any other illustrated. The diamond design bears a resemblance to No. 13. In texture, it is more like the Kazakh rugs. The knot in this rug is tied around alternate warps with a free warp between each knot as in the Uzbek rugs, but it does not have the additional weft under the rows of knots. Hence, the design is clearly visible on the back of the rug. Other rugs of this type are known to exist and they may represent the production of an isolated group of weavers.

Size: 5'4" x 7'11"

Knot: Turkish; 12 per sq. inch, 3 vertical, 4 horizontal;
.72" (18mm) long

Warp: brown; 2 z-spun, s-plyed

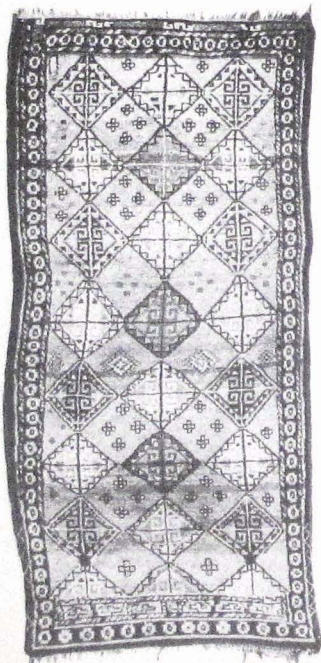
Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun loose; 2 and 3 shots

Edges: 8 warps; 4 groups of 2, outer 2 z-spun, s-plyed
and 2 z-plyed, supplementary yak hair wefts
around bundles of two creating selvedge,
ground weft around inner warp only

Ends: Beginning end: 3" brown wool kelim with two
strips of red and white and red and brown
brocading plus 8" twisted, uncut fringe
Finishing end: 1½" brown wool kelim with one
stripe of orange and green brocading plus 7 inch
loose fringe

Colors: RED, ivory, brown, orange, faded blue, pale
green





No. 19

Kazakh?

Circa: 1890

In all respects except design this rug belongs in the Kazakh group. However, this design has not been observed in another rug. The weaver has done a masterful execution of the concept of light and shadow with the design elements in the center of the diamond shaped polygons. In some instances, the design appears to be the reversed "E" design and in others an anchor or arrowhead motif is dominant.

Size: 3'7" x7'5"

Knot: Turkish; 36 per sq. inch, 6 vertical, 6 horizontal;
.44" (11mm) long

Warp: Yak hair; brown; some white wool; 2 z-spun, s-plied

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun loose; 2 and 3 shots

Edges: 8 warps of 4 bundles of 2 z-spun, s-plied; supplementary Yak hair wefts around bundles of 2 creating selvedge, ground weft around inner warp only

Ends: Beginning end: 1½" of brown wool kelim with three stripes of red/yellow red/blue and red/yellow brocading, mostly worn off
Finishing end: Originally like beginning but worn off

Colors: BRICK RED, green, ivory, brown, orange, indigo, yellow

No. 20

Kazakh Horse Cover

Circa: 1930

In Afghanistan, this piece is called a *saerzini asp*. It consists of several *gadjari* bands sewed together in this special shape. The fineness of the weave of these bands approaches the best one finds in this float warp technique. The colors in this example are also exquisite for their richness and clarity. Although the bands in this piece are from two different bands, the colors and warps are of consistent quality and were most likely woven at one time to be made into this piece.

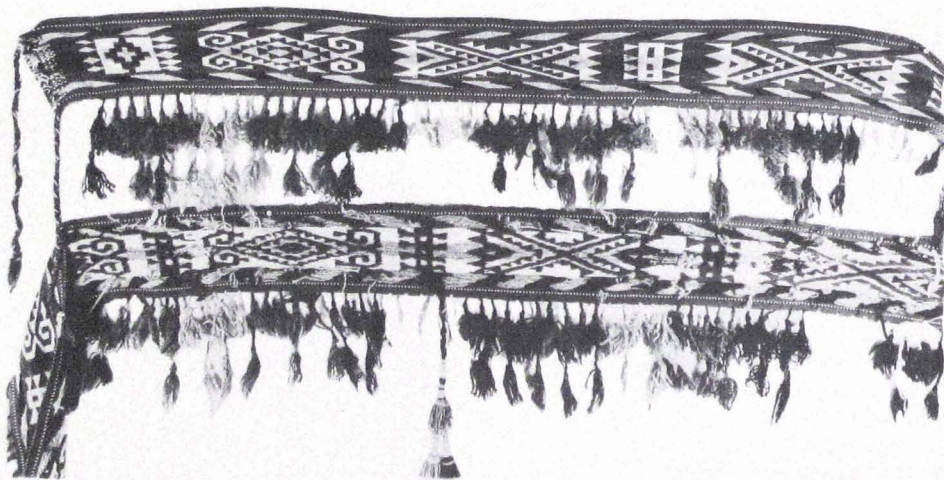
Size: 3'9" x 3'10"

Warp: Wool; 2 z-spun, s-ply; 46 per inch

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun, s-ply; 15 per inch

Colors: RED, ivory, dk, brown, yellow, green, blue





No. 21 Kazakh Tentband Circa: 1930 (Detail)

The Kazakhs were prolific weavers of bands of this type. They are woven in a supplementary floatwarp technique called *gadjarı*. Complete bands are typically 35 to 50 feet long. They were woven in a variety of widths and used as tentbands in assembling the yurt. In addition, they were cut into strips and sewed together to create floor rugs, bags or trappings such as the horse cover (No. 20). The designs in these bands are unrelated to the designs used in the pile floor rugs and the

kelims with the double interlock weave. The tassels on this example are attached after weaving and not a part of the basic fabric.

