R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

An "interested," not "authoritative," exploration of textiles

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Journal Entry Archive May 2016 - January 2019

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for May, 2016

Saul Bardofsky: Two Themes

Posted in Uncategorized on May 24, 2016 by rjohn

On March 20, 2016, Saul Barodofsky gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program here at The Textile Museum, in Washington, D.C.

Saul draws a crowd.

Saul told the story of how he got into the rug business. He said that he was in the book business in San Francisco and a couple (Gary Muse and Susan Smith) showed up and showed him some Turkish textiles. He sold his book business and decided to travel to Turkey. He did and discovered Turkish textiles and the rug and textile business has been his world ever since.

Saul announced at the beginning that he would speak and show material under two themes. First he would treat things that he had personally collected over the years, and second he would treat pieces that had been purchased for sale, but that he had been unwilling to sell.

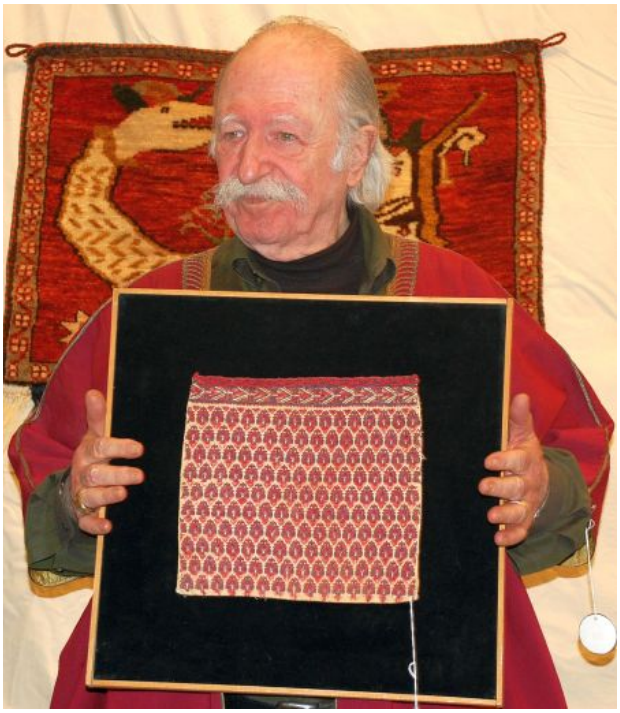
Saul likes costume and frequently comes equipped. His first piece of the day was a Syrian dervish-type robe of the Mevlevi order.

He said that it is reminiscent of the type used in the whirling dervish dances. It opens when its wearer turns. Note the satin inserts.

The patterning highlight of this coat was the embroidery on its back.

He moved, now, to other pieces from his personal collection.

S1



This, he said, is a small Greek Island embroidered bag face: the finest he has ever seen.

The next piece was one pinned on the front board.

S2

This piece is a kind of "nazarlik," (something to ward off evil forces). The particular design is a famous one, called "Shah Miran," the goddess of snakes and scorpions. "Nazarliks," Saul said, are a pre-Islamic residue believed widely by Muslims without experiencing any contradiction with their Islamic faith.

This piece was woven in Sivas in Northeast Turkey.

Details of S2.

The next piece was this small khorjin face. Lur, South Persian. Bought in 1979 or 1980, and kept hidden until now.

S3

Details of S3. Note the Persian slit-type closure system.

On the right side of the front board was this lion rug. Konya area in Turkey. The manes of the lions are nicely detailed.

S4

Details of S4.

Saul's next piece was a very shaggy Kurdish rug, Badani. Long, unspun sheep's wool. Saul described it as a wedding night rug, a dowry piece from Malatya.

S5

Details of the Kurdish, Badani, S5.

Below are details of the back of the Kurdish Badini, S5.

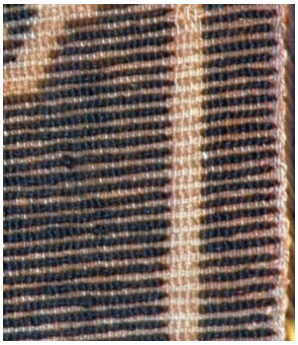
Saul's next piece was a Chinese/Turkman (Yarkand) rug with a narrow palette. I am not sure, but think that the two central figures in the field may be an abstracted version of one of the Buddhist auspicious symbols, the parasol. Note also that the swastika is used to resolve the line border at the corners. There are seeming flower forms in the spandrels and the small cross-hatch devices could be abstracted endless knots. The meanings of Chinese symbols have until recently been well-known in Chinese society.

S7

Here is a line drawing of one version of the parasol symbol.

Details of S7.

Here is a detail of the back of this rug.



Saul said that his next piece was Kurdish, woven in the Jehambelli plateau, between Ankara and Konya. He thinks it is a "wedding canopy" hung flat above the wedding bed with the tassels hanging down, so as to distract the evil eye.

S8

Details of S8.

Saul's next piece was a six-piece Ottoman wedding night set. Pillow shams hanging down. Silk and gold crocheted. Maybe from Ottoman-Syria.

Saul said that he has owned it for 34 years and that it has never before been shown.

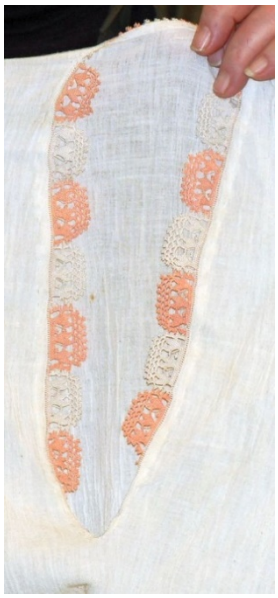
S9

Details of S9.

Next, was a simple, super finely woven, chemise of hand-spun linen.

S10

Details of S10.



Saul's next piece was a complete, but not sewn together, pile Caucasian mafrash (cargo bag type). Two sides and two end panels. Pile instances of this format are rare.

S11

Here are closer images of these parts.

Detail of above side panel.

Images of the other side panel and the two end panels.

The next piece was a Caucasian salt bag. Saul said "weft-float brocade."

S12

Back of S12. Notice that cicim (weft float brocading) on the back is usually found on weavings from Central Turkey, not the Caucasus

Next, was another salt bag, this time a Caucasian with good drawing and color. A photo of this piece has appeared in two carpet books.

S13

Back of S13.

Next was a Baluch woman's head covering, replete with cowry shells, beads, bells and pom poms. Note, also, the use of old buttons. The cowry shells are thought to resemble female genitalia. (This was a gift from Tatiana Divens).

S14

The piece below is a woman's belt with silk embroidery. Uzbek.

S15

Details of S15.

Next was a tiny 19th century Chodor bag.

S16

Detail of S16.

Saul said that the next piece was the youngest he had brought today. Embroidered. Likely a hair-braid covering. Use of hammer and sickle devices indicate Soviet era.

S17

Next was a pair of men's spats (lower leg coverings) with gold metallic embroidery. Late Ottoman period.

S18

Details of S18.

Next were two Turkmen hats. Embroidered in silk. Nice traditional colors.

S19

Next were two pairs of "nazarlik" gloves. Knitted with mohair locks that would move to distract the evil eye. Dowry pieces from the Konya mountains.

S20

The next piece was an Uzbek woman's cap with braid cover. Silk velvet ikat. Likely made from a fragment of a silk velvet ikat coat.

S21

The next piece was a Turkman woman's head band. Silver, with amber, coral and carnelian.

K22

Next was a tiny embroidered Uzbek bag. Good, pre-synthetic color. Two sided but only one shown.

