CENTRAL-ASIAN RUGS

WITH 100 COLOUR-PLATES

ULRICH SCHÜRMANN

OSTERRIETH

CENTRAL-ASIAN RUGS

Ulrich Schürmann

176 pages, 100 colour-plates, 19 monochromes, 8 plates with 52 "guls", 1 Map of Turkestan.

Central Asia, one of the important districts where carpets have been made for a long time, has on account of its inaccessibility had little attention by scientific researchers while countries like Asia Minor, Iran and the Caucasus have been thoroughly combed by scholars of oriental art. Only since 1940 scientists of the USSR and the USA tried to throw new light on the history of Turkoman and Chinese-Turkestan rugs. They were assisted in their task by prominent collectors.

Ulrich Schürmann undertakes in his book "Central Asian Rugs" to deepen the knowledge and to locate the products of the various tribes and clans according to ethnological evidence and structural differences. He tries specifically to capture the beauty and artistic balance of old and antique rugs of Central Asia. 100 colour plates — as true in colour as possible — give the reader an idea of the treasures of past days as well as of stylistic development of rugs coming from a certain district. On eight pages 52 various tribal "guls" are shown by which the provenence can be readily determined.

Hans König, Cologne, gives a splendid survey of the historical and political background with attention to the way of life, religion and commercial aspects of this great territory which is flanked by high mountains and guarded by vast deserts.

The book should be of great help to Museums, Universities, Libraries, Art Dealers, Collectors and Amateurs.

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Victoria and Albert Museum, London

(text page 163)

ULRICH SCHÜRMANN

CENTRAL-ASIAN RUGS

A DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE ART OF RUG WEAVING IN CENTRAL-ASIA IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURY. WITH A HISTORICAL REVIEW BY HANS KÖNIG
100 COLOUR-PLATES

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VERLAG OSTERRIETH · FRANKFURT AM MAIN

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Preface

"Central Asia", one of the most important rug areas, perhaps even the cradle of the oriental rug, has up till recently been neglected by scientific research. Very little was known about this area until the turn of the century, when General A. Bogolubow, an enthusiastic collector, wrote his admirable book on Turkoman rugs. Trade definitions such as "Bokhara", "Yomud-Bokhara" and "Samarqand", or even worse, "Royal Gul" and "Princess Bokhara" predominated. It is only since 1940 that attempts have been made to throw new light on the origin, history and provenance of the Central Asian rug by researchers in the U.S.S.R. such as Moshkova, Gogel, Pirkulyeva and scientists in the U.S.A. such as Thacher, Dimand, Christopher Dunham Reed, supported by a group of enthusiastic collectors like Arthur Jenkins, H. McCoy Jones, Leslie Leifer, and Joseph V. McMullan. In Germany it was essentially Bidder's book on East Turkestan rugs which pioneered the field.

It was, therefore, no small undertaking when I decided to contribute to the better understanding of the Central Asian rug.

Acknowledgements are due to Mr. H. König, Hahnwald, near Cologne, who not only showed unflagging interest in the gradual growth of the work but also encouraged the completion of it. The many pleasant hours of intensive discussion finally led him to agree to deal with the historical and ethnological problems of Central Asia in a separate chapter.

Had it not been for the generous help of the Textile Museum in Washington D.C., The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and many important collectors and dealers who so readily placed at my disposal rugs which would otherwise have been difficult to come by, the book would never have been completed. My sincerest thanks are due to them all.

Ulrich Schürmann

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Introduction

This book presupposes intensive occupation, not only with technical details, but also with aesthetic and artistic characteristics of the art of oriental rug making. Therefore there will be no repetition of a detailed description of the art of knotting, of the materials used, of dyeing, measurements or names. There are quite a number of adequate works on this subject which give all that is necessary to know in this respect. This book deals with the rugs of Central Asia, with the exception of Mongolia which is generally regarded as belonging geographically, historically and culturally to Central Asia; as far as her rugs are concerned, however, she belongs to East Asia.

A full description of the historical and ethnical development of East and West Turkestan has kindly been undertaken by Mr. H. König. It is only when illustrations of rugs of the period under review could pinpoint the development to the rug as we know it to-day, that the historical aspect has been considered.

The prime intention of this book is to recapture the beauty and artistic balance of old and antique Central Asian rugs. The attempt has been made to present colour-plates as true to life as possible, but unfortunately even they will give the interested reader only an approximation of the magnificent rugs of bygone eras. Even if we employ the most up-to-date techniques we cannot conjure up the charm of colours and the patina of time.

A conscious effort was made not to contrast later specimens with these old, extremely rare examples. For apart from the experience that the comparison of the design and colours of a new rug with an older one is unfavourable, the unity of the book would also have suffered. There is sufficient comparative material about this subject in modern works. Thus the emphasis has been placed on such rugs as will offer something unfamiliar and which at the same time fill gaps in the historical development of the Central Asian rug. The task was made all the more difficult since it is almost too late to find, photograph and examine these irreplaceable rugs which form the subject matter of this book. It would certainly have been much easier fifty years ago, when old Turkoman rugs could still be found in every rug dealer's shop, or in the years between 1928 and 1934 when the Russians were unloading veritable treasures of old and antique rugs from East- and West-Turkestan on to the European and American markets. Because of ignorance, misuse and wear these rugs have disappeared.

The task of deciding which rugs belong to which tribes has been made easier by many years of practical experience and physical contact with thousands of examples. The "feeling" for a rug was just as important as the recognition of structural peculiarities in deciding the formation of groups which must come from a definite district, even if there is a variety of design. Only then can the tribe which has in all probability knotted the rug, be identified by ethnological means. It must not be forgotten that the artistic inspiration, the harmony of

colour and design must remain to the fore. The work of art per se must not be smothered in a welter of technical detail. It has become the fashion nowadays to analyse every rug, however uninteresting it is, artistically or historically, indicating warp and position of the threads, twist and number of wefts, type and number of knots, top and bottom edges, shirasi etc. This may be of interest for someone who looks at rugs scientifically, but for a collector, amateur or connoisseur it is merely tiresome. Technical information (if at all accessible) has, therefore, been kept to a minimum in this book, the characteristics for determining the origin on the other hand have been accentuated.

Special attention has been devoted to the determination of age. This is by far the most difficult aspect, for the rugs from Central Asia offer no date, as is sometimes the case with rugs from the Caucasus and less frequently with Persian rugs. Nothing is to be gained even from comparisons with rugs on paintings of old masters. Central Asia was too far away, too remote and too perilous for travel (right up to modern times), for rugs to reach Europe as merchandise early enough to appear in paintings. Testimony of old and antique rugs from Central Asia is, therefore, scarce. Yet it would be wrong to say that there were no Turkoman rugs before 1850. We know of East-Turkestan pieces which must belong to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by virtue of their stylistic development and reproduction in Chinese paintings of that time. These rugs are softer and more fragile than those knotted by Tekke or other Turkoman tribes and still they have been preserved. Consequently there ought to be many more of the splendid, finely yet strongly knotted, more hardwearing Turkoman rugs. Certainly they have not all been "worn out" in the tents of nomads and semi-nomads; they were also used in city dwellings and the palaces of Bokhara, Merv and Tashkent and were greatly treasured and well looked after. The true age of a Turkoman can only be determined by careful scrutiny and by comparison with others especially since variations in design – as is the case with Turkoman rugs – are scarce and barely noticeable.

In the general part of the descriptions of different types of rugs, special care has been taken to pinpoint those characteristics from which the age can be deduced. Among the plates, rugs of the same origin have, wherever possible, been contrasted in such a way as to demonstrate the development of style and colour.

It should be pointed out that this book lays no claim to infallibility. Dates have been given only with the greatest caution, and origins to the best available knowledge and only after detailed study.

I. The Gul

No other ornament in Turkoman rugs is of greater importance than the *gul*. The word *gul* itself presents problems, for its significance is not clear. *Gul* means *flower* in Persian, but it also seems to have existed in the Turkoman vocabulary. It was Mme. Moshkova who made the first attempt at clarifying the meaning of the gul. She uses the spelling *Gol*. Quite a number of wellknown writers have done likewise. Mme. Moshkova uses the word *gol* mainly because, in her opinion, it denotes not so much a flower as a tribal symbol. Before the end of the eighteenth century each tribe possessed its own gol, honoured like a flag, which lived and died as the fortunes of the tribe rose or fell. It is for this reason that she speaks of *living* and *dead* gols. The living ones were those which had been used up till recent times by tribes which had survived the vacillations of wars, the dead ones being those which had lost their own national identity through absorption by other victorious tribes into their own rug ornamentation. From that moment a gol becomes a gul in her opinion, i.e. a venerable tribal symbol becomes purely an artistic ornament. Wegner, too, uses gol instead of gul, although he points out that the word gol is probably derived from the original gul. Whereas Gogel, the famous Russian researcher, calls all tribal symbols gul without exception.

The question is whether a differentiation between gul and gol is either necessary or advisable. There is no doubt that the ornament, as it is known in Turkoman rugs and in as far as their patterns can be authenticated, has a floral significance. As the word gul can be translated by either *floral ornament* or *flower* it has been decided in this book to use the spelling Gul. The differentiation between living and dead guls seems rather contrived. After all, every ornament is alive as long as it is being used, irrespective of whether it remains in the tribe which created it, or whether it has been adopted by other tribes, be it peacefully or otherwise. It is of far greater importance to seek out and reproduce, wherever possible, rugs which to the best of ones knowledge, are old enough to show the original tribal gul.

If one looks at a map of Turkestan and studies this countries history, one realises just how impossible this task is going to be for an author in the twentieth century. Products of rug-making appear at times in all sorts of areas which can hardly be ascertained on a map. This is due to the migrations of truly nomadic tribes and even of tribes which had settled in a particular area, but which were forced to move because of the centuries-old feuds among them. One cannot, therefore, criticise Bogolubov or Vámbéry or others for not being precise. Apart from a few tribes living in total seclusion, intertribal marriage and the ensuing peaceful migration of ornaments have made the locating thereof even more difficult.

At any rate, this much can be ascertained: each tribe possessed its own main ornament which appeared in every one of its products; this does not mean, however, that the tribal gul remained unchanged for centuries. Numerous rugs

portrayed in this book, covering perhaps a period of 150 to 200 years, show a gradual but definite change in the gul. The tendency is exclusively towards simplification becoming progressively more geometrical. In the following pages an attempt will be made to determine this development by means of the illustrations.

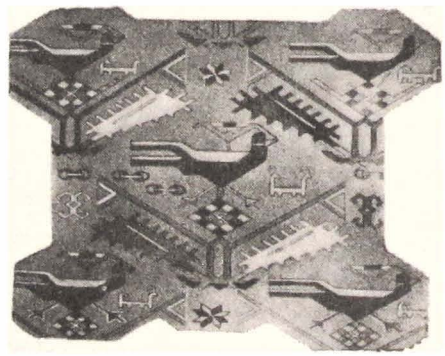
To accept the gul de facto would be too simple. A symbol as intricate as this must have had definite beginnings, although, of course, the square, the hexagon and the octagon belong to the earliest ornamental conceptions we know of. In this respect the findings of Gogel are so informative that it is worth quoting the following passage: *Since olden times irrigation has been one of the prime factors in the economic life of Central Asia. In 1221 the Mongols conquered Turkmenia, destroyed Merv, slaughtered its population and wrecked their extensive irrigation system. After the Bokharas' conquest of Merv in 1790 and the ensuing destruction of its famous dam, the city simply wasted away.*

Even in early times rug knotting reached a high degree of perfection in Central Asia. Frequently the theme of irrigation is encountered in the composition of the rugs' designs. In their ornamentation we find scenes taken from everyday life: irrigated fields, grazing pastures surrounded by ditches, etc.

His information is illuminating. For the nomad who had just become settled, the irrigation of his plot, his fields and meadows was of paramount importance. It was, therefore, for very good reasons that the conquerors of Turkestan down through the ages concentrated on destroying the irrigation networks first of all. They knew full well that in doing so they delivered a paralysing blow to the very nerve centre of the vanquished tribe. Thus, it is all the more understandable that these vital aspects of life found their expression in the ornamentation of the rugs. At one and the same time the rug becomes the language and the literature of the nomadic tribes.

Even though irrigation was, and is of great importance, it was still but one aspect of the tribe's existence. Undoubtedly the breeding of cattle by settled tribes has played an extremely important part through the ages (e.g. only the rich could afford cattle-breeding whilst poorer people had to make do with working the land). Warlike activities, too, and hunting and religious performances etc., all had their appointed place in the Turkomans' imagination.

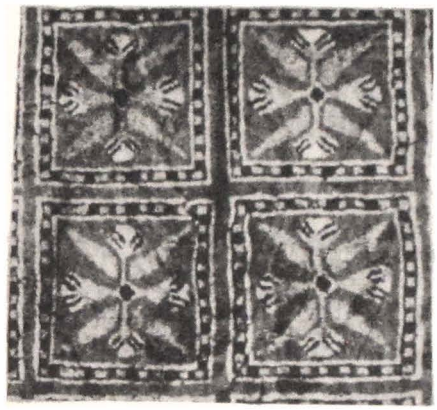
The floral motif predominates in nearly all the old rugs which have been preserved, and it is only in the gul, which Moshkova calls the "Tauk Nuska", that animals are depicted. To judge by the name, they must have been chickens, for "Tauk" means chicken. If one examines the earliest Turkoman guls of this type, one sees that the animals have long horns – not at all common in chickens but rather in rams and goats. Other animals such as running birds, were not used for guls but in the ornamentation of Osmolduks. Gogel gives an excellent example of this type (illus. 1). Turkoman tribes other than the ones living in Turkestan, have reproduced birds mostly facing each other in pairs within a polygon, as we can observe in the old Italian paintings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It appears, however, that these rugs originated in Anatolia and had no direct



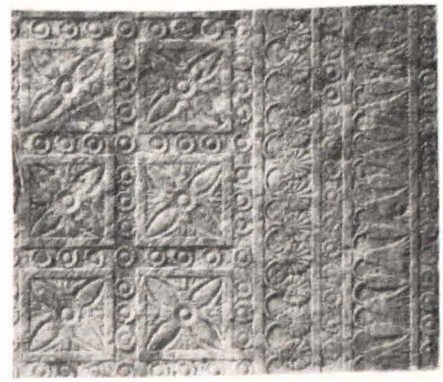
illus. 1

connexion with the ornamental gul of the tribes from Turkestan. The pairs of animals in Anatolian rugs of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries have in all probability been woven by descendants from those Turkoman tribes which came in several waves to Asia Minor between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. It can be assumed that this design is derived from Byzantine materials. On the other hand, it is not impossible that the Byzantines in turn have learnt from the East. It may have been from those Turkoman tribes which inhabited Persia in pre-Islamic days, first as mercenaries, then as rulers, and who founded dynasties in this area (Syria, Egypt), long before the arrival of the Seljuks.

As we will see later on, the gul not only had this tremendous importance in Turkestan, but also among the Turkoman peoples of the Tarim basin, whose rug products are nowadays wrongly known as *Samarqand*. The guls of these rugs are not filled with animal shapes, but they show far more clearly than in Turkestan the floral nature of the gul, for the flower has developed into a rosette.

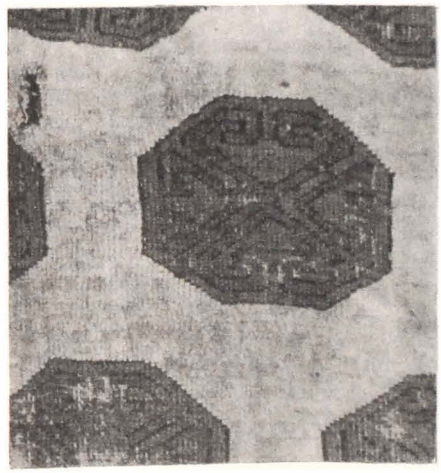


◀ illus. 2



illus. 3

All rug weaving peoples have one thing in common, the "horror vacui", in other words they would try their utmost, if not to say they felt compelled to cover any given area with as many ornaments as possible. It is, therefore, understandable that the Turkomans apart from their own tribal guls which we shall call major guls, used smaller minor guls running parallel to the major ones, thereby enhancing the rug. Only to a certain extent is the expression minor gul suitable. Mostly they are cruciform or star shaped ornaments, rather than scaled down major guls or their centre-piece. These minor guls also betray the origin of the tribe that knotted them. Only in very few cases, especially towards the end of the eighteenth century was there a very short-lived period when large areas were but lightly covered. This is the case in the Caucasus, in rugs which have been dealt with by the same author in his book "Caucasian Rugs", and in East Turkestan, mainly in Yarkand rugs.



illus. 4

Before the individual tribal guls are described in detail let us pause to recapitulate in order that weight and emphasis may be added to the opinion expressed above. The oldest known rug, of which more than just a fragment has been preserved, is the Pazyryk rug (fifth to fourth century B.C.). Its inner field consists of segmented

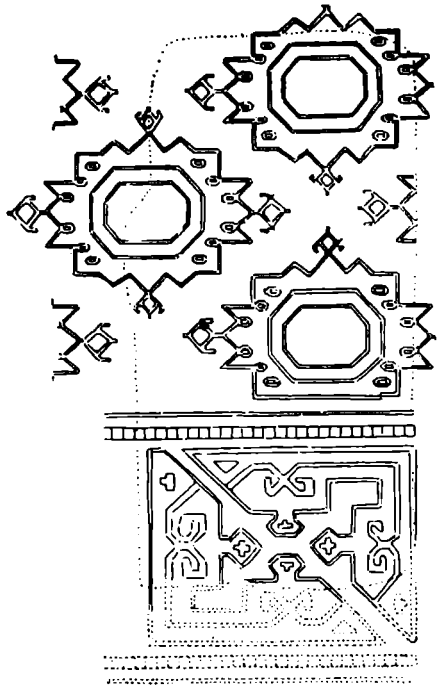
guls the floral ornaments of which effect a division into four compartments (illus. 2). As the stone rugs of Khorsabad show (illus. 3), it is the Achamenidic form of expression which found its way into Urartu – Azerbaijan as we know it today – at that time occupied by the Scythes, where in all probability the Pazyryk rug was knotted.

One has to skip a few centuries until once again rugs with a distinctive type of gul can be found. The best example of this is the Seljuk of the thirteenth century in the "Turk ve Islam Eserleri Museum" in Istanbul (illus. 4). In this extraordinary document the gul has already developed into an incredible abstraction. As the Seljuks were of Turkoman origin, little imagination is needed to connect these guls with those of the Saryks or Yomuds, especially since it can be proved that the Salors, as well as probably the Yomuds and Tekke migrated to Asia Minor in the course of military campaigns.

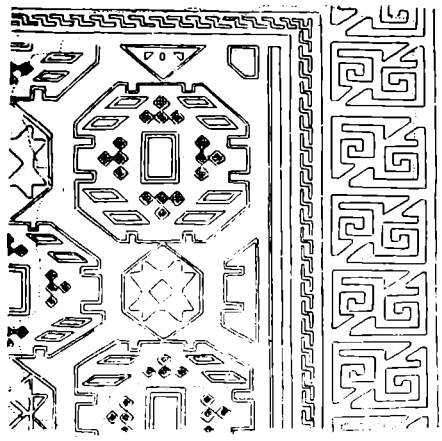
Carl Johann Lamm in his treatise "The Marby Rug", reproduces some rugs pieced together from fragments (Fustat Fragments) which he was able to obtain in Egypt and which date from the fifteenth century.

Their kinship with Turkoman products is unmistakeable. The fragment in illus. 5 could have been knotted by Salors, the one in illus. 6 and 7 by Yomuds. The similarity between the border ornaments in illus. 7 and the border of the rug in plate 23 of this book is particularly striking.

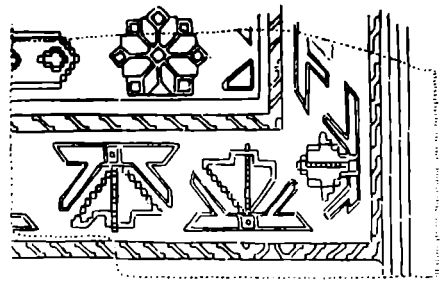
There is a sad lack of originals from the actual Turkoman culture which would allow us to state definitely that they had been knotted before the seventeenth century. We possess, however, representations of rugs in murals and miniatures. Magnificent murals have been discovered, e.g. during the excavations of the palaces of Pyanjikent (6th to 8th century). High ranking officials are shown sitting on rugs which were undoubtedly knotted and the kinship of which to later Turkestan rugs is undeniable.



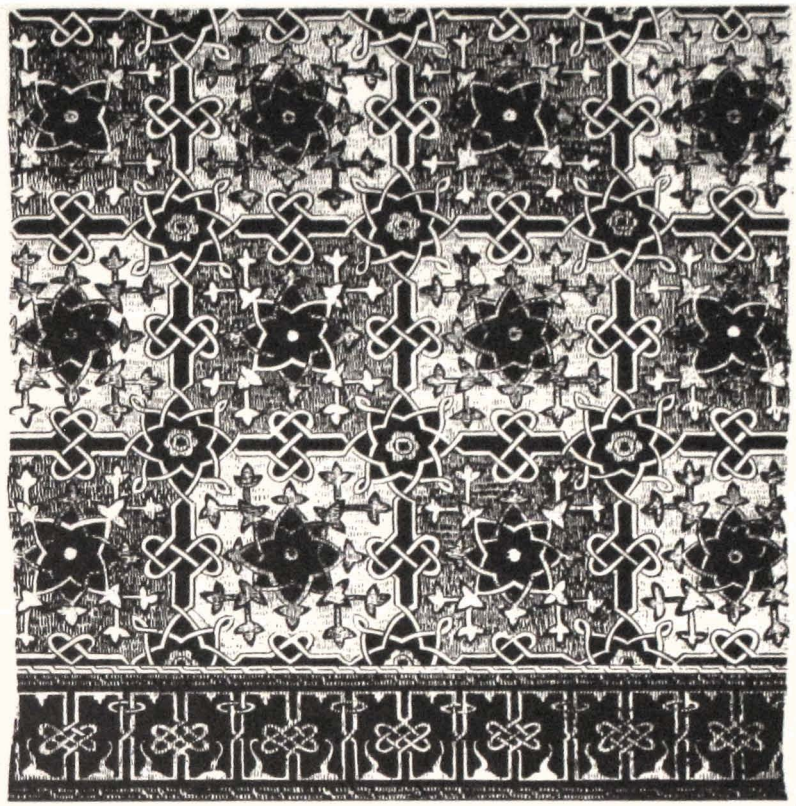
illus. 5



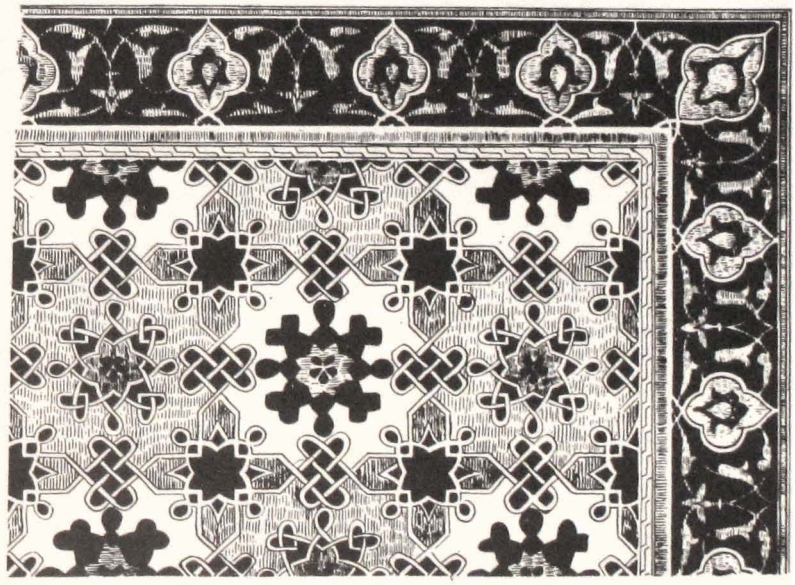
illus. 6



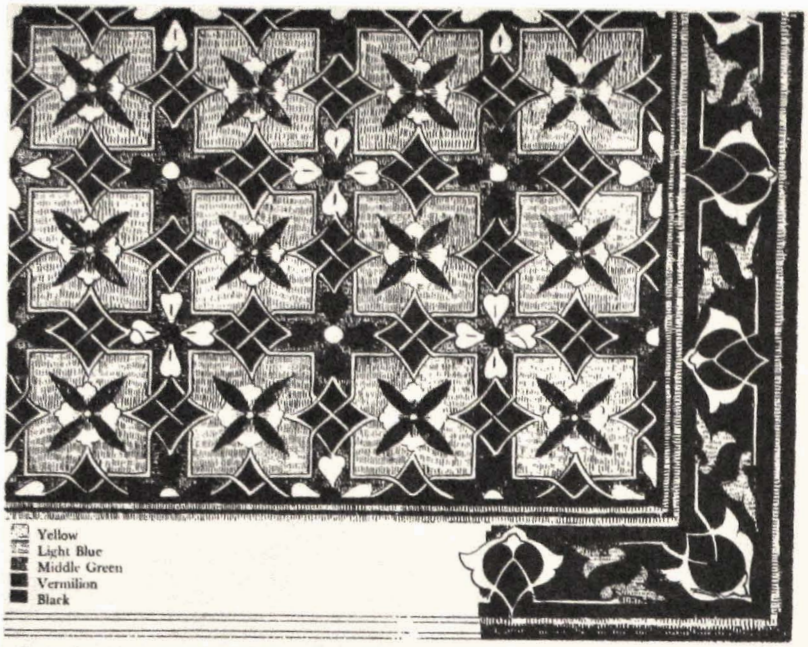
illus. 7



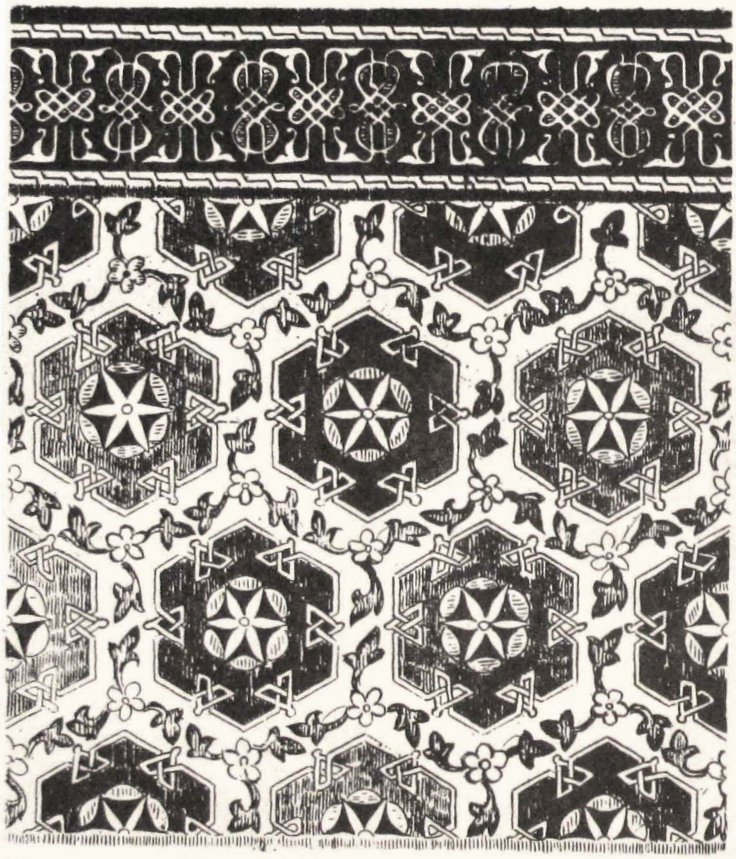
illus. 8



illus. 9



illus. 10

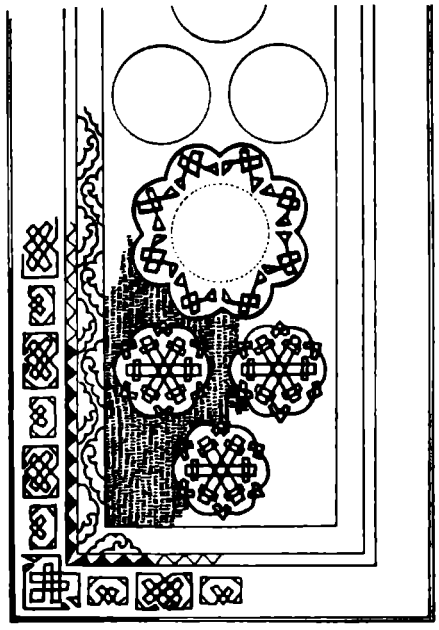


illus. 11

Furthermore, Amy Briggs has examined Timuridic miniatures and has grouped together the rugs which were painted in with extreme precision. They are almost all geometrical rugs with a continuous pattern. Only very rarely do they have a central medallion. Not one of these rugs found by Amy Briggs in miniatures shows animal designs. In order to understand the development of the Turkoman rug it is necessary to illustrate some of her findings in the illustrations 8-12.

In the paintings of European artists one will search in vain for rugs which one can definitely attribute to Central Asia. On the other hand, Maurice Dimand is said to have discovered Chinese paintings of the seventeenth century, in which Central Asian rugs – in this case from East Turkestan – have undoubtedly been depicted.

On the following pages a number of guls are depicted, which can be traced on antique rugs that survived to our days. They comprise a space of time of about 3 centurys and return often in hardly changed form even in rugs of the 20th century. In their compact presentation they are meant to allow a quick survey of the different types and to help the collector to identify his own rugs. Helmut Conin, Cologne, has executed them with great precision and admirable exactness.

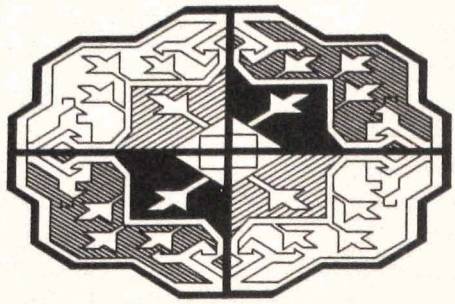


illus. 12

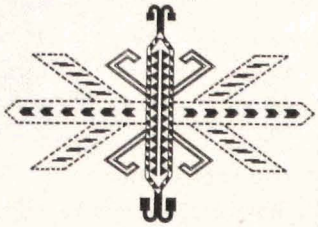
The *Tauk Nuska*, this curious design, appearing in guls of different provenances gives rise to revised thoughts and new ways of regarding the gul.

Mme. Moshkova believes this to be the original gul of the Arabatch which was then adopted by the Chodors. Neither she nor any o her writer has as yet been able to prove this statement. Actually, just the opposite seems to be true. Many variations of the *Tauk Nuska* appear in Yomud, Saryk and Ersari rugs, but it has not been found so far in Chodor rugs.

One must rather decide sharply to separate two aspects of the gul, namely its SHAPE AND ITS CONTENT.