Size: 4½" x 41'

Warp: Wool; dyed; 2 z-spun, s-plyed; cotton, white, 3 z-spun, s-plyed; 35 per inch

Weft: Wool; brown; 2 z-spun, s-plyed; 11 per inch

Colors: RED, white, gold, indigo

No. 22

Kazakh Salt Bag

Circa: 1900

As in many other nomadic weaving groups, one finds some of the best weaving in the small utilitarian pieces. This salt bag is the finest example of weaving in the double interlock technique in the exhibit. The design of the pouch and on the neck of the piece contains the crab motif which is the most common one used. The colors, particularly the yellow, have softened with age and use. The fineness of the weave gives great clarity of detail to the designs.

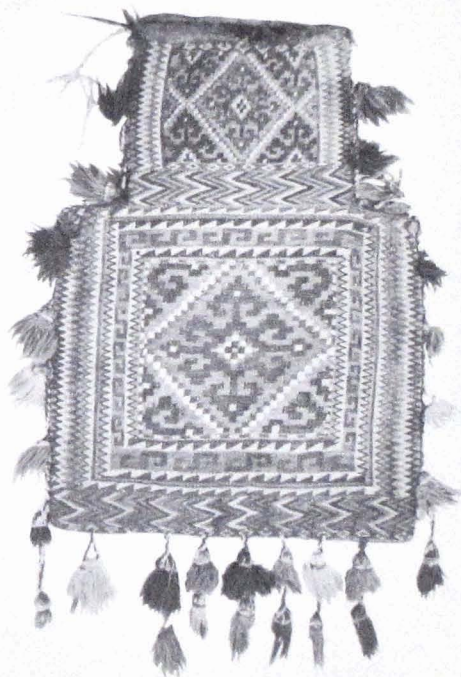
Size: 15" x 20"

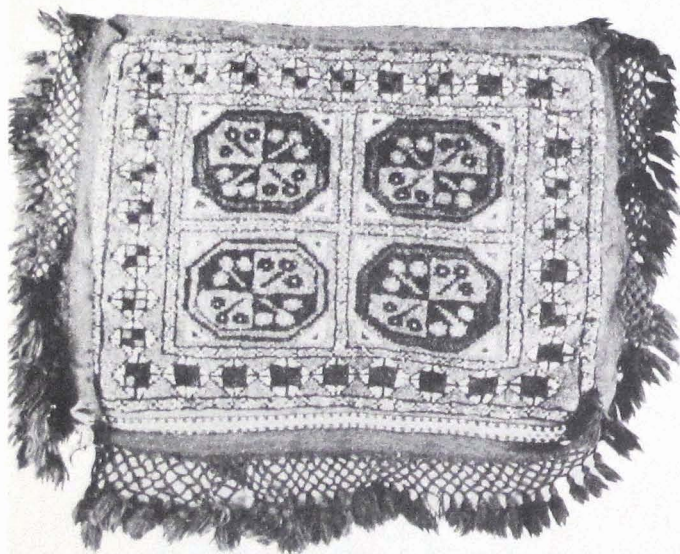
Warp: Yak hair; dark brown; 2 z-spun, s-plyed; 15 per inch

Weft: Wool; 2 z-spun loose; 47 per inch

Edges: The edges were sewed together and a braided cord in ivory and brown with tassels of dyed wool were stitched around the sides.

Colors: RED, ivory, brown, lt. yellow, blue-green, dk. blue





No. 23

Kazakh Juwal

Circa: 1940

In addition to large juwals such as Nos. 3 and 4, the Kazakhs made a smaller type which was squarish in size. These, undoubtedly, served the same purpose of holding various articles in the yurt. Later pieces such as this one do not contain Yak hair. For reasons unknown, it appears that 30-40 years ago, these weavers were unable to obtain Yak hair from the Khirghiz and so they switched to wool and goat's hair for warp. This change may have occurred with the move into Afghanistan from Russian Central Asia. This piece contains a variant of Ersari Turkoman guls rather than the more traditional designs seen in the other examples. The change in materials and design may well have started in the 1930's with this move.

Size: 1'8" x 2'8"

Knot: Persian, open right; 30 per sq. inch, 5 vertical, 6 horizontal; .16" (4mm) long

Warp: Wool and goat's hair; gray and brown mixed; 2 z-spun, s-plied

Weft: Wool; brown; 1 z-spun; 2 shots

Edges: 2 warps plus ground weft

Ends: Beginning top: 2" brown, red, white float weft brocading

Finishing back: brown wool simple kelim weave

Colors: BRICK RED, ivory, brown, maroon, yellow, dk. blue

No. 24 Kazakh Donkey Bag Circa: 1940 (Half Detail)

Compared to No. 12 the design of this piece is much simpler and the colors do not yet have the depth which comes with age. The technique of weave is the double interlock plus some elements in a weft float brocading. The border designs are not as complex as the prior example nor are the colors as varied by abrash. This bag does have a feature not seen in the other and that is a pleated corner at the bottom of the bags. It should be noted that the back sides of these donkey bags are almost as colorful and patterned as the faces and in a variety of techniques.

Size: 2'6" x 5'10"

Warp: Goats hair: brown; 2 z-spun, s-plyed; 11 per inch

Weft: Wool; dyed, wool 2 z-spun loose; white cotton, 2 z-spun, s-plyed; 37 per inch

Edges: Simple weft selvedge, covered by multicolored overstitch to close sides of pockets.

Colors: RED, white (cotton), brown, yellow, blue-green, dk. blue