K22

The following piece has the shape of part of a Central Asian horse head decoration, but the tassels, braids, shells, beads and top loop suggest that it is a nazarlik hanging.

S23

Next piece is a Turkman pile koran bag.

S24

Detail of S24.

Saul said that the next piece is also a koran bag this time Turkish. Obruk near Konya. It is the first piece he purchased when he began in the rug business in 1977.

S25

Detail of S26.

Another Koran bag, this time in silk ikat purchased in Samarkand.

S27

This is the back of S27.

Very often Central Asian ikat is backed with Russian printed cloth, but I think Saul said this back is done with a “mud-resist” technique.

Still another Koran bag, this time complete, but opened up. Central Turkey. Saul thinks 18th century or earlier.

S28

Folded, front side. Folded, back side.

The next piece was a camel head decoration. Lots of cowrie shells with beads and mirrors. Saul found it in Konya. It was the last piece he purchased for his camel decoration collection. He figured that 378 pieces were enough.

S29

Details of S29

Small gabbeh rug with a largely empty kilim field (camel wool). The small mostly red medallion is knotted pile. Southwest Iran.

Saul always felt this was a prayer rug, with a "secret mirhab."

S30

Details of S30. Notice the small device in the upper center of the field. Note tufts on the sides.

The next piece was an oddity. Made to serve as a frame for a picture. Open cocoons from silkworms on velvet. Offset with metal embroidery.

S31

Detail of S31.

Next was a beaded, dated and inscribed Qashqa’i camel headress.

S32

Details of S32.

Next piece was Turkish from Sivri Hissar . Oldest Anatolian bag found recently. Maybe 150 years old. Cicim weave – used for storage. Great colors and fine condition for its age. Probably a dowry piece.

S33

Details of S33.

The next piece storage bag from Konya. Saul called attention to its great color. Back of S34.

S34

The next piece was a Kurdish baby carrier. Eastern Malatya. Dowry piece. Sheep's wool and goat hair that feels like silk. Metallic thread in places, an indicator that this is a dowry weaving.

S35

Back of S35.

You can see the quality of the weave in this view.

Saul said that the next pieces were a matched pair, woven in Eastern Turkey. Kurdish from the Malatya area. Pre-synthetic and in fabulous condition. Located in 1980.

S36

Back of S36.

The next two pieces are a pair of matched Western Anatolian grain bags woven by Yunja nomads. Natural dyes. Pristine condition. Beautiful, crisp brocaded fronts with silk additions. Probably late 19th century, and dowry pieces. Yunja nomads. They were located in Bergama in 1980.

Here is the front of the first one.

S37- Back of S37.

S38 is the second one. This is its front. Back of S38.

S38

The next piece was a long Chinese pictorial embroidered textile. He said that one day someone walked into his shop and asked if he wanted to buy it. He said he knows nothing about Chinese textiles, but decided that he'd never see another like it.

Saul feels that this is a clan banner. Note the fine details – people's whiskers and hair are superbly detailed. Since each person is so highly detailed as to be recognized by other clan members, we can only assume that this was a "family photograph."

You need to click three times on the images of this piece to see larger versions of them.

S39

Details of S39. We're going to walked around this piece, a bit, to show closer images.

The next piece was Central Asian, Uzbekistan, maybe Afghanistan. This is the smallest Dshulshir (sleeping rug) we've ever seen. Probably made for a child. Woven in five strips (of course) and then sewn together. An unusual textile.

S40

The pattern of the front of S40 is nearly invisible on its back. This is the result of its being woven with knots on alternate raised warps on an open shed, which is typical of dsulchirs.

Details of S40.

The next piece was a small yatak. Perhaps a sleeping rug for a baby or child. Woven in Nazumla, a small village in the Koyna mountains. The only child's one we've ever seen.

S41

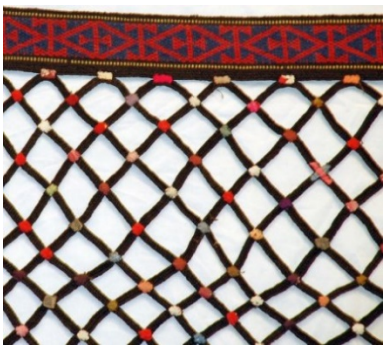
Details of S41.

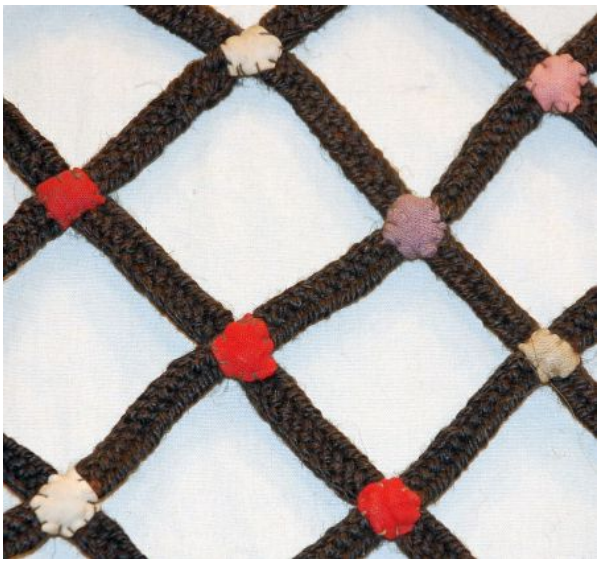
Here are some images of the back of the Nazumia yatak.

The next piece was a Caucasian kitchen tent hanging. Kitchen utensils would be hung from it. Considering both its age and condition, we must assume that it is a dowry piece and never used.

S43

Details of S43. The small pompoms and hanging tassels are intended as a protection against the "evil eye."





Next, was an Anatolian spoon bag in excellent condition. Bergama area, Yuncu nomad group, late 19th century.

S44

Back of S44.

In another program Saul had some wooden spoons with hand-painted calligraphy from the Koran.

He used these spoons and a different spoon bag to demonstrate how such bags are used to hold spoons, conveniently.

Saul described the piece below as “Byzant” from Western Anatolia. Hand woven cotton with silk embroidery. A baby cradle cover from the converted peoples, who still use the cross design as a form of protection. The small cross at the top is difficult to see (detail below).

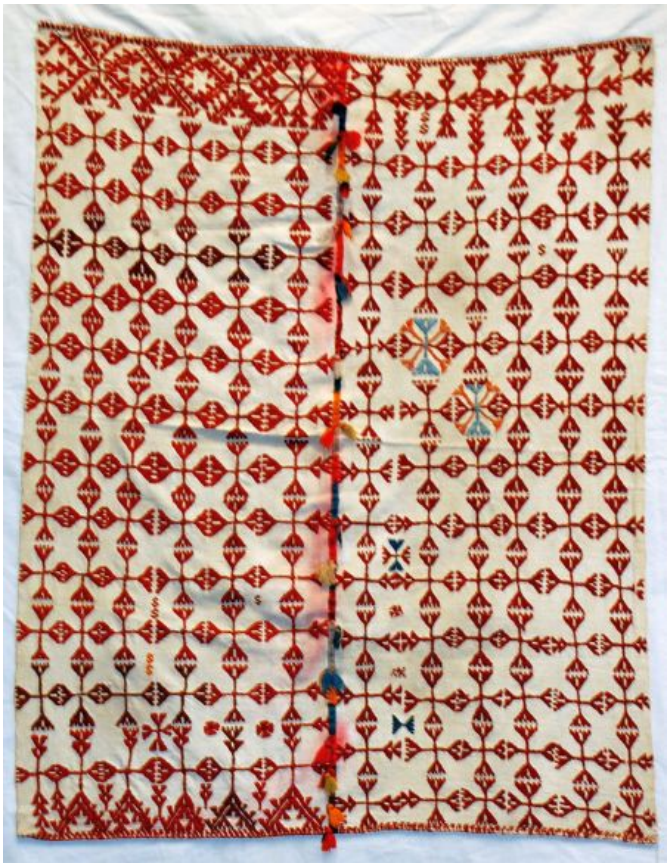
S44 and S45 were acquired in 1979 or 1980 and never shown. Back of S45.