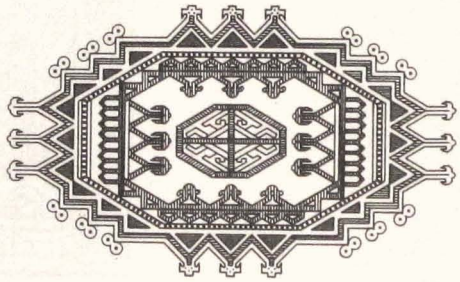
1. Tekke Gül



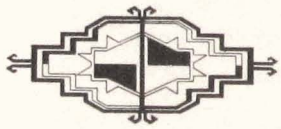
2. Tekke Nebengül

3. Tekke Nebengül

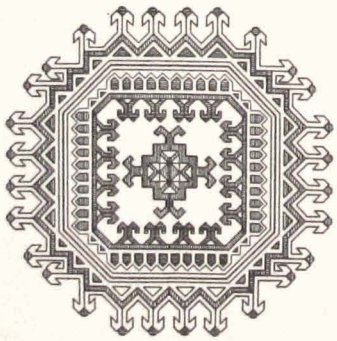
4. Salor Gül



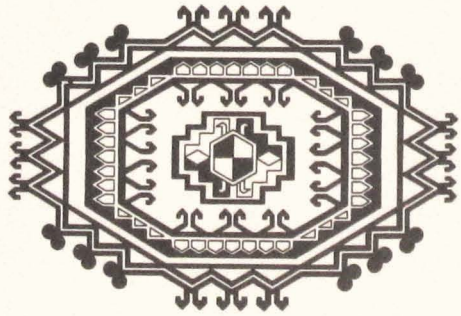
5. Salor Gül



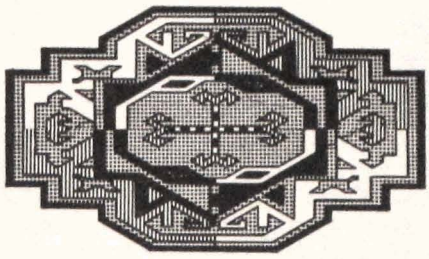
8. Salor Nebengül



6. Salor Gül

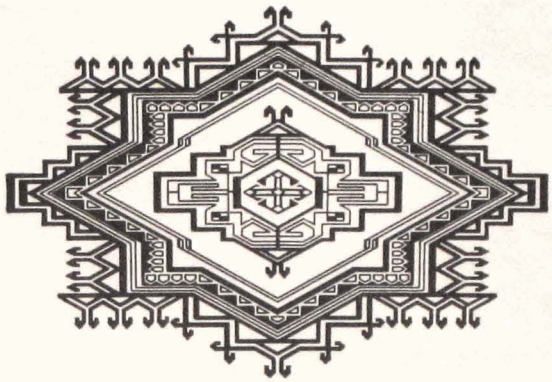


7. Salor Gül

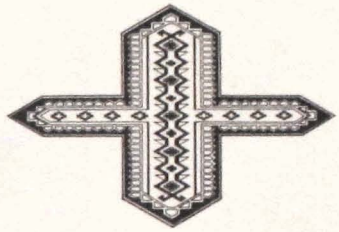


9. Saryk Gül

10. Saryk Gül

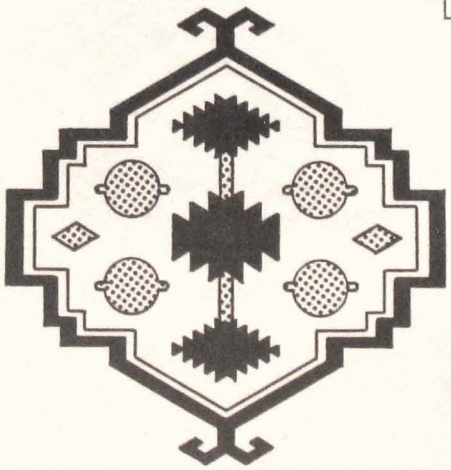


11. Kisilajak Gül



12. Kisilajak Nebengül

14. Tschaudor Ertmen Gül



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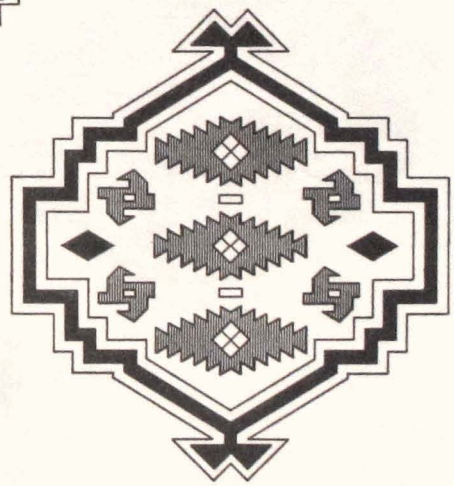

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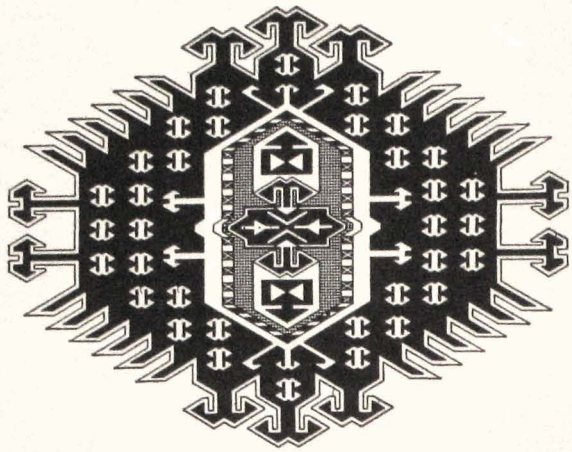

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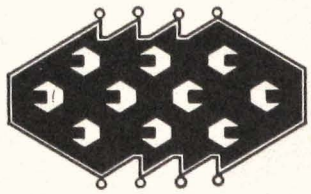

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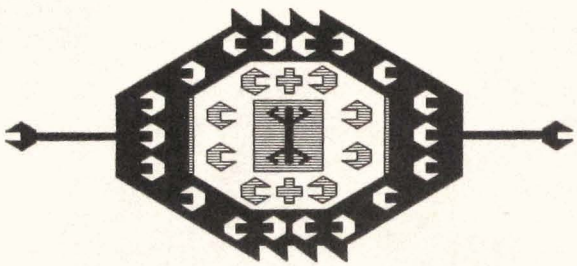

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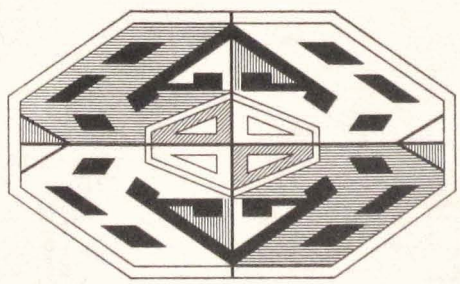

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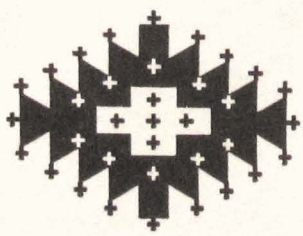

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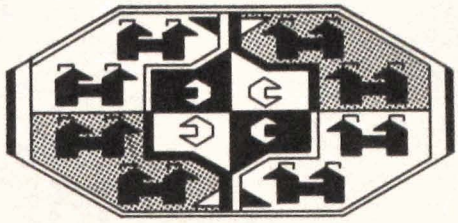
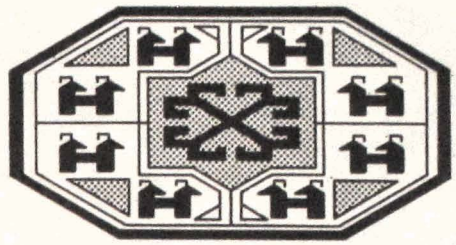
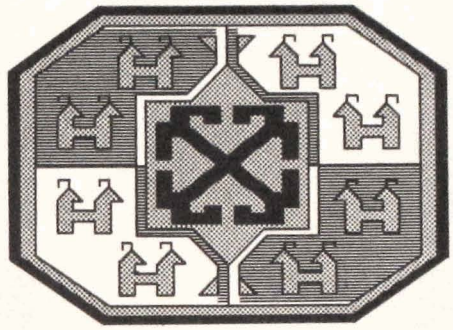


22. Yomud Tauk Nuska Gül



23. Yomud und Tschub-Basch Afghan Gül



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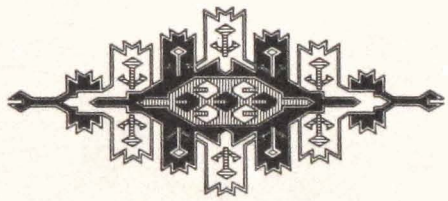

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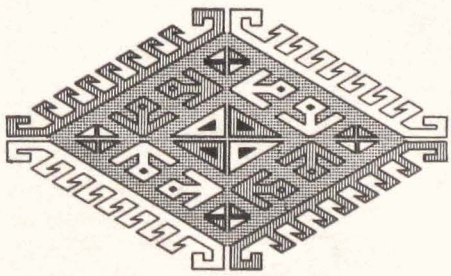

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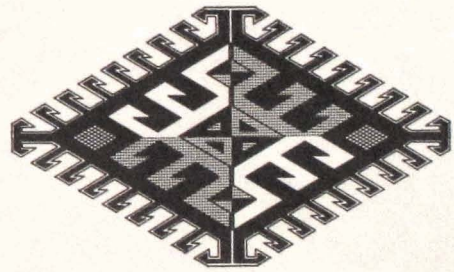

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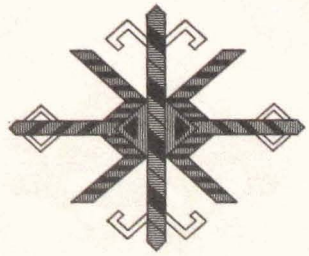
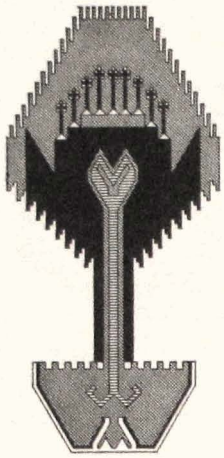
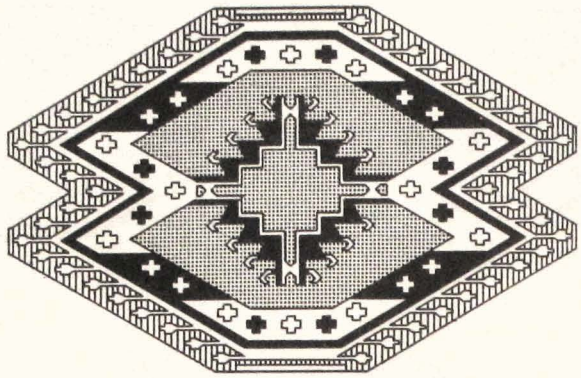


28. Yomud Nebengül



29. Ersari Beschir Gül



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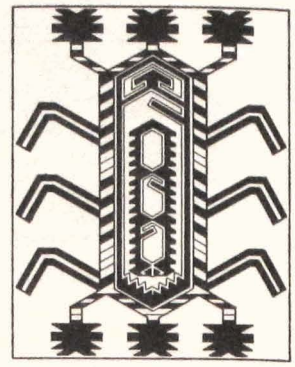

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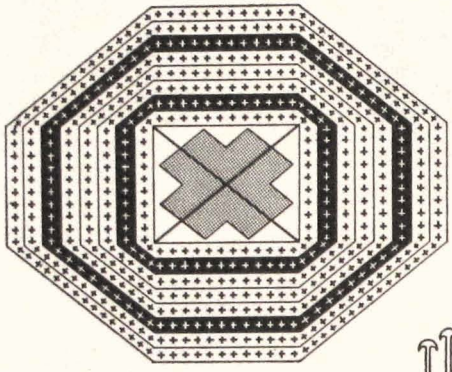

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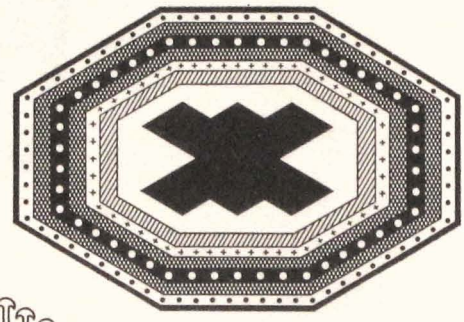

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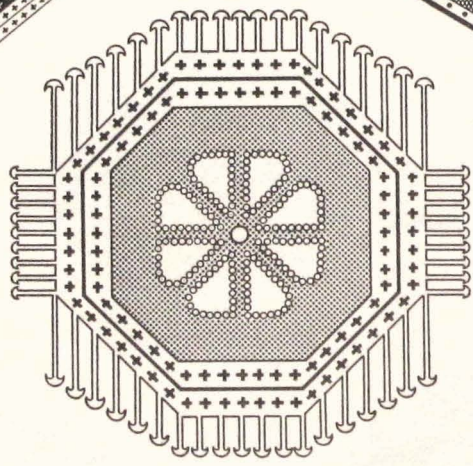

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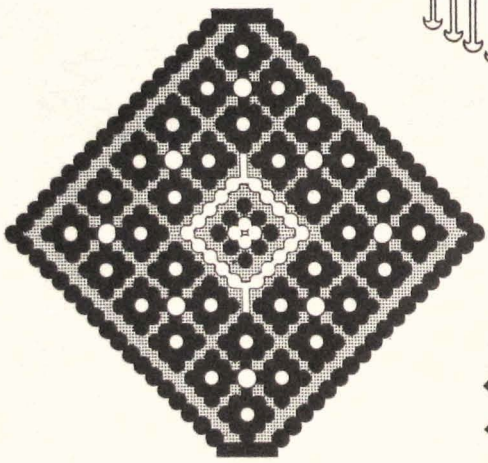
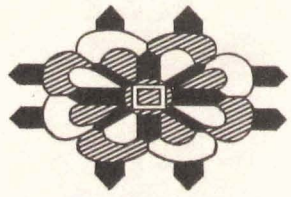


35. Karakalpak Gül



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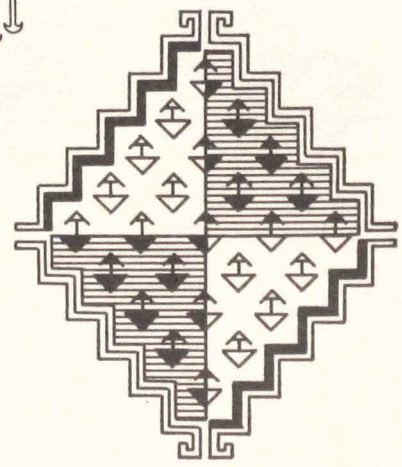

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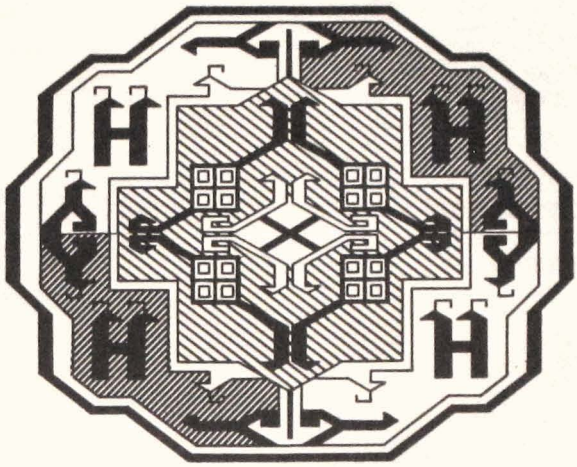
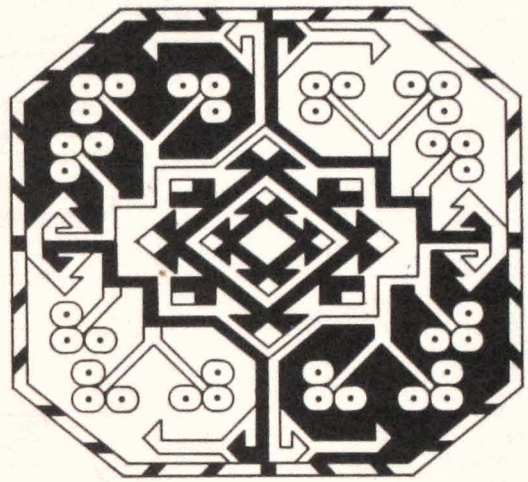
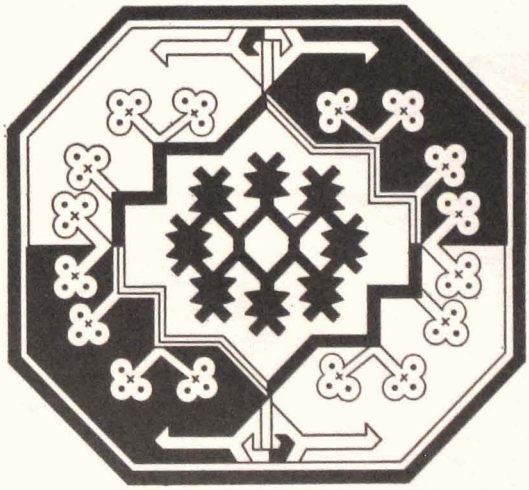


38. Afghan Ersari Tauk Nuska Gül



39. Afghan Ersari Gülli Gül



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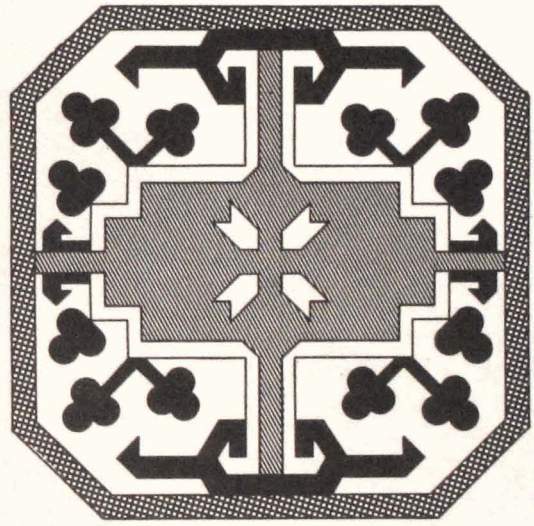

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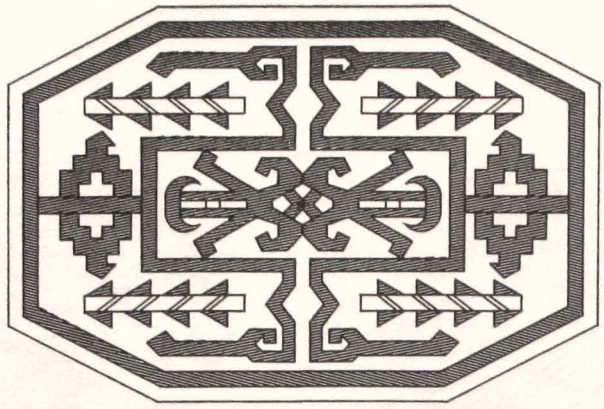
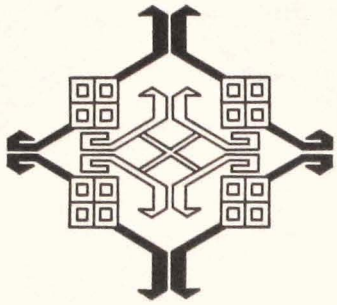
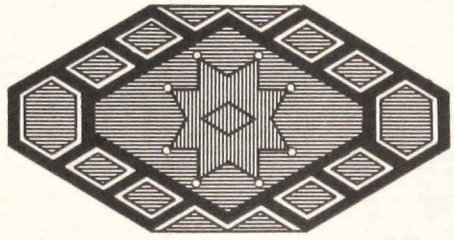


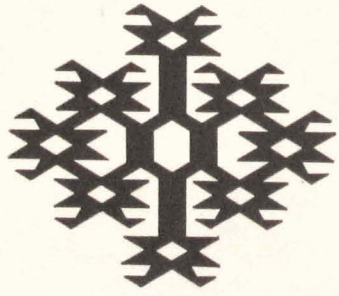
42. Afghan Ersari Temirdschin Gül



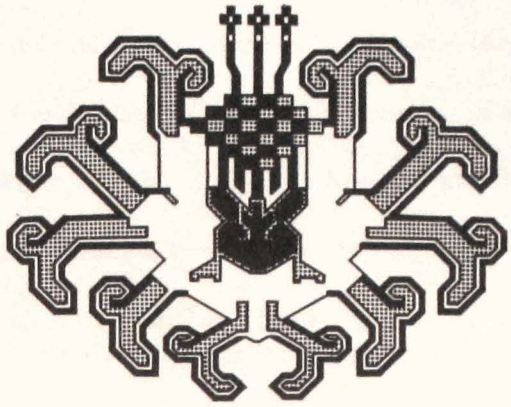
43. Afghan Ersari „Sagdak" Nebengül



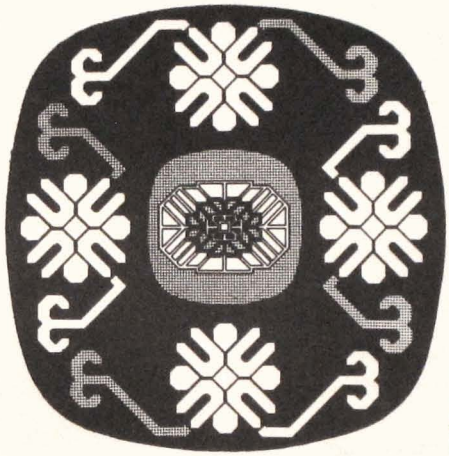
44. Afghan Ersari Beschir Gül



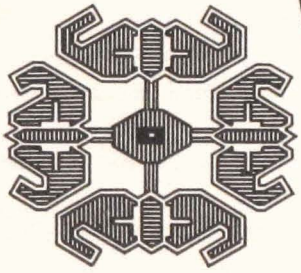
45. Afghan Ersari Nebengül



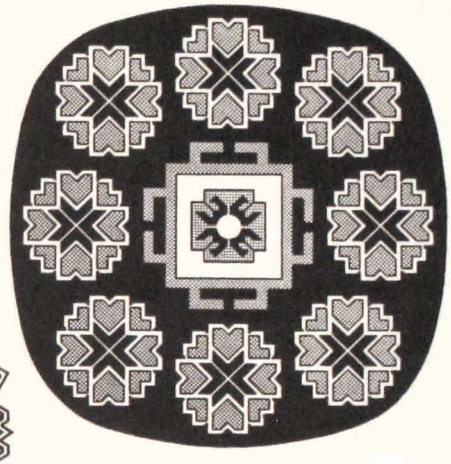
46. Kaschgar Gül



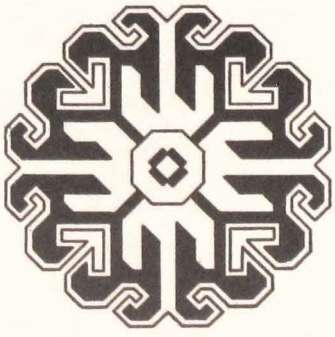
47. Yarkand Gül



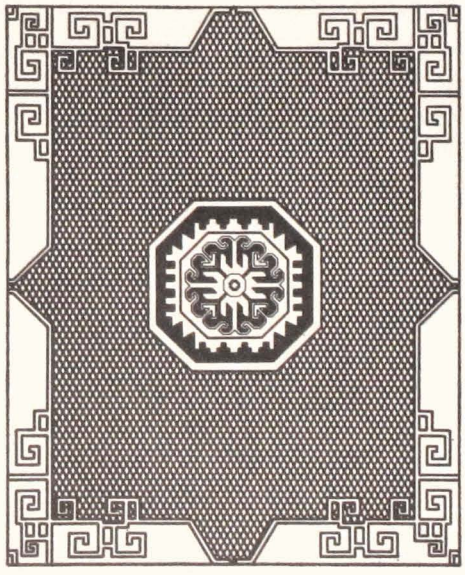
48. Yarkand Gül



49. Yarkand Gül



50. Khotan Gül



51. Khotan Gül

52. Khotan Gül kassettiert

The OUTER CONTOUR of the gul is the decisive factor in determining the tribe to which it belongs:

The *Tekke* favour the polygon (fig. 1) with rounded corners, always divided into quarters.

The *Salors of the North* prefer the large, generously rounded medallion (fig. 4) on a horizontal axis.

The *Salors of Merv and Pendeh* have the octagon decorated with hooks, rays and spirals (figs. 5, 6, 7).

The *Saryqs* favour a stepped polygon with partly rounded corners on a horizontal plane (figs. 9, 10).

The *Chodors* have the curved medallion along a vertical axis, in contrast to the northern Salors whose medallion is in principle quite similar, but on a horizontal plane (figs. 13, 14, 15).

The *Yomuds* favour a plain, elongated octagon, resembling the hexagon and frequently divided into quarters. Sometimes there are horizontal spiral ends as a continuation of the axis, or a lozenge, either plain or decorated with hooks (figs. 18, 19, 21, and 25, 26, 27).

The *Ersari* of the Amu Darya have a plain octagon with either a smaller inner octagon with sides running parallel to the main, or decorated with rays (figs. 32, 33, 34).

The *Ersari of Afghanistan* have a considerably larger, plain octagon, divided into quarters, or a big but flatter, plain octagon divided into two parts (figs. 39, 40, 41, 42).

The *Saryqs* and the *Salors of Afghanistan* and the *Chub-Bash* favour bigger polygons than the ones commonly found in Turkestan, and often intermingled with Ersari contours.

The CONTENT of the gul need not necessarily be decisive in determining the tribe to which it belongs. It can consist of

the *Tauk Nuska* (*Saryq*, *Yomud*, *Afghan-Ersari*, *Afghan Chub-Bash*, figs. 22, 23, 24, 38);

trees: *Temirdshin of the Ersari*, *northern Salors* (figs. 42 and 4);

twigs: *Tekke* (fig. 1);

spirals: *Saryq*, *Salors*, *Yomuds* (figs. 5–7, 9, 10, 19);

flowers and leaves: *Ersari-Beshir*, *Afghan-Ersari*, *Afghan-Saryq* (figs. 25, 26, 29, 36, 37, 39–41);

other ornaments which have lost their significance in the passage of time or which have become geometrized beyond recognition.

The "TAUK NUSKA" representing the animal motif and trees, twigs, spirals, flowers, etc., representing the floral motif, were used by all tribes who liked them as content for their own tribal gul. The content itself does not yet form a gul; the shape alone, however, may decide it. The two together, the combination of shape and content, astound by the host of possible variations.

II. Determination of Age

In addition to the considerable problem of deciding the origin of the rugs, one of the main tasks of this book is to attempt a solution of the problem of fixing their age.

It must be stressed straightaway that each group of rugs has its very own characteristics which offer a clue as to the age of a rug. It is for this reason that the descriptions of the plates in every instance point out available clues to the determination of age. But there is a great deal common to all rugs.

In many cases, the deciding factor is the observer's first overall impression. This may sound far-fetched in a serious thesis, but every true expert and connoisseur of old rugs will understand what is meant, when we call the really old rug a living work of art; living inasmuch as the observer will be captured immediately by the charm of its colours and the balance and harmony of its design. One could almost say that the rug talks to the spectator. It is comparable to love at first sight. All this has not been written in a romantic mood, but is based on the fact that an old rug is not simply a knotted piece of material. It is an expression of the artistic talents of a seemingly primitive people. The woman who has industriously knotted ornaments into the rug has also added her own thoughts and language into it.

Feeling for an old rug is unfortunately not sufficient for determining its age. There is only one way of achieving this: by looking and comparing. The more old rugs a dealer, an expert, a connoisseur or a collector has seen, the easier he will find it to give an approximation of its age. Life-long experience, together with a gift for recognising the finer points of style and colour are mainly necessary for this.

A most convincing demonstration of what is meant, is where an old Tekke rug is put before a gathering of experts. They will all agree that it must be roughly a hundred years old. Then a second rug is shown, and there will again be agreement that it must be older than the first. Finally, there will be a piece with such convincing characteristics that all those present will once more be forced to agree that this last one is the oldest of the three. It is a well-known fact that from thirty to fifty years must elapse before two rugs of the same origin show visible differences in age. The third rug could, therefore, be between sixty and a hundred years older than the first, which would mean that it was knotted in the eighteenth century.

In this connexion let us disclaim the widely-held view that there are no examples of Turkoman rugs left which were knotted before 1850. It has been argued that they have long since been worn out by the weavers themselves and simply could not exist any more. One tends to forget that the rugs for private use which were put on the floors, were mostly woven (as distinct from knotted) or felt rugs. The finely knotted small and large pieces, however, were treated as treasured pos-

sessions and were well looked after. Nor must we forget that the rugs of the Tekke, Salors, and Saryqs did not only hang in the kibitkas, but also decorated the palaces and the houses of the rich in the cities of Turkestan and in Samarqand. It is only due to the inaccessibility of the remote weaving areas of Central Asia and the indescribable cruelty, tyranny and lust for war of these peoples, that their rug products did not reach the European markets in earlier centuries. Thus they could not appear in paintings of eminent artists, as the Anatolian rugs did. There was a certain amount of exchange of trade between the Turkoman tribes and their neighbours, e.g. silk and silken materials were exchanged for rugs.

It must be realised that up till recently, i.e. up to the conquest and subsequent pacification of Central Asia by the Russians in the Seventies, a journey to Turkestan was about the most hazardous undertaking in the world, and meant almost certain death. Vámbéry's book on his journey in 1863 will be a revelation to all who read it. In the preface to his book "Journey into Central Asia" he writes: *„I must ask you not to forget that I am returning from a country where listening is considered impudent, asking a question a crime, and taking notes a deadly sin."*

A further proof is that many a rug which has found its way to Europe and America during the last eighty years, was too big for a kibitka. They were rugs which were ordered by the wealthy for their town houses and palaces. Moreover, every experienced dealer and collector has received, at some time or other, pieces which looked much newer than they actually were. They had rings or loops along one of the longer sides and were always hung up, never walked on. Just as one can be mistaken about the age of a seventeenth century painting from which the original varnish has been removed, purely because the work looks so much fresher than it really is, so, too, can one err about the age of a Turkoman rug, because it looks less used and newer than design, colour and fineness could allow. There are, however, some definite characteristics which one can go by:

1. The older the rug, the smoother the back. The thousands of small, wool fibres which can be found on the back of every newly knotted rug, become abraded with the passage of time. It is for this reason that the rug gets a back which is rather lustrous, smooth and velvety to the touch.

2. A certain brittleness of the warp and weft (without however, being rotten) and signs of wear e.g. fraying of the kilim at the ends of the rug.

3. A remarkable sheen on the wool, evident even in wornout places.

4. The use of clear colours sometimes in striking combinations. A light, clear yellow is extremely rare in Turkoman rugs, with the exception of the Beshirs. But if it is used in small ornaments it shows that the rug is very old. Similarly, if certain parts are in pale violet wool or silk. The more extensive the colour range both in the shades of the individual colours, as well as in the number of different colours used, the older the rug is.

5. Balance of design; how well the individual ornaments are proportioned in relation to each other, the care with which the borders are executed.

6. Imaginative variations in the border; this is difficult in the field because of the strict division thereof into guls and minor guls. Thus the border can give an indication of the age, especially in the case of Tekke-Turkoman and Yomud rugs.

7. The oldest Turkoman rugs mostly have an unusually broad kilim and frequently disproportionately narrow borders.

8. The guls and other ornaments of older rugs are significantly richer, more realistic and more complicated in their execution than in later ones. Typical

examples would be the development of the Turkoman leaf tendril and the "Tauk-Nuska" ornament.

Other characteristics will be pointed out from time to time in the descriptions of the individual colour plates.

III. Characteristics of the products of the individual rug areas

TURKOMAN RUGS

The rugs of Turkestan, Afghanistan and Belouchistan are unmistakeable. Typical of them are all shades of red, from brownred to deepest violet, together with geometrical and geometrized floral patterns. The sparing use of a few other colours might lead the inexperienced wrongly to consider them monotonous. Yet to the practised eye it is evident that every old rug is a small work of art. Despite a similarity with rugs from the same district, no one is identical to the other.

With no pattern to copy from, women and girls of the Turkoman tribes, some nomadic, some semi-nomadic, spent their leisure hours weaving the magic of traditional designs into their textile products. The tent, the kibitka, was filled with objects made from knotted textiles, from salt containers, the bag, the cushion to the rug as we know it to-day.

Two understandably erroneous ideas must be corrected, namely that the knotting of beautiful rugs was the main occupation of the Turkoman, and that the country was inundated with numerous tribal units each consisting of a large number of members.

Firstly, rug making mostly played a minor part in the lives of the predatory, warlike, freedom-loving Turkoman tribes. Essentially only their own needs were catered for. It was only in the vicinity of large towns such as Khiva, Merv, Pendeh and Kerki that rugs were made to order or for sale on the open market by the semi-nomads living there. A much more important and peaceful occupation was the production of cloth, articles of clothing, leather, silver and even pottery goods. So it is not surprising that Vámbéry never even mentions rugs when he drew up a list of the goods exported by Turkoman tribes in 1863.

Secondly, if one attempts to place the numerous offshoots and clans of the tribes into some form of ethnological, fairly homogenous groups, the following picture, with the aid of Vámbéry's table, is obtained:

TEKKE: the largest and most powerful Turkoman tribe, in two main camps: Achad (east of Tedshend) and Merv. 60,000 tents.

SALOR: the oldest tribe on historical record: decimated by wars and driven from Merv into the vicinity of Merchag and surroundings. 8,000 tents.

SARYQ: in the neighbourhood of Pendshat on the banks of the Murgab. 10,000 tents.

CHODOR: south of the interior between the Caspian and Aral Seas. 12,000 tents.

YOMUDS: on the eastern seabord of the Caspian and in and around Khiva. 40,000 tents.

ERSARI-BESHIR: along the banks of the Amu Darya in the Khanat Bokhara. 50,000 tents.

If one allows four people per tent this would add up to a population of less than a million of which only a fraction were actively engaged in rug production. This figure does not include any other non Turkoman tribes or those who made no, or hardly any rugs. The tribes were scattered over an immense area–900 kilometres long and 1,400 kilometres wide, and scarcely a town or village was encountered in the steppe and inhospitable desert. Under these circumstances it is almost a miracle that so many old rugs have been preserved at all. Bale upon bale were exported by the Russians at the turn of the century and between 1929 and 1934, the principal markets being England and the U.S.A. Only a few collectors recognised their true value and irreplacable beauty. Since then it has been virtually impossible to obtain old and antique rugs in Russia.

Tables of the tribes, their offshoots and clans are given in some publications. Many of these clans consisted of simply a few families. It is impossible to furnish conclusive proof of their rug products–one cannot even hazard a guess at them.

It has been decided, therefore, to keep the attribution of names to a minimum, and to mention only such tribes whose products can be identified with certainty, TEKKE, SALOR, SARYQ, CHODOR, YOMUD, KIZIL AYAK, KARAKALPAK, ERSARI-BESHIR, AFGHAN-ERSARI

The cost for reproduction was unfortunately another limiting factor. Only those pieces have been reproduced which show most clearly the differences in tribal characteristics. Thus many a small, interesting bag, container, ribbon, door-hanging etc. had to be omitted.

One could write a separate book about the thoughts on the symbolism of the individual ornaments. To do so here would be beyond the scope of this work. Even the oldest living weavers have no idea of the meaning of the ornaments they weave into the rug. Thus it is left to the imagination of the spectator to read into the rugs whatever pleases him.

TEKKE

The best known of the Turkoman rugs is the Tekke. Its fine weave, glowing colours and velvety handle have always enchanted the collector and expert. One differentiates between the *Akhal-Tekke* in the south of the Kara-Kum desert and the *Merv-Tekke* in the surroundings of Seraks and Merv. They belong to the tribes of Turkestan which have the largest population and are politically the strongest.

They use in their rugs the four-part gul with only slight variations. The inside consists of starkly geometrized twigs with a leaf at the end fanning outwards. The horizontal axis is only a little larger than the vertical axis, which makes the slightly stepped shape of the gul appear rounder. Horizontal and vertical blue lines link the guls, while in the space between there are starlike minor guls.

It is the border which sets off the rug. In newer rugs one finds a rather monotonous system of lozenges decorated with hooks. The age of antique Tekkes is evident from the variety of their design and wealth of colours. Plates 1 and 2 fully show what is meant here. Many an old Tekke has a "skirt" knotted at both ends in an entirely differing pattern (plate 3) before the kilim proper starts. This can be as long as 40 cm. with several fine blue lines running through it.

The warp and weft, made of wool or a mixture of wool and goat's hair, can be surprisingly fine and dense. (Rugs with over 400,000 knots per square metre are not unusual.) The warp threads lie flat, side by side, thus giving the back of the rug a smooth feel, heightened by the use of silky wool. The "handle" of old Tekkes is, therefore, velvety and supple. The pile is low and in very old pieces has a silky lustre. The colour range extends from brick red to oxblood, but the red never tends to blue or violet. The oldest specimens have by no means only dark shades. There are magnificent examples in brick red of the same age. The colouring of the ornaments can be blue, pale blue, greenish blue, green, vermilion, natural white, brown, and sometimes, in small parts only, a clear yellow.

The measurements of antique Tekke rarely exceed 7ft. 10in. × 10ft. 10in. without the kilim. One finds scatter rugs as well as Hatchlou Engsi, Juvals and Torbas. In addition, there are kibitka tent-bands (plate 5) up to 65ft. long, monotonous palas and colourful silk embroidery work on linen.

SALOR

The Salors are said to be the oldest Turkoman tribe in Turkestan. Continuous skirmishes, especially with the Tekke, reduced their numbers, forced them to leave Merv and to take refuge on the Murgab near Pendeh. In the middle of the nineteenth century, however, a small group still lived towards the northern end of the middle reaches of the Amu Darya and in Seraks. Two of the most beautiful specimens in this book (plates 6 and 7) were made by them. They are large juvals (wall-bags) which still show the old gul full of imagination (fig. 4). It is a large, roundish, stepped gul. There is a central motif in the middle of the gul consisting of eight intertwined groups of leaves, in turn surrounded by eight flowers. The same flower motif appears in the ornamentation of the double gates in the main ground. The use to which these pieces were put, i.e. the bags, is emphasised in the contours of the border.

The juval (plate 7) gives an idea of the colour combinations commonly used by the Salors: a red which tends to blue. The lighter cherry red of the juval in plate 6 is rare.

The generally known Salor gul of the Salors around Pendeh is a richly decorated, flattened octagon–small triangles ending in double hooks radiate both inwards and outwards. The centre is formed by a stepped gul divided into four squares, which appears roughly in the same form in the minor guls. They extend in a vertical direction over the rug, parallel to the major guls.

The borders of Salor rugs offer no outstanding traits worthy of mention.

As has been mentioned earlier on, the warp and weft resemble the Tekke, with the difference that the warp threads lie obliquely together. The handle of Salor rugs is harder and less supple than that of the Tekke. The pile is very low. Silk is quite frequently used in juvals and torbas for the design inside the gul. So far only one, old all-silk Salor rug measuring nearly 9ft. 10in. × 13ft. 2in. has been discovered by the author.

The Salors generally have a rather gloomy colour combination. They belong to the darkest rug products of the Turkoman. Only rarely can one find antique pieces with a light ground, as in plate 8.

A great many rugs up to 8ft. × 9ft. 10in., scatter rugs and bags were knotted. Hatchlou Engsi and Namasliks do not appear to have reached Europe.

SARYQ

The Saryqs, like the Salors, lived in and around Pendeh and in Yuletan, but also much further south towards the Afghan frontier. Scattered parts of the tribe populated the north of Afghanistan.

The Saryq gul, in contrast to the Salor gul, seems extremely simple and geometrical. It consists of an elongated, stepped polygon divided into quarters. Cruciform ornaments ending in double hooks appear at the end of the axis as well as in the centre of the gul. The minor guls are confined to a considerably smaller and simpler stepped polygon divided into four parts. The borders are similar in design and colour to the central field.

The warp and weft of the Saryqs resembles that of the Salors. They are, however, much less finely knotted and their pile is higher. One of their characteristics is the kilim which can be up to 1ft. 4in. long and is sometimes embroidered. The wool for the pile is relatively dull, and a pinkish blue silk is occasionally used for smaller parts of the gul. Cotton is also used for white gul quarters. The handle is not unlike that of the Salors.

The general impression of Saryq colours is that of a red tending to blue; the ornaments range from deep blue to black, and gul quarters from brick red to orange and white. The colour range tends to be rather limited.

Rugs in larger sizes (up to 9ft. 10in. × 13ft. 2in.) are known, as well as scatter-rugs and bags. Engsi and Namasliks could not be found.

KIZIL AYAK

The Kizil Ayak are considered to be a minor Ersari tribe. Unlike these, however, they did not live on the Amu Darya but supposedly between Merv and Pendeh. Consequently their rugs differ considerably from those of the Ersari. They resemble far more closely the rugs of those Turkoman tribes with whom they lived, i.e. Salors and Saryqs.

They have no characteristic gul of their own. Plate 38 illustrates a rug where one can recognize a mixed gul design. Judging by the outer form a Salor major gul is coupled with a minor gul which in turn has developed into a major gul. Kizil Ayak rugs are very rare indeed. (Milhofer shows one similar in colour in plate 2 of his book.)

It is because of their Engsi and Namasliks that the Kizil Ayaks have become rather better known. Plates 36 and 37 give an idea of typical make-up of design. The first, the oldest known example, shows clearly that originally realistic floral ornaments on a light ground predominated. Later the ornaments became stiff and such dark colours were used that one considers the Kizil Ayak Engsi to be the darkest rugs of all. There are specimens which are almost black with a sheen of dark violet.

The structure and material used resemble the Saryqs-, cotton for white knotted parts and silk for small magentacoloured areas are not unusual.

CHODOR

The main tribe of the Chodors wandered between the northern part of the Caspian and Aral Seas as far as the Khanat of Khiva. Sometimes they have been linked with the Yomuds, but their rug products show such a marked deviation from those common to the Yomuds that they are treated here as a separate tribe.

A further confirmation of this lies in the fact that the Chodors have played a fairly important part in Turkoman history and as early as the sixteenth century they were leaders of a relatively large Turkoman tribal unit.

Their stepped polygon gul-called *Ertmen*–does little to emphasize the horizontal effect. It is not divided into quarters and its content shows less geometrized floral ornaments. There are no minor guls, but a trellis of jagged lines interrupted by small flowers in lozenge form surrounds the actual guls. The guls may run diagonally or vertically, changing colour from row to row. "Skirts" at both ends of the rug consist of rows of the "Ashik"-motifs.

The warp and weft are of medium density. The warp threads lie slightly obliquely together. The handle is soft and the pile of medium height.

Both gul and colour range are equally characteristic of the Chodors. The basic colour of the rugs is restricted to a dark brownish violet. The guls have dull, almost dirty looking colours: brown red, off-withe, greenish blue, dark blue, and dark bottle-green. In short, they have not the eye-catching lively colours of really old Yomuds.

There are Chodor rugs in an elongated shape (Kelley) up to 14ft. 9in and 16ft. 5in long, bags and–very rarely–Namasliks. Scatter rugs and door-hangings have not been found.

OGURJALIS

The Ogurjalis are part of the Yomuds. Their guls are the most interesting and striking. It has, therefore, been decided to treat them separately from the normal Yomud products.

At one time the Ogurjalis lived on the shores of the Caspian Sea, north of the Persian border, and then again in the north between the Aral Sea and Khiva. It is because of these great distances that their guls (The Ogurjali-gul in Orendi's book and others who copied it later on, is only part of a border, as illustrated in plate 17 of Bogolubov's work, and is simply a form of the leaf tendril.) and the structure of warp and weft are entirely different, yet strangely enough not the borders.

Starting with the Ogurjalis of the south on the Caspian Sea, plate 23 offers an excellent example of their products. There we find the rayed gul influenced by the proximity of the Caucasus. It is very faintly elongated. The design consists of three double hooks at the top and bottom and again, two double hooks at the right and left-hand side connected by a boldly serrated line. In the inner field there is a hexagonal centre-piece adorned with long, double hooks. The minor guls consist partly of small lozenges with a cross inside ending in double hooks, and partly of a rather larger hexagon divided into quarters, and decorated with minute lozenges. In the extraordinary specimen in plate 23, of course, stylised pairs of dragons are added, similar to North Persian and Anatolian rugs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Plate 24 illustrates a later rug of the same area with a considerably simplified pattern: serrated major guls and hooked minor guls, divided into four, alternating.

The peculiar border is common to both rugs: a hooked wavy line in the troughs of which there are ornaments resembling ships or blooms, resting on a bar adorned with double hooks. In the early rug plate 23, these ornaments are still separate, whereas in plate 24 they are linked with the bar. Compare the ornament with a rug of the fourteenth/fifteenth century from "The Marby Rug" by Carl Johann Lamm (illus. 7 of this work).

The warp and weft of these rugs can be of exceptional fineness: almost twice as many knots per square metre than in other old Yomuds. The height of the pile is similar to that of the Yomuds.
The basic colour is mostly reddish violet which may turn to brown. The ornaments are in a medium blue, vermilion, and white, with clear yellow for smaller parts. A broad, often ornate kilim without "skirt" finishes off the rug at both ends. Apart from rugs under 6ft. 6in × 9ft. 10in. no other pieces are known.
The *Ogurjalis of the North* around Khiva have an equally distinctive gul as the Ogurjalis of the south. It consists of a somewhat flattened plain gul, not divided into four parts, the horizontal axis of which is emphasized by longish lines ending in an inverted hook or half moon. The inside of the gul is divided into three parts, each with its own ground colour: a centre piece with a cruciform ornament, an inner octagon with half moons and an outer octagon with half moons. The guls may be of the same colour horizontally, plate 15, or arranged diagonally, plate 16. In some rugs the Ogurjalis also used the "Tauk-Nuska" for their guls, plate 19. The rare rug in plate 22, which is attributed to the same tribe has a pattern consisting purely of stripes. (McMullan depicts a later, simpler piece in "Islamic Carpets" (plate 134) which is woven and not knotted.) The oldest rug shown here, plate 15, proves that the northern and southern Ogurjalis used the same border. (Compare the border with plate 23.) In the later rug, plate 19, however, signs of decadence can be discerned. Even the "rolled leaf" border of the Yomunds has found its way into the border part.
All antique rugs of the northern Ogurjalis have one structural peculiarty in common which is not found in other Turkoman rugs: brown weft threads alternate with white threads on an evenly smooth plane, as in Tekkes. The back has, therefore, a speckled appearance. Thacher ("Turcoman Rugs") noticed this in his rug, plate 21.
The basic colour of the northern and southern Ogurjalis is the same, namely a reddish violet or brownish red. The colour range of the ornaments, however, is much richer: pale blue, medium blue, dark blue, vermilion, dark red, blue green, pale green, natural white and very little yellow.
Other types of weaving than the ones shown in this book could not be found.

YOMUD

The tribes of the Yomud are mainly concentrated in two areas along the south eastern shores of the Caspian Sea to the south as far as the Persian frontier, to the east as far as the district of the Akhal-Tekke and in the north, south of the Aral Sea far into the Khanat of Khiva.
Four guls can be distinguished:
1. The oldest is a polygon divided into quarters and resembling the Saryq gul. Its centre, however, consists of a vertical hexagon. Within the gul the axes end in double hooks, while the squares facing each other diagonally have the same colour (plate 18).
2. A smooth, flattened octagon in quarters with a horizontal centre (in contrast to the one above). The "Tauk-Nuska" ornament fills the quarters. Attention must be drawn to the fact that in older pieces all the animals in all the quarters are arranged in an upright position, whereas in later pieces the animals in the two lower quarters of the gul are standing on their heads, so to speak (plate 20).
3. A horizontal lozenge which may be divided into four or two parts, or not

divided up at all. The corners always end in double hooks on the outside, while the sides are adorned with thick hooks. The inner field consists of starkly stylized flowers. This gul is called *Dyrnak* (as appears in plate 24).

4. A very much elongated, horizontal lozenge with no straight lines for the outer contours. Along a horizontal axis ending in tips of half moons there are broad stripes of varying colours, filled with flowers and tapered off towards the ends of the axis. This type of gul is called *Kepse*. The colour changes diagonally across the field of the rug (plate 21).

In all Yomuds the border contrasts in colour and design with the central field. Most commonly, it is a formal, wavy tendril decorated in part with hooks, and in the troughs of which appears the "rolled leaf" motif. Gogel takes a very old Osmolduk (fig. 14 in his book) to prove that the curled leaf originally grew from the wavy tendril. Later, the stem came away from the tendrill, the ornament became separate and simplified to a curled leaf with no stem. It eventually developed into a dentated hexagon called "Ashik". The border of the Yomud in plate 20 shows several stages of this development.

Many Yomuds have a knotted "skirt" at both ends. The most beautiful example as regards ornamentation appears in the rug in plate 18. Later on it is replaced by the "Yomud Pine" (plate 20) or small bunches of flowers (plate 21).

The warp and weft of Yomuds are of medium density, with the warp threads lying slightly obliquely. The number of knots per square decimeter varies between 2,000 and 3,500. The wool can shine like silk in good pieces. Silk and cotton are very rarely used for knotting. The pile is of medium height and the handle firm yet fairly supple.

The colour range of Yomuds is rather limited. Although very old pieces in exceptional cases (plate 18) may look more colourful, even in old pieces shades of red and blue are predominantly used. Natural white is mostly used in the border and it appears in the guls and small ornaments. Yellow is used only for dots or in leaves. Cornflower blue in the minor guls makes some Yomuds delightfully characteristic.

The size of Yomud rugs rarely exceeds 7ft. 3in. × 10ft. 10in. In addition there are many Hatchlou Engsi, the most beautiful of which have a pale blue "skirt", bags (Juvals and Torbas) and Osmolduks. Small, old scatter rugs with a camel coloured ground are rare (plates 30 and 31). Engsi, Osmolduks, scatter rugs and most bags have their own ornamentation quite different from that of the rugs.

At this juncture attention must be drawn to a strange fact. Were the Engsi (door-hangings) at the same time Namasliks (prayer rugs)? Many writers assume this. They believe that the pentagonal motif at the upper end of the rug, which can be repeated as often as four times, indicates a corner set aside for prayer. Gogel, however, is of the opinion that it is nothing more than a reproduction of the kibitka standing, as it were, in a landscape adorned with flowers, trees and irigation systems. Were Gogel right, then the Yomuds would scarcely have had any prayer rugs. Instead, the Ersari tribe of the Beshir, as will be shown later, made no door-hangings, but quite a number of rather attractive prayer rugs. It seems hardly likely that there should be no, or no preserved old prayer rugs of the Yomuds. Even the length of many Hatchlou, often not exceeding 4ft. 11in., contradicts this theory; from every description and picture of kibitkas one gains the impression that the entrance is higher. To think that a small, short Hatchlou should also be used as a prayer rug does not therefore appear far-fetched.

KARAKALPAK

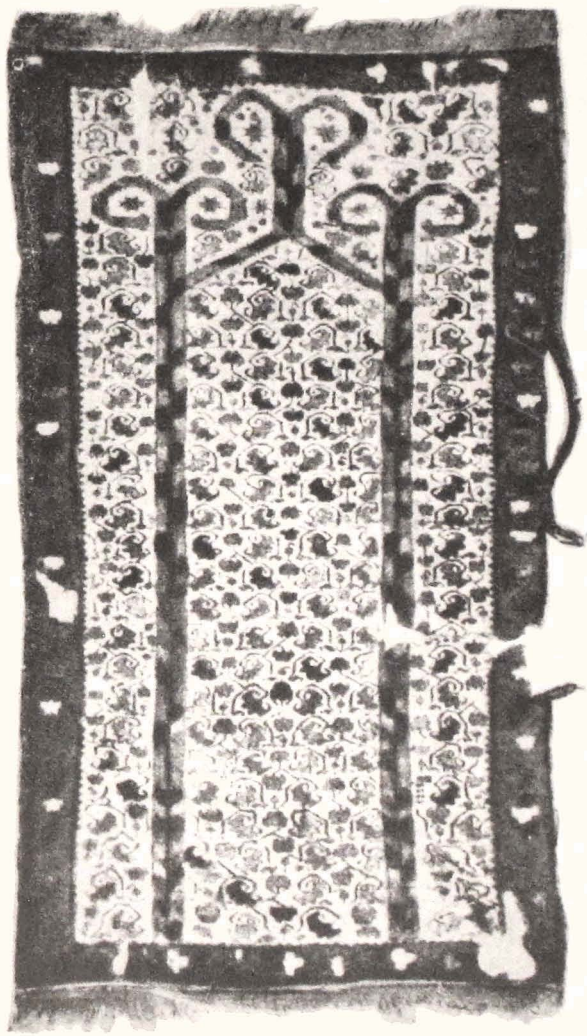
The Karakalpaks lived along the lower reaches of the Amu Darya in the north of Turkestan.

Their guls are not particularly outstanding. They are mostly rhombs filled with flowers in the shape of a cross separated by corresponding zig-zag lines. The borders are geometrical and simple. As regards structure and colour combination they resemble the Ersari-Beshir who lived a little further south. on the Amu Darya. Only a few smaller rugs reached the market.

ERSARI-BESHIR

The Ersari, perhaps the most numerous Turkoman tribe in Turkestan, lived along the middle reaches of the Amu Darya as far as Kerki (and beyond into northern Afghanistan). The Beshir in the Khanat of Bokhara and along the banks of the Amu Darya formed a large part of this tribe. They seem to have broken away from the other Ersari and developed their own style of ornamentation, rich in design and colour. Instead of the rigid, geometrical regularity of the products of the Turkoman tribes in Turkestan, they used softer contours as found in flowers, a more imaginative arrangement of pattern together with a gayer colour range.

illus. 13



Four guls can be distinguished:

1. A flattened octagon with thin lines fanning out and which end in double hooks; the centre is adorned with a realistic flower. Later the gul becomes simplified and reduced to a plain, elongated octagon, the centre of which shows a geometrical arrangement in an almost square rectangle. (plates 41, 51, 53).

2. Stepped lozenges divided into four parts and decorated with flowers crossing the central field of the rug in unending repetition. (plate 42.)

3. Rosette guls alternating with cruciform guls of the same size, decorated with eight rays and linked together by a trellis of lines and flowers. (plate 55.)

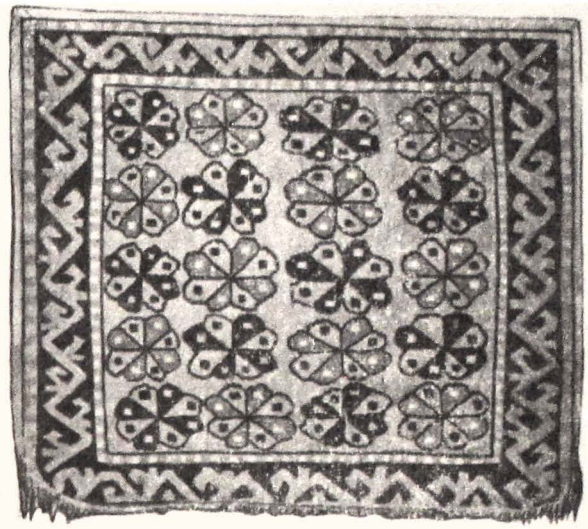
4. Guls of a rare, special group which, because of their ascending pattern, cannot belie the floral origin of the gul in 1. above (plate 44). The juval in plate 45 also belongs to this type; the last stage of its development in the nineteenth century may be seen in plate 56. (See also plate 37 in Milhofer.)

Without doubt the above-mentioned guls belonged to four offshoots of the Beshir and were used only by them. We have no knowledge of the names of these tribal groups. One could only guess at them, and that is not in the spirit of this book.

Apart from these clearly definable groups, there are other Beshir rugs influenced by Persian and Caucasian designs (the "Herati" and "Tarantula" pattern), as well as a multitude of other pieces which surprise by the imagination revealed in their ornaments (plates 43, 54, and many pictures in other specialist books).
The borders of Beshir rugs do not offer anything out of the ordinary, but follow the central field of the rug in their ornamentation and colouring.
The structure of the Ersari-Beshir is just as varied as their ornamentation. Rugs in group 1 have mostly a strong, thick warp and weft with the weft threads lying obliquely. The pile is short. Group 2 is flatter, thin and finer, with a pile of medium height. Group 3 comprises heavier, thicker rugs of medium fineness with a deeper pile. The handle is rather similar to that of Afghans. Group 4 is flat, flabby, loosely knotted with a fairly long pile.
Only wool is used for the pile and in old and antique pieces this can have a silky sheen.
The colour range of the Ersari-Beshir is the lightest and friendliest of the Turkoman rugs. Almost without exception the predominant colour is red in shades from light cherry to vermilion. Ornaments glow in light, medium and greenish blue, while yellow, a special characteristic of the Beshir, is used more generously (principally in guls and minor borders), than in any other type of Turkoman rug. The clearer the yellow, the lighter and more lustrous the blue, the older the rug. Later, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the yellow tends to a brownish yellow or orange, and the blue becomes dull and dirty.
Beshir rugs are always in Kelleyi sizes (at least twice as long as they are wide) and can reach the surprising length of 23ft. Possibly this is due to the proximity of Bokhara with its larger rooms. Many Juvals and Torbas were knotted, but scatter rugs are rarer.
The prayer rugs (Namaslik) belong artistically to the most important products, and are certainly the most sought after. Again and again the eye is delighted by the slender Mihrab, with its double hooks surrounded by and containing realistically worked flowers. Gogel's book afford us the rare glimpse of a Beshir prayer rug from the seventeenth century. By including it in this work it is hoped that a wider section of the public will become acquainted with it (illus. 13).

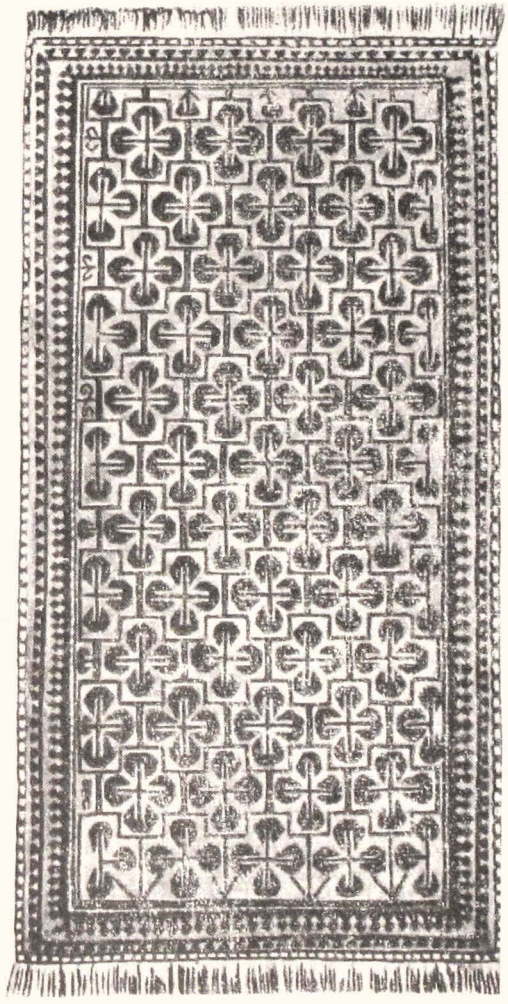
KIRGHIZ

The limitless expanse of the northern steppes was traversed by the Kirghizi who wove genuine nomad, coarsely constructed rugs. The ornamentation is simple, and the colours limited to a few shades of red and blue. Few found their way to Europe and can hardly be said to appeal to the collector's sophisticated taste in Central Asian rugs.
The reader's indulgence is, therefore, craved, if three typical examples in black and white only are reproduced here. (Illus. 14, 15, 16, from D. T. Umetalyeva's book "Kirghiz Rugs" 1966).



illus. 14

illus. 15



illus. 16

Turkoman rugs from Afghanistan

The rugs listed in this book under the heading of Afghan were not in the strictest sense knotted by Afghans. It is only more recently that rugs were produced on a commercial scale by the Afghans. What is meant here are the rugs of the same Turkoman tribes who lived in Turkestan. They migrated to Afghanistan either voluntarily of forcibly, and brought their colourings and treasured designs with them. We find, therefore, in the north of Afghanistan near Kerki and the Turkoman frontier, Turkoman tribes whose names are familiar to us from Turkestan. In particular it is the Ersari and the Kizil Ayaks, but also the Saryqs and Salors lived in northern Afghanistan. They wove their traditional designs into the rugs which, for all that, deviate slightly from those produced in Turkestan. Thus pieces came into existence which really puzzled the experts. To these belong the group of Afghan-Saryqs which Grote-Hasenbalg ("Meisterwerke orientalischer Knüpfkunst") describes in plate 46 and an example of which is reproduced by McMullan in plate 124 (Study also No. 15 in the Fogg Museum catalogue). Perhaps a comparison can best serve to solve the problem. If a vineyard on the Moselle is noted for a particular grape, the connoisseur knows immediately which vineyard it is by the taste, fragrance and bouquet of the wine. If the vine is planted but a few miles away, say, on the middle reaches of the Rhine, a wine will result which will still have some of the qualities of the Moselle, but which will nevertheless be totally different to the expert. This comparison is equally apt for rugs knotted by Turkoman tribes in Afghanistan. The water is different, the wool from the sheep is not the same, and the colourings have a different effect. Because of the thicker woollen threads used for the structure of the rug, the handle and back differ from the rugs knotted in Turkestan. The stitch is coarser, the pile is higher, yet they remain unmistakeably Turkoman in their origin.

What was said in the chapter on determining the age of Turkoman rugs is also generally true of Ersari rugs and those knotted by other tribes in Afghanistan. In really old Afghans one finds a gaiety of colour which, compared whith to-day's products, would seem improbable: radiant brick red with light blue and pale green: yellow guls alternating with light blue minor guls: then again, the finest shades of lilac, pale cochineal and brown reds. They afford the observer a surprisingly enchanting insight into the magnificence of the past art of rug knotting.

In his article "Nomad and Peasant Rugs in Afghanistan" (Baessler Archives, New Edition, Vol XII. 1964), Dietrich H. G. Wegner gives a first-class review of the areas of rug production in Afghanistan, and of the tribes to which the weavers belong. He mentions how the offshoots of the Ersari around the seventeenth century crossed the Amu Darya towards the south, and how parts of Chodors coming from the west penetrated into the Bokhara area and then, via

Pendeh, into northern Afghanistan. Salors and Saryqs also sought refuge in the north-west of Afghanistan in the nineteenth century. The Ersari were numerically the largest, but Kizil Ayaks were also well represented. Both Wegner and Mme. Pirkulyeva put them down as a minor group of the Ersari. Even Merv and Akhal Tekke are said to have taken refuge in and around Herat. Saryq-Turkomans settled in the district of Maymana and Salors in the area around Marutshak.

Thus a clarification has been found for a certain group of controversial rugs of which one is illustrated in this book, plate 60, and another in the Heimtex of May 1968. They were produced by descendants of an old Chodor or Yomud tribe who found refuge in Afghanistan after having come form the Pendeh area. They called themselves "Chub-Bash". And so the almost exclusive use of the "Tauk-Nuska" in the major gul with the hooked Yomud trendril border is explained.

Referring to the "*Saryq*"-bag produced in Afghanistan, illustrated in plate 63, one finds on page 149 of Wegner's article: „*In exceptionally good pieces, particularly the Saryq, red and green ornaments in silk are to be found.*"

The "*Ersari*" used principally two types of gul in their rugs, the gulli-gul and the Temirdshin-gul. Their shapes underwent several changes without, however, losing their main characteristics. The minor gul consisted mostly of a star-shaped group of small, interconnected flowers.

The dimensions of Afghan rugs are multifarious and differ from the Turkoman in that large rugs, often well exceeding 7 ft. 3 in. × 10 ft. 10 in., were knotted. As far as the structure is concerned, differences are apparent between them and Turkestan rugs, as both warp and weft as well as pile consist of thicker threads.

The warp threads lie at a more or less acute angle to one another, giving the back a ribbed appearance. Brown and brownish red shades predominate, but there are many old rugs which tend to blueish violet.

The following basic list can be drawn up:

1. *Ersari* Rugs: brown to brownish red, sometimes tending to violet.
2. *Kizil Ayak* rugs: mainly a warm brown, but frequently tending to a reddish colour.
3. *Chub-Bash* rugs: similar to the blueish red of the Yomuds.
4. *Saryq* and *Salor* rugs: red to deep blueish red. They belong to the darkest rugs. Typical is a light, fine shade of lilac in the guls.
5. *Beshir* rugs: these have retained their characteristic colours, and accordingly show a fresher brown red, with small yellow areas.
6. *Kerki* rugs: the Kerkis are generally recognized by the lighter colouration and silkier wool.

The reader is requested in other cases to refer to the individual plates. The tribal "league table" in Wegner's essay is recommended to anyone who has an interest in them from an ethnological point of view.

The handle of Afghan rugs is considerably firmer and heavier than in Turkestan rugs. In the case of pieces produced by the Saryqs they can be almost board-like. Very old Ersari rugs are, in some exceptional instances, flabby and loosely knotted.

BELOUCH RUGS

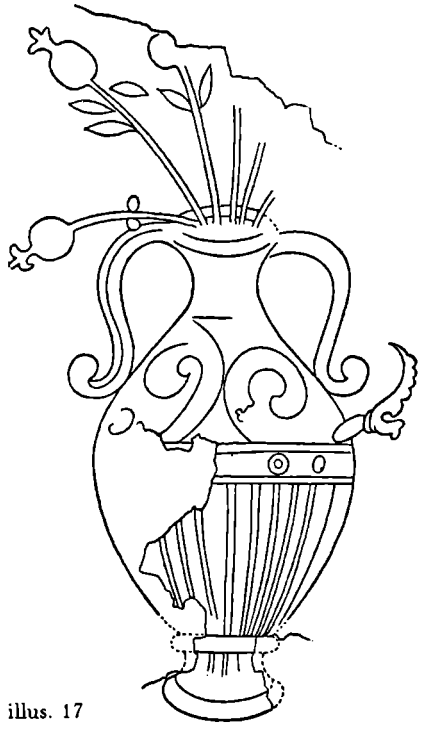
The design in Belouch rugs knotted in parts of Afghanistan, West-Turkestan and East-Iran, cannot be considered as an independent design. Guls of almost all the Turkoman tribes appear in them, and are used without account being taken of their original composition. Thus it often occurs that major guls become minor guls and vice versa. In fact, sometimes a major gul of the inner field degenerates into an ornamentation in the border. See plate 65. One differentiates Meshed Belouch, Herat Belouch and Arab Belouch. The finest and the oldest are the Meshed Belouch. These have a predominantly very dark colour. Herat Belouch are lighter in their overall appearance; the stitch is less fine and not so carefully knotted. The quality of the Arab Belouch leaves much to be desired. A characteristic of the Belouch is that the weavers use more than one technique in the knotting of the rug. For instance, a fine Meshed Belouch often has an embroidered kilim. Indeed, there are even rugs, as in the example illustrated in plate 66 which has the kilim technique for the inner field, whereas the border is knotted.

The stitch in good, old pieces can be very fine, the wool lustrous and the handle velvety. A characteristic of the old Belouch rugs which must be mentioned here, is that parts of the deep brown or black wool, which is often used in them, disintegrate with the passage of time. In addition to scatter rugs and a mass of prayer rugs pieces were also produced up to 6 ft. × 13 ft. 2 in., but always in an elongated, Kelleyi size.

These rugs deserve much more of the collector's attention than has hitherto been devoted to them, by virtue of the diversity, fineness and restful harmony of colour. Up till a short time ago it was still possible to get hold of really valuable examples of this folkloristic art for little money; but for some surprising and inexplicable reason the budding collector failed to recognize the beauty of these rugs and preferred the mass produced items of Anatolian prayer rugs in glaring colours. Only two unusual pieces are illustrated here, since countless examples of Belouch rugs have been reproduced, both in colour and in black and white, in books on rugs in the recent past.

East-Turkestan rugs

Rug weaving tribes lived in the oases of Yarkand, Kashgar and Khotan. They are to be found on the old silk route from China to the Near East in the Tarim basin, and have been producing rugs from time immemorial. In the remoteness of Central Asia, these rugs have retained their stylistic and colour characteristics. Even such relatively near neighbours as the Turkoman of Turkestan, or the Chinese in the East in Ning Hsia, and the Mongols, exerted little influence on the design of these rugs. This is all the more surprising when one considers that the original inhabitants who belonged to an Indo-Germanic speaking race, were subjugated by Turkoman tribes towards the end of the ninth century, and thereafter intermarried with them. Equally astonishing is the fact that Buddhism, Islam and temporary domination by China was not able to influence to any great degree the shape of designs or the gaiety of colour in the rugs. The predominant red of the Turkomans in all its shades had just as little affect as the flat, unimaginative and rather limited Chinese taste in colour. Bidder expands on this topic: "*Throughout the course of history the above-mentioned physical circumstances of these oasis states and the geographical conditions of being scattered over an immense area, precluded any formation of a powerful, political unity. Similarly, worthwhile defence against their many military conquerors was to no avail. Preoccupied with their agricultural activities, their local arts and crafts, these oasis dwellers preferred subjugation and paying the price of peace and protection. As a result they have been able to preserve their national character trough the centuries down to the present day. Such a political shadow existence means a peaceful, unmolested life and the safety of their cultural possessions, handed down from generation to generation. By force of circumstance these cultures could not be widespread, since these oasis tribes had little room to move. Kashgar and Yarkand had areas of only 2,650 and 2,100 square kilometres respectively; Khotan had even less – only 1,600. Yet the small oasis state of Khotan, as will be seen, upheld 2,000 years of cultural tradition in its rug knotting.*"

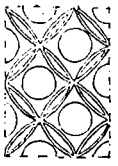


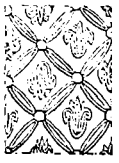
illus. 17

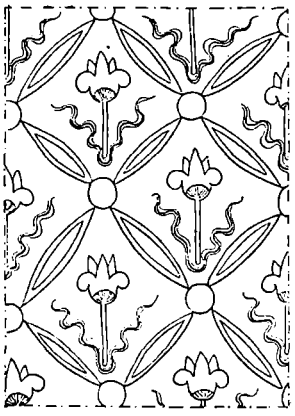
It was only with the opening-up of new trade routes in the nineteenth century

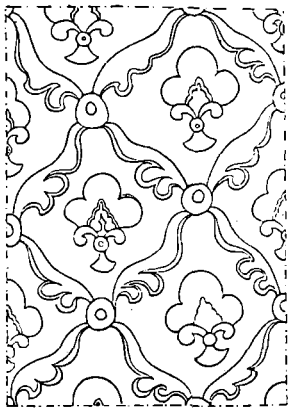
that the first examples of these rugs reached Europe. However, it must be remembered that a few centuries earlier the Chinese brought not only valuable jade (also found in the Tarim Basin), but also East-Turkestan rugs back to China. China had no production of her own in knotted rugs which can be traced back to earlier than the end of the seventeenth century. (There were probably patterned felt rugs in Mongolia and China). There are well-founded old Chinese reports as to the great value and desirability attached to the possession of knotted rugs. Only a small section of society could afford such expensive imports. Maurice S. Dimand traced such East-Turkestan rug products in dated Chinese pictures from the seventeenth century. These were called Kansu rugs. Rug patterns of this period can be thus determined fairly accurately. Proof of a highly sophisticated textile production has been found in the excavations of Sir A. Stein in Niya and Lou-lan, east of Khotan. They date from the third century A. D. Unfortunately these are such small fragments that apart from a few lines, one cannot even guess at the complete composition of the rug. At any rate, they were knotted rugs.