S45

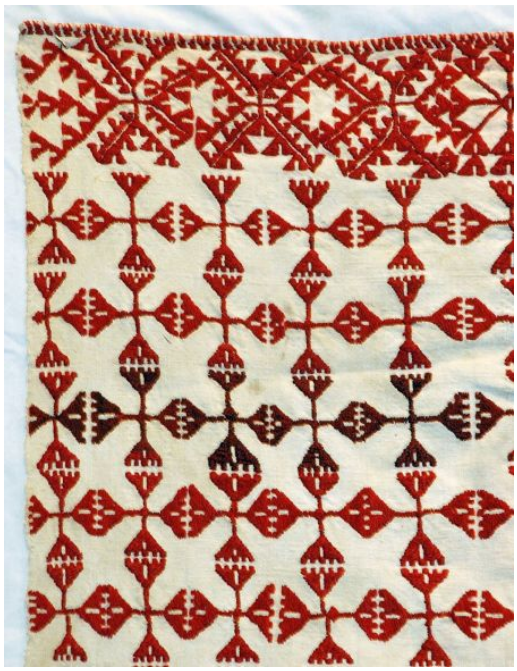
Details of S45. Note small cross.

The next piece was a composite. Two cradle covers, used to keep flies and sun off the child. Made by Byzantine people who converted to Islam.

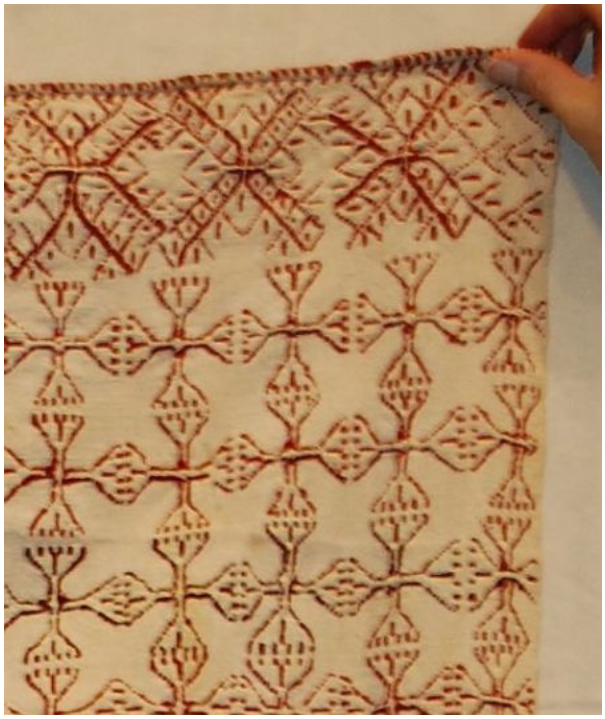
S46



Details of S46. The cross devices and color changes are intended to keep the evil eye off the child.



Back of S46.



Next, two pieces were fragments from very old Anatolian kilims. Acquired in Izmir in 1981, Saul estimated them to the 15th century. Perhaps from the same kilim.

S47 is the first one.

S47

S47 is the second.

S47

Details of S46 and S47.

The next was another fragment, this time of the border of a Transylvanian rug,woven in Turkey. Rugs such as these were often bought by Saxon Romanians and displayed in their Christian churches. Many "Transylvanian" rugs are estimated to be 18th century or earlier.

S48

Next was a niche design hanging composed of fragments of Greek Island embroidery. Composed pieces are often looked down on a bit, but I have seen several in serious textiles collections. Saul said that he bought this one for himself.

The fragments of which these pieces are composed are, sometimes, in part, from the 18th century or earlier. These were made in religious schools, and used as prayer hangings. He said that a variety of stitches have been used and that he loves its colors, especially its greens and a distinctive blue. Saul said that he sees this piece as one of early Ottoman embroidery. The super-finely embroidered

central panel also references the Islamic Kabaa, in Mecca. The outside panels are boche fragments from the 16th century. Boches are textiles usually about three feet square used as wrappings.

S49

Details from S49. This is another that we're going to walk around a bit with a number of detail images.

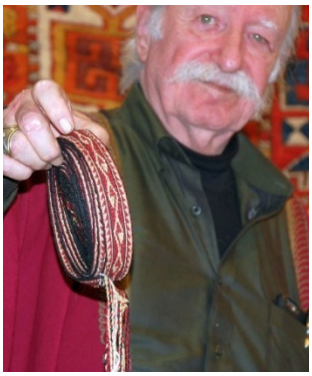
Next, was a very striking pile fragment. Saul said that it was part of a long Karapinar rug. Estimated to the 17th century. Its full-pile wool and colors are spectacular. It has intact selvedges. Reminiscent of an early example in Harald Bohmers book, "Weavings of the Peasants and Nomads of Anatolia."

S50

Details of S50.

Saul had some Anatolian woven bands.

S51



S52 & 53

S54

Next, a flat-woven Anatolian bag. Kurdish dowry piece. Antep area. Pre-synthetic dyes with white cotton. Recently purchased in Turkey, February, 2016.

S55

Details of S55.

Back images of S58.

Color variations due to light and camera effects.

Saul ended his program with the unusual piece below that someone had brought in. No attribution. Maybe someone will write.

S59

Let's turn it to try to get a large image. Seemingly woven end wrappings, lots of cowry shells, some bells and some additional garnishes. The center section is carved on both ends but with a smoother wooden center section.

Saul answered questions and brought his session to a close.

The audience migration to the front to talk to Saul and get hands on this interesting material, began.

Saul's friend, Michael Spenser, who always assists him in his TM sessions.

I want to thank Saul for another interesting program. Peggy Brown took another good set of notes.

I hope you have enjoyed Saul's guidance through a program devoted to pieces he bought for himself and pieces he originally bought for sale but couldn't part with

Regards,

R. John Howe[1]

[1] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2016/05/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for June, 2016

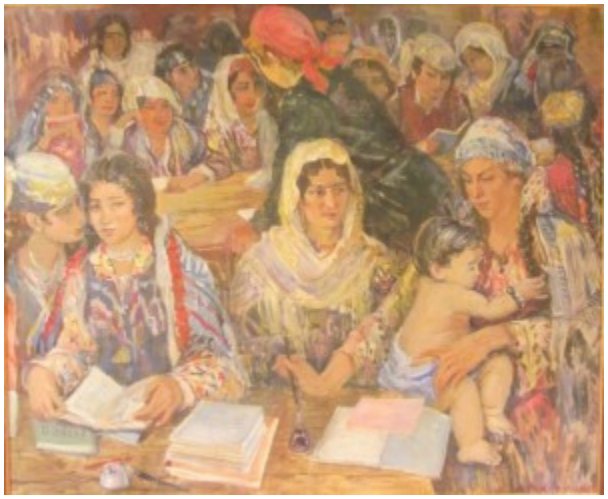
Russian Printed Textiles: R. John Howe

Posted in Uncategorized on June 7, 2016 by rjohn

On February 27, 2016, John Howe, that's me, gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program on Russian printed textiles.

Note: You can click two or three times on most images in this post to get a larger version. This will be necessary, sometimes, for readability.

The recent Textile Museum exhibition "Old Patterns; New Order," was tightly focused.



It treated paintings and drawings from the era of Soviet Realism and related them to patterns in Central Asian textiles, mostly, from the 19th century.

This focus is the result of collaboration between The Textile Museum and The George Washington University's Central Asian Program.

When I first walked through this exhibition I noticed that a large group of Russian textiles, those that are printed, was explicitly excluded. There were several Central Asian coats, lined with Russian printed cottons, but the coats were firmly closed-up to ensure the Russian printed linings were not seen.

The image below, from another source, indicates what these Central Asian coats look like if their linings are permitted to show.

Courtesy Susan Meller

The left and right coats in the slide, above, are presented with the ikat side out. But there are glimpses of the Russian printed cottons used to line and edge them. The coat in the center has been turned inside out so that you can see the extensive use of Russian cotton prints to line it.

This suggested that it might be useful to have an RTAM program that acknowledges, Russian printed textiles, as an important Russian textile group, and that explores them a bit.

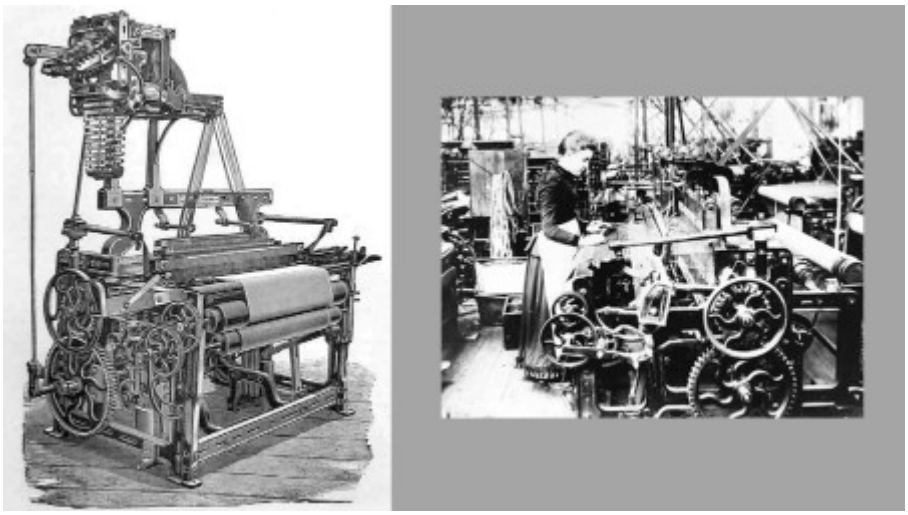
And that is our focus here.

I do not pretend to know anything about Russian printed textiles, but I'm a kind of aging "graduate student," with a reasonable English-language textile library, and I can research, excusably, many textile subjects. And I buy things when I need them.

Above are the covers of some of the sources I've drawn on.

A Russian printed textile industry has existed since at least the days of Peter the Great. Peter encouraged the manufacture of canvas (for his navy) and linen and wool mills. Textile mills grew up in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and the village of Ivanova, about 165 miles to the northeast.

Russian printed textile production was interrupted by Napoleon's invasion, in 1812, and the burning of Moscow (textile factories in Ivanova were spared).



The steam engine, machine spinning, power looms and the mechanical cotton gin, had all appeared in the world in the late 18th century. They came a little later to Russia but they came.

The prerequisites of "factories" were: machines used in social cooperation with a division of labor. There are BC traces of factory-like forms, and a Roman mill in 550 AD seems to qualify, but factories also really arose in the 18th century. A first instance, was an English, water-powered, silk mill.

In the last half of the 19th century. The Russian textile industry revived with vigor as an aspect of the general surge of invention and industrialization. Russian textile mills were built by wealthy Russian and English industrialists, using, mostly, English machinery.

This is a late 19th century photo of Ivanova, often described as a "little Manchester." (Manchester, most will know, was the center of England's textile industry.)

Russian serfdom was abolished in 1860, and, although the plight of the "freed" serfs was, usually, not economically bettered, for years, the fact that about 80% of Russians had been serfs did, potentially, create a vast market for inexpensive textiles. Russian printed textiles filled that bill. Between 1870 and 1880 printed shawls (cotton and wool) made their appearance in Russian villages.

The Central Asians could afford and showed a real hunger for the colorful, inexpensive, printed, Russian textiles. On the left, above, is an ikat coat lined with an elaborate, colorful Russian printed cotton. The detail on the right lets you see this lining fabric close up.

Mills, mostly in Moscow, and nearby Ivanova, were busy.

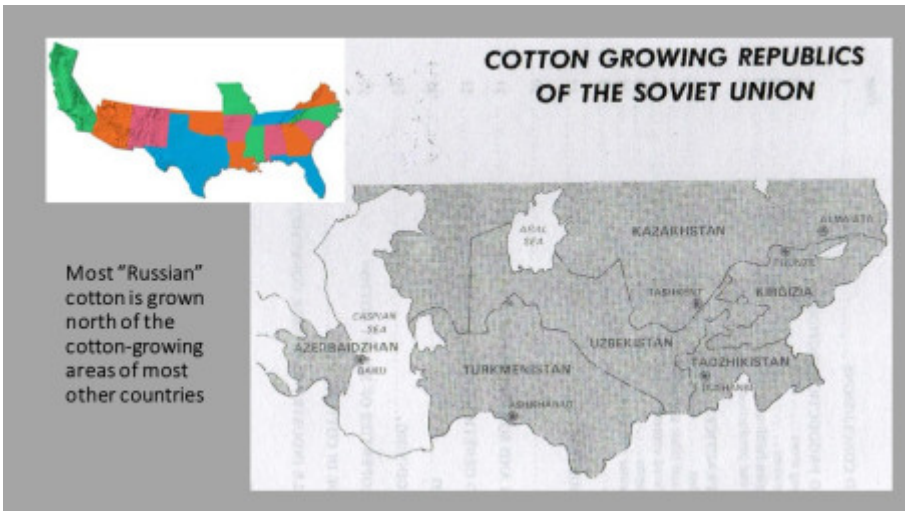
Let's tick off what seems to be known about some basic aspects of Russian printed textiles.

I'm not going talk much about the ground fabrics on which Russian printed textiles were printed.

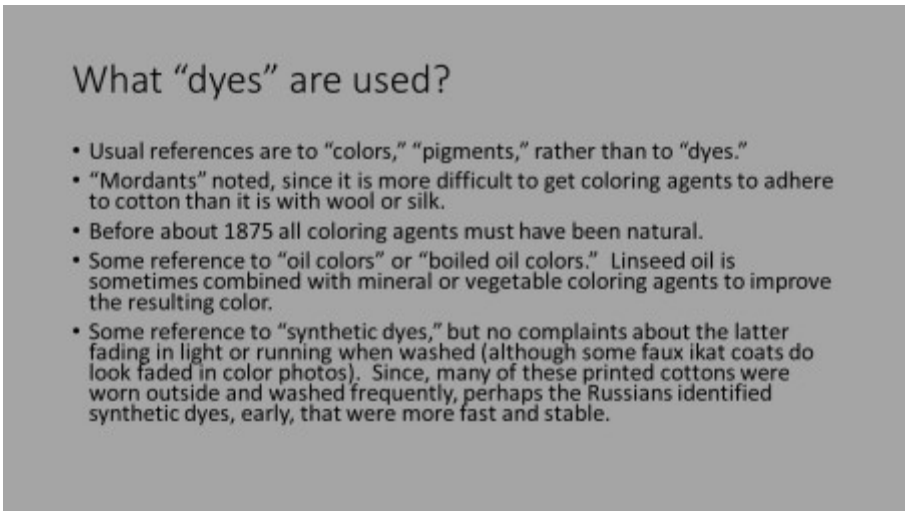
However, we should note that flax was grown in many parts of Russia (so linen was widely available). Russia was an exporter of flax in the 19th century. Early Russian printed fabrics, often, had a linen base.