The excavations in Pyanjikent (600 to 800 A. D.) revealed a splendid mural in one of the rooms of the palace. An overlord is depicted sitting amongst other people on a rug. As to the pattern in later rugs it is the reproduction of a vase filled with pomegranates (illus. 17) that is significant in this connexion, as well as two reconstructed rugs in murals (illus. 18 and 19). It is in these murals that the much softer, more flexible and colourful style finds its expression, in contrast to the strict, geometric forms of West-Turkoman rugs. In the earliest preserved East-Turkoman rugs this feeling for flexible shapes and strong, harmonious colours is still clearly evident.









illus. 18 illus. 19

The findings of Amy Briggs tell us that East Turkestan rugs have been depicted in miniatures of the Timurid period. After all, Samarqand, together with Bokhara and Herat, was an important cultural and scientific centre, and undoubtedly exerted an influence on East-Turkestan, especially since Kashgar was at times the residence of Chaghataic rulers. Illus. 11 and 12 give an idea of the beauty and harmony of these rugs which were produced in various contrasting colours.

Whilst the gul is the dominant theme in all Turkoman rugs, it faces competition from other rug designs in East Turkestan, where the stark angularity of the geometrised patterns is departed from. Instead, floral ornaments are used in endless repetition with great effect. One is thus tempted to group the rugs according to their design, as Bidder does in his book: pomegranate design, medallion design, casette-gul-design.

A different avenue is explored here. Most important is the principle of placing the rugs from the point of view of structure and style. From Bidder's book one could get the certainly unintended impression that there were only Khotan rugs and that the products of Yarkand and Kashgar were "peripheral" so to speak. But the opposite is true. It may well be that the greatest rug production took place in Khotan; as far as quality and artistic talent are concerned, Yarkand and Kashgar rugs were, in the main, far superior.

KASHGAR RUGS

The most artistic and the most mature rugs as regards colour and design were knotted in Kashgar. It is not the nomad we are dealing with here but the elite in artistic talent. This is all the more understandable when one considers that Kashgar was the centre of luxurious life. Bidder quotes Fu Ching in his travelogue of the eighteenth century: "*In the Turkoman town of Kasghar there lives a number of courtesans in great luxury, well versed in the art of singing and dancing. Apart from the courtesans there are also good-living people who are extremely experienced weavers of gold and silver embroidered silk rugs and pile rugs in five colours. Furthermore, they engrave gold, work in jade, do chased copper and inlaid work – and all this with the utmost skill. Turkoman boots and hats for the men, "ho-chi-pa-k" for the women to tie their hair, etc. – all this comes from Kashgar. Saddle covers are made from embroidered deer leather, "ho-la", mirrors and glass mirrors, corals, pearls, jewels, and jade trinkets, gold brocade and blue and white cotton goods*".

Naturally, this high standard also found its expression in the knotted products of this oasis town. It is thanks to the cooperation of the Textile Museum in Washington and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London that rugs could be illustrated, which bear witness to this highly artistic epoch. Plate 68 and plate 69 give an idea of the intricacy of design, of the sure sense for proportion and of refined, charming colour combination. The delicate branch-work of the field, combined with pastel shades, on which a main motif predominates, is obviously a product from Kashgar. The peony, as the example for, and the precursor to the gul could not be depicted more clearly than in the rug in plate 68. In a simplified form it was used as a type of gul in Khotan rugs, rows of which covered the rug. There it was used not only as a detached ornament, but also surrounded by squares, thus forming a lattice gul covering the whole of the central field. The superior purity in the design of the peony in Kashgar rugs became the simplified, rigid everyday gul of mass-produced Khotans.

It is, therefore, not surprising that apart from woollen pieces, magnificent silk rugs were made in Kashgar. These satisfied the demands of the rich and at the same time were much sought-after export goods to China. The highly developed design was particularly suitable for execution in silk. The attempt to improve the effect even more, resulted in signs of decadence – an occurence frequently found in highly developed cultures. Gold and silk threads were introduced into the basic structure of the rug, so that the design, worked in silk, stood out in relief. These rugs, too, were copied in Khotan and thrown onto the market in a progressively misunderstood and distorted form.

The structure of the Kashgar rug is comparatively finely woven, almost exclusively in undyed cotton for the warp and weft. The adjustment is, however fine enough not to make the knots themselves appear loose. The pile has been kept as low as the density of the warp and weft would allow.

Nothing can be said with certainty about the age of the oldest Kashgar rugs. The pieces in plates 68 and 69 are from the seventeenth century at least.

YARKAND RUGS

Even if there are certain similarities in their ornamentation Yarkand rugs have so many stylistic characteristics that they can hardly be mistaken for Kashgar rugs and certainly not for Khotans. The peculiarities of the Yarkands are clearly

seen in plates 78, 79, 80. The design is stronger and more striking, the use of ornamentation is extremely limited and vivid colours are employed with great boldness. The difference between Kashgar and Yarkand rugs can be illustrated by taking as a parallel to the differences between Anatolian rugs of the sixteenth century on the one hand, and Caucasian rugs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on the other. Though many ornaments and colour composition are similar, the Caucasian rug is much bolder in its use of colour, much more clear-cut in its design than the more refined Anatolian rug with its stronger artistic influence. The medallion-Ushak of the sixteenth century, with its delicate tracery in the ground, is like the Kashgar in this parallel. The overwhelming, almost barbarous power of the colours and outlines of the Caucasian rug is shared to a certain extent in this comparison by the Yarkand.

In contrast to the Kashgars and Khotans, the Yarkand has a strong, cotton warp and weft of much stouter threads. The warps are often on different levels and do not lie flat. Furthermore, there is another characteristic, namely, the use of blue-dyed cotton wefts. In fact, sometimes parts of the warp are in blue cotton in the oldest pieces. For example, the Yarkand illustrated in plate 78 has alternating blue and undyed warp threads every 6 cm.

Not only wool was used for the pile surface in Yarkand rugs, but also silk. Probably silk was a more suitable material to dye because of existing water conditions, for in no other rug is the red and the blue so intense, of such consistency that they appear almost too hard to the eye, even in pieces well over a hundred years old.

There are two predominant designs in Yarkand rugs. First, the pomegranate design: a lattice-work of branches rises from two vases, with pomegranates hanging from the boughs. The design is so cleverly executed that only the practised eye notices that at the other end of the rug the same tree grows from a second vase. From whichever end one examines the rug, the same picture appears. This "trick" design undoubtedly was a relatively late development. The original form was that encountered in smaller rugs, in which the pomegranate tree grew out of only one vase (see plate 88).

The second design consists of one or more guls of disc-like shape, which contrast sharply with the sparsely decorated field. Normally there are three guls of the same or similar shape, more rarely one or two guls, and very rarely four guls. Sometimes the central gul has a completely different shape, on a plain ground (see plate 80).

Later, since the middle of the nineteenth century, other designs were also used in the train of the general profusion of patterns, which were otherwise found only in Khotan rugs. Probably the weavers' production had adapted itself to some degree to fashion and demand.

KHOTAN RUGS

Export was the principal aim of weavers' products centered in the oasis belt of Khotan. The district was, after all, closest to China and Mongolia, and many rugs are thought to have found their way to Tibet and India. From the point of view of style the Khotan rug is distinguished by its greater diversity and changing shapes of design. Here, too, the pomegranate design is equally as important as the gul design. This latter falls into two sub-groups:

1. Rugs which show three large disc-medallions on an irregularly patterned

field, filled with flowers and other floral ornaments. The same arrangement is found with two medallions and, in smaller pieces, with one medallion. The medallion-gul is dominant in all these rugs and this is what gives the rug its character. There is a sharp contrast in colour between the gul and the surrounding area.

2. Rugs in which there are no large medallions in the design, but in which rosette-like guls appear, developed from the peony mentioned in the Kashgar section. These are introduced regularly over the entire rug in a continous pattern. The colours of the individual guls alternate either diagonally or vertically. The rug is also filled vertically with "casket-shaped" guls with variations in the colours. Frequently the casket effect consists less of straight line quadrants than of a decorated meandering contour. It is not easy to say which type is the older, the detached or the casket gul, for casket guls were known in Pazyryk rugs. It could be maintained that the detached gul developed from the peony of the Kashgar and Yarkand rugs, whereas the casket gul was borrowed from the Turkoman tribes which adhered to the traditional form.

Compared with the Kashgar and Yarkand rugs, the clarity of design, harmony of colour and the balance of the central field to the border, leave much to be desired.

Apart from early pieces, as in plates 86, 87, it appears to have been more important in Khotan to produce rugs in quantity, rather than to pay attention to artistic detail and content.

This attitude is also borne out by the structure. It is looser in Khotan rugs than in Kashgars. The warps are flat and are made of cotton. The wefts are mostly of brown wool. It is worthwhile remembering at this stage that the wefts of Kashgars are undyed wool and those of Yarkands blue-dyed cotton. Khotan rugs can, therefore, be identified by their structure. In addition, as the weave is looser, the pile must be longer, if the rug is to have some modicum of effect and durability. Resulting from the methods of production used in Khotan, the pile material is not so carefully dyed. Harsh, discordant colour combinations are just as frequently encountered as the faded tuft ends of the pile. Silk rugs were also knotted in Khotan, some even with metal thread embroidery; but because of their substance they never achieved the effect that Kashgars and Yarkands attained.

All East-Turkestan rugs possessed a further characteristic which must be pointed out, namely, their size. With few exceptions they are at least twice as long as they are wide. The reason for this is to be found in the use for which they were intended, i. e. for rooms in houses of a particular type. Bidder writes:"*For ages, huts of unbaked bricks and mud were the main form of building in the oases on the southern edge of the Tarim Basin. It is of no importance here, whether the domed form of building, as practised by the old Turanic population, was used, or later, the form of flat-roofed mud huts, since the Turkoman peoples who came in the second half of the first millenium A. D. did not erect cupolar-shaped buildings; at any rate, this form of building decided the rectangular shape of rooms, mats and rugs. Peculiar to these houses is the "Aivan", a type of atrium, around the walls of whoch a broad gallery, one metre high, was constructed. On this – similar to the Chinese k'ang – the inhabitants live, receive visitors, eat and sleep. It was in these galleries that the original sizes of the rugs were determined. For, as the excavations have shown, it has not changed for thousands of years, and is simply called nowadays "sūpā sūpā", an Arabic loan word, whereas "aivan" is of*

Persian origin. The "aivan" obtains its light from an opening in the ceiling protected by a raised roof. This is still called a "tungluk", as is found in nomads'-tents."

This method of building is still current to-day. The dimensions and shapes are, therefore, conditioned by the size of the aivan galleries, and consequently give rise to sizes generally from 3 ft. 7 in. × 7 ft. 3 in. up to 6 ft. 6 in. × 13 ft. 2 in. Also runners and saddlecovers were made. A parallel can be found to the Turkoman tribes of Anatolia who also produced prayer rugs with an uneven number of niches (5, 7, 9, 11). Not only was the basic colour of each niche different, but also the shape of their floral ornaments. (See plates 71 and 97.)

As might be expected, the rug industry of Khotan was the first to break away from traditional, natural dye recipes and to use industrial dyes. That which wars, suppression, reparations could not achieve was quickly effected by aniline dyes. The East-Turkestan rug lost its original character and thereby its value as a collector's item.

YOMUD of the Ogurjalis

Wool · About 1800 · 5 ft 5 in x 6 ft 8 in

Karl Pfatschbacher Collection, Linz/Austria

IV. Historical Background

Central Asia in world history

This is a book about the art of carpet-weaving in Central Asia. This craft, its techniques and motifs, its social importance and artistics character, like any other element of civilization, can only really be understood by considering its entire evolution, its history. It cannot be separated from the civilization from which it has grown and which itself is interwoven with many previous and neighbouring cultures. Hence it seems necessary at least to outline the history of Central Asia, with, of course, the main emphasis on those peoples and cultures that have been associated with carpet weaving right up to the present day.

Central Asia is the region between the Caspian Sea in the west and the Chingan mountain system in the east, between the mountain range bordering on southern Siberia in the north and the Hindu Kush and the Himalayas in the south. It does not drain into the high seas, lies in the heart of the largest unbroken land mass on earth, and is intersected by many mountain ranges. The greater part of this vast region receives very little rainfall on account of the adjacent mountain tracts and subcontinents, and consists mainly of desert, semi-desert and steppe formations. The mountainous areas collect most of what little rainfall there is and are therefore the most fertile parts. Natural oases were formed on the banks of the rivers which rise in the higher reaches, at the points where they enter the basins, and man has for thousands of years brought them under cultivation and made them the centre of his economic and social life. Only here could relatively densely populated communities thrive. Elsewhere in the wide expanses of the basins only smaller groups of people with their animal stock have found it possible to exist, originally as hunters and collectors, then as nomadic shepherds.

Central Asia is partly cut off from the outside world by enormous mountain chains (ridges of Western China, Himalayas, Karakoram reaches and Hindu Kush in the south, the mountains of Southern Siberia in the north, the Chingan in the east). In other parts, especially in the east and the west, the frontiers are wide open, with the steppes running into Northern China, Eastern Europe and Western Siberia. The mountain masses of the interior, especially the Pamirs, the ranges bordering on Western Turkistan and the Tien-Shan, cut the region into two vast segments: Inner Asia, embracing the whole of Mongolia and Tibet, on the one side and Middle Asia on the other. Steppe corridors such as the Jungarian gate and routes through high passes link these two halves together, thus making it possible to bring the eastern and western parts of the double continent of Eurasia into contact. The oases were often landmarks in the movements of peoples and civilisations, even of armies and traders, and their importance was emphasized by the silk caravans which in the age of the Caesars and the Han emperors linked the Chinese Empire with the Roman Empire.

Thus, over the millenia, Central Asia was not only a massive block dividing the civilisations flanking it in the west, south-west, south and east, but also a centre which was again and again the scene of important historical contacts and made such developments possible. As far as the evolution of this region can be traced, its peoples are constantly to be seen in the role of intermediary, thus performing an important function for the entire history of Eurasia.

Of course it is not this intermediary role that first comes to mind when we reflect on the peoples of Central Asia, a region which we always associate with names like the Huns, Turks and Mongols, tribes known to most of us as nomads and plundering warriors. In fact the nomadic horsemen of Central Asia were not only a constant threat to the steppes themselves from the first half of the last thousand years before Christ but also invaded, conquered and plundered highly civilised neighbouring countries. The Chinese had to defend themselves against their attacks since the early Chou era. In the writings of Zoroaster the people are called upon to take up arms against them, and the Achaemenides and Assyrians sorely felt their aggression, while the invasions of Europe by the Huns, Mongols, Magyars and Turks are known well enough. But these terrible armies were anything but undisciplined. They were in most cases held together by an iron hand and brilliantly led by outstanding commanders. Nor should we forget that it was the pax mongolica which – for the last time – made possible intensive contacts right through Central Asia, linking China with India, East Persia and Europe, and resulting once again in a lively cultural and economic exchange between these civilisations.

But the interchange of ideas, patterns and goods of all kinds between East Asia, the Near East and Southern Asia, right through Central Asia, goes back much further. Long before Christ was born, Chinese silks were brought to Europe, just as ceramic patterns and designs from Persia and eastern Europe came to China, and the stimulus for bronze moulding was passed from the ancient Orient to the Hwang-Ho. The routes taken are still uncertain as archeological surveys of Central Asia are still in their infancy. Nor do we know which peoples were involved in these movements, but it is certain that east Indo-European and even west Indo-European groups ruled over and settled in large parts of Central Asia in the last thousand years before Christ. Iranians or kindred groups were neighbours of the ancient Chinese in the area known today as Kansu. They were not barbarians but – even judging by modern standards – highly civilised peoples. For many centuries, problably almost two thousand years, China is believed to have been mainly the receiving partner, as the people living close to the ancient Oriental civilisation transmitted parts of this culture to East Asia.

Contacts between East and West in Central Asia appear to have been far more varied and reciprocal during the Han era and subsequent epochs. From the west came Buddhism with its art – in the form of Gandhara art with its Graeco-Roman elements – as well as considerable Parthian-Sassanian and, later since the 7th century, early Islamic influence, while large parts of T'ang culture and art was adopted by the West. The era of the T'ang dynasty was indeed a phase of most intensive contacts between East and West Asia, and it was natural that, as in the past, these exchanges should take place in Central Asia, as was again the case later within the Mongol empire.

In the oasal region of Turan, East Turkestan and Kansu, where such contacts were most frequent, these developments have left behind clear traces. We

know the ruins of East Turkistan which today lie buried in the sand, the cities and kingdoms which grew up in the Bactrian basin after the campaigns of Alexander, and the long-lasting influence of Hellenism in that region, as well as the great centres of the Buddhist cult at Bamian and in Kansu. And we know how important the spread of Islam in Central Asia, beginning in the eighth century and eventually reaching East Turkistan, became for the culture of that region. Although many records and documents of the older phases have been lost forever as a result of countless wars, the ruins that have remained – apart from later architecture – testify to Islamic influence, usually transmitted by Persians. The Buddhist missions to Tibet and Mongolia from India and China have left the stamp of their highly developed culture and art on both these vast regions. The Buddhist temples in Tibet and Kansu as well as the Buddhist monasteries in northern Mongolia and the yurts used as temples by the nomadic Tibetans and Mongols, indicate the importance of this element, which came lastly from India, for the civilisation of Inner Asia.

This enumeration of outside cultural phenomena which had their origin in highly civilised neighbouring areas could give the impression that the civilisation of Central Asia is simply a hotch-potch of external influences. This is certainly not the case, for everywhere elements of old and sometimes ancient Central Asian traditions have played their part, either interspersed with other cultures or in conjunction with them. Even in prehistoric times many parts of Central Asia had their own characteristics. During the Iranian domination of the steppes, at the time of the Scythians and their successors, the animal form, which – fed from many sources – is today often acknowledged as the central feature of steppe art, thrived in many parts of Central Asia. But it should not be forgotten that the tombs of the monarchs of those days contained not only wonderful gold and silver ornaments and jewelry but also objects which were, and remained, much more characteristic of the culture of the steppe tribes than the short-lived craftsmanship in precious metals – knotted carpets. The oldest knotted woolen pile carpet came from one of the hillside graves of Pazyryk in the Altai range. Its pattern consists not only of animals and horsemen but also of many geometrical ornaments which have been found over thousands of years in rugs made by nomadic tribes. As far as art is concerned, these seem to represent the main continuous element of the culture of Central Asia. Their beauty and variety, their quality and phantasy, bear testimony to the autonomous culture of those peoples.

After the decline of the Iranian-Indo-European predominance in Central Asia, the Hsiung Nu conquered Inner Asia, only themselves to be defeated by the Chinese. Nomadic groups from the southern reaches of the Chingan ousted the Chinese and there then followed a series of shortlived dynasties and states until the Turks, penetrating from the Altai mountains and the neighbouring regions to the east, which together formed a connecting link between Central Asia and southern Siberia and between the Mongoloids in the south and the Europides in the north, made themselves masters of Inner Asia and soon also of all Central Asia. Here, too, there was a sequence of ruling dynasties and tribes, such as the Tukhüeh, the Oghuz, the Uygur and the Kirghiz. A considerable number of these moved south-west, entered and occupied Central Asia, and from there advanced to Iran. By the 11th and 12th centuries, Turkish dynasties held power in large areas of the Islamic Orient for they had identified themselves with Islam at an early stage.

A branch of the Turks, the Seljuks, conquered Persia, from where they advanced to Asia Minor. One of their fractions, the Ottomans later ruled the Middle East and the Balkans.

Even the Mongol interlude hardly altered the spreading Turkish influence in large parts of the Orient and Central Asia. A small nomadic clan led by an able young man named Temuchin made itself independent in central Mongolia and after enforcing the support of neighbouring groups and tribes subjugated first Inner Asia then China, Middle Asia, Persia, and parts of eastern Europe. The young Temuchin later assumed the name of Jenghiz Khan and brought great fame on his native tribe, the Mongols. And even when his empire crumbled after 150 years, some parts remained viable long afterwards. Towards the end of the fourteenth century, one of these, again under the leadership of a great soldier and statesman, grew into a new, this time Turkish, empire, that of Timur-i-Lenq, who conquered Inner Asia and Persia and entered Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and India. Although his empire soon declined, his descendants created another powerful empire in India, and not until the British rule was firmly established were the last reigning descendants of Jenghiz Khan, the Grand Moguls, removed from power.

It is true that the Turks had made their mark in world history before the rise of Islam, but their influence did not spread to Middle Asia, Persia and other parts of the Orient until the Islamic era. This religion was soon adopted by the Turks of Middle Asia, and it was not long before it became the dominant religion. This was not only to have the greatest influence on the history of the entire region but also on the evolution of Turkish culture. As nomads they had forced their way into Middle Asia and the Islamic Orient and like nearly all other nomadic tribes they were rich in myths and epics, but painting and sculpture, which we normally consider to be the most important forms of visual art, were a very minor element of their culture. Siuce the time of Pazyryk they seem to have maintained and developed mainly what we refer to as geometrical forms, especially in the leather and textile goods made by the women, whether they be pure, originally figure-shaped, ornaments, or symbols. With the advent of Islam other similar shapes came from Persia, mostly animals and plant patterns with occasional human figures, but on the whole old tribal traditions were maintained and even fostered because of the Islamic preference for ornament. Thus the art of Turk peoples which manifested itself in textiles, leather goods and metalware – with the exception of architecture – remained characterised by the ornament and the decorative use of a few figures, as evidenced chiefly by their carpets, right up to recent times.

In the meantime Europe had discovered America by sea, rounded the Cape of Good Hope and found a direct route to India, the spice islands of Indonesia, and the Far East. These sea routes were by far less dangerous than the land routes through Inner Asia, that turbulent region which had been weakened by countless wars and whose fate was hardly predictable. As a result, contacts between Europe, South and East Asia were now made by sea. The importance of the Near and Middle East had declined mainly by the loss of the traditional transit trade. This applied even more so to Central Asia, which now lay at the end of the world, divided into a large number of small states of varying duration, shaken by the ravages of war and the incursions of potentates seeking to extend their influence. It thus gradually became dominated by the Chinese, who had recuperated their strength since the seventeenth century, and

the Russians, who had recovered from the frights of the Mongol era. Their armies, whose equipment was more modern than that of the steppe horsemen, defeated the armies of Central Asia and made themselves masters of one city after the other. By the end of the nineteenth century the Russians and Chinese had shared this vast region between them, and it was due only to the conflict between Russian and British interests, that the last link in the chain of states founded in Central Asia, Afghanistan, maintained its independence.

Thus the old centre of the continent of Asia had now become a peripheric region and, in spite of its central position, was of no political significance. For most people it was an out-of-the-way subject except, perhaps, in connexion with carpets. Not until recently did it begin to regain some of its former status, when Russia put great effort into developing the economic potential of her Asian empire, and when China, under the pressure of her rapid population growth, embarked on a large-scale colonisation of her possessions in Central Asia wherever this was possible.

History and way of life of the Turkomans

To-day Turkomans live in the U.S.S.R., Afghanistan and Iran. The majority of them lives in the Turkoman S.S.R., stretching from the south-eastern shores of the Caspian Sea to the middle reaches of the Amu Darya, and bordering on Iran in the South, and Afghanistan in the South-East. In addition, Turkomans live in the adjoining Central Asian Soviet republics. The total figure of Turkomans living in the Soviet Union is less than one million.

In Afghanistan, Turkomans have settled in an area in the North-West which extends from Herat in the West over Mazar-i-Sherif near Balkh as far as the district of Kunduz in the East. Some arrived there very early, in pre-Mongolian times. Other Turkoman groups took refuge there only in the last two hundred years on the retreat from military or political pressure. The number of Turkomans living in Afghanistan may be in the region of two to three hundred thousand.

In Iran Turkomans live mainly in the North East of the country, between the Caspian Sea and the Afghanistan frontier. Here, too, there is an old, predominantly Turkoman settlement. The number of Iranian Turkomans is likely to be above one hundred thousand.

Nowadays almost all Turkomans are sedentary. In spite of many changes and vacillations the tradition of rug knotting is still much alive.

Origins

The name "Turkoman" appears for the first time in written sources in the tenth century. The Arabian geographer Maqdisi is the first to mention it, whereas the name "Turk", as W. Barthold points out, is used not only in early Chinese sources, but also by Arabian and Persian authors, as early as the seventh century[1].

Originally Iranian tribes such as the Massagetes, Sakas and Alans populated the area of modern Turkmenia. It is generally assumed that the Turkomans of to-day have assimilated and intermingled with large groups of these Iranian farmers and steppe peoples. This would explain why the Turkomans differ outwardly from the neighbouring Turkish peoples e.g. the Kazakhs and the Uzbeks. I. Javorsky and N. A. Aristov as early as the end of the last century, remarked on the dolichocephalic type of the Turkomans[2]. It appears doubtful, however, whether an uninterrupted family tree can be constructed from the Massagetes to the Turkomans, although this is something which has been attempted occasionally in recent times.

From the fourth, to the first half of the sixth century, first the Chionites, then the Hephtalites reigned in the steppes bordering on the north-east frontiers of Iran and a strong influence was soon exercised over the Sassanian empire.

Many writers consider these latter to be a branch of the Huns who were forced westwards out of their original settlements. Procopius describes the Hepthalites as being fair-skinned and as having regular features. No opinion shall be offered here as to whether the Hephtalites spoke a proto-Turkish language, or belonged to the Indo-European (East Iranian) language family[3]. In all probability survivors of these peoples were assimilated by the Turkomans. The Chinese pilgrim and traveller, Sung Yün, who visited the Hephtalites in 518, describes the dwelling of a Hephtalite prince and says: "The king has a square felt tent erected for himself, the sides of which are forty feet long; the inside walls are hung with wool rugs"[4].

In the sixth century the Turks advanced to the West. A vast Turkish empire extended from Mongolia to the Caspian Sea. It was divided into an eastern and western part. The ruler of the western empire, the Kakhan Istaemi and the Sassanid ruler of Iran, Chosrau I. Anushirvan became allies and about 562 the Hephtalites suffered a decisive defeat.

From this time on, Turkish peoples have never ceased to play an important part in the history of this region.

Although it cannot be said with certainty whether the Oghuz, who are generally thought to be the immediate ancestors of the Turkomans, are in fact the descendants of the Turks of the western empire – Barthold, for example, maintains this[5], – it can be assumed that they appeared in this part of Central Asia even before the occupation of Trans-Caspia and Trans-Oxania by the Arabs. Their country of origin, just as that of other Turk peoples, was probably in the Altai region. There are legends about their mythical ancestor Oghuz Khan from whom the twenty-four Oghuz or Turkoman tribes are supposed to have sprung. Arabian historians and geographers mention them in the ninth century along the banks of the Syr Darya and on the Ust-Urt Plateau west of the Aral Sea. Very early on, the Oghuz wandered along the east coast of the Caspian sea down to the mouth of the Gurgan. Arabian historians tell of the battles in this area of Tahir, son of the governor of North Khorassan, with the Oghuz, and of how he erected fortifications against the Oghuz nomads near Kizil Arvat between 830 and 844. There are reports about the presence of Oghuz on the Mangyshlak peninsula in the early tenth century[6]. This shift of emphasis of Oghuz-Turkoman influence from the North-East to the South-West continues during the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century and eventually reaches its climax in the conquests of the Seljuks.

Conquests and Foundation of States

The Seljuk dynasty belongs to the tribe of the Kinik which is mentioned in a list of Turkoman tribes by Mahmud Kashgari (i.e. Mahmud from Kashgar) at the end of the eleventh century, as well as by Rashid-ad-Din in the fourteenth century[7]. Their leader Seljuk, an Islamic convert, broke away from the other Oghuz in the second half of the tenth century, and went south. The son of Seljuk, Arslan, a successful general, was taken prisoner by Mahmud of Ghazni and sent to India. His successors Chagri Beg and Toghrul Beg crossed the Oxus (Amu Darya). As Emirs of Merv and Nishapur they defeated first the Ghaznavide ruler Mahsud in the vicinity of Merv in 1040 and became the masters of North-East Persia. The Seljuks under Toghrul conquered Transcaucasia in 1045 and Baghdad and Iraq in 1055. Finally, in 1071, the Seljuk ruler Alp Arslan

defeated the emperor of East Rome and consequently occupied the largest part of Asia Minor.

Within a very short time the Seljuk empire extended from Central Asia to Iran, Iraq and to Anatolia. Of all the Seljuk foundations the Rum-Seljuk empire in Konya lasted longest and also reached the highest degree of prosperity. Not only members of the Kinik tribe took part in these conquests, but also deputations from other Turkoman tribes. It is interesting to note that up till recently an administrative district in Anatolia bore the name of the Tekke tribe and that amongst the Anatolian Yuruks groups could be found which were called Salurlu and Saryqechi[8].

The arts prospered in the Rum-Seljuk empire. Seljuk architecture is one of the most outstanding features of Turkish art in this respect. The art of rug knotting was pointed out almost simultaneously by a European traveller, Marco Polo, and by an Arabian geographer, Ibn Said, in the thirteenth century. Ibn Said writes that the Turkomans of Asia Minor produced "Turkoman rugs which were then exported to (various) countries"[9]. In Central Asia the Seljuk reign was shorter lived. As early as the end of the tenth century there were Turkoman groups hostile to the Seljuks. Turkomans were party to the overthrow of the Seljuks in Central Asia, following the death of the last important Seljuk ruler, Sultan Sandshar, in 1167.

Meanwhile, in 1054, a group of Oghuz had started to move along the northern shores of the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea. This group was defeated on the Danube by the Byzantines in 1064, while, at the same time, other Oghuz attacked with far greater success in the south-east of the East Roman empire.

Another series of Turkoman conquests started on the western shore of the Caspian Sea in Azerbaijan of to-day. From there the dynasties of the Black and White Ram (Kara Konlyu and Ak Konlyu) founded states in Western Iran, East Anatolia, and North Iraq which successfully resisted the Timurids in the East and the Ottomans in the West, during the fifteenth century.

Turkomans did not participate only in the campaigns of the Seljuks, but were forced, like other Turk peoples, by Genghis Khan and his successors to serve in their armies. There was a Turkoman contingent in the army of Timur who repeatedly invaded East Anatolia and who defeated the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I near Ankara in 1402. Turkoman mercenaries and generals could be found in Syria and in the Mameluke empire in Egypt; moreover Turkomans have been known to have made their fortune in the services of the Almohades in Spain and to have founded Mauro-Turkoman noble families[10].

Turkmenia from the 15th to the 19th Century

In the ensuing centuries, up to the occupation of Turkmenia by the Russians, Turkoman history follows an unchanging pattern. In the North and in the East they are confronted by the Uzbek empires of Khiva (Khoresm) and Bokhara. In the South there is the Persian empire, in the South-East since the end of the 18th century Afghanistan. One moment the Turkomans are allied with one of these states, the next they are at war with them. Depending on the political and military strength or weakness of their neighbours their sphere of influence extends into the district of hiva, Bokhara or Persia. In the seventeenth century the Mongolian Kalmyks from the North exert great pressure on them, and some Turkoman tribes and groups come under their rule for a time. In addition,

during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries frequent skirmishes occur with the Kazakhs.

On the other side there have been but a few short periods during which one of the states succeeded in really dominating Turkmenia and the Turkomans. One of these was, for example, the period of the reign of Nadir Shah of Persia (1736 to 1747), who himself was of old Turkoman lineage[11]. The collection of tributes and taxes by the rulers of neighbouring states frequently escalated into exploitation and raids. At the same time military and plundering expeditions always were an important factor in Turkoman life. In some villages of North-East Persia one can see, even to-day, streets with low arches to make it more difficult during the Turkoman "Alamans" (plundering raids) for the attackers to enter the village and to carry off its inhabitants[12].

One must, however, regard these chronicles of Iran, of Khiva and Bokhara with certain reservations, whenever they mention the Turkomans. The historians wrote their books by order of and for the greater glory of their respective masters. The Turkomans, as the enemy, had to be vilified so that the heroic deeds of the Shah, Khan, or Emir could shine forth all the more brightly. There has been no written, Turkoman history, apart from legends and heroic songs which were handed down by word of mouth.

In all this, one must bear in mind that neither Turkmenia, nor the Turkoman tribes have ever reached political or military unity. If one tribe were to associate itself with Khiva, then another would be the ally of the Iranian rulers; sometimes, even parts of the same tribe fought on opposite sides. Furthermore, there were continuous skirmishes and, on occasions, even great battles amougst the Turkomans themselves. As early as the tenth century the traveller Ibn Fadlan reports that the Turkomans distinguished themselves by great independence and a strong sense of individualism. This characteristic has always been and still is in evidence.

Military and political events were frequently the causes of migrations: at times Turkoman groups would give way to superior forces and migrate to another area; sometimes they were carried off or re-settled by victorious princes. The frequency with which tribes moved from one area to another was not solely due to shifts in the balance of power or to military events. Climatic and hydrographic changes were also very significant. When the Saryqamysh, a lake in the North-West of Turkmenia, dried up, extensive migratory movements to the South and East resulted. Down through the centuries other changes can be observed, for instance, in the courses of the few rivers of this region, above all of the Amu Darya, or in the productiveness of the watering places[13]. Those Turkomans living in Mangyshlak and on the Uzboy endeavoured, therefore, to penetrate into the oasis areas to the North, East and South of their settlements, which were populated by Uzbek, Iranian, and settled Turkoman husbandmen.

It is remarkable that as soon as the Turkomans left their own country, Turkmenia, they managed to found new empires. In doing so they showed considerable talents for organisation and administration. In Turkmenia itself, however, they never succeeded in forming a state. They simply lived, side by side, as various tribes and tribal groups[14]. Outside Turkmenia, there were numerous Turkoman rulers, generals, statesmen, governors and philosophers. Yet the history of Turkmenia affords us comparatively few names.

It is true that there occur repeatedly sorts of tribal federations. However, these federations were but loosely-knit units and based mainly on the predominance

of a particular tribe at the time. None of them was of long duration. In reality, the history of the Turkomans in Turkmenia is nothing other than the history of their tribes and tribal groups, conditioned and determined by their tribal structure.

Tribal Organisation

The Turkomans have perhaps never, or at the most, only for very short periods of time, considered themselves a people or a nation. They did, however, have a marked tribal structure, remains of which can still be seen to-day.