Cotton is different. Cotton was grown in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, and some was imported from Iran, but a great deal of cotton that was imported to Russia came from England (Russian mill owners preferred its longer fibers). And a lot of the cotton that England had to sell in the first half of the 19th century was grown and harvested in slave-based conditions in the U.S. So there is, likely, a clear connection between Russian cotton printed fabrics, before the U.S. Civil War, and slavery in the U.S., during this period.

This U.S.-sourced imported cotton was lost to Russia during the U.S Civil War, although, some British cotton from India was available. In the last part of the 19th century, a concerted effort was made to expand domestic Russian cotton production in the "stans" and Azerbaijan, using U.S. seed and U.S. and British machinery.



The area in "Russia" in which cotton is grown is north of that where cotton is grown in other countries. For example, the most southern cotton-producing areas in the Soviet Union are on about the same latitude as Fresno, California and the northern boundaries of Arkansas and North Carolina. Special strains of cotton were produced to permit growth and maturation in the shorter growing season.



What kinds of "dyes" are used?

- Literature seems cagey on this point. The word "dyes" is not used often, but not entirely avoided. And references are made to "mordants" and "synthetic dyes." But, more frequently, one sees references to "colors," "pigments," even "inks." There is reference to "oil colors" and even "boiled oil colors" (linseed oil can be combined with dyes with good effects).

- Getting dyes to adhere to cotton is notoriously difficult and linen is even worse. Since, many of these printed cottons and linens were worn outside and washed frequently, perhaps the Russians identified mordants, early, that produced colors on cotton and linen that were pretty water and light fast. There is some reference to "synthetic dyes," but no complaints about the latter fading in light or running when washed (although some faux ikat coats do look faded in color photos).

Screen printed (a stenciling type of screen printing appeared in China in between the middle of the 10th and the late 13thcenturies. But screen printing was apparently not introduced into Europe from Asia until sometime in the late 18th century, and was not used commercially in Europe until the early 20th century. Because flat-bed screen printing is so simple, and because silk was available in Russia, it seems likely that there were instances of Russian "hand printing" that were screen printing rather than block printing. I just didn't find any.

Block printing of textiles is very old, but its actual beginnings are conjectural.

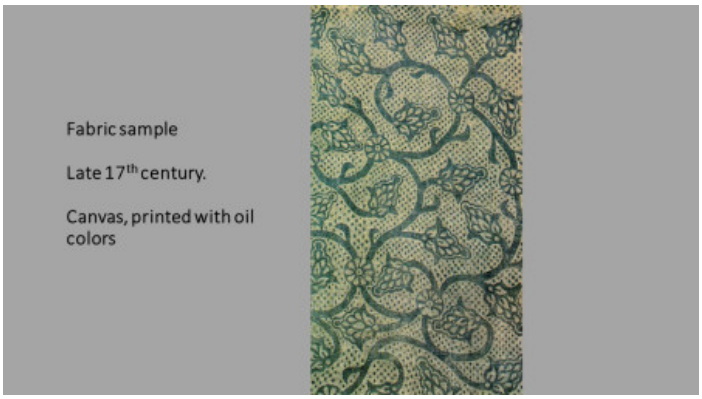
This is a carved wooden block used in hand block printing.

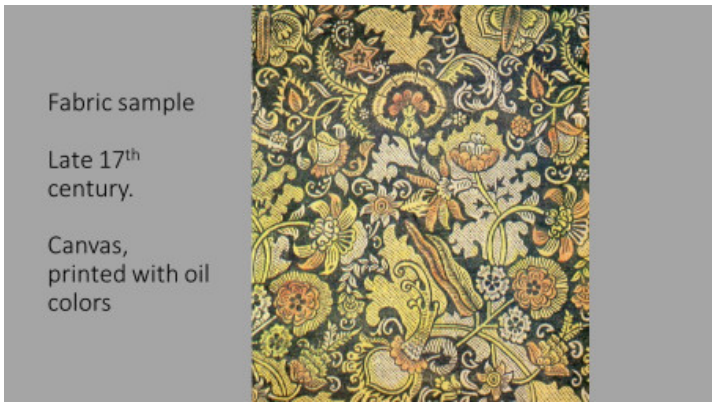
Block printing of a textile entails putting a coloring agent on a wooden block with a design carved into it, and then stamping the block onto a ground cloth, usually not patterned. Early Russian block printing was of a single color on a fabric of a different one.

Here are some printing blocks and a line of block printers. Each block has one "repeat" of a given pattern carved into it. The block printer stamps the block onto the ground cloth, then carefully moves the block to a new adjoining position that, when stamped, creates a continuation of the pattern.

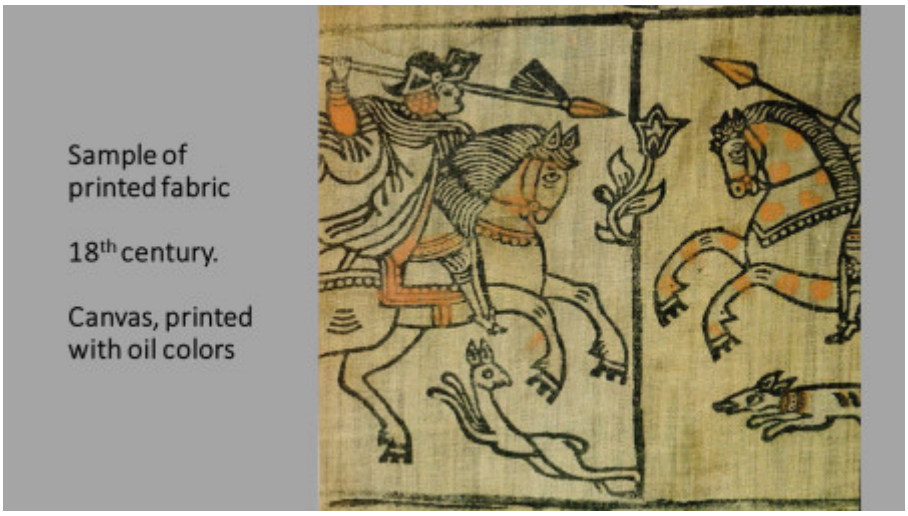
Above is an Indian rather than a Russia photo of block printing, but it gives you a concrete image of how it proceeds.