This tribal organisation must not be equated with an archetypal form of community, since it has only a few superficial traits of that. W. König's hypothesis, that the tribal organisation of the Turkomans developed from military and administrative necessities seems very plausible. Since the Oghuz and Turkomans were themselves a conglomeration of various peoples, it is quite obvious that certain ideas and superficial forms of earlier types of society of one or the other people had to be adopted. W. König thinks that other Turkoman groups gathered voluntarily, or were forced to gather round successful military leaders and their smaller or larger families. Out of the need for a common genealogy these groups quickly adopted the family tree of their leader or made their family a member of the tree. This family tree would then be traced back to legendary times and ancestors[15].

Similar to other Turk peoples, the Turkoman tribes revert to the dual symmetry which continues downwards in the structure of the tribe. Thus the Tekke are divided into the Otamish and Tokhtamish groups, the Yomud into the southern part Kara-Choka and the northern Bairam-Shaly. The Kara-Choka in turn, are divided into the western Jafarbai and the eastern Atabai.

Originally there were said to have been twenty-four Oghuz or Turkoman tribes, according to Mahmud Kashgari and Rashid-ad-Din. Both writers are agreed on twenty-one of the names on the list[16]. Only very few of the Turkoman tribes mentioned in 1077 were still in existence in this century. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, especially, W. König assumes an intensive regrouping, amalgamation and changing of tribes. Quite recently Karpov mentioned twenty-four tribes, but is doubtful whether they are all, in fact, "tribes" and not merely splintergroups[17]. The figure twenty-four also reappears, corresponding to the subdivision of tribes, in the distribution of the canals in the Tekke's irrigation system in the oasis of Merv. In modern times, e.g. in the nineteenth century, changes and formation of new Turkoman tribes are by no means rare. This process of regrouping and amalgamation is particularly evident in those Turkoman tribes which have settled in Afghanistan, as D. Wegner clearly points out[18].

The disappearance of old names and the emergence of new names is not restricted to large tribal units, but is apparent also in the subdivisions of the tribes. This was facilitated by the fairly considerable autonomy of the individual tribal groups who sometimes lived at a great distance from one another, separated by other tribes and tribal groups, nomadic or settled.

The large tribes had no tribal overlord. More coherent groups were the two tribal divisions or the four subdivisions, e.g. Bek, Vekil (Tokhtamish), Bakhshi, Sytshmas (Otamish) of the Tekke. This division into two wings (of the Army) or into the two further subdivisions was retained not only in battle, but also when taking over land, or settling, in games and similar events.

A respected and influential part was played by the wise, old men, the Akhsakals ("Whitebeards"), as well as by the leaders in military and plundering raids, the Serdars. In troubled times the position of the latter was equal to that of a prince or chieftain. We know the names of a number of such military leaders who seemed to embody and dominate their tribal group or tribe. However, they did not found dynasties, although they were usually descendants of old, respected families, and enjoyed only limited authority.

The events of the last century, the rise of the Tekke at the expense of several other tribes, the increasing pressure from Russia on the traditional Turkoman area and the inability of the Turkomans to extend their domain permanently towards the Uzbek states and Iran – all this has led to the latest development: tribal structure has become merely a folkloristic element, but a certain feeling for Turkoman solidarity arose.

Tribal History

One tribe which parted company from the Oghuz very early on, is that of the *Khalaj*. Mahmud Kashgari mentions two Khalaj tribes among the Oghuz. Some scholars, however, doubt whether they were both really Turkoman. D. Wegner surmises that the Ghilzai of the midlands of Afghanistan are descendants of the Khalaj. According to other writers their successors are to be found in Southern Afghanistan or even in the North-West of Iran[19].

The tribe of the *Afshari*, already mentioned by Mahmud Kashgari, left Turkmenia at the time of the Seljuk conquests. Groups of Afshari are mentioned in North-West Persia (Lake Urmia, Ardebil, Kazvin), in Iraq, in Anatolia and South Persia before the sixteenth century. Numerous governors and generals of the Afshari tribe have been listed by Persian historians. The rise of the Safavides in the early sixteenth century would have been impossible without the active support of the Afshari. The Persian ruler Nadir Shah (1736–47) came from this tribe. It was during his reign that Persia once more played an active and important part in the Middle East. During the last hundred years, the Afshari, who are, by the way, excellent weavers, lived mainly in Fars, Kirman and Khorassan.

The descendants of the Khalaj as well as the Afshari will not be considered as Turkomans proper in the context of this book.

Another tribe whose history can be traced with a degree of certainty is that of the *Salors*. Very probably they took part in the expeditions of the Seljuks. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Salors were at the head of a large tribal confederation on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea. Later on the Salors emerge as leaders of military campaigns. They were always regarded as a highly respected tribe.

It may well be for this reason, that Tekke, Saryq, Yomud and Ersari trace their lineage from the Salors as Abul Ghazi Boghadur relates[20]. The extent to which Salors contributed to the formation of these tribes can no longer be ascertained to-day. One can safely assume, however, that these tribes did not totally stem from the Salors. The Salor family tree was probably reconstructed at a later date by these tribes, so as to give themselves greater significance and prestige.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Salors were still a powerful tribe, with the majority living in the Serakhs Oasis on the upper reaches of the Tedjen. In 1832, at the hands of an Iranian army, they suffered a crushing

defeat, from which they never recovered, especially since the Tekke, who had started migrating in the eighteenth century pushed strongly towards the East and South-East. A smaller group of Salors remained in Serakhs or returned there; another group (approximately 5,000 people) settled along the middle reaches of the Murghab between Saryq and Tekke. A larger group of Salors settled on the middle reaches of the Amu Darya, to the North-west of Chardshu. Lastly, small groups of Salors can be found in the North-East of Iran near the Turkmenian frontier and in Afghanistan, north of Herat.

The *Tekkes* are mentioned for the first time after the era of the Mongols, towards the end of the fifteenth century[21]. They are said to have belonged to that tribal federation which was led by the Salors. For a long time they seem to have been of relatively little importance until they invaded and gradually conquered the Akhal Oasis in the eighteenth century. In doing so they forced the Imreli, Ali-Eli and Karadashli who had settled there, to move, and they dominated the remaining Turkomans who belonged either to the "holy tribes" (Hoja, Makhtum, Ata etc.), or were mere husbandmen (Nuchurli, Murchali). In the course of further conquests they occupied the oasis of Atek and the Tedshen Oasis, with Tejen and Serakhs (which they had to evacuate again later on), as well as the northern part of the Murghab Oasis with Merv, from which they drove out the Saryq southwards in 1852 (Yulatan, Penjdeh).

Great interest was raised by the fighting of the Tekke in the Seventies of the last century, under Berdy Khan and Makhtum Kuli Khan, against the Russian armies who were trying to win Turkmenia as the Trans-Caspian province for the Russian empire. In Gok Tepe in the oasis of Akhal, the Tekkes repulsed a first Russian army under General Lazarev in 1879. The Russians suffered heavy losses. A carefully planned campaign in the winter of 1880/1881 of a second army under General Skobelev, strongly supported by artillery, brought about the surrender of the fort at GokTepe and thus of the whole Akhal district. Three years later, in 1884, Merv and the other towns of the Murghab Oasis were occupied by the Russians.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the Tekke, with over 150,000 people, lived in the Oasis of Akhal, and in the steppes and desert regions lying to the north in front of it; they also lived in the Oasis of Atek and in the northern part of the Murghab Oasis. Small splinter groups lived in North-East Khorassan, and North-West Afghanistan.

The *Saryq* also appear as a tribe only in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, together with the "Stone Salor". It is probable that, like the Tekke, they were an autonomous tribal group even earlier, especially if one considers that the Yuruk tribe Saryqechi in Anatolia existed practically into our times.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Saryq were in the area of the Great Balkhan mountain range. In the seventeenth century parts of them could be found in the South-West of Turkmenia along the rivers Atek and Gurgan and another group along the Uzboy, the former river bed of a branch of the Amu Darya. One hundred years later, strong contingents of Saryq were reported on the middle reaches of the Amu Darya near Chardshu from where they proceeded slowly in the direction of the Murghab Oasis and its capital, Merv. In the early nineteenth century Saryq and Salors possess the land on the lower and middle reaches of the Murghab, whilst the Ersari live in the Penjdeh Oasis on the upper reaches of the river.

In 1852 the Saryq were defeated by the Tekkes advancing from the West.

They were pushed towards Penjdeh and, in turn, forced the Ersaris towards the South and East. A little later they took possession of the township of Yulatan. In the second half of the nineteenth century 20,000 Saryq lived on the upper and middle stretches of the Murghab. A small group of Saryq settles in North-West Afghanistan.

During the last few centuries several other tribes and tribal groups lived in southern Turkmenia, the most important being the *Goklan*. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were still very strong and ranked equally with other great tribes. More than other tribes, however, they were caught between the fronts in battles between Iran and Khiva. They suffered more from the effects of the fighting, since, along the Atrek and Gurgan rivers, they had become settled farmers. The Tekke conquest of the Akhal Oasis also affected the economic and political position of the Gogklan. Moreover they suffered from frequent armed conflicts with the Yomud. Parts of the Goklan were resettled or driven off by one or the other party. Thus twice in the first half of the nineteenth century groups of Goklan reached the Khanate of Khiva – the first time forced there by the Khan of Khiva, the second time under Persian pressure – where they lived at the end of the nineteenth century and still are to-day[22]. The Goklan living on the Gurgan in Iran to-day have become a poor and insignificant people. Their number is estimated at around 35,000 to 40,000. Tribes such as the Imreli and the Gireili suffered a similar fate.

The *Nuchurli* and the *Murchali* who had long since become settled in some of the valleys of the Kopet Dagh, tilling the soil and grazing their cattle, were less affected by military and political changes.

The *Yomud* appear on the historical scene roughly at the same time as Tekke and Saryq. They trace their descent back to a mythological ancestor who had the same name as the tribe. They, too, achieved political importance, thanks to the declining significance of older tribes. Whilst nearly all other tribes changed their tribal districts quite frequently, the settlements and pastures of the Yomud remained almost unchanged throughout the centuries. One group of the tribe lived along the lower reaches of the Atrek and the Gurgan, on the south-east shores of the Caspian Sea, in the mountains of the higher and lower Balkhans and in the eastern border region of the Kara-Koum desert. The other group lived in the area of the Peninsula of Mangyshlak, and in the West and South-West of the Khanate of Khiva.

Apart from disputes and feuds with other Turkoman tribes, and between the two sub-divisions Jafarbai and Atabai, the Yomud played a considerable part in the history of Persia and Khiva. The Yomud leader Chojam Berdy Khan was instrumental in helping the Qajar dynasty to take over Iran in 1786. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Yomuds repeatedly ruled in the Khanate of Khiva for short periods.

During the nineteenth century groups of Yomuds served alternately or simultaneously the Khans of Khiva or the rulers of Iran. The comparatively quick occupation of Khiva, without much bloodshed, by General von Kaufmann in 1873, was followed by the Russian campaign against the northern Yomud Subdivision of the Bairam Shaly who suffered heavy losses.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Yomud, beside the Ersari and Tekke were the most numerous tribe. The dialect of the Yomud has become the official Turkoman language during Soviet times.

Near the southern Yomud there were other smaller tribal groups whose rela-

tionship and possible kinship with the Yomud are not yet quite clear. To these belong, in particular, the *Ogurjali* who lived on the islands off the south-east coast of the Caspian Sea, as well as on the coast itself in the area of the modern town of Krasnovodsk.

The tribe of the *Chodor* has also a long history. Mahmud Kashgari in the eleventh century calls them Chuvaldar, Abul Ghazi in the seventeenth century uses Chavuldur, and later still we can find Chovdur, Chaodor or Chaudor[23].

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth century the Chodors headed a large tribal federation between the Caspian Sea and the Aral Sea. Between 1640 and 1650 they also suffered from the threats of Kalmyck invasion.

In the eighteenth century a clan of the Chodors on the Mangyshlak Peninsula requested the protection of the Russian Czar, a request which was, however, rejected.

After the middle of the nineteenth century a part of the Chodors could still be found in the area west of the Aral Sea. Vambéry tells of a punitive expedition by the Khan of Khiva against the Chodors, in 1863[24].

Chodors also lived on the lower Amu Darya, in the Khanate of Khiva near Porsu and on the middle reaches of the Amu Darya, south-east of Chardshu. According to D. Wegner the Chub-Bash living south of the upper stretches of the Amu Darya, e.g. near Shur-Tepa, weave rugs, which show a striking similarity to those of the Chodors. They are probably a Chodor group who reached this part of North Afghanistan either together with the Ersari or because they had to migrate for political or economic reasons[25].

The *Ersari*, with their equally legendary ancestor, Ersari Khan, whom Abul Ghazi also mentions, lived originally in the area of the Mangyshlak Peninsula and the bordering coastal district of the Caspian as far as the region of the Great Balkhans. About the middle of the seventeenth century the majority of them went east and settled in the area of the middle reaches of the Amu Darya within the sphere of influence of the Emirate of Bokhara. In all probability other, smaller tribal groups followed the Ersari on their trek east.

Another Ersari group moved further south-east. They were called Kizil Ayak, as Barthold reports. To this same group may have belonged those Ersari who, around the middle of the nineteenth century, were forced to leave the Penjdeh area on the upper reaches of the Murghab by the Saryq, who in turn were pushed southwards by the Tekke.

Both these migratory movements ended in the North-West Afghanistan of to-day, where the present Turkoman population seems to be predominantly Ersari[26].

It is said of the Ersari living on the middle reaches of the Amu Darya that some of their sons attended the Medresselvs of Bokhara and became mullahs and kadis. In doing this the rulers of Bokhara hoped to gain greater influence over the unruly groups of Turkomans who were living further to the West of the Amu Darya[27].

A great part of the Ersari became settled, or at least partly so, very early on. Individual subdivisions of this tribe – more so than was the case with other tribes – developed a separate existence of their own. Thus the Beshiri, who lived mainly on the middle stretches of the Amu Darya, became, apparently at an early date, a comparatively independent group – something which finds its expression in the design and colourings of their rugs. Neither the Beshiri nor the Kizil Ayak of the Afghan area can, according to D. Wegner, be considered as

Ersari proper[28]. The history of this tribe is even less well-known than that of other Turkoman tribes.
At the close of the nineteenth century the figure for Ersari living within the Russian sphere of influence was put at 150,000 to 200,000.

Religion

As early as the ninth to the eleventh centuries the majority of Turkomans was converted to Islam. Although reports that some tribal groups adhered for a time to the Nestorian doctrine of Christianity cannot be repudiated, no confirmation of this can be found in historical sources. The influence of their former religion, Shamanism, remained strong even in the last centuries, when all Turkomans had long since become Moslems.
The Turkomans who remained in Turkmenia fell at no time into the fanatic Sunnitic intolerance which was characteristic of the Uzbek states for such a long time. Thus Turkoman Islam remained largely superficial, intermingled with shamanistic elements which were integrated into the new faith without hesitation.
This explains the frequent occurence of undoubtedly non-islamic symbols and motifs in their rugs and other knotted products. These were by no means simply objects of practical use in daily life for, in most cases, they originally had a ritual and religious significance. Some of these signs were derived from the tribal brandmarks of cattle (tamghas) or totem signs (onghun), others were symbols of sacrifice or fertility and charms for the protection of man and cattle. The same signs occur in the silver jewelry of Turkoman women. It is interesting to compare these signs and symbols with those found on tombstones of late medieaval Turkoman cemeteries in the great Balkhans[29].
The Tekke venerated the horns of the mountain goat (Tekke = mountain goat) and put them upon poles near their tents. Names of animals and astral symbols appear frequently in the names of Turkoman clans and families. Among them there is the dog, an animal unclean to other Moslems, but enjoying high reputation with the Turkomans.
Generally speaking, the old customary law was usually stronger than the sharia of Islam. It is for this reason that kadis and mullahs from the towns had little influence over the Turkomans. Of far greater importance were the partly mystical dervish orders whose monasteries could often be found on the edge of the steppes and deserts. The magic and mystery of the dervishes corresponded undoubtedly much better to the ideas of the Turkomans than the strict orthodoxy of Bokhara.
Although the frequent enslavement of Shiitic Persians was often deemed justified by religious reasons, at best this was, however, a formal pretext. When Sunnitic Moslems were kidnapped they were often labeled Shiites prior to being sold in the slave markets of the towns.
In accordance with the lax conception of Islam, the position of the woman was freer and less restricted than with the settled Moslems and, above all, the town dwellers. This comparative freedom of the woman depended, however, also on her duties in a society of nomadic cattle-breeders.

Art

Whenever Turkoman folk art is mentioned one thinks primarily of the highly developed art of rug knotting. There is not a shadow of doubt that the art of knotting has a tradition going back centuries – if not for thousands of years. V. Moshkova and D. Wegner have given exhaustive accounts of the importance of knotted rugs, bags, tent bands, door hangings and saddle covers, etc. to the Turkoman. The most important events in the life of the Turkoman – birth, marriage, death, feast days, reception of guests – were closely linked to their knotted products[30].

Although rugs, bags and other knotted ornamental pieces were mainly destined for private use – in many cases they were connected with religious conceptions – Turkoman rugs were from early times held in high esteem by their neighbours and undoubtedly found their way into the palaces, mosques, medresses as well as into the houses of the well-to-do citizens of the surrounding states. W. König in his study on Turkoman economy points out that in the nineteenth century rugs and other knotted products were a secondary source of income for many tribes[31].

We know that a number of Turkoman tribes, e.g. the Karadashli, Goklan, Ali-Eli, Imreli, Eski, knotted no rugs during the second half of the nineteenth century; at any rate, no examples have been preserved which could be attributed to them[32]. The Nuchurli were apparently never familiar with the art of knotting. Like the Eski on the middle reaches of the Amu Darya and the Goklan on the Gurgan, they produced silk fabrics. Various reasons have been put forward why these Turkomans should have stopped using this typical skill of theirs, yet the question cannot be answered clearly and satisfactorily.

Textile craft was not restricted to knotted products. The production of felt rugs and mats in quantity exceeded the number of knotted rugs many times. Felt was used to cover the round, yurt framework, felt rugs covered the floor inside. The production of tapestry-woven palas rugs and other products in this technique, such as bags, tent bands etc., was also wide-spread. The production of these articles was again much greater than that of knotted rugs, but it must be remembered that approximately one hundred years ago palas were produced not only by tribes who still knotted, but also by those who had long since stopped knotting. Also, Turkoman women knew how to weave and embroider. The festive clothing of women and girls and also of the men represent beautiful testimonies of Turkoman folk art.

Textile art is certainly the most obvious and best known form of Turkoman folk art. It would, however, be wrong to assume that it was the only form. In some tribal groups the silver smiths had developed their art to a very high standard. This is not surprising, since the Turkoman woman wore ornate silver jewelry on head, dress and arms for festive occasions. Woodwork cannot be considered as a form of art in this case, because it was chiefly used in the building of the framework of the yurts and boats. One Turkoman tribal group did concentrate on pottery; it was a part of the Chydyr-Ely who settled in the Karakul Oasis, to the North-East of Chardshu, up to the middle of the last century and then moved to the middle stretches of the Amu Darya due to the encroaching desert[33].

Folk poetry was another important expression of the Turkomans' artistic and historical awareness. The epic "Gor Oghlu", based on the Oghuz received its present-day form in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Makhdum Kuli (1733–82) of the Goklan tribe became the Turkoman national poet. Although

his writings were lost in the course of one of the numerous battles between Turkomans and Iranians, his poetry was even then so widely known amongst Turkomans that wandering minstrels were able to write them down again from memory; even those Turkoman groups who in the first half of the seventeenth century left for the region of the mouth of the Volga and then moved to the neighbourhood of Stavropol in the northern Caucasus, regarded him as their poet. In the nineteenth century there are two more outstanding poets. One is justified in saying, therefore, that the Turkomans, more than other Central Asian Turk peoples, had their own national literature[34].

Economy

It has been the generally accepted opinion that the Turkomans were cattle-breeding nomads and that only a small number adopted, perforce, different occupations. The exhaustive studies of W. König result in a much more diversified picture[35].

There are certain indications that among the Turkomans always subsisted certain, possibly subconscious memories of farming stemming from earlier times, before they appeared on the historical scene.

It is said of the Turkomans who had settled along the Syr Darya in the ninth and tenth centuries, that they tilled the soil and even lived in towns for some part, towns which, however, they had not built themselves. In the further course of history there are other indications that individual Turkoman groups settled quite voluntarily in oasis towns or in their vicinity, and then started new economic activities. This is particularly true of those Turkomans living on the Atrek and Gurgan, as well as of some tribal groups on the east coast of the Caspian and along the lower and middle reaches of the Amu Darya.

Thus, in the early nineteenth century the Goklan on the upper and middle reaches of the Gurgan still had intensive cultivations of wheat, sesame, barley, cotton and mulberry plantations for the rearing of silk-worms. As regards cattle-breeding, they bred chiefly sheep and oxen, but also riding horses. The Yomud developed several quite different types of economy. Apart from irrigation and dry-soil farming along the Gurgan and Atrek, there was fishing in the river estuaries, hunting, ship building, and trade, too, had its appointed place. The cattle-breeding Yomud of South-West Turkmenia, whose main occupation was the rearing of sheep and camels, also settled for more than half the year at a place near the well centres. There were then no great migrations. Only in winter did these large settlements of complete tribal divisions break up into smaller groups. Then the location was changed more frequently.

From the beginning of the eigtheenth to the middle of the nineteenth centuries the Tekke gradually became the masters of most of the South Turkmenian oases. The majority of them became farmers very soon and learned surprisingly rapidly how to use the irrigation systems and how to keep them in good repair. They continued the cattle-breeding in the oases, but it was no longer the cattle-breeding of nomads, but that of settled farmers. Another part of the Tekke continued to rear sheep and breed camels in the Khara-Koum while in an intermediate area, the population tilled the soil for one part of the year and for the remainder led their cattle to the pastures around the wells. Similar circumstances albeit with many variations have been reported, from the Khanate of Khiva and the middle reaches of the Amu Darya.

Handicraft and activitites of a like nature were widespread. Knotting, embroidery and weaving were prerogatives of the womenfolk. There were, for instance, smiths, shipbuilders and silversmiths. Yet only rarely was this more than a sideline of especially skilful people who otherwise owned their herd or irrigated plots of land. The potters of the Chydyr-Eli tribe who lived in the Karakal Oasis northeast of Chardshou, up till the middle of the nineteenth century, were an exception. Another interesting case apart were the Ogurjali from the island of Cheleken. The main source of income was the exploitation of the oil wells there and the sale of oil and ozocerite. Around the middle of the last century roughly 2,200 tons of oil were sold annually, mainly to Persia, but also some to Khiva and Bokhara. Slavetrading, another form of income, should be mentioned. The raiding expeditions of most Turkoman tribes every year brought many slaves to Bokhara and Khiva. After the defeat in 1862, of an Iranian army by the Tekke, 20,000 captured soldiers swamped the slave market of Bokhara.

Trade was practically exclusively on a barter basis. In addition to animals, meat and wool, articles of handiciraft were sold. Whilst it is correct to say that the majority of knotted rugs was for the weavers' own use, by no means all the rugs remained for ever in the kibitkas of the families for which they had been made. If flour became scarce, or cattle died off, many a piece had to change hands. Even before the Russian occupation some tribal groups would appear to have produced rugs for sale to neighbouring towns. Turkoman rugs were known as far as East Turkistan towns. Thus, R. Shaw tells of his first journey to the court of Yakoub Beg in Kashgar in 1867, where he saw Turkoman rugs and which he could distinguish from East Turkistan products. Occasionally members of rug knotting tribes exchanged rugs with tribes who had ceased knotting rugs, for other products, e.g. silk.

The job or function of a dealer was little known to the Turkomans. Yet as early as the first half of the seventeenth century Abul Ghazi mentions Tekke merchants whom he had met[36]. Similarly, we know of Yomud dealers. Frequently members of the "holy tribes" (Hoja, Sheikh, Makhtoum, Ata), accepted the office of dealers between Turkomans and their neighbouring states.

The economic structure of the Turkomans was, therefore, not monolithic, but relatively complex. No doubt, cattle-breeding in its nomadic or near-nomadic form was the most important aspect, but farming and other economic activities were also by no means insignificant. They must not be regarded solely as the result of political subjugation or economic decline. The frequently quoted contrast between Chomur (farmers) and Chorva (cattle-breeders) covers in reality a much less simple relationship. Very often some families of the same clan were farmers and some nomadic cattle-breeders. In fact, this change from farming to cattle-breeding, and vice versa, could take place within one family, from father to son. There is no doubt that the life of a nomadic shepherd allows greater independence as well as social prestige and military agility, and yet the greatest resistance shown to the Russians was not from nomadic horsemen, but by Tekke foot-soldiers in a fort. Finally, it is true to say that many impoverished Turkomans were forced to become farmers (as, for instance, the Salors after their defeats by the Persians and the Tekke), yet there were rich farmers as well as poor cattle breeders. Each individual case would be the sum total of many different factors as to which mode of life and which type of economic activity would be chosen by a tribe, tribal division, group or clan.

The Tarim Basin

The geographical location of the Tarim Basin would seem to put insurmountable obstacles in the path of man. High mountain ranges seem to cut it off – to the South towards Tibet the Kuen Lun, and Altyn Tag; in the West, the Pamirs, the roof of the world, in the North the Tienshan. To the East there is a vast desert area where the Takla Makan continues into the Gobi. The interior of the Tarim Basin consists almost entirely of desert. Most writers maintain that climatic conditions in the Tarim Basin have not changed much over the last two to three thousand years, so that conditions for human settlement can hardly have been much more favourable in earlier times[37]. And yet there have been settlements in this area for a long time. Along the rivers, rushing down from the mountains and flowing into the Tarim which crosses the basin from East to West, there are oases which have attracted a farming population from very early times. Nomadic shepherds grazed their flocks on the mountain pastures. Many oases developed into trading centres, thanks to the silk route, that ancient trade route skirting the Tarim Basin on the southern and northern edges.

To-day the Tarim Basin has a population of approximately over one million Turki, less than 100,000 Kirghizi on the mountain slopes, a small Tajik group in the South-West, descendants of many other Central Asian peoples, and of course, in more recent times, Chinese.

The way of life of the people in the river oases, as for instance H. Bidder reports[38] has changed little in the course of thousands of years. Intensive farming – cereals, fruit, vegetables, partly with the aid of intricate irrigation systems – was the basis of their livelihood. The Tarim Basin was the first region outside China where the rearing of silkworms and consequently the production of silk became a local industry, so to speak. Arts and crafts prospered very early on in the towns and villages, the best known being Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan and Aksu.

During the first millennium A. D. trade, which was mainly in the hands of the Sogdians from the banks of the Oxus, the Amu Darya of to-day, played a very important part in the economy of East Turkistan. At the turn of this century there were, by the way, quite a number of Indians, Kashmiri, Afghans, and Uzbeks as dealers and money lenders in the towns and villages of the Tarim Basin, forming their own guilds[39]. This trade comprised the transit goods of China on the one hand, those of West Turkistan and Iran on the other, as well as products of the country, e.g. jade and textiles. In the low-lying river valleys hunting and fishing was important.

Almost all the travellers who crossed the Tarim Basin and who recorded their impressions, paint an attractive picture of those river oases. The Englishman Shaw, who was the first European to travel this part of the world for a long

time, describes, on his journey from Kashmir in 1867, the prospering settlements and the relative wealth of the population, and the abundance of delicious fruits. In all the townships a meal was prepared for the traveller under the trees in his honour, and on each occasion the beautiful rugs of this area would be spread out. He was particularly impressed with the gaiety and hospitality of the population[40].

The shepherds lived on the slopes of the mountains. They were mainly Kirghizi who entered into trade with the settled population, and in the course of their wanderings had occasional contact with other Central Asian states.

Indo-European Settlement and Hellenistic Influences

It is generally assumed that from early times the population of the river oases of the Tarim Basin were of Indo-European origins. Several theories have been put forward regarding the origin of these settlers. It is assumed that members of the east Iranian group who proceeded farthest east settled here. The early colonization of the Tarim Basin was further largely due to a people belonging to the Indo-European language family, but who were not directly connected with the Iranians. Finally, according to the tradition, Indian settlers took part in the colonization of the southern oases of the Tarim Basin, for example Khotan[41].

Great was the surprise when Sir Aurel Stein found manuscripts in the sand covered ruins of the Tarim Basin, which were written in an Indo-European language, "Tokharian", a language which was unknown until then; moreover, it was a language which belonged to the so-called kentum group which, up till that time, was thought to comprise only the languages of the western peoples of the Indo-European language family. The main area of "Tokharian" settlement seems to have been east of Kashgar, especially around Kucha[42].

These Indo-Europeans represented over a long period of time, the majority of the population in this vast area. Their settlements extended into the districts of the Chinese province of Kansu of to-day. This population maintained close cultural and commercial contacts with the west, south-west and south. They were particularly receptive to Greco-Roman art which reached them via Iran, Bakhtria and North India. The discovery of frescoes in Miran near the border of Kansu, which might have come from southern Italy or Alexandria, was another great surprise during the research done by Sir Aurel Stein, Grünwedel, Le Cocq and Pelliot in the Tarim Basin, in the first three decades of this century.

The progress of Buddhism towards the east furthered the propagation of classical forms. Buddhism, and Hellenistic art met in the empire of Kushan – which comprised east Persia of to-day, Afghanistan, the north of west Pakistan and part of the Soviet republics of Central Asia – and, merged in the Ghandara style, produced some of the most beautiful works of art in the history of mankind. The art of Ghandara was brought along the silk route via the Tarim Basin to China, where it left obvious traces in Chinese art, thanks to several dynasties. Despite widespread destruction by nature's forces or by human hand a number of impressive testimonies of this late period of classical art of the third to the ninth centuries have been preserved from the Tarim Basin: frescoes, paintings on wood and silk, sculptures and reliefs were discovered near Khotan, Kucha, Turfan and on the Lop-Nor, amongst other places. They show that there was artistic wealth of surprisingly many facets. Amongst these testimonies were also the fragments of knotted rugs from the third to the

sixth centuries, which were considered to be the oldest preserved examples of the art of knotting until the discovery of the Pazyryk rug.

At certain intervals the rich cities, continuously threatened by warring nomads, became passionately devout. These were favourable conditions for successful missionary activities from the west and southwest. Very early on, Nestorian Christianism had its followers in the oases. In several points of the Tarim Basin, Manichaeism, a sect of the Zoroastrian faith, which in Iran was persecuted as heresy, found disciples and, farther towards the North-East became the state religion of the Uygur empire, in the eighth century. However, the predominant religion, as is shown by many testimonies, was Buddhism which was supplanted by Islam in the twelfth century[43]).

There seem to have been religious differences at frequent intervals, never, however, religious persecutions. The Tarim Basin appears to have been a religious sanctuary at this time, an area of religious tolerance, which points to an urbane and civilized mental outlook.

Although cultural influences and religious tendencies came chiefly from the west, south-west and south, and did not have their roots in East Turkistan itself, one cannot simply talk of blind acceptance of foreign elements and ideas. It would be equally wrong to talk of cultural syncretism in the Tarim Basin. Moreover, the small principalities and cities succeeded in merging harmoniously these new elements and ideas and in putting their own seal on them. In any case, the population does not seem to have always regarded them as foreign.

How much of this spiritual and cultural glory has remained in the Tarim Basin down to present times? In the following thousand years new masters and a new faith came to East Turkistan, new artistic impulses were received and adopted. Certain forms of art, such as painting, disappeared almost completely. Only ruins remind us of Christianity and Buddhism. Yet in spiritual attitude and culture many a trace from the first millennium A.D. has been tangibly preserved, even throughout the period of stagnation and decline during the last two centuries. Examples of this can also be found in East Turkistan rugs.

The Influence of the Nomadic Empires on the Tarim Basin

The near-impassable mountains to the North and the South, and the desert to the North-East of the Tarim Basin presented no insurmountable problems for the neighbouring peoples of the steppe. On the contrary, the politically and militarily weak oasis states usually depended to a greater or lesser degree not only on the large states to the east and west, such as the Chinese empire and the Islamic states beyond the Pamir and Hindu Kush, but also on the more loosely organized empires of nomadic horsemen. Chinese historians were the first to give accounts of this country's changeable and frequently repetitive history. Later, reports were also forthcoming from Persian, Arab, and Byzantine authors.

The first great empire of a people of the steppe, including the Tarim Basin, was that of the Hsiung Nu and was founded towards the end of the third century B.C. It constituted a grave threat to the Chinese empire which was at that time not yet definitely consolidated.

Many writers assume the Hsiung Nu to be identical with the Huns who appeared in Europe at the beginning of the fourth century, and who threatened Byzantinum, Rome and Romano-Germanic western Europe.

About the middle of the first century B.C. the Tarim Basin fell under the in-

fluence of the Wu-Sun (Arshi) whom some authors identify with the Issedones mentioned by Herodot, and who spoke an Indo-European language.

For a time, perhaps at the beginning of the second century A.D., the western Tarim Basin appears to have belonged to the Kushan empire. This empire, with its centre in northern Afghanistan, extending as far as north-west India and east Persia, succeeded the last Greek kingdoms in the south of Central Asia, the Graeco-Bakhtrian states. This was the birth place of the Ghandara art which was to be of such importance to the Tarim Basin.

The Hephtalites, or White Huns, conquered the Tarim Basin from the west around 400 A.D. The heavy defeat which they suffered at the hands of the west Turkish ruler Istaemi in 562, made East Turkistan dependent on the West Turkish empire. The powerful thrust to the west of the first T'ang emperors during the seventh century was in turn followed by a period of influence of Turkish groups. One of them, the Uygurs, founded a state in the area of Turfan (Khocho) after their defeat by the Kirghizi in 840. This kingdom was soon to become renowned for its outstanding culture, the civilization existing in its towns and at its court[44]. Parts of the Tarim Basin came under Tibetan sovereignty for a time, in the eighth century.

Subsequently only three empires of steppe people were to have any significance for East Turkestan. The Karakitai, a Mongolian people, pushed out of northern China and Mongolia, were forced to move west towards Central Asia, where they founded a well-organized empire (1128–1218) to which the Tarim Basin, as the southernmost province also belonged.

During the conquests of Jenghis Khan all Central Asian states and state-like formations disappeared, and East Turkistan also fell under Mongol rule with the occupation of the Karakitai empire. As the Mongols met with very little resistance they seem to have been less destructive than elsewhere. Following the death of Jenghis Khan the Tarim Basin belonged to the Ulus (Kingdom) of Chaghatai, one of the sons of Jenghis Khan. The dynasty and ruling classes of this Mongolian successor-state adhered longer to the shamanist and nomadic traditions than the Mongolians in Iran and China. It was only in the course of the fourteenth century that Islam could take a firm hold on the majority of them.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth century a new confederation of Mongolian tribes, that of the west Mongolian Oirats, rose to considerable power, north of the Tarim Basin and asserted their sovereignty in this part of the world. The battle of the last Oirat ruler, Amur Sana, against China ended with a devastating defeat of the Oirats in 1757. East Turkestan allowed itself to become involved in this war, and after prolonged fighting it was occupied by the armies of the Chinese emperor Chien Lung in 1758/59.

The inquiry into the results of the contacts the oasis towns of the Tarim Basin had with the tribes and tribal federations of the steppe peoples, raises the whole problem of the relationship between nomads and town dwellers, even if the question takes on a special aspect.

In contrast to the towns of Khoresmia and Transoxania, e.g. Khoresm, Merv, Balkh, Bokhara, the small municipalities of the Tarim Basin had no lofty military or political ambitions. They could scarcely afford to cherish such ambitions in view of the geographical conditions. The town dwellers and farmers, as well as their leaders, adopted a flexible attitude and were, therefore, involved only to a relatively small extent. Great events passed them by and their way of life was subjected to no or very little change.

Yet these frequent and lasting contacts certainly did not fail to leave their mark on both partners.

The wild horsemen from the steppes, as those on the northern borders of China and Iran, were frequently attracted to the cities where they received not only payment of tribute, but also spiritual and civilizing influences. Conversely, the oasis states could not remain in total seclusion from the invaders; their population adopted members of these nomadic tribes who brought their own ideas and cultural conceptions with them. In particular, certain elements of motif and form of the art of Indo-European, Turkish or Mongolian steppe peoples eventually became part of the cultural heritage of the Tarim Basin. It must not be forgotten that relatively short periods of conquest and wars were followed by long, peaceful contacts between the oasis dwellers and the nomads.

An important turning point in the history of the Tarim Basin was marked by the progress of Islam and the Turk peoples who, following the first thrust of the Arabs, became the instruments of this faith in Central Asia.

The Turks and Islamic Kashgaria

The name "East Turkistan" is not unjustified. From early times proto-Turkish and Turkish peoples can be found in the Tarim Basin, side by side with the predominantly Indo-European inhabitants of the river oases. But we do not know in every single case to which language family these people belonged. For instance, there still remains unanswered the question whether or not the Hsiung Nu and the Hephtalites are to be considered as predecessors of the Turks.

Ever since the second half of the sixth century, when the Tarim Basin becomes dependent on the west Turkish empire of Istaemi the Turks form the longest-lasting influence in this area. From the East, also, Turkish settlements are founded in the Tarim Basin. Thus the kingdom of the east Turkish Uygurs of Khotsho forms a climax of pre-Islamic culture in the Tarim Basin[45]. The Uygur script was used in this region for several centuries. Architecture and painted frescoes are still admired to-day. From very early times there was a rapprochement between the western oasis states and the Turks, even if the Indo-European languages predominated in the west of the Tarim Basin, well into the tenth century.

The rapid, victorious advance of Islam leads the Arabian armies to the southern frontiers of Central Asia as early as the middle of the seventh century. The conquest and conversion of this area, however, took much longer than in Syria, Persia and North Africa. The local Iranian principalities were not the main opponents of the Islamic armies, but the Turks, who reigned in the North of this area, and were also powerful in the south of Central Asia. Their conversion to Islam was a gradual process and not without its setbacks, and created entirely new conditions. A religious war, the "Jehad" lost its justification to a large extent. The orthodox community was extended progressively as far as the Chinese frontiers and later into the western provinces of China.

The western part of the Tarim Basin was not claimed for Islam by the Arabs directly, but by the Turks who had, meanwhile, adopted the Mohammedan faith. The loosely-knit empire of the Karluk Turks and the subsequent state of the Karakhanides also took in the western part of the Tarim Basin, where Islam finally asserted itself during the tenth century[46]. Almost simultaneous with this

conversion to Islam, which had started earlier on in some places, began the adoption of the Turkish language, together with an acceptance of many elements and conceptions of Turkish cultural and religious life.

Kashgar, which was soon to give its name to the whole area of the western Tarim Basin, viz. Kashgaria, became a centre of Turkish culture. About 1070 the "Book of Auspicious Knowledge", a kind of almanac, was written in Turkish, while at the same time in Baghdad Mahmud Kashgari compiled a Turco-Arabic dictionary[47]. It is to this author from Kashgar that we owe a great part of our knowledge about the origins of the Turks in Central Asia.

Neither the empire of the Mongolian Karakitai, nor the conquest by Jenghis Khan, nor the rule of the Chagataid dynasty founded by his son, presented any serious threat to the prevalence of Islam and the Turks in the Tarim Basin. At first the focal point of the Chagataid empire lay further north, on the other side of the Tienshan mountains. But as soon as the rulers transferred the seat of their government – even though only temporarily – to the South into the Tarim Basin or to Transoxania, the power of Islam became apparent. Because they had changed their faith, several rulers were forced to abdicate by the northern tribes who had remained Shamanistic and who formed the mainstay of the dynasty. Finally, in the fourteenth century, the South of the Chagataid empire, the ruling classes included, became outspokenly Islamic.

The second great conqueror of Mongolian descent, Timur-i-Lenq, founded another mighty empire, albeit of short duration, which extended from the frontiers of China as far as the Mediterranean. Although his conduct in war was more cruel, and the destruction and devastation he caused was greater than in Jenghis Khan's time, the Tarim Basin suffered less than other areas from Timur's conquests. After his death the empire broke up.

The Chagataids, now reduced to the level of a minor, local dynasty, concentrated their power on Kashgaria, but were contested in this by other noble families, especially the Dughlats. During the reigns of Esen Buka II, and Yunus in the fifteenth century, close contacts existed with Samarqand, Bokhara and above all with Herat. Yunus had spent much of his youth at Timurid courts and was greatly interested in poetry, music and the arts. He kept up a lively exchange with the cultural centres of the Timurids. The rule of these successors of Timur was, however, restricted mainly to East Persia and Transoxania, yet the Islamic culture of Central Asia attained its highest degree of perfection under them: architecture, book illustrations, the art of rug knotting, poetry in the Persian and Chagataic (East Turkish) languages were practised and encouraged in the Timurid capitals. Kashgar lay within the sphere of this culture and contributed to its development. The fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth centuries are once again golden times for the Tarim Basin.

From the outset the Islam of the Tarim Basin had a special Turkish character. In the tenth century the faith was spread by Turkish missionaries and border fighters. In the further course of the history of Kashgaria, Turkish "saints" again and again play an important part. During the reign of the Karakhanides Kashgar was the religious centre; most Karakhanide rulers were buried here. Up to the appearance of Jenghis Khan many mosques and medresses were built, very little of which, however, has remained to this day.

The limits of Islamic expansion in the East were formed by the town of Kucha on the northern artery of the silk route, and Cherchen on the southern artery. To the east, the Uygur empire no longer independent, still survived in which

Buddhism and remnants of Manichaeism and Nestorian Christianism co-existed peacefully. In this eastern part of the Tarim Basin Islam asserted itself only as late as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Many of the Karakhanide and Chagataide rulers later considered themselves as protectors and champions of the faith. Holy wars were repeatedly waged to the East and South in an attempt to convert the unbelieving, and towards the end of the fifteenth century an unsuccessful campaign was launched against Tibet.

During the sixteenth century Central Asia was cut off from the main stream of political events of Islamic Asia. Kashgaria reflects this development very clearly indeed. At about this time the Khojas, a family from Bokhara, gained influence at the court of the last Chagataids. The first of them came to East Turkestan as an itinerant preacher and became spiritual adviser to the royal court at Kashgar. In the second half of the seventeenth century the Khoja prince Hidayatulla (1678–1694) overthrew the last Chagataid, aided by the West Mongolian Oirats, and ruled over Kashgaria with despotic authority. After this, one part of the family fought against the other, helped by the Kirghizi who lived in the surrounding mountains. The balance of political power was transferred, sometimes to Kashgar, sometimes to Yarkand, to Aksu or Khotan[48]. Trade with neighbouring districts continued, but to a much lesser extent than in earlier times.

Military and political stagnation and isolation are also concomitants of religious narrow-mindedness, which eventually degenerated into an intolerant sunnitic fanaticism. The institution of the Dervishes which the Turks had always favoured strongly, as, for instance, in Anatolia, lost to a considerable degree its spiritual and mystic content, yet the Dervish orders in Central Asia retained their influential position. Far-reaching, new cultural creations are not known of in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Rug fragments from the third to the sixth centuries A.D. discovered by Sir Aurel Stein and A. v. Lecoq tend to prove that the art of knotting has deep roots in the Tarim Basin[49]. These fragments have retained their colours unusually well and show a marked similarity to the colourings of later, completely preserved rugs. H. Bidder's theory that this form of art existed continuously cannot unfortunately be proved, since there are long periods from which no rugs or fragments have been preserved. Yet it does seem highly probable. Rugs dating from the end of the Chaghataid period up till the second half of the nineteenth century and which can be found in museums and collections, reveal a great variety of artistic heritage.

The conquest and occupation of Kashgaria by the Chinese in 1759 was the result of this country's disunion and weakness.

Once more, in the nineteenth century, Kashgaria tried to return to the circle of Central Asian, Islamic principalities, who likewise had experienced a gradual decline and were on the verge of being conquered by Russia. After several uprisings of the followers of the Khojas, which the Chinese were at pains to suppress, Yakoub Beg, a condottiere from the Khanate of Khokand, helped the successors of the Khojas to become the rulers of Kashgaria. China, weakened by the disputes with the Tai Ping, the opium wars and the revolt of the Mohammedans in the western provinces, could do nothing to avoid the defection of Kashgaria.

Yakoub Beg (1865–1878) soon installed himself as ruler and set up an autocratic, Islamic régime. He endeavoured to strengthen his position by making

contacts with England and Russia, and also with the Sultan of Roum, that is to say, with the Ottoman empire[50]. But when the Chinese sent a strong army into Kashgaria in 1877/78, Yakoub Beg's empire collapsed. At last China was definitely in possession of the Tarim Basin.

China in the Tarim Basin

China itself lay a very long way away from the Tarim Basin. The distance from Peking to the towns of Kashgaria is almost 5,000 kilometres on the caravan route, just as far as from Kashgar to Iraq. At no time before the twentieth century was China really interested in an integration of these distant regions into its empire. Yet the Tarim Basin had a significance for the Middle Empire which must not be underrated. Time and again in the course of thousands of years, plundering raids and campaigns of conquest by the nomadic peoples of the steppe were launched from Jungaria just to the north of the Tarim Basin. Quite often the Tarim Basin formed a part of these nomadic empires. The greater China's influence and power in these areas to the North and North-West became, the less likelihood there was of an attack by nomadic horsemen.

More important still, China's export trade with the West depended to a large degree – and at times exclusively – on the silk route, which traversed the Tarim Basin in two branches, a northerly branch along the southern slope of the Tienshan, and a southerly branch along the north face of the Altyn Tag and the Kuen Lun. Along this route horses from the Ferghana Valley and jade from Khotan were brought to China. Thus the silkworm was introduced to the Mediterranean via Central Asia and the grapevine reached China in the other direction. The safeguarding of this caravan route was, therefore, a prime concern of most Chinese dynasties.

Advances into the Tarim Basin with the establishment of military posts at strategically placed points along the route are known from the time of 100 B.C., the end of the first century A.D., the seventh century (630–678) and the eighth century (745–750). Only in the seventeenth century, in connexion with the battles against the west Mongolian Oirats, was the claim to sovereignty over the Tarim Basin raised again by the Manchus, a claim which according to the Chinese had never lapsed. With the annihilation of the last west Mongolian state begins the final occupation of the Tarim Basin, interrupted only from 1865–79.

The expansion of China towards the West always coincided with a lively spiritual and cultural exchange, as W. Speiser so clearly exposes[51]. This was the case in the sixth century in the Chou period, occurred several times in the Han period (first century B.C. and first century A.D.), in the early T'ang period (seventh century A.D.), and again at the height of the Manchu period (approximately 1680–1780). The western Tarim Basin with its oasis towns was the central switchboard.

Ideas and religions did not penetrate the Tarim Basin from the East: Buddhism and Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianism and Islam came from the West and the South-West. The fact that for more than 200 years the Tarim Basin has belonged to China politically as well as the repeated, but temporary expansion of the Chinese sphere of power as far as the Pamirs in earlier times should not lead one to conclude wrongly that the culture of the Tarim Basin was deter-

mined by China. Yet it would be equally wrong to say that Chinese culture had exercised no influence in this region.

In the T'ang period, when the Chinese empire had formally extended its sovereignty as far as the Caspian Sea, elements of Chinese form and style reached the Near East. In the train of the Mongol rulers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Islamic art shows clearly noticeable Chinese influences, for example in painted miniatures. It would therefore be unrealistic to believe that, as a result of its first contact with the non-Chinese Central Asian world in the Tarim Basin, the "itinerant treasure" of Chinese art and culture, should not have left visible traces. Furthermore, the various city states of the Tarim Basin have to be considered separately, in this respect. While in Turfan (Khocho), for instance, there was a lively cultural exchange between the ninth and the twelfth century, the effect of Chinese conceptions was less pronounced in the western oases[52]. In any case, this Chinese influence was never predominant, but remained merely one of the many components which went to make up the culture of East Turkistan, and, in particular, of the western oasis towns.

Even in times when China's political domination over the Tarim Basin was unequivocal, e.g. in the seventh and eighteenth centuries, Kashgaria always remained attuned to the West and South-West culturally. Only in the nineteenth century, especially following the end of Yakoub Beg's reign, was a definite line of demarcation drawn in the North, West and South-West. At that time China feared further expansion of the Russian empire in Central Asia. There is no doubt that plans for an occupation of the western Tarim Basin, had been considered by the Russians and it was thanks not to the power of China but to England's desire to protect the northern frontier of India in this area, that the status quo was preserved.

*

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V. Colour-Plates

Tekke Turkoman

Wool 18th century 6 ft 3 in x 7 ft 2 in

Vereinigte Werkstätten Collection, Munich.

The Tekke illustrated here is perhaps one of the oldest preserved pieces. A comparison with other very old Tekkes proves this. It is extremely difficult to give a correct age because of the long period of time when the Tekke did not alter their design. This necessitated the following method of comparison: the piece in question was contrasted with other very old Tekke rugs which the experts placed in the first half of the nineteenth century. Only this made it possible to arrive at the conclusion that the specimen shown here must be much older. Obvious characteristics, such as colour, the silky wool and the velvety handle cannot unfortunately be illustrated to best advantage in a colour plate.

The central field shows five rows of guls with rounded corners on a relatively dark, oxblood-coloured ground. In between the guls there are cruciform ornaments with double hooks – quite a common feature in Turkoman rugs. The whole rug is covered by a trellis of blue lines at right angles. The inner field of the guls combines white, pink, red, pale and dark blue. Leaf ornaments fan out from the central star of the gul. In the main border hexagons, trellis and other geometric ornaments alternate freely, whilst two minor borders are restricted to double-hooked motifs.

Warp	Goat's hair of the finest quality. S-twist, two-fold, flat warp.
Weft	brown, undyed wool. Two wavy wefts.
Pile	finest, silky wool, two-fold, untwisted. Senna knot, 80 high, 41 wide per dcm. = app. 3,280 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	extremely long kilim woven in red wool and thrice decorated with 3 blue lines each.
Shirasi	simply secured with blue wool.

Tekke Turkoman

Wool Beginning of the 19th century
6 ft 8 in x 7 ft 10 in

Vereinigte Werkstätten Collection, Munich.

In contrast to the "oxblood" colour typical of Turkoman rugs, this is an illustration of one of the rare examples whose basic colours tend more to brick red. The guls in the central field are quite the classical Tekke guls; the border, however, shows the lively, imaginative design only to be found in the oldest known pieces. Along the edges of the length of the rug a variety of stars on a red ground alternate with geometrical motifs and plant shapes on a white ground. The border changes at both ends, restricted to star-filled octagons, interrupted by tree-like ornaments. The charming bright greeny blue which appears in some guls is a remarkable feature in the colour range of this rug.

Warp	undyed goat's hair, S-twist, two-fold.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 60 high, 40 wide per dcm. = app. 2,400 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	no kilim
Shirasi	not original.

5 Tekke Turkoman

Wool Beginning of the 19th century
app. 6 ft 3 in x 8 ft 7 in – detail –

Pearson Collection, New York.

The central field and the border of this rug merit no special attention; yet its magnificent brick red ground colour and the variety of design in the border indicate great age.
The great importance for the collector lies in the unusual design of the "skirt". It consists of an extraordinarily finely executed row of realistic bunches of flowers. In early Yomud rugs and bags similar forms are more readily found (see plate 18). This can be considered very rare for a Tekke.

4 Tekke Turkoman

Wool 19th century 3ft 9in x 4ft 1in

Stepped guls, flatter than usual, stand out from the glowing, oxblood coloured ground. The guls are connected with each other by a simple vertical line. Between the guls there are rows of cruciform ornaments, common to any Tekke of age and fineness (see plate 1).

The different design at the top and bottom end of the rug is unusual. The wool of this particular rug is bright and fine and the design is extremely precise.

Nowadays there can be only few pieces obtainable which show so many of the highly valued qualities of the Tekke.

Warp	undyed goat's hair mixed with wool; S-twist, two-fold.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 112 high, 44 wide per dcm. = app. 4,930 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	missing.
Shirasi	blue wool wound round several warp thrads.

5 Tekke Turkoman

Kibitka Tent Band

Width: 1 ft 5 in

The Tekke Turkoman adorned their tents with hangings which showed, on a natural coloured ground, vertical and horizontal stripes and ascending ornaments of varying shapes. The piece illustrated here is one of the finest of its kind. Not only is the colour range considerable richer, but the knotting is finer since they used silk as well as wool. In the central field horizontal and vertical ornaments alternate, their colours being blue, brown, beige and pink. All the pink areas are in silk. On both sides there is a main border with a zig-zag pattern, and two very fine minor borders which repeat the colours of the central field. The strip shown here is part of a very long piece. It is far superior to any other known pieces, because it is so colourful and finely knotted.

Warp	undyed goat's hair, two-fold, S-twist.
Weft	undyed goat's hair, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool: all pink parts as well as some tiny, pale blue spots in silk: white parts in cotton. Ghiordes knot.
Shirasi	wound round with pink silk.

6 Salor *Juval*

of the Salors on the northern middle reaches of the Amu Darya towards Khiva.

Wool and silk pile *About 1800* *2 ft 6 in x 7 ft 4 in*

Coury Rugs Collection, New York.

This juval and the example following shows just how similar and yet how different two rugs from the same tribe can be. The first is the older. Its colour combination is more capricious than ever. The light cherry tending to brick red coloured ground surrounds two major guls with greyish violet grounds dyed, apparently, with a very rarely used dye. The result has been that the wool tufts have disintegrated and the ground is set back in relief. Five minor guls have the same dye. Wool dyed in cochineal does not normally disintegrate to such an extent. Smaller ornaments have been knotted in pink silk.

In the main guls and in the double ornaments in the shape of turret-like projections extending into the central field are floral motifs resembling bunches of flowers. The double ornaments are linked together. Several geometrical borders emphasize by their contours the use to which the piece was put, i. e. as a decoration and bag.

(Compare with Bogolubow Illus. VI and X)

7 Salor *Juval*

of the Salors on the northern middle reaches of the Amu Darya towards Khiva.

Wool and silk pile *Early 19th century*
3ft 1in x 7ft 2in

Berkeley Private Collection, California.

This juval could easily be one of the finest and most carefully worked pieces of Turkoman art. The pile of the inner field is all in cherry-red silk. Into this ground have been worked, in wool, the realistic and finely executed forms of the gul typical for this Salor tribe. The colour plate cannot do justice to the patina and the magnificent silky sheen of these scintillating colours. The stitch of the rug, which, unfortunately, could not be examined, is of considerable fineness and might be between 4,000 and 6,000 knots per sq. metre.

In the guls, as well as in the surrounding double fields floral ornaments, bunches of flowers, would appear to have been reproduced. Bogolubow however, thinks they are torch holders, as used, for instance, on altars.

8 Salor Turkoman

of the Salors on the Murghab near Pendeh

Wool Early 19th century 5 ft 10 in x 6 ft 8 in

Private Collection, Bergisch-Gladbach.

The extraordinary thing about the rug shown here is the white ground colour. It is a well known fact that the rug products of the Salors usually have a deep, dark violet, sometimes even almost black ground. In the central field there are the typical Salor guls adorned with the double hooks typical of Turkoman rugs. Between three rows of these guls there are simplified, partly rounded, stepped minor guls in red and blue. They correspond more or less to the centre piece of the Salor gul. The triple border shows rosette ornaments. The middle border at the top and bottom ends of the rug changes to another pattern: a square from which double hooks extend.

Warp	Goat's hair mixed with wool. S-twist, flat warp.
Weft	undyed brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	Wool, two-fold, untwisted. Senna knot, 72 high, 45 wide per dcm. = app. 5,240 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	original kilim missing.
Shirasi	simply wound round with red wool

9 Salor Turkoman

Wool 19th century 4ft 1in x 6ft 1in

Three rows of Salor guls are arranged over a dark, cherry red ground. They are accompanied by minor guls which stand out clearly because of their light ground colour. The border and the ends of the rug show nothing unusual.

Warp	Wool mixed with goat's hair. S-twist, two-fold twisted. Slightly on two levels.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot.
Top and bottom ends	none.
Shirasi	wound round with brown wool, not original.

10 Saryq Turkoman* from Pendeh

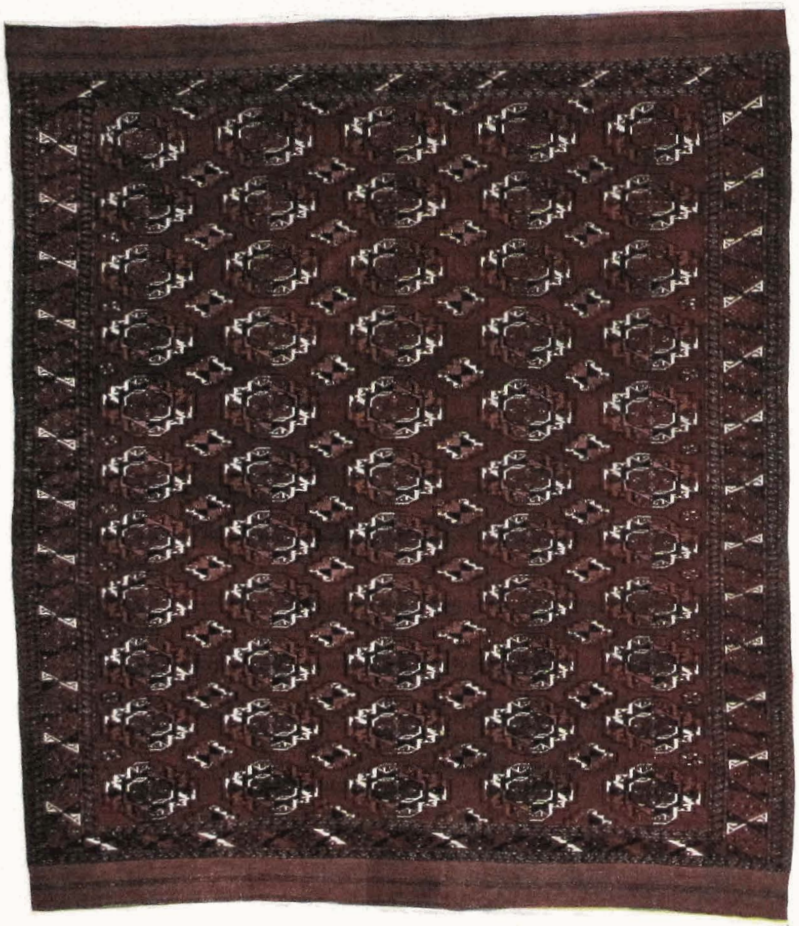
Wool, cotton and silk Early 19th century
7ft 8in x 7ft 10in

McCoy Jones Collection, Washington D.C.

Five rows of Saryq guls are arranged on a dark, cherry red ground. Their colours include white (cotton), orange-brown, (wool), cochineal (silk), and dark blue (wool). Between there are again simplified minor guls in the same colours.

A characteristic of rugs produced in Pendeh is that the white parts have been knotted in cotton and that charming, lilac-coloured parts in silk stand out from them. As a rule, silk parts appear only in bags, but this is one of those rare cases where silk has been used in a large rug. Against the same cherry-red ground the main border shows geometrical ornaments in white and dark blue, with a little yellow, which frame a cruciform motif with the usual Turkoman double hooks.

*(*Similar to the rug illustrated by A. Bogolubow in plate 9, described on page 12.)*



Warp	Wool, S-twist, two-fold, flat.
Weft	greyish brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	Wool, silk and cotton, untwisted, Ghiordes knot, 75 high, 57 wide per dcm. = app. 2,775 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	red wool kilim with blue lines.
Shirasi	bunches of five warp threads, each wound round with red and blue wool alternately.

11 Saryq Turkoman

Wool 19th century 3 ft 2 in x 3 ft 9 in

In contrast to the usual deep red ground colour, this small rug shows a lighter colouring. The central field reveals a small pattern in which six rows of Saryq guls alternate with minor guls of the same size. The central device of the minor guls in clear yellow indicates that the rug is very old. The geometrical design of the border – a row of small caskets – is finished off at both ends by a "skirt".

Warp	Wool mixed with goat's hair, two-fold, twisted, S-twist, flat.
Weft	undyed wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	Wool, Ghiordes knot, 68 high, 42 wide per dcm. = app. 2,856 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	remains of a red kilim.
Shirasi	Three warp threads wound round with dark blue wool.

12 Chodor

Wool pile 1st half of the 19th century
7 ft 10 in x 13 ft 7 in

A trellis work of Chodor guls in red and white which change colour diagonally, stands out from the violet-brown and brown ground. The lozenge-shaped link between them consists of red and white lines broken by small rosettes. The outer border shows a wavy line decorated with hooks on a white ground, with stepped lozengeguls in the compartments. At both ends the rug is finished off with two broad stripes of stepped lozenges in red, white, dark blue and blue-green, lying obliquely to the rug and shaped like arrows.

Warp	wool, mixed with goat's hair, twisted, S-twist.
Weft	undyed wool, two-fold.
Pile	wool, two-fold, untwisted, Senna knot, 54 high, 52 wide per dcm. = app. 1,728 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	violet kilim in wool.
Selvages	brown wool wound around 6 warp threads.

15 Chodor Juval

Wool *19th century* *2 ft 6 in x 3 ft 8 in*

Martin Volkmann Collection, Unterföhring.

Typical Chodor guls in white, red, blue and a rather striking green stand out from a deep, dark violet central field. After a few narrow borders the foot of the little bag starts with stylised trees, the twigs of which, decorated with hooks, change from blue to white and red.

Rugs knotted by Chodor tribes are comparatively rare. Rarer still are bags with the Chodor gul. This piece is fairly coarsely knotted. Whatever it may lack in fineness is made up for by its attractive colour combination, especially the rarely used green.

Warp	brown wool, two-fold, S-twist.
Weft	wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 54 high, 32 wide per dcm. = app. 1,728 knots per sq. dcm.

14 Chodor

Namaslik (Prayer-rug)

Wool 19th century 3 ft 7 in x 5 ft 11 in

Straka Collection, New York.

Chodor prayer-rugs are particularly difficult to find. From the tomato-red ground of the central field, crowned with three prayer niches, three rows of blue, Chodor guls stand out; they alternate with two other rows of guls of different colour and content. The unusual piece is finished off at both ends by a strip in red, blue and ivory, consisting of minor guls arranged like arrowheads. The prayer-niche itself is accentuated by an abrupt change of pattern (white Ashik minor guls). The Senna knot has been used.

15 Yomud

of the Ogurjalis (detail)

Wool 18th century 5 ft 8 in x 8 ft 10 in

Joseph V. McMullan Collection, New York (plate 122).

This extraordinary rug is one of the oldest preserved Yomuds. On a typical Yomud ground colour appear guls filled with half moons. The central device changes from gul to gul as does the colour combination of the guls themselves (red – green, green – red, blue – white, red – blue, blue – red). Along both edges of the central field there is a row of minor guls slightly star-shaped. The main border reveals the wavy tendril typical of the Ogurjalis. In its segments appear flowers growing out of a bar adorned with hooks. They are most beautifully formed along the sides of the rug, but are more simplified at the top and bottom edges. They are framed by two minor, trefoil borders.

Comparing this rug with that in plate 16 one will realise at first glance that this specimen is by far the older. The guls still show true originality and the borders and central field form a harmonious unity. The whole is extremely carefully executed. Furthermore, the most important factor is that this rug has the same structure as the pieces in plates 19 and 22. Thacher already noticed *(plate 21)* that these rugs belonged to a group apart inasmuch as the weft threads consist partly of white wool instead of the brown wool used later. The back of the rug therefore, resembles "salt and pepper" suiting material.

16 Yomud from the Khanat of Khiva

Wool Middle of the 19th century
6 ft 2 in x 10 ft 6 in

Textile Museum, Washington D.C.

Although not as old as the previous example this rug clearly demonstrates the development over the years. The guls of the central field, filled with half moons, alternate in a strict diagonal direction in pale red, green and black on a typical Yomud ground colour. The guls have been taken from the Ogurjalis. "Skirt" and border, however, are those of the Yomuds around Khiva. They are still charmingly colourful, but becoming less interesting from the point of view of design.

17 Yomud

Wool 19th century 6 ft 1 in x 8 ft 1 in

Azadi Collection, Hamburg.

The interesting development and the dating of Yomuds is reflected to a certain extent in this rug. The central field with its blue minor guls adorned with half moons reveals a certain kinship with the rug in plate 16, while the major guls resemble those of the rug in plate 20. The tendril border, however, has become completely rigid and there is no knotted "skirt" at the ends. One might otherwise be inclined to consider the rug older. Colour and design of the inner field are particularly well balanced and attractive.

Warp	Wool, two-fold, twisted, grey-brown.
Weft	Three-fold, wool and goat's hair. 1 straight, 2 wavy.
Pile	Wool, Ghiordes knot, 44 high, 32 wide per dcm. = app. 1,408 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom edges	remains of a red kilim.

18 Yomud

Wool 18th century 5 ft 9 in x 10 ft 6 in

Textile Museum, Washington D.C.

This rug belongs to the earliest known pieces. All really antique rugs enchant by the clarity and exactness of design, as well as by their gay colour combination.

The most striking aspect are the "skirts", in which flowers are so realistically worked, with such elegance and artistic feeling as can be found only in very early pieces. It would not be unjustified to place this rug in the 18th Century. *(See illus. 12 in Gogel's work.)*

A formal tendril, without leaves, is shown in the border down the sides. The haxagons which appear are, however, filled with gul-like ornaments which, on the right hand side, would seem to be filled with lettering in their centres. The borders at the top and bottom are filled with the "Ashik" motif.

The central field seems to be fairly normal. Yet the minor guls in fact possess an extraordinarily fine filigree work in brilliant pale blue. In the main guls dark blue alternates with a rarely encountered green.

19 Yomud of the Ogurjalis

Wool First half of the 19th century
4ft 11in x 7ft 3in

Vereinigte Werkstätten Collection, Munich.

It is the border which is the remarkable thing about this rug. Along three sides the Turkoman tendril is accompanied by a flattened gul, underlined by a bar ending in hooks, and which is already in a simpler form compared to those in earlier pieces (see plate 15). Along the fourth side of the rug the Yomud coiled leaf is evident. The pale green is very rare and can be seen in the middle of the first border as well as in the centre of two guls and in a few other small areas. In the violet-brown, red ground octagons with brick-red and white quadrants stand out. "H"-shaped animal figures with horned heads appear therein. (Tauk Nuska.) In later rugs there is either only one horned head or the horns are missing completely, while in even later examples the heads also are omitted, leaving only the "H". Apart from these unusual characteristics of this rug it should be pointed out that in addition, it belongs to the rare group of Turkoman rugs where white and brown wool is used alternately in the weft. It is certainly possible that this piece was produced in the 18th Century.

Warp	brown wool, S-twist, two-fold.
Weft	white and pale brown wool, two-fold.
Pile	wool, Ghiordes knot, 60 high, 40 wide per dcm. = app. 2,400 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	kilim ends are missing.
Shirasi	a bundle of warp threads wound round in brown-red wool.

20 Yomud

Wool 19th century 5 ft 4 in x 8 ft 10 in

Private Collection, Hamburg.

Yomud guls stand out from a rather violet, red-brown ground. The quarters again reveal the "horned" animals, as in the rug in plate 19. In later rugs only the "H" remains. The minor guls in this rug are of exceptional clarity of contour and colour. A near lozenge shape is accentuated by dots arranged around a centre of strong blue or black. The typical Yomud tendril surrounds the field. The striking aspect is that some leaves are coiled whilst others have developed into stepped rosettes. The "skirt" at both ends shows tree-like motifs, with leaves in white and brown seeming to grow from different coloured stems. A trefoil border runs down each side of the rug.

Warp	Goat's hair mixed with wool, two-fold, S-twist.
Weft	Brown wool, two-fold.
Pile	Wool Ghiordes knot, 70 high, 55 wide per dcm. = app. 2,450 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	remains of a red kilim evident.
Shirasi	brown wool, not the original.

21 Yomud

Wool *Second half of the 19th century*
5 ft 10 in x 9 ft 7 in

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich

Kepse-Yomud guls alternating diagonally in white and blue-green stand out from a dark violet ground. In the main border, in white, the characteristic Turkoman tendril appears as well as shrivelled, curled, leaves which have lost their stem, and thus their connexion with the tendril. The "Ashik" covers the narrow top and bottom borders. The broad top and bottom ends are covered with stylised floral shapes.