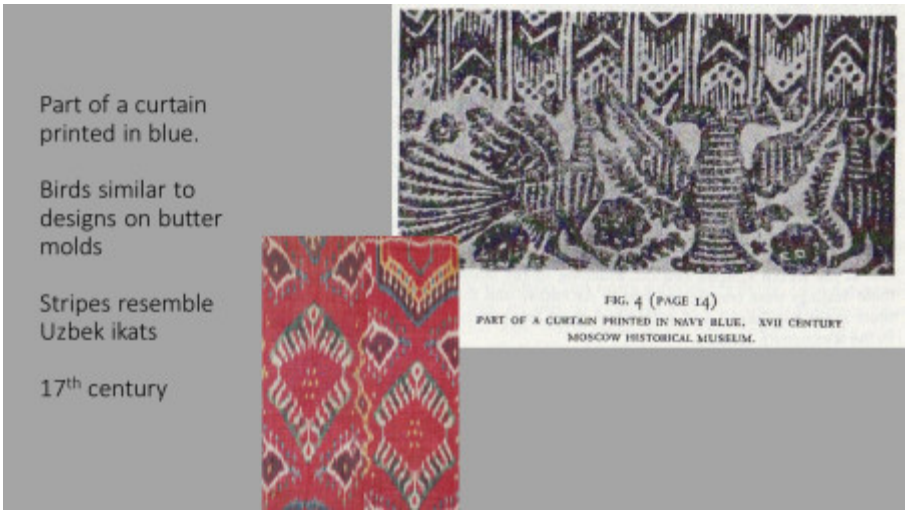
Here are some examples of Russian block printed fabrics.



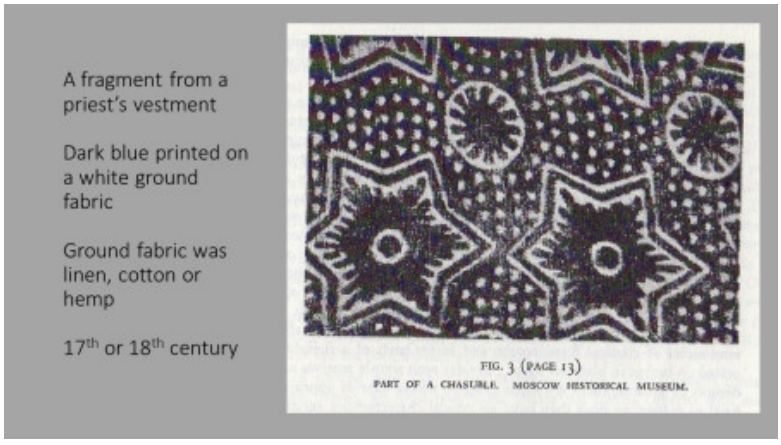


Here are a few older Russian printed fabric examples, mostly without comment, beyond what's on the slides.





Above is part of a hand block printed curtain. 17th century. Stripes seem similar to Uzbek ikat designs indicated in the colored detail.

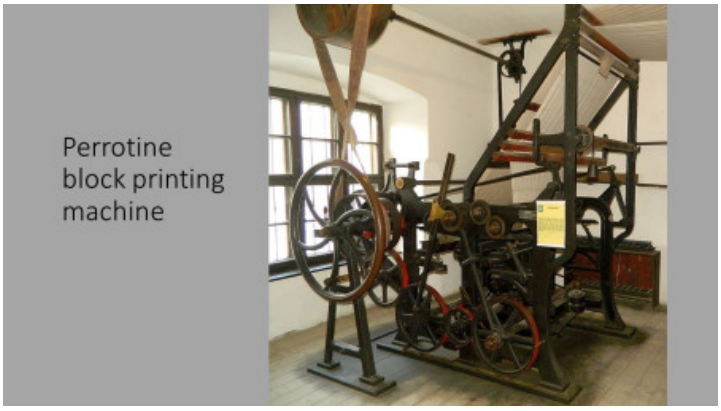


Above is a Russian cotton hand block printed fabric done in Ivanova in the 18th century.

Below are a few more 18th and 19th century block printed fabrics, again, mostly without comment beyond what's on the slide.

The two Russian block printed kerchiefs, above and below, are "tourist" textiles, but are in a Russian museum because they are before 1850, rare, and in perfect condition.

Block textile printing was mechanized early. The most prominent development was the invention of the "Perrotine" block printing machine in 1834.

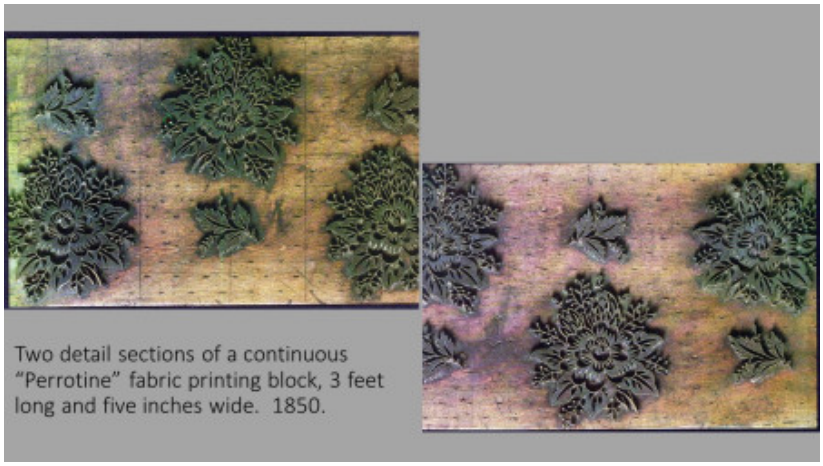


Above is a Perrotine machine that could print fabric using longer blocks and mechanical indexing.

And below are two detail sections from a continuous "Perrotine" printing block with a pattern carved or cast onto it in relief. The complete block was 3 feet long and 5 inches wide.

The cloth being printed passes (mechanically controlled) beneath the block, it is printed and then indexes to the next position (the height of the block) and the next area is printed to produce a continuous pattern.

Perrotine block printing had two major advantage over hand-block printing. First, the longer length of the block (3 feet) increase productivity two and a half times. Equally important, the precise mechanical indexing of the machine, to move the cloth to an adjoining area to produce a continuing pattern, permitted a degree of precision practically impossible in hand block printing.

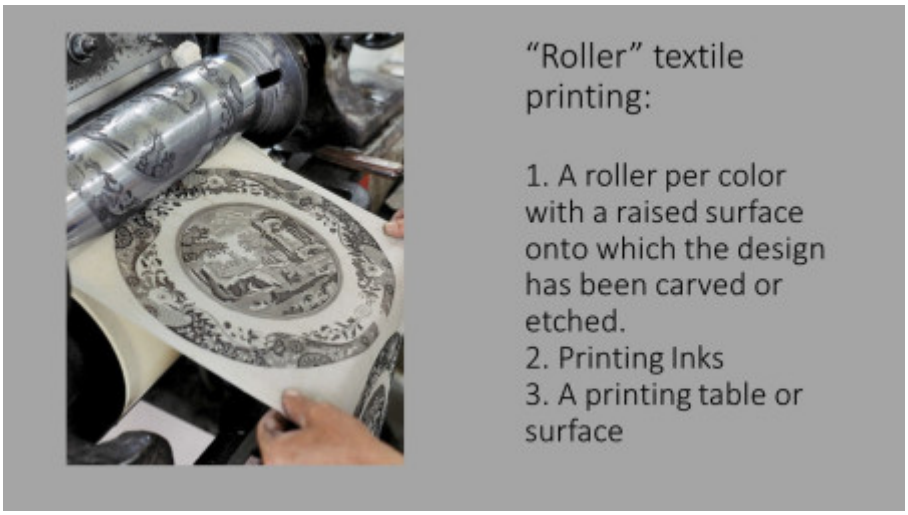


Two detail sections of a continuous "Perrotine" fabric printing block, 3 feet long and five inches wide. 1850.

Perrotine block printing had some disadvantages compared with hand block printing. The printing blocks could be 3 feet long, but only a maximum of five inches wide. And it could only produce a three color pattern (some sources say a few more). Hand block printing can cope with a pattern of almost any scale and any number of colors.