Warp	wool, S-twist, two-fold, twisted.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, twisted.
Pile	wool, two-fold, untwisted, Ghiordes knot, 61 high, 53 wide per dcm. = app. 2,013 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	A short, violet coloured kilim follows a broad strip in the flower and tendril pattern.
Shirasi	blue wool wound around four warp threads.

22 Yomud of the Ogurjalis

Wool About 1800 4 ft 4 in x 6 ft 7 in

The collector can be proud to own this unusual example which belongs to those rare Yomuds of Turkoman origin. It is not a fragment nor is it part of a large bag, even though one might imagine that this rug could have been used crosswise as a wall-hanging, and hung in such a way that the variegated stripes pointed from top to bottom.

Transverse stripes on a red-brown ground tend to violet. They differ in width and design and are ever-changing. Geometric ornaments appear in the narrow stripes which again change with other stripes showing flowers. In contrast thereto the pattern in the broader stripes reveals extremely detailed motifs, such as are found in the borders of many Yomud rugs. The colouring of the rug is enchanting: green-blue, pale blue, medium blue and dark blue alternate with white and red, with liberal use of yellow – most surprising for this tribe.

The strangest and yet the most essential characteristic about this rug, however, is its structure. The use of brown and white wefts in the back makes it totally different from all other Turkoman rugs. It looks as if white sand had been sprinkled on to a brown-red ground.

Structurally there are but a few comparable pieces. Some are illustrated in this book in plate 15 and 19. It is, therefore, obvious that this rug can be attributed to the Ogurjalis.

Warp	Goat's hair, S-twist, two-fold.
Weft	Goat's hair undyed, brown and white, two-fold.
Pile	Wool, Ghiordes knot, 80 high, 40 wide, per dcm. = app. 5,200 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	missing.
Shirasi	originally red and blue wool threads wound round 2 bundles of warps, now removed.

23 Yomud

of the Ogurjalis from the South, on the Caspian Sea.

Wool pile *Early 19th century* *5 ft 5 in x 7 ft 6 in*

Private Collection, Milan.

The rug shown here can be considered a singular specimen. The central field contains a number of ornaments of a variety not normally encountered in Turkoman rugs. In addition to tribal guls and irregular shapes adorned with hooks, and with a field design which also appears in Belouch rugs, this example reveals ornaments reminiscent of the Dragon design in Caucasian and early Anatolian rugs. The motifs in pale blue, dark blue, white and brown stand out from the brown-violet Yomud ground colour. Yet the border does not reveal the familiar Turkoman tendril with coiled leaves, but a strange type of flower growing from a hooked bar. (See also the border of the rug in plate 15.) Special attention should be paid to the magnificent kilim in pale blue and pink.

The Senna knot has been used, with 86 knots high and 42 knots wide per dcm. which equals approximately 3612 knots per sq. dcm. Along the sides red and blue wool has been wound round two warp threads alternately.

24 Yomud of the Southern Ogurjalis (detail)

Wool 19th century 6 ft 5 in x 9 ft 2 in

Joseph V. McMullan Collection, New York (plate 123).

This Yomud shows a further interesting development of the foregoing rug in plate 23. There are on a *continuous line* major, tribal guls, each pointing in a different direction from the other, arranged in a row with Dyrnak guls. This is something which normally appears only in Tekke rugs. Parallel to this there are pairs of minor guls decorated with hooks relieved by an even smaller gul. In this instance, too, the main gul has retained its Caucasian character.

The apparently classical tendril of the Ogurjalis has been preserved, but infinitely less attention has been paid to detail and design than in the rugs in plates 15 and 23.

25 Yomud

Beshir influence

Wool Early 19th century 5 ft 6 in x 14 ft 11 in

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich

There is no other known rug of this type and design. The ground colour as well as the stitch of this rug are typically Yomud. The colour combination, however, resembles that of the Beshirs. We may, therefore, consider this rug as a combination of the characteristics of the two districts, due to migration or marriage. In the rather undemonstrative central field there are fourteen compartments containing stepped lozenges. Their central device is a gul with rays, each in a different colour, and ending in double hooks. Between the rectangular fields lie vertical and horizontal stripes with predominant red and yellow ornaments. The narrow border consists of a row of blue-red and red-brown lozenges. An "S" border frames the rug and various fields and even fills two compartments completely. The lower edge of this piece may well be considered unique.

Warp	undyed wool, S-twist.
Weft	red dyed wool, two-fold.
Pile	untwisted wool, two-fold, Senna knot, 46 high, 32 wide per dcm. = app. 1,472 knots per sq. dcm.
Top end	wool kilim with blue stripes and knotted fringes.
Bottom end	knotted edge with "S" ornaments and halves of Yomud guls followed by a kilim in Yomud red with blue and brick red stripes; knotted fringes.
Shirasi	brown, undyed wool wound around three warp threads.

26 Yomud Engsi

Wool Before 1800 4ft 2in x 4ft 11in

Private Collection, Stuttgart.

This rare specimen may well be one of the earliest preserved Yomud Engsi (used as door-hangings), which has already been published in R. V. Ottingen/Grote-Hasenbalg's Folder II, plate 45.

The central field consits of an ascending row of Ashik minor guls surrounded on three sides by the curled or coiled leaf border, so typical of the Yomuds. A gable accentuates the upper part of the rug while various geometrical ornaments cover corners and border. The "foot" is formed by a row of laden beasts of burden on a golden brown ground, their realistic reproduction contrasting sharply with the otherwise abstract rug.

27 Yomud Kapunnuk

Wool and Silk Early 19th century

4ft 1in x 4ft 2in

For the embellishment of the Kibitka entrances rugs were knotted which were executed with great care and exactness. The specimen depicted here can hardly be surpassed in beauty and fineness.

On beige ground the curled leaf motif is shown in its clearest form and applied cleverly to the difficult shape of the Kapunnuk.

While the hanging narrow parts could have been taken from a border of a Yomud rug, the design changes in the middle part to reciproce domlike fields in which two bigger and one smaller curled leaf appear. As unusual as the solving of the problem of design is also the colourscheme. There is a vibrant strong brickred which normally cannot be detected with this clearness in Turkoman rugs, accompanied by a magenta coloured silk and a deep indigo-blue.

A small border consisting of double crossed frames the rug. At the ends of the narrow parts and at the lower end of the middle part a braide is sewn on which is embroidered with S-shaped motifs and produces long fringes.

Warp	undyed wool
Weft	brown wool
Pile	wool and Silk Senna knot, 94 high, 52 wide per dcm. = app. 4,888 knots per sq. dcm.
Bottom ends	with embroidered braid attached
Shirasi	darkblue wound round with wool.

28 Yomud Hatschlou Engsi

Wool 19th century 4ft 11in x 5ft 8in

For tent entrances knotted pieces were used which were also called Hatchlou, due to their cruciform design. The most notable thing in the specimen shown here is the characteristic Yomud lower edge.

The cruciform design stands out from a brownish red ground which tends somewhat to violet. The four rectangles formed by the cross are filled with small gul shapes. They are surrounded partly by border ornaments (Ashik guls) as well as by trapezoid shapes. Between this surround on the sides there is a tendril with the coiled leaf motif, while "T"-shaped motifs predominate on the short sides, similar to those found in the Fustat rug fragments (14th/15th Century).

The carefully executed kilim at the top and bottom edges is embroidered in blue and pink.

Warp	wool, S-twist, two-fold, twisted.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Ghiordes knot, 60 high, 50 wide per dcm. = app. 3000 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	violet-brown-white kilim, embroidered in blue and pink wool.

29 Yomud Hatschlou Engsi

Wool 19th century 4ft 2in x 5ft 1in

In spite of the obvious similarity in colour, design, structure and age with the previous rug No. 28, it was considered worthwhile illustrating this rug because of its pale blue lower edge. It is this blue "skirt" with its design commonly known as the Yomud pine, which makes this rug special and attractive.

30 Yomud

Wool Early 19th century 3 ft 7 in x 3 ft 7 in

Danker Collection, Wiesbaden.

This small, unusual Yomud belongs to the Danker Collection in Wiesbaden. The main feature are the sand-coloured rectangles forming the central field, with floral crosses in red and blue at their centres. A red-blue gul border with a white ground surrounds the central field, followed at the top and bottom by ends in which geometrized trees have been knotted. They appear faintly elongated on the usual Yomud red ground. The unusual colouring as well as the fineness of design and stitch indicate that the rug is very old. The extremely smooth back of the rug is further proof of its age. A similar rug exists in the United States; it used to be in Ethel Elkins' Collection in New York.

Warp	undyed, ivory-coloured wool.
Weft	brown wool, 2 wefts waved.
Pile	wool, Ghiordes knot, 60 high, 42 wide per dcm. app. 2,520 knots per sq. dcm.
Shirasi	red and blue wool alternating.

51 Yomud

Wool Middle of the 19th century 3 ft 3 in x 3 ft 5 in

Private Collection, Munich.

Small Turkoman rugs with a camel-coloured ground and a starkly geometrical design are very rare indeed. This rug, completely covered in rectangles with a cruciform device at their centres, does not appear boring simply because its design is simple. The rug is finely knotted with a well preserved kilim at the end, interlaced with blue lines.

32 Yomud Osmulduk

Wool 19th century 2 ft 4 in x 3 ft 9 in

All camel covers of this sort are pentagonal, and the border, therefore, is uniform on three sides only. The pointed fourth and fifth sides have a narrower end in a different design. The central field reveals a row of "S"-ornaments arranged on vertical bars, on a white ground. The main border with the Ashik gul in red on a green ground, is surrounded by a minor border showing the "running dog" motif.

These hangings are rarely as colourful as the example shown here.

Warp	undyed brown wool, two-fold, twisted.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Ghiordes knot, 76 high, 54 wide per dcm. = app. 2,584 knots per sq. dcm.
Lower edge	kilim decorated with blue and red embroidery work.
Shirasi	strands of warp threads wound round with brownish red wool.

55 Yomud Osmulduk

Wool 19th century 2ft 2in x 4ft 7in

The border and the ground colour of the central field correspond with those of the previous pieces. The central field, however, is surrounded by a notched lattice-work. As the predominant colours are green-blue, pale blue, brownish red and brick red, with very little yellow, the overall effect of this rug is much more sombre than that of the previous piece.
The structure of the two rugs is the same.

54 Yomud Osmulduk

Wool 19th century 2 ft 4 in x 4 ft 0 in

The unusual design of the camel hanging is without doubt a later copy of the very old piece which Gogel illustrates. The design, however, has been simplified and does not show the imagination and colourings of Gogel's specimen.

The light brownish-red field is dominated by serrated white and blue motives sesembling leaves, which enclose a bird in their midst. On top of the bird appears a leaf adorned with double hooks while underneath it, a double row of blue and white lines in V-form are added.

The border shows on three sides on a cream ground the well-known Yomud tendril in its original form, i.e. the curled leaf is still connected to the tendril. Double crosses are filling the remainder of the border. As with all Osmolduks the design changes in the upper two sides of the rug: a weavy line lets the border taper towards the peak.

The rug was only offered for a short time to the Textile Museum, Washington D.C., and, therefore, no details of its structure could be obtained.

35 Yomud Juval

Wool and cotton 19th century 2 ft 3 in x 3 ft 9 in

In addition to the normal tent bags with knotted pile, there are also those in which the warp and the weft form the main surface structure. In order to achieve a more varied effect the weft thread is white in one stripe and red in the next. Narrow and broader stripes, knotted in wool, stand out from the warp and weft structure. Their main colours are blue, red and white and reveal a geometrical design. The bottom edge of the bag is in white cotton on which Yomud guls in blue and red straddle a vertical ornament. The design which results is reminiscent of stylized trees.

Warp	white goat's hair of finest quality, S-twist, two-fold.
Weft	partly red, partly white goat's hair.
Pile	the pile of the knotted strip is in wool, the bottom edge in undyed cotton. All ornaments are in wool. Senna knot, 110 high, 50 wide per dcm. = app. 5,500 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	cast off.
Shirasi	selvages according to the material used.

56 Kizil Ayak

Namaslik (prayer-rug) or Engsi

Wool Early 19th century 4 ft 7 in x 5 ft 9 in

A rare, early specimen which proves conclusively that the otherwise so rigid geometrical forms have developed from plant ornaments. Starting with the brown lower edge of the rug one can see a row of blooms which are still drawn quite realistically. They stand out from the ground in their matt red, pale blue and white colours. Similar blooms are repeated on both sides before the beginning of the border. On the right and left sides towards the central field there is a wavy line from which clearly-defined, beamlike ornaments adorned with horns or hooks project. Following this towards the centre there is a faint white line from which tulip shapes branch out. The inner field so formed has yet another central device with distinctive leaf motifs framed by a geometrical border. At the top and the bottom of this there is a Mihrab-like niche again with an ascending design of blooms in its centre. To the right and left are stylised twigs similar to the tendril surrounding the central field.

At the upper end there is a row of four turrets (Kibitkas?) framed by geometrical rosettes.

In contrast to many old Hatchli the white is not in cotton but is white wool. No silk was used.

Warp	undyed goat's hair, two-fold, twisted, S-twist.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Ghiordes knot, 62 high, 55 wide per dcm. = app. 2,170 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	missing.
Shirasi	traces of two bunches of warp threads having been whipped at one time.

57 Kizil Ayak

from Pendeh Engsi or Namaslik

Wool and cotton *Middle of the 19th century*
4 ft 7 in x 5 ft 7 in

These rather sombre-hued Hatchli, attributed mostly to the Kizil Ayak tribes around Pendeh, belong to the most desirable collectors' items of Turkoman origin. The cruciform shape of the inner field is not so pronounced and the foot of the rug is often in gold-brown colours. The white ornaments have been knotted almost always in cotton, and the lilac ones in silk.

Warp	goat's hair.
Weft	undyed wool, two wefts.
Pile	wool, all white parts in cotton, Ghiordes knot, 78 high, 29 wide per dcm. = app. 2,262 knots per sq. dcm.
Top end	chessboard kilim in pink and blue; the ends of the kilim are turned over.
Shirasi	brown wool wound around bundles of four threads.

38 Kizil Ayak from the Merv area

Wool pile Middle of the 19th century
7 ft 6 in x 10 ft 11 in

Vereinigte Werkstätten Collection, Munich.

The Turkoman tribe of the Kizil Ayak knotted many large rugs in Afghanistan. Only very few, however, have been preserved which were produced in Turkestan. Consequently this specimen belongs to the rarest rugs of its kind and is, as far as is known, the only piece in this design.
Usually only prayer rugs or door-hangings are known from the Turkestan Kizil Ayaks, their ground colour being from deep reddish brown to an almost black violet. The inner field of this large rug in brown-red shades is divided into three rows of major guls with a surrounding decoration similar to the Salors. The influence of the Salors was considerable since the numerically smaller Kizil Ayaks lived between the Salor and the Tekkes of Merv. The minor guls have taken on the shape of a cross towards the centre of the rug, but change to the "T" form along the borders.
The main border shows the typical Kizil Ayak pattern, as is also found in Hatchli. The minor borders reveal scaled down minor guls. At both ends of the rug there follows and additional strip with a flower design. The all-wool pile has a velvety handle.

Warp	goat's hair.
Weft	undyed, grey-brown wool.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 87 high, 59 wide per dcm. = app. 5,393 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	first a red, then a white kilim, knotted fringe.
Shirasi	two warp threads wound round with blue wool.

59 Kizil Ayak

from the Afghan-Turkestan Border District

Wool *19th century* *6 ft 5 in* x *8 ft 11 in* – detail –

R. G. Hubel Collection, Munich.

On a rich red-brown field four rows of guls influenced by Salor-ornamentation appear in red and yellow alternating with rows of blue starshaped ornaments. Similar forms changing between yellow and blue dominate the main border which is accompanied by an inner and outer border showing small rosettes.

Colour composition as well as handle and stich lead to the conclusion that this is a rug that technically was knotted on Afghan soil.

Warp	wool undyed.
Weft	wool and goat's hair, 2 straight, 2 weavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 48 high, 40 wide per dcm. = app. 1,920 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	remainder of Kelim with red and blue wefts.
Shirasi	not original.

40 Karakalpak

Wool 19th century 6 ft 8 in x 7 ft 5 in

Private Collection, Cologne.

It is astonishing just how much harmony and radiance of colour have been achieved in this small rug, in spite of the coarseness of stitch. Although the colouring is akin to that of the Beshirs, the design reveals that the piece comes from a special area. One would not be mistaken in attributing it to the Karakalpaks. Rhombs filled with cruciform flowers and outlined in blue and white zig-zag lines stand out from the brilliant red ground. An amusing feature is that it is not only the rhombs with the blue and yellow outlines in the central field which have a plain red ground, but also those down the sides. The rug is framed by a starkly geometric and fairly narrow border.

Warp	undyed, grey-white wool, two-fold.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold.
Pile	Senna knot, 26 high, 29 wide per dcm. = app. 760 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	brown-red kilim.
Shirasi	three warp threads wound round with brown wool.

41 Ersari - Beshir

Wool *First half of the 19th century*
4ft 11in x 11ft 6in

Private Collection, Cologne.

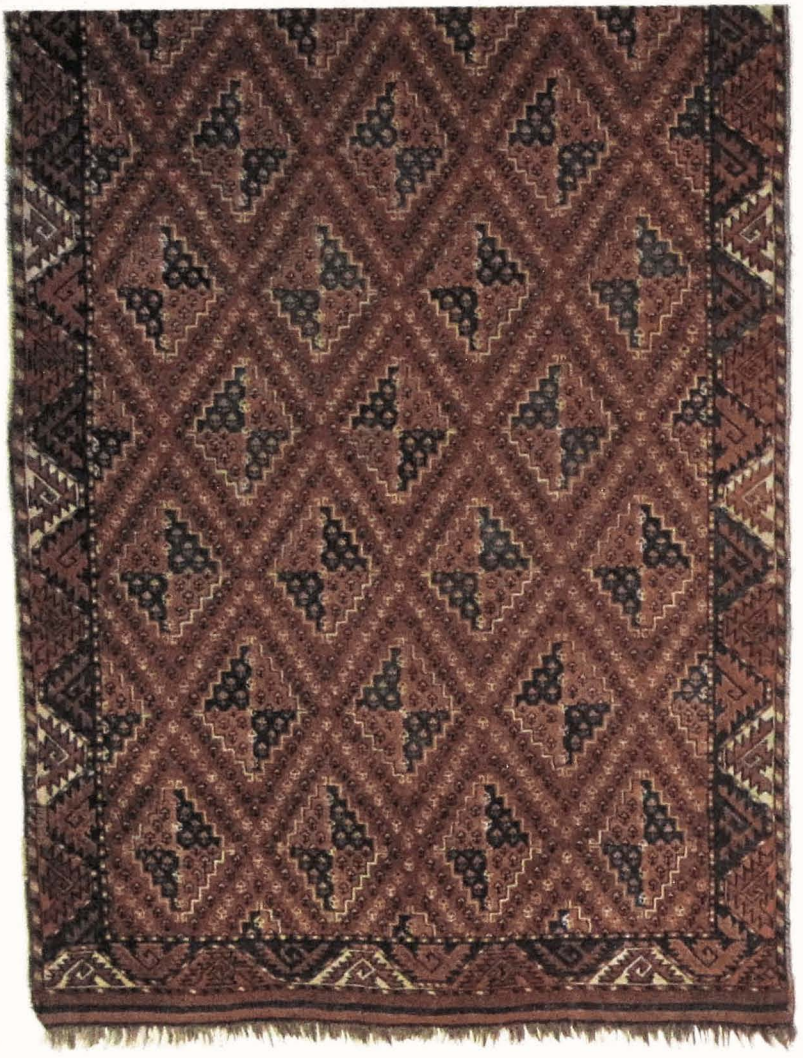
It is very seldom that one finds a Turkoman rug which radiates such charm and reveals such an abundance of harmoniously worked ornaments. Minor guls in red, light blue and dark blue surround the major guls, an ornament which is normally used sparingly. Here it is used in an overall design, decorated with needle-like rays which fan out from their edges. The rest of the brick red ground is covered with countless, most intricately worked ornaments. A narrow border – proof of its great age – in which the trefoil motif predominates, frames the rug.

42 Ersari - Beshir

Wool Middle of the 19th century
4 ft 8 in x 10 ft 6 in – detail –

Frank M. Michaelian Collection, New York.

The whole of the ground is covered with a diamond-shaped trellis work. In the fields of the diamonds there are stepped, lozenge guls either in light blue and a yellowish red, or a dark blue with yellowish red.
The border shows signs of the Yomud tendrill in the form of curled leaves in red, alternating on a blue, and white ground.



Warp	undyed goat's hair, S-twist.
Weft	brown wool, three-fold, one straight, two wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 35 high, 27 wide per dcm. = app. 945 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	reddish brown and blue kilim.
Shirasi	grey wool covering three warp threads.

43 Ersari - Beshir

Wool Middle of the 19th century
7 ft 2 in x 9 ft 8 in – shortened –

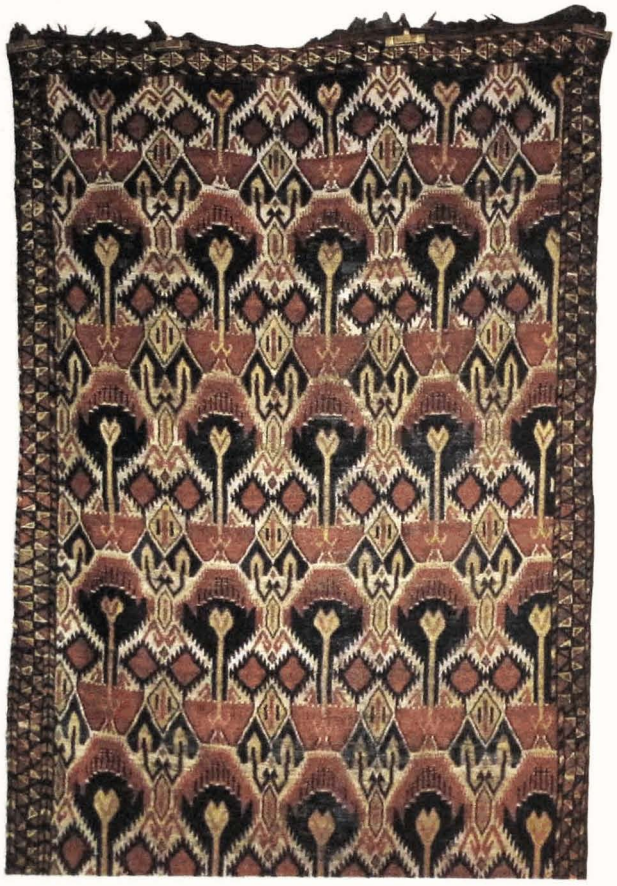
C. H. Vater Collection, Zürich.

The central field of this rug is divided into brownish red and ivory coloured rectangles. The motif appearing in them gave rise to the name "Tarantula Beshir". It is, however, left to the reader's imagination to interpret this as he likes.
A tendril border with geometrically patterned minor borders completes the rug.
The typical Beshir yellow, the harmonious colour tones and the rare design make this an extremely desirable collector's item.

44 Ersari - Beshir

Wool 18th century 5 ft 8 in x 17 ft 1 in – detail –

Rugs were often produced by the Ersari which exceeded by far the measurements of the kibitka. This proves that their early products, outstanding in their originality of design and colourings, also found approval for use in town dwellings and palaces.
This Beshir and the following juval belong to a special group of Beshirs which are typified by their silky, long staple wool, by the red tending to pink, and by their rather loose handle.
The field of the rug is divided up into five rows of ascending, tree-like ornaments. This was not unusual towards the end of the 18th Century. (Could this be the form from which the gul, without its stem and tendril link, developed?) Amongst them are other leaf and twig ornaments as well as shapes in which stepped, minor guls can be discerned.
The carpet is surrounded by a narrow border – a sign of its great age – consisting of triangular segments.



45 Ersari - Beshir Juval

Wool 19th century 3 ft 1 in x 5 ft 8 in

H. McCoy Jones Collection, Washington D. C.

This bag and the previous rug form a special group within the Ersari. Not only the colourings, but also the unique boldness of the design single them out from the other products of the Ersari. Four gul-like medallions in blue and red with black and white stripes fill the field. A stepped star forms the central device of the guls, from which black rays with white hooks emanate. The border shows a realistically worked floral pattern in alternating light blue and black on a red ground. The rather unusual red tending to pink is characteristic of this group.

A similar piece can be found in Thacher, plate 36.

46 Ersari - Beshir Namaslik

Wool 18th century 3ft x 4ft 2in

Private Collection, Hamburg.

The exceptional beauty and balance of this prayer rug is achieved by using for the design little stars or rosettes on the light coloured ground, as well as in the light blue and black centrepiece. The pattern is repeated in the angle of the stripes. The great age of this rug is borne out by the starkness and clarity of the pattern and by the use of light blue with black – an unusual feature in Ersaris or Beshirs.
The rug is closely knotted with fine and lustrous wool.

47 Ersari - Beshir

Compartmented Prayer/Rug

Wool Middle of the 19th century
2ft 9in x 4ft 3in – fragment –

Harold Mark Keshishian Collection, Washington.

This type of Ersari prayer rug is probably one of the rarest Turkoman rugs from the middle of the last century. The particularly attractive feature of this piece are the pairs of hands appearing above the mihrab. Originally there may have been five to seven niches.

Inside the prayer niche, on a Beshir red ground, gables are repeated alternating in colour from blue, to red and white. Above the niches there are geometrical ornaments, as well as a pair of hands, each in blue.

Warp	wool.
Weft	wool.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, app. 1,500 knots per sq. dcm.

48 Ersari - Beshir Namaslik

Wool Early 19th Century 3 ft 7 in x 6 ft

Ersari prayer rugs commercially known as Beshir, belong to the most sought after collectors' pieces. Only very few examples have survived, being generally rather loosely knotted. The mihrab of the piece shown here is emphasized by a pendant design of pomegranates on a white ground with a central field in red and blue (also with a plant pattern). Above the prayer niche on a cherry red ground there are some flowers in pale blue, dark blue and some brown. In contrast to this there is the strict, geometrical border in blue, red and yellow. This mixture of pure geometrical and floral ornaments is typical of the Ersari, yet is in contrast to most other Turkoman rugs in which plant ornaments have become geometrized beyond recognition.

Warp	Brown, undyed wool, S-twist, two-fold, twisted.
Weft	brown wool, twofold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 40 high, 30 wide per dcm. = app. 1,200 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	final border partly. restored.
Shirasi	blue wool wound round two warp threads.

49 Ersari - Beshir Namaslik

Wool *Early 19th century* *3 ft 7 in x 5 ft 3 in*

Martin Volkmann Collection, Unterföhring.

Although this rug is not as old as the previous one, the harmony of colour and the balance of design lend it a charm of its own. The slender mihrab with plant ornaments stands out from a red ground and is framed by a blue border shaped like a pillar which ends in a dome-shaped mihrab. Whilst red ornaments outlined in yellow appear in the pillar, signifying possibly stylized animals, the ornamentation near the tip changes to rosettes. The ground colour of the rug is white and covered in an ascending pattern of flowers. The pattern of the tip of the mihrab is repeated in the narrow main border, while the final border shows a notched tendril on a yellow ground.
Rugs of this kind are amongst the most sought after collectors' pieces. They not only delight the eye, but offer also an insight into the imagination and versatility which went into their making.

Warp	undyed wool mixed with goat's hair. S-twist, two-fold *twisted.*
Weft	undyed wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 56 high, 29 wide per dcm. = app. 1,044 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	no kilim.
Shirasi	every two warp threads secured with wool (not original).

50 Ersari - Beshir

Wool *Middle of the 19th century* *5 ft 8 in x 12 ft 2 in*

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

The central field consists of diagonal, adjacent stripes in royal blue and mignonette, broken up at irregular intervals. Brick red, linked ray guls with yellow outlines run across these diagonal stripes – altogether a rather strange conception. Rosettes in pale blue, mignonette and red with projecting leaf ornaments are shown in the main border in royal blue and deep blue. In two of the four minor borders the typical Beshir yellow predominates.

Warp	wool, S-twist, two-fold twisted, grey-brown.
Weft	2 red wool threads, wavy.
Pile	wool, two-fold untwisted, Senna knot, 52 high, 27 wide per dcm. = app. 864 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	A kilim in red and blue follows a knotted section in red wool, decorated with leaf and flower motifs.
Shirasi	two warp threads wound round with red wool.

51 Ersari - Ilan - Beshir

Wool *Middle of the 19th century* *5 ft 4 in x 11 ft 0 in*

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

The central field shows the characteristic Beshir guls: a large gul at the centre of the rug, two guls at the top and two at the bottom. The ground colour changes from brown to dark blue and pale blue. Between the guls there is a cherry red motif adapted from the "cloud band" motif. The octagons themselves consist of a number of outlines in yellow, red, deep blue to black, filled with stars, while the central motif shows a red notched rosette on a yellow ground, divided by two intersecting lines.

There are two main borders running parallel, filled with floral ornaments, and separated by two minor borders with a yellow ground. Fine, soft, lustrous wool has been used.

Warp	wool mixed with goat's hair, light grey-brown, S-twist, on two levels.
Weft	brown wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, two-fold untwisted, Senna knot, 37 high, 30 wide per dcm. = app. 1,110 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	missing.
Shirasi	red, dark brown and light blue wool wound round four warp threads.

52 Ersari - Beshir

Wool *Middle of the 19th century* *5 ft 6 in x 15 ft 8 in*

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

The central field is divided into six lozenges at the centre of which, radiating from an inner red lozenge, are eight red stems with flowers. The resulting triangles are filled with ornaments similar to those of the lozenges. Leaf and ray guls alternate in the blue border. The minor borders are in typical Beshir yellow, and filled with small blue and red stars. A zigzag outer border frames the rug.

Warp	brown wool, S-twist, two-fold.
Weft	undyed wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, untwisted, two-fold, Senna knot, 54 high, 29 wide per dcm. = app. 986 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	red kilims in wool, each with three blue lines.
Shirasi	Bundles of three warp threads wound round with brown wool.

55 Ersari - Beshir

Wool End of the 19th century 5 ft 1 in x 8 ft 0 in

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich

Three lozenges stand out against the ground colour which changes from light to dark blue. In the lozenges are stylized trees surrounding a gul. The same arrangement is seen in the triangles formed by the lozenges. Two minor borders in Beshir yellow flank the central border, the blue ground of which is filled with hexagons containing flowers.

This rug already shows signs of the decline to come. The guls are not of the same size and the ground is unevenly covered. The Beshir yellow has lost its clarity and tends to orange. Nevertheless, the rug is a typical example from the Beshir area.

Warp	wool mixed with goat's hair, S-twist undyed.
Weft	undyed wool, two wefts wavy.
Pile	wool, two-fold, untwisted, Senna knot, 32 high, 27 wide per dem. = app. 864 knots per sq. dem.
Top and bottom ends	kilims in blue and red.
Shirasi	two warp threads wound round with red wool.

54 Ersari - Beshir

Wool *Middle of the 19th century* *7 ft 9 in x 13 ft 9 in*

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

The central field, in a stronger red than is normal for Beshir rugs, is filled with alternating round ornaments and rhombs reminiscent of tulips. The colours of the ornaments vary from white to light blue, to green, to brown. The tulip motif of the central field is repeated in the border. The arbitrariness of the number of ornaments and the manner in which they are broken up by other motifs are remarkable features of the rug. For example, whilst there are nine vertical and two horizontal tulip motifs at the lower end of the rug, the upper end shows only eight vertical motifs. The tulip motif is not commonly found in Beshir rugs.

Warp	wool mixed with goat's hair. S-twist, blackish brown, with one warp thread rather raised.
Weft	S-twist, wool, two wefts wavy, one weft red, one weft white.
Pile	wool, untwisted, Senna knot, 24 high, 28 wide per dcm. = app. 672 knots per sq. dcm.
Top end	red kilim in wool with a blue stripe.
Bottom end	missing.
Shirasi	red wool wound round two warp threads.

55 Ersari - Beshir Juval

Wool 19th century 3 ft 0 in x 4 ft 11 in

Waehry Collection, Zürich.

Many bags from this tribe have been preserved, but it is seldom that one finds an example of such definition of pattern, beauty of colour and fineness of stitch. Observe the detailed ornaments at the top and bottom ends, and the little stars in light blue, dark blue and some yellow, contrasting with the rust-red ground of the lower extremity.

The lattice-work, made up of stars, flowers and connecting lines, is typical of Beshirs, whilst a continuous tendril border of leaf shapes and rosettes surrounds the piece. The clear yellow used in some of the rosettes is a clue to the relatively great age of the bag.

56 Ersari - Beshir

Wool End of the 19th century 3 ft 11 in x 5 ft 7 in

Private Collection, London.

In contrast to plate 44 and plate 45 this rug is the product of a later era in which pure ornamentation and colour combination of the original tribe has changed with the influence of the times. The older, flattened gul, here in black with yellow or white contours on a red ground, can no doubt be recognized, but the colours have become harder and the border, from the point of view of both design and colour, has deteriorated sadly.

57 Afghan

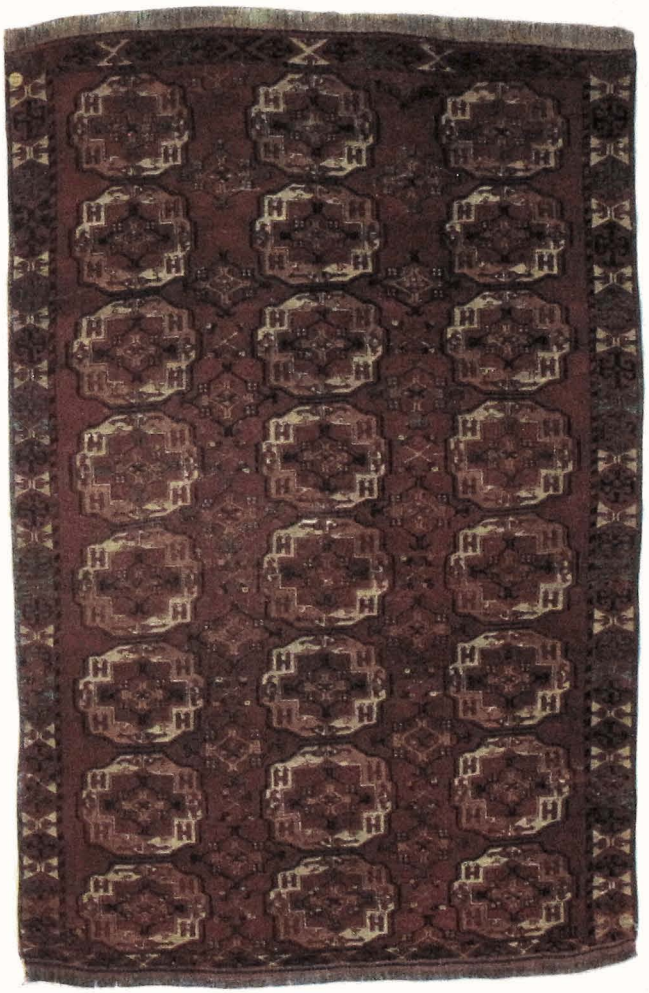
of the Ersari from the Kerki area

About 1800 *6 ft 7 in x 9 ft 7 in*

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

This rug from the Ersaris of the Kerki area belongs to the oldest preserved Afghans. Its major guls arranged in rows on a pale brick red ground, show many peculiarities. The older the rug, the more original the gul.