Susan Meller, one of my important literature sources, labels some Russian printed textiles "machine printed" and others "roller printed." Her "machine printed" usage refers to block printing done with a Perrotine-type machine.

Next is "roller" textile printing.

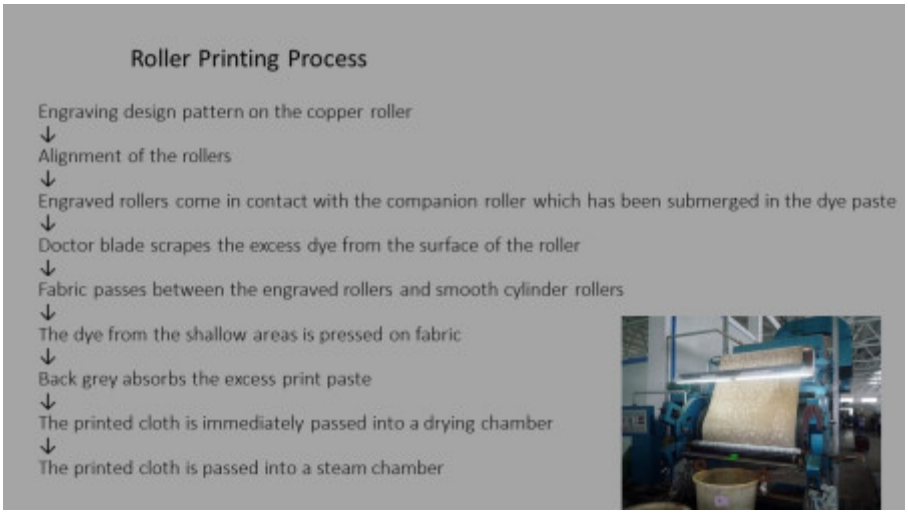


Roller printing was invented late in the 18th century.

Early models could print six colors, one after another. Without attempting to explain roller printing in detail, the equivalent of a full repeat of a pattern was placed on a roller. Each complete revolution of a roller printed a full repeat onto the ground fabric. A primary advantage of roller printing was productivity. A single color machine could print 10,000 to 12,000 yards in a single ten-hour day. This increased productivity made printed cotton textiles much less expensive and so affordable by nearly all levels of Russian society.

Here is a more detailed listing of the roller printing process. I'll just let you read through it.

Click on it two or three times to get a more readable image.



The term "Back Grey," in the third step from the bottom, may require a little explanation:

"Back Grey" is the name given to a fabric that runs behind the cloth being printed, in order to pick-up any pigment that has seeped through the actual printed cloth.

It is usually washed-out each time it is used and the resultant coloration is a muddy-grey — hence the term: BACK GREY.

And here is an example of a 19th century Russian roller printed cotton.

As I've said, Russian screen printed textiles were likely because, once silk was available, it was so simple. But I haven't found any.

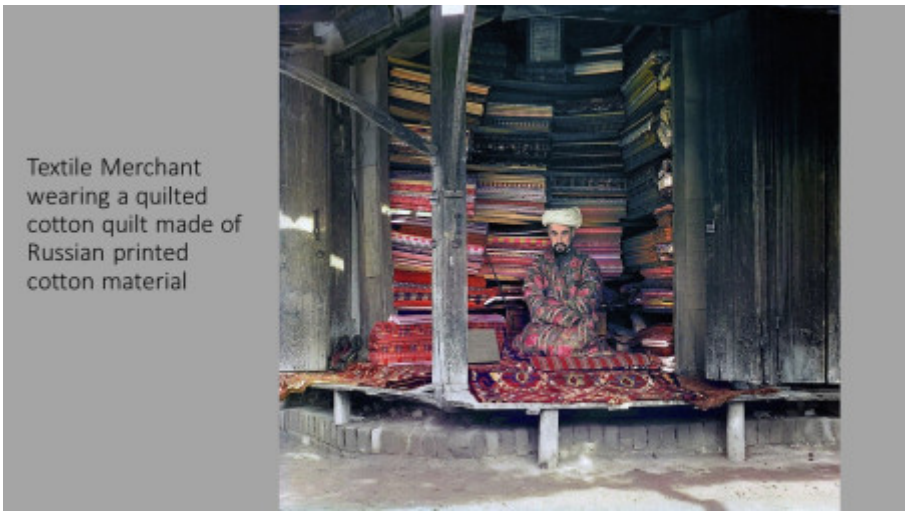
How are/were Russian printed textiles used? The slide below lists various Russian printed textile uses.

One published title of this session talks about Russian printed "trade" cloth, and most of what we'll deal with was likely that. But, the literature indicates that some of the earliest uses of Russian printed textiles were distinctive (more about that shortly).

Printed textiles were, as you'd expect, used to make and line clothes.

The Uzbeks used Russian printed cottons to line their sumptuous ikat coats. One reason that they did this was aesthetic. The Uzbeks were "dandies" and gloried in rich colors and designs. One author said that, for Uzbeks, more was often not enough.

The complex patterns and rich colors were also seen to be protective. They distracted evil forces and kept them from harming the wearer.



This is a famous photo of a textile merchant wearing a quilted coat made of Russian printed cotton. It is likely that most of his wares are also Russian printed cotton.

This is a boy wearing the same kind of coat. We can see both its outside and inside material both of which are Russian printed cotton.

Shawl detail

Cotton print design with the signature of the artist N. Golubev

1896

Ivanova-Voznesensk

Prascovya Vitova and Sons

Printed textiles were used as shawls, and widely used as scarves and kerchiefs and as tablecloths

Kerchief

"Red Calico"

First half of the 19th century

Unknown manufactory

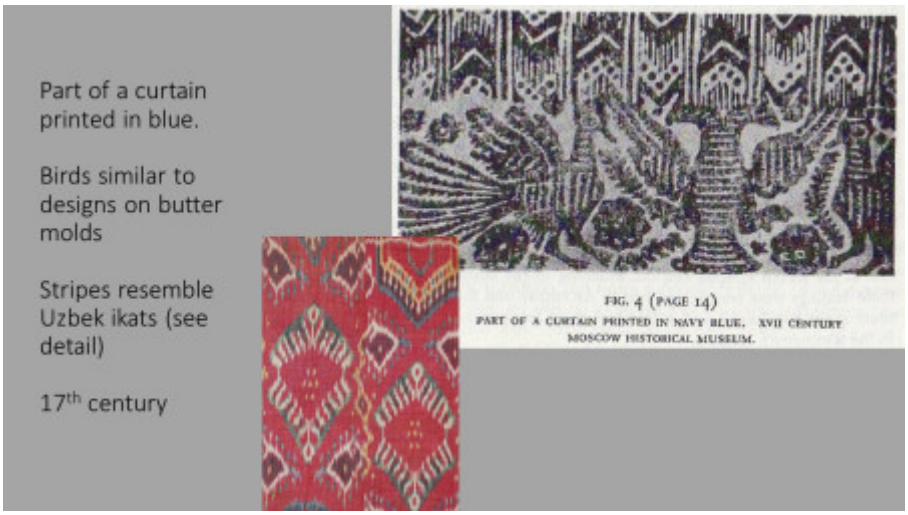
Tablecloth, Detail

Early 19th century

Hand printed, vat dyed

Ivanova

M. Garelin's manufactory



Another early use, we've also seen above, was as curtains, either liturgical or for the home.

Russian printed cottons were also used for furniture upholstery.

And here are three table mats or runners made, in part, with Russian block printed material.