In a Tauk-Nuska filled gul there are usually two horned animals in each quarter. Here, however, there is only one animal on an apricot-coloured or white ground. The animals face away from each other. All the feet are at the bottom, all the heads at the top, just as in an ascending pattern. In addition, to the left and right of the centre of the gul, sitting on the axis, as it were, is a shape reminiscent of a bird. The central device of the major gul contains a light coloured lozenge shape adorned with flowers and which re-appears in the minor guls. It is called "Sagdak" gul and is very popular in Kerki rugs. The simple border shows red hexagons with pale blue and dark blue cruciform flowers.



Warp	wool mixed with goat's hair, S-twist.
Weft	undyed wool, two-fold, wavy.
Pile	wool, two-fold, Senna knot, 36 high, 26 wide per dcm. = app. 936 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	remains of a reddish blue kilim.
Shirasi	undyed brown wool wound round three warp threads.

58 Afghan Embroidery*

18th century *4 ft 0 in x 12 ft 8 in – detail –*

McCoy Jones Collection, Washington D. C.

The embroidery combines Afghan ornaments from Char-Vilayet with Turkoman influences. On a fiery, brick red ground there are three rows of three guls each in red, blue, yellow and mignonette green with ornaments indicating a border on both sides. The embroidery consists of twelve such rows of guls sewn together. It is of special interest to note that ornaments, shaped like flowers or treetops grow out of different guls. It seems to confirm the theory that originally the guls represented irrigated pastures with trees and grazing cattle.

The warp and weft are of extremely hard and tightly twisted wool. The kilim and the fringes are sewn on to the top and bottom ends. Along the sides there are red and blue borders which have been sewn on.

* *A similar piece is illustrated in plate XLI/1 and described on page 29 in Bogolubow's work.*

59 **Afghan** of the Ersari

Wool *Middle of the 19th century* *6 ft 3 in x 7 ft 11 in*

Coury Rugs Collection, New York.

The typical colourings of the Beshir, an offshoot of the Ersari, is significant for this rug produced in Afghanistan. The so-called Afghan gulli-gul (three leaves in each segment) in yellow and dark blue and white and dark blue stands out from the brick red ground. In between lie minute minor guls alternating with pale blue and dark blue Sagdak guls (Sekis kelle Sagdak = eight flower motif).

A notched tendril main border frames the rug, with two minor borders of the same kind.

60 Afghan of the Chub-Bash

Wool 19th century 7ft 10in x 9ft 10in

Although this rug, judging from its design and colouring, could have been knotted in Turkestan, the difference in wool and stitch density points to its having been produced by an offshoot of the Chodors or Yomuds, i. e. the Chub-Bash, who migrated to Afghanistan. The Tauk-Nuska in the major guls would also confirm this. Four rows of major guls stand out from the slightly blueish red ground. The animal depictions are visible, not only with heads but also with horns – a sign of the great age of the rug. In later rugs, first the horns were omitted and then, finally only an "H" wasleft. Next to the major guls there are rows of minor guls similar to those of the Tekke. The familiar tendril design is seen in the border down the sides of the rug, whilst the border along the top and bottom contains a row of minor guls.

Here is a rug which combines several tribal characteristics. Wegner, using an illustration of a comparable rug in plate 10 of his book points out that in fact the Chodors were inclined to adopt and adapt guls and other ornaments from neighbouring tribes into their own products. *(See also Turkoman rug from Siavosh Azadi, Heimtex, May 1968.)*

Warp	brown wool mixed with goat's hair.
Weft	brownish red wool, two-fold wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 42 high, 30 wide per dcm. = app. 1,260 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	red kilim with blue stripes.
Shirasi	red wool round three warp threads.

61 **Afghan** of the Saryqs (detail)

Wool *Middle of the 19th century* *6 ft 9 in x 10 ft 5 in*

Joseph V. McMullan Collection, New York (plate 124)

There is a group of rugs, knotted in Afghanistan, which has nothing to do with the products commonly known as Afghans. They are very carefully knotted rugs in silky wool which, as regards age, colouring and fineness, are equal to the most beautiful Tekke and Saryq-Pendeh. They use as their major gul the rounded clover leaf gul considered to be the typical Afghan gul (gulli-gul). Note that the Tauk-Nuska motif appears in the centre of the gul. Their ground colour makes them rather similar to the Yomuds, but the other colours are much too delicate for one to assume that a scattered branch of the Yomuds might have produced them. No. 15 of the illustrations in the catalogue for the exhibition of Turkoman rugs in the Fogg Art Museum in 1966, shows an almost identical rug which reproduces the colour combination very well indeed, and which solves the puzzle with its Saryq inner border. They are very old products of Saryqs in Afghanistan, near the Turkestan town Kerki.

62 Afghan Ersari - Beshir

Wool Middle of the 19th century 3 ft 5 in x 5 ft 0 in

Felix Rogge Collection, Bielefeld

This small unusual rug was knotted by an offshoot of the Ersari from Turkestan. Next to the rectangular, red guls with a blue star on a camel-coloured ground, one can see the much more characteristic Ersari gul which in its flattened form is framed by a geometric wicker-work effect. Here, too, there is a star in brown on a red ground. The most striking characteristic, however, is the yellow outline of the wreath, alternating with white. A simple rosette border surrounds the rug. As so often happens, it is surprising how the nomads produced such enchanting effects with so few aids at their disposal.

Warp	dark brown wool.
Weft	dark brown wool.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 36 high, 27 wide per dcm. = app. 972 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	red kilim, broken by blue stripe.
Shirasi	remnants of black-brown wool wound round 2 warps threads.

63 Afghan Juval of the Saryqs

Wool and silk Early 19th century
3 ft 9 in x 5 ft 7 in

Chamalian Collection, New York.

One could hardly imagine a more charming little rug from the Afghan district than this delightful bag, made by Saryqs who probably migrated from Pendeh. The centres of the major guls are formed by facing triangles in green, beige, pink and blue silk. Star-shaped minor guls in black and white fill the rest of the centrepiece, while a row of partly geometrical, partly floral borders finish off the bag. The rare, old brick red gives the rug its brilliance and heightens the relief effect of the colourful silk.

64 Afghan Namaslik

Wool 19th century 3 ft 5 in x 5 ft 1 in

Private Collection, Cologne.

From the thousands of prayer rugs which were produced by a number of Turkoman tribes in Afghanistan, this unusual and charming piece stands out. The mihrab extends from border to border and is divided into fifteen fields crowned by the prayer gable. The corners above the mihrab are filled with circular ornaments with a dot in the centre, as used in East-Turkestan rugs. The brownish red border shows geometrical rosettes in blue, white-brown and pale red. The colour and design arrangement of the ground can also be found in lager Afghan rugs, mostly, however, in a coarser, shaggier stitch.

Warp	undyed wool mixed with goat's hair.
Weft	undyed wool, two-fold, wavy. The weft is partly white, partly brown.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 34 high, 27 wide per dcm. = app. 918 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	broad wool kilim in stripes – brown and white at the top end, brown, white and red at the bottom.
Shirasi	Three warp threads wound round with thick brown wool.

65 Belouch

Wool 19th century app. 3 ft x 4 ft 7 in

Harald Böhmer Collection, Istanbul

Because of their fineness of stitch, velvety wool, and unusual colourings, old Belouch rugs can be considered to belong to the most attractive pieces worthy of collection. One of the most original examples is the one illustrated here. Whereas the central field with its camel-coloured ground and design in blue, brown and red could be regarded as nothing out of the ordinary, the most unusual border makes it an exception. Guls which have been worked with such precision are a rarity. They stand out from a natural white ground, in brown and rust red with a sparse design in deep blue. The difference in the design of the border at the lower end of the rug is typical of the nomadic origin of the piece, for apart from the three guls in the middle of the lower border, there appear motifs unrelated to the rest of the rug. Whilst the left ornament might represent a woman, the right one can only be guessed at. It could conceivably represent a male figure.

66 Belouch

Wool, tapestry woven and knotted 19th century
2ft 5in x 5ft 8in

Seven rows of trees in embroidery work stand out from the camel-coloured wool kilim structure, framed by a black, notched surround. The border, however, is knotted and reveals a geometrical pattern in brown, red, dark blue and black – typical of the Belouch.

Warp	undyed wool, S-twist, two-fold twisted.
Weft	undyed wool, S-twist.
Pile	wool, untwisted, Senna knot, 41 high, 31 wide per dcm. = app. 1,270 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	patterned kilim both woven and embroidered. Knotted fringes.

67 East - Turkestan

Fragment of a very large rug

Wool 16th century? 4ft 2in x 13ft 5in

French & Co. Collection, New York

The fragment shown here is very puzzling indeed. It is part of a gigantic rug which at one time is supposed to have lain in the Chihil Sutun Palace. It had already, apparently, been cut up in Persia, for fragments can be found in quite a number of museums. If one looks at the clear design of vases, pomegranates and scroll work, one cannot but suppose that this is one of the very early rugs preserved from East-Turkestan. The scientists are agreed, however, that the piece does not originate from Persia: India is rather favoured as the place of origin. The latter theory would be supported by the red wool ground which has almost completely disintegrated. Not so the ornaments in other colours. Yet the design is not at all Indian, nor can there be any question of an Indian copy of a Persian pattern.

Considering that luxurious palaces of the rich existed in East-Turkestan, especially in Samarqand, in earlier centuries, it would not be surprising if luxury rugs of considerable size had been produced in Yarkand and Kashgar. The generous pattern reappears in a similar form in eighteenth and nineteenth century rugs from East-Turkestan. One would, therefore, seem justified in assuming that this rug was a product of East-Turkestan, ordered for the palace in Ispahan.

68 Kashgar

Silk 17th/18th century 2 ft 10 in x 4 ft 4 in
– fragment –

Textile Museum, Washington D. C.

There is surely no other preserved antique rug from East-Turkestan surpassing the beauty of the fragment illustrated here.
The blue tracery of branches stands out from the clear yellow ground. This is typical for Kashgar rugs of the seventeenth/eighteenth century. Peonies in light red, pink, pale blue and white are linked together. It seems as if these peonies were the forerunners of the separate, unframed gul, plate 89. Groups of ornaments in red and red white and blue are scattered over the rug, representing moving banks of cloud (or possibly bats which are used frequently as symbols of good fortune in eastern countries).
The rug in its entirety was knotted in a continous repetition of this pattern.
The wonderful harmony of colour and balance of design indicate Kashgar as its provenance. (Compare also the cover, plate 69.)

69 Kashgar

Silk pile Silk warp 17th century 3 ft 2 in x 4 ft

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

A magnificent example of the refined Kashgar style. In contrast to the robust design and strong colours of Yarkand rugs, the early Kashgars are distinguished by the subtle tracery of the "twig and leaf" motif. The shades of colours used give a tone on tone effect: a matt pale blue harmonises with the pale golden yellow ground. These are the most aristocratic and sophisticated products of the Tarim Basin.

A pomegranate in a shade of brown constitutes the centre of the cover, surrounded by an abundance of fine ramifications and leaves in blue, with scattered single flowers in white. The wide border in the same design and colouring is separated from the central field by a narrow, geometrical inner border.

Warp and weft are in silk. The Senna knot has been used: 282 knots per sq. in. = 4,400 per sq. dcm.

70 Kashgar

Silk 18th century 3 ft 8 in x 6 ft

C. John Collection, London.

A charming little prayer rug from the Kevorkian Collection reflects admirably the characteristics of old Kashgar products: fine, elegant design and colouring accomplished with the minimum of aids.

A ramified flower in green and pale blue is depicted in each of the five niches. In the fields above the niches there are yellow leaves and flowers on a pale blue ground. The whole is surrounded by a narrow border in a leaf-and-tendril design.

71 Kashgar

Wool 18th century 3 ft 9 in x 7 ft 5 in – fragment –

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
Acquired in 1904.

What an abundance of detail, what variety are offered by the early examples of the Saph, or compartmented prayer rug, compared with the simplified design and gloomy colours of later pieces (see plate 97). The field of each mihrab offers a different pattern, but all are elegantly and delicately executed. Either trees with leaves and flowers or an intricate tendril with rosettes, or a continuous design of tendrils growing from rosettes.

The original rug was longer and may have had up to nine niches. As in all Kashgar rugs, the subdued harmony of colour is enchanting.

72 Kashgar

Silk Early 19th century 7 ft 3 in x 13 ft 10 in
– detail –

Private Collection, Cologne.

The harmony of colours and elegance of design of old Kashgar rugs is still preserved in this beautiful piece. On beige ground a lattice work of blue rhomboids and stars is filled with flowers and stems crosswise, which are repeated in stiffer outline in the darkblue border.

The cotton warp changes in colour every few inches.

73 Kashgar

Wool Early 19th century 5 ft 9 in x 11 ft 0 in

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The fineness of design and the care with which it has been executed, together with the harmonious colouring, indicate that this wool rug was also produced in Kashgar. The pale blue to turquoise field is covered with a continuous ramified cinquefoil design said to have been influenced by Persian Herat rugs. It would appear far more likely, however, that this design, resembling the pomegranate design in its branchwork and arrangement, and which reflects the artistic feeling of the country, has its origin in the Tarim Basin.

The main border is most unusual consisting, as it does, of leaves strung together and all pointing in the same direction, with flowers projecting downwards. At first glance the border resembles the socalled cufic borders of Anatolian and Caucasian rugs of the 16th. – 18th. Century.

74 Kashgar

Silk Early 19th century 5 ft 8 in x 11 ft 8 in

French & Co. Collection, New York

Numerous East-Turkestan silk rugs have been preserved which reveal a closely drawn design in the central field in mild grey, pale blue and beige colours. This pattern of flowering trees and rosettes might possibly have a Persian influence, just as Chinese influences might be detected in the border. It is much more probable, however, that this is a treasure of East-Turkestan ornamentation which remained unchanged through centuries, because of the remoteness of the district. The ground of many of these rugs is not knotted in silk, but embroidered with silver threads.

Warp	Cotton.
Weft	Cotton.
Pile	Silk, Senna knot, 52 high, 58 wide per dcm. = app. 1,216 knots per sq. dcm.

75 Kashgar

Wool First half of the 19th century
7 ft 10 in x 9 ft 5 in

This rug belongs to that group of Kashgar products which seem to have been influenced by Herat and its Persian patterns. The unusual arrangement, on a pale to medium blue ground, reveals a lattice design filled with red flowers. Elongated medallion-shaped ornaments with projections at each end break up the field. They contain the typical Kashgar branches with flowers and leaves. A similar pattern on a yellow ground is repeated in the four corners. At one end only about one third of the area of the two medallions has been knotted, thus giving the rug an irregular appearance. It must be stressed that the rug has not been cut or shortened.

On a white ground in the main border appears a leaf-and-tendril design in pink, brown, green, blue, yellow and dark blue. The main border is flanked by an inner and outer minor border.

Warp	white cotton, S-twist, five-fold, flat.
Weft	white cotton, two shoots, wavy.
Pile	wool, untwisted, Ghiordes knot 22 high, 34 wide per dcm. = app. 748 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	no original ends.
Shirasi	two bundles of warp threads wound round with red and brown wool.

76 Kashgar

Silk pile with metal embroidery 19th century
app. 3 ft 9 in x 5 ft 2 in

Mehdi Collection, London.

Despite their East-Turkestan origin, there appears in the 19th century a group of finely knotted rugs in silk with metal embroidery, the patterns of which were strongly influenced by Indo-Persian conceptions of design. The typical ramification and arrangement of leaf-rosettes remain, yet the contours are rounder and the flowers and rosettes lovelier. The leaves are more curved and the general impression is of a more "playful", friendlier rug. These are luxury rugs alienated from their own true style, and almost certainly intended only for export. The Ghiordes knot has been used.

77 Yarkand

Silk 17th/18th century 3 ft 4 in x 3 ft 6 in

Textile Museum, Washington.

The close relationship between this rug and the one following in plate 78 is unmistakeable. It has the same forceful, realistic design. There is, however, a difference in that the ornamentation used in the central field is the same as that in the border. Four flowers are arranged round a central flower. The overall effect is softer and more harmonious because silk has been used for the knots.

Warp and weft are in cotton, and the Senna knot has been used for the pile.

3 Yarkand

Wool 17th/18th century 3 ft 3 in x 3 ft 3 in

Bernheimer Collection, Munich.

Very few examples have been preserved in which the elegance of design and beauty of colour are as outstanding as in this small rug. The dominating element in this case is not the small central field with its four leaf rosettes, but the wide, rust red border in which blue, realistically drawn peonies linked by green tendrils, stand out. The outer minor border shows the traditional meander design on a black-brown ground, repeated at an angle in the inner border.

The structure differs from that of the Kashgar and Khotan products. The warp threads lie almost vertically over one another, thus imparting to the rug weight and a hard handle.

Warp	threads almost vertically over one another, every 6 cm. yellowish thread alternating with a blueish thread. Cotton, S-twist, four-fold twisted.
Weft	undyed cotton, two thin shoots, wavy, one double thread straight.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 35 high, 40 wide per dcm. = app. 1,400 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	remnants of a short kilim.
Shirasi	two bundles of warp threads wound round with black-brown wool.

79 Yarkand

Wool About 1800 5 ft 11 in x 12 ft 4 in

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

This rug, with its very striking trefoil border, differs in structure from Khotan and Kashgar rugs. The warp threads lie obliquely to one another, and the weft is of blue cotton. Such pieces usually come from Yarkand. The clear-cut design and the excellent colours point to its age being not later than 1800.

Three blue medallions stand out from the coppery red ground. Probably due to Buddhist influence, they contain Chinese symbols for luck, and flower tendrils. The inner minor border with its swastika design and the outer border with the leaf-and-tendril pattern serve to emphasize the wide main border with its bold trefoil motif on a copper-red and mignonette green ground.

Warp	cotton, warps lie obliquely to one another, S-twist, six-fold twisted.
Weft	light blue cotton, two wavy, one straight.
Pile	wool, untwisted, two-fold, Senna knot, 29 high, 51 wide per dcm. = app. 899 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	light blue cotton kilim, knotted fringes.
Shirasi	edge wound round with red wool.

80 Yarkand

Wool About 1800 6 ft 11 in x 11 ft 1 in

Eskenazi Collection, Milan.

This splendid rug is probably the best example of Yarkand rug knotting. Bold, yet economical use of design, broad expanse of colour stand in fiery audacity side by side. The handle is heavy and firm. The warps lie almost one on top of the other and the wefts are mainly in blue cotton.

Three medallions on a brilliant ground make up the central field which is framed in clear blue with starkly geometrized tendrils fanning out from the corners. Next to a narrow border with a leaf-and-tendril design run two main borders of equal width. It is interesting to note how the trefoil motif of the main yellow border seems to run into the meander-like second border at the corners. A magnificent achievement in artistic perfection.

Warp	white cotton.
Weft	blue cotton.
Pile	Ghiordes knot.

81 Yarkand

Silk *Middle of the 19th century* *7 ft 7 in x 10 ft 4 in*

On a brilliant yellow ground above and below the centre of the rug can be seen the pomegranate and tree motif growing from vases. The pomegranates and vases are in pale pink outlined in red; the branches and leaf shapes are in pale blue, also with a red outline. The central field is framed by several borders with geometric and rosette designs on a red ground. Normally these silk rugs have a red or blue ground colour. Yellow, as in this example, is rare.

Warp	cotton, S-twist, six-fold, twisted, warps lie obliquely to one another.
Weft	cotton, undyed, two wavy, one straight.
Pile	silk, two-fold, untwisted, Senna knot, 30 high, 39 wide per dcm. = app. 1,170 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom edge	cotton kilim, undyed, with knotted fringes.
Shirasi	simply wound round with red silk.

82 Yarkand

Wool Beginning of the 19th century
3 ft 9 in x 10 ft 9 in

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich

Four blue medallions filled with rosettes and tendrils dominate the coppery red central field. Grouped around them are pomegranate motifs, star-shaped flowers and twigs with blossoms. The border is divided into two, fairly equally sized parts, one with a light blue meander pattern on a red ground, the other a continuous, baroque tendril in pale yellow on a pink ground. Judging more from the aspect than from the structure, this rug could have been knotted in Yarkand, while the structure points to Khotan.

Warp	cotton, S-twist, six-fold, twisted.
Weft	undyed cotton, two shoots wavy, one straight, in brown wool.
Pile	wool, two-fold untwisted, Senna knot, 29 high, 26 wide per dcm. = app. 754 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	yellow wool kilim with knotted fringes at the top, brown wool kilim with looped warps at the bottom.
Shirasi	Simply wound round with red wool.

83 Yarkand

Wool Beginning of the 19th century
3 ft 9 in x 8 ft 1 in

Private Collection, Cologne.

A gul-like tendril motif arranged round a central rosette alternating in light and dark blue on a red ground covers the field. A certain similarity to the Anatolian "Holbein" rugs of the 15th Century is evident. Red, light blue and dark blue geometrized twigs alternate in the yellow main border. The outer minor border shows the familiar flowertendril motif, repeated in simpler form in the inner minor border.

Warp	undyed cotton.
Weft	blue cotton, two-fold wavy.
Pile	wool pile, Senna knot, 32 high, 29 wide per dcm. = app. 638 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	missing.
Shirasi	red wool round one bunch of warp threads.

84 Yarkand

Wool 19th century 4ft 10in x 8ft 11in

C. H. Vater Collection, Zürich.

Even in the 19th century there was a predilection for clear, striking designs and fairly strong colour contrasts in rugs from the area of the Yarkand oasis.

Turkoman influences from neighbouring West-Turkestan are undeniable in this example.

Two rows of major guls alternate with three rows of minor guls on a pinkish red ground, similar to those encountered in Salor rugs, yet stylistically adapted for East-Turkestan. The three borders, however, retain their East-Turkestan character.

85 Khotan

Wool with Goldbraiding 17th century
1 ft 6 in x 3 ft 11 in – fragment –

Museum für Kunsthandwerk, Frankfurt.

This fragment with its archaic design surely must be counted as one of the oldest Khotan rugs still in existence. Presumably it is an example of the early rugs that were meant for export to China. This is not only indicated by the heavy goldbraiding but still more by the presentation of the "Dragon and Phoenix" symbol in the medallion guls. The Dragon and Phoenix design is not part of the Eastturkestan range of ornaments and therefore it is shown in a hardly recognizable abstract form. If the rug were knotted in China, this for Chinese so important symbol would have been clearly and discernibly outlined.
A similar fragment, even with part of the border, is illustrated by Tattersall Vol. II plate 65, and it might well be that both fragments belong to the same rug.
On dark blue ground a system of twigs and blossoms appear interspersed with staggered medaillon guls containing the Dragon and Phoenix symbol. The straight lines and some ornaments are heavely braided.

Warp	cotton undyed.
Weft	brown wool 5 to 5 shots after each row of knotts.
Pile	wool, Ghiordes knot, Goldbraiding.

86 Khotan

Wool 17th/18th century 6 ft 3 in x 15 ft 5 in

G. & R. Schubert, Collection, Milan.

This rug may well be one of the earliest and certainly one of the most beautiful rugs preserved from this district. It belongs to the group of rugs with continuous repetition of (in this case) a finely detailed gul (in blue and beige on a darkblue ground), surrounded by a lattice of flowers, rosettes and flower cups. The ramification has not yet become rigid, as in later pieces, and the leaves and flowers still look enchantingly exact and lively.

The intricate trefoil border of later rugs (Bidder, plate XVI, probably rather 19th century), is here still in its noble form linked by wavy tendrils. Ornaments in dark brown, yellow, white and pale blue are grouped together on a pale pink-beige ground.

This is a classical rug as regards design, colour combination and measurements. The structure, however, could not be analysed to ascertain the origin.

87 Khotan

Wool 17/18th century 5 ft 6 in x 9 ft 8 in

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
Acquired 1883.

The unusual feature of this rug is its arrangement into two parts. The strict geometry of the medallion is unique and reminiscent of early Caucasian rugs of the Kazak area. Only the inner field here is filled with native motifs as if to lessen the strictness of the medallion. Even the narrow surround of the inner field remains strictly geometrical, then followed by the typical "Yun-Tsai-T'ou" main border. The end of the rug is formed by a system of lozenges which change colour diagonally.

88 Khotan

Wool 18th century 3 ft 4 in x 5 ft 2 in

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
Acquired in 1883.

In this small rug, with its beautiful balance of design and colour, there is a one-way design of a pomegranate tree growing from a vase. The ascending pattern is carefully worked; the light brick red of the pomegranates surrounded by yellow branches and leaves harmonizes with the rare cream-coloured ground. Simple minor borders in blue and black, together with a main border showing the meander design, frame the rug.

89 Khotan

Wool 18th century 3 ft 8 in x 6 ft 4 in

Textile Museum, Washington. D. C.

Diagonally free-standing, unframed guls alternating in beige and yellow, brown and blue, stand out against a turquoise and pale blue ground. In the corners there are geometrical representations of cloudbands. The border is divided into two parts: the stiff, inner "Yun Tsai-T'ou" border surrounds an outer meander border on a yellow ground.

The clear and sparse design together with the few but brilliant colours indicate the great age of the rug (Compare the later rug in plate 93).

The warp of the rug is in cotton.

90 Khotan

Wool Beginning of the 19th century
4 ft 3 in x 7 ft 8 in

Textile Museum, Washington. D. C.

As is so frequently the case in old rugs, the striking feature here, too, is the simplicity of design combined with extreme economy of colour. A yellow field divided into four quarters reveals a design of small golden ringlets. Bidder believes that they depict the Pu-Lo design from Tibet. A meander border with, apparently, a deliberate change of colour frames each quarter.
The rug has a cotton warp.

91 Khotan

Wool 19th century 5 ft 6 in x 7 ft 2 in

Textile Museum, Washington. D. C.

The brilliant tomato red of this rug accentuates the simplicity of design. It is really three rugs in one, the two outside panels being separated from the plain, central section by a meander border with a blue ground. This piece undoubtedly had a specific use and could possibly have been employed as a bed-spread. The rug has cotton warp and weft and the Senna knot has been used.

92 Khotan

Wool Beginning of the 19th century
4ft 8in x 9ft 6in

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The pattern of this rug – pomegranate trees growing from two vases and meeting at the centre – seems to have been very prominent in old rugs of East Turkestan. There are many variations of this motif, mostly on a red ground or, as here, on a blue ground. Yellow or cream coloured grounds are rare. Minor borders in the leaf and-tendril design frame the main border which shows the familiar "Yun-Tsai-T'ou" design.
The most noteworthy aspect of the rug is the inclusion of an inscription in the top, right-hand corner of the border. Inscriptions in East-Turkestan rugs are extremely rare, and no other published example is known of, Unfortunately the inscription gives no clues as to the date, but simply mentions two names.

93 Khotan

Wool Early 19th century 5 ft 11 in x 12 ft

Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
Acquired in 1883.

This extremely well-preserved Khotan rug shows unframed rosettes in close, diagonal rows on a rust coloured ground. Only the colour combination changes. Plant tendrils alternating with geometrical bands form the colourful and stylistically beautiful border.

In addition to those rosettes standing free in the centre of the rug, there are those which either stand in a surrounding field of different colour, or have been framed, as it were, by intertwining geometrical bands. Bidder illustrates quite a number of such rugs.

94 Khotan

Wool Early 19th century 6 ft 5 in x 12 ft 7 in

Meyer-Müller Collection, Zürich.

The clarity of design, together with the intricacy of the work and the good colours point to the fact that this example could still have been knotted in the 18th century. All kinds of leaf and tree ornaments are arranged around a blue central motif, on a coppery red ground. Along the central axis at both ends of the rug, a design of leaves and twigs with blossoms springs forth from two vases. Quarter segments of the central motif are repeated in the corners of the rug. A combined leaf-rosette and tendril in red and blue is depicted in the clear yellow border. Numerous narrow borders with geometric designs surround the rug.

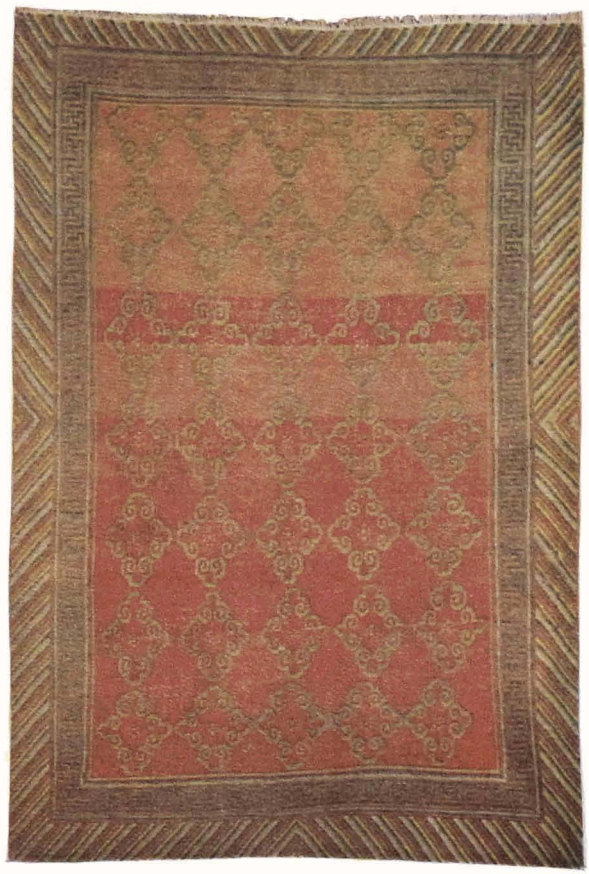
Warp	cotton, S-twist, six-fold twisted.
Weft	undyed wool, two wavy, one straight.
Pile	wool, untwisted, two-fold, Senna knot, 30 high, 34 wide per dcm. = app. 1,020 knots per sq. dcm.
Top end	knotted fringes.
Bottom end	looped fringes.
Shirasi	one warp thread wound round with a single thread in red wool.

95 Khotan

Wool Early 19th century 4ft 3in x 6ft 3in

Private Collection. Bergisch Gladbach.

Medallions in the shape of cloud heads in mignonette green in a cotinuous pattern, contrast sharply with the "abrash" red ground. An inner swastika-meander border is concluded by another border of diagonal stripes in grey, yellow and red.



96 Khotan

Wool Middle of the 19th century 4 ft 7 in x 7 ft 8 in

Private Collection, Cologne.

A lattice-work, as is frequently used not only in Central Asian rugs but also in Chinese rugs, contrasts with the tomato red ground. The unusual inner border highlights the rug: it is more of a band than a true border and has pink lozenges engaged like cogs, on a pale blue ground. The border proper consists of rows of flowers in yellow and pale blue on an orange coloured ground.

Warp	undyed cotton.
Weft	brown wool, three-fold wavy.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, 19 high, 25 wide per dcm. = app. 475 knots per sq. dcm.
Top and bottom ends	missing.
Shirasi	two warp threads secured with red wool.

97 Khotan

Compartmented prayer rug or Saph

Wool 19th Century 3 ft 5 in x 13 ft 6 in

Compartmented prayer rugs, similar to the Anatolian Saphs, were produced in East Turkestan. Normally seven or nine niches, each in a different colour, are reproduced. They are filled with either floral, shrub-like shapes, or geometrical ornaments. The pattern above the niches generally takes the form of circles, rosettes or lattices. The brilliant yellow is found usually in old pieces. The fields of the niches are framed by a multicoloured border of rectangles which contain rosettes. (These rugs were also knotted in silk).

Warp	cotton, S-twist, five-fold, twisted, undyed, warps lie obliquely, on two levels.
Weft	brown, undyed or grey wool, three-fold.
Pile	wool, Senna knot, two-fold untwisted, 25 high, 29 wide per dcm. = app. 667 knots per sq. dcm.
Top end	looped fringes after an undyed cotton kilim.
Bottom end	fringes after a brown wool kilim.
Shirasi	bunches of warp threads wound round with red wool.

98 Khotan

Wool 19th century 4ft 3in x 6ft 9in

C. H. Vater Collection, Zürich

Roughly towards the middle of the nineteenth century a change of style took place. Stronger influences from West-Turkestan, Persia and China made themselves felt. The rugs would seem to indicate that East-Turkestan is no longer so completely cut off. Export orders to Europe are accepted and the weavers start to take note of the wishes of the customers in respect of colour and design.

Thus we have in this example a one-way design of rows of lotus blossoms showing Persian influence, on a rust red ground. A narrow, dark brown inner border with flowers and leaf tendrils contrasts with the light ground colour in the main border, in which a very strange vase (?) and branch-like pattern can be seen.

99 Khotan

Wool 19th century 5 ft 3 in x 10 ft 8 in

C. H. Vater Collection, Zürich.

A pure, geometric border divided into three parts frames the pink central field adorned with rosettes and branches. The colouring is appealing and may have been adapted to European (French) contemporary taste.

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KASPISCHES MEER

ARAL-SEE

Syr-darja

KARAKALPAK

U D S S R

Khiwa

Amu-darja

TSCHAUDOR

Krasnovodsk

Uzboy

YOMUD

TSCHAUDOR

YOMUD

Buchara

SALOR

OGURDSCHALI

YOMUD

TEKKE

BESCHIR

ERSARI

Ashkhabad

Atrek

YOMUD

GOKLEN

Gorgan

TEKKE

Merw

ERSARI

Kerki

SALOR

TEKKE

Seraks

Murgab

SARYK

ERSARI

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Yarkand

KIRGISEN

Khotan

Indus