Altar cloth detail

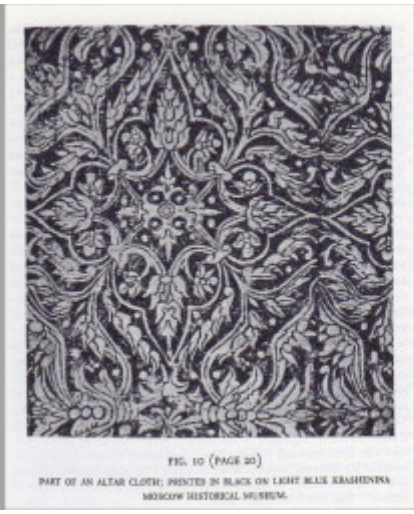


FIG. 10 (PAGE 20)
PART OF AN ALTAR CLOTH; PRINTED IN BLACK ON LIGHT BLUE KRASHENINA
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

One early use was as altar cloths.

A fragment from a priest's vestment

Dark blue printed on a white ground fabric

Ground fabric was linen, cotton or hemp

17th or 18th century

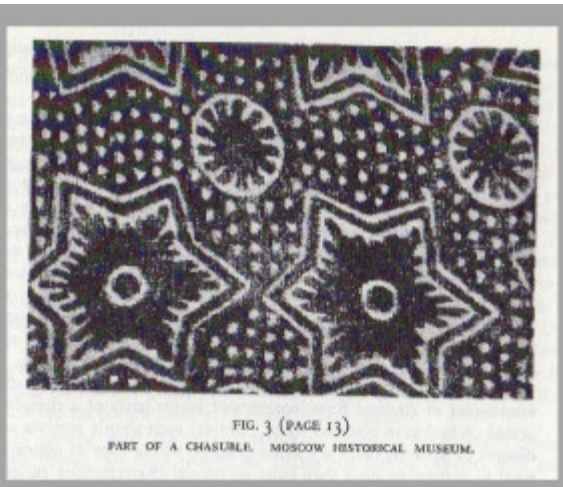


FIG. 3 (PAGE 13)
PART OF A CHASUBLE. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

As we have already seen, above, printed cottons were also used in religious vestments.

Religious vestments

Here are two more details of vestment of printed cotton.

Russian printed cloth was also used by Central Asians to line or back various non-clothing textile formats.

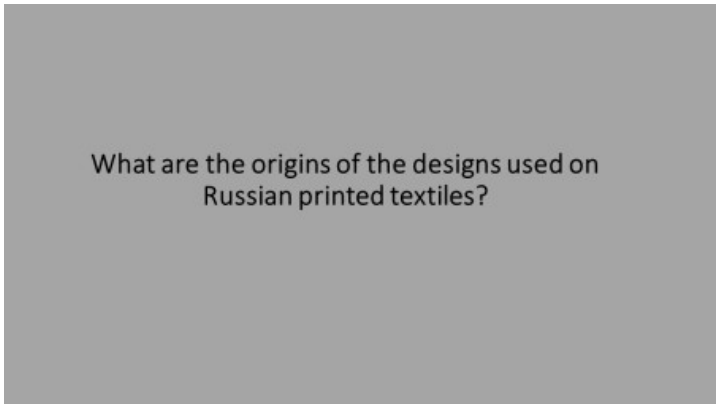
Above are two book bags lined with Russian printed cotton.

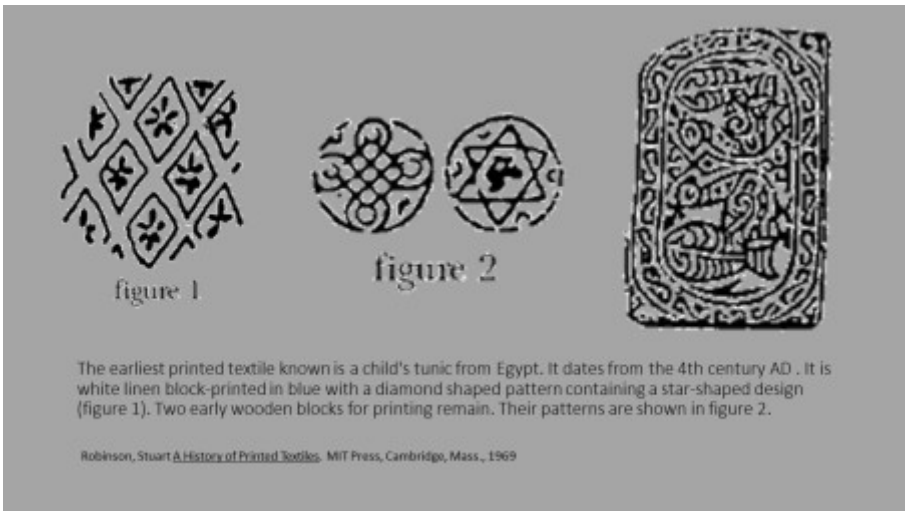
The wool pile Yomut saddle cover in the lower right of this slide is entirely backed with a Russian printed cotton.

This is a Kyrgyz wall hanging, embroidered on the front and backed with a Russian cotton printed material.

Here is a small embroidered "Ersari" Turkman bag with a printed cotton back.

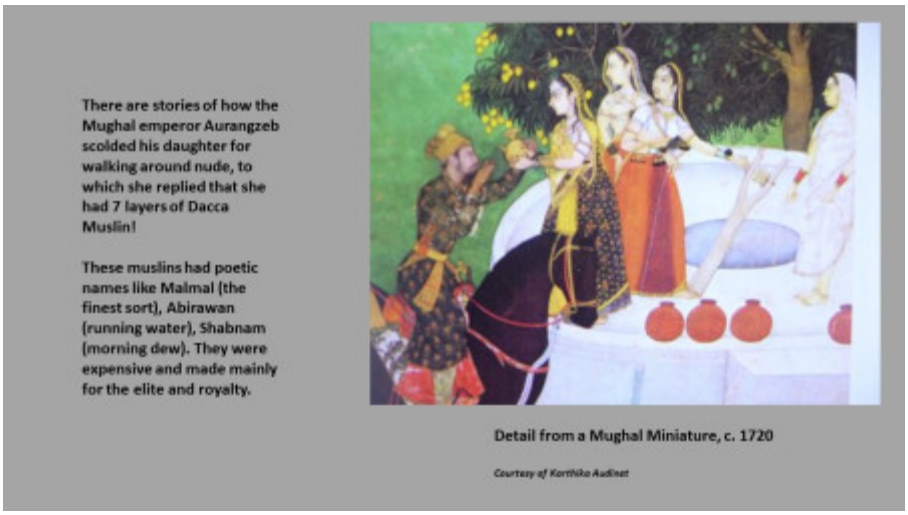
Now let's look a bit a what the origins of the designs used in Russian printed textiles are.





(Click thee times on the slide above and several that follow to get readable size images.)

Many scholars think that printed textiles and block-printed textiles originated in India around 3,000 BC, although no textiles or blocks have survived. Figure 1, above, the earliest printed textile known, is from Egypt in the 4th century AD. The earliest European example is from a tomb (502 to 543 AD) and is suspected to have originated in Egypt.



Above is evidence of the Indian creation and use of printed translucent muslims in the early 18th century.

Detail of the hanging in the temple of the sect of the "Radhe worshippers" southern India, cloth painted and printed using mordants, southern India, end of 18th century.

Musée de l'impression sur Etoffes, MULHOUSE

And here is a late 18th century Indian screen with printed and painted cloth patterns.

Cotton square with Florals, Wood block printing and handpainting on cotton, India by 1790

Musée de l'impression sur Etoffes, MULHOUSE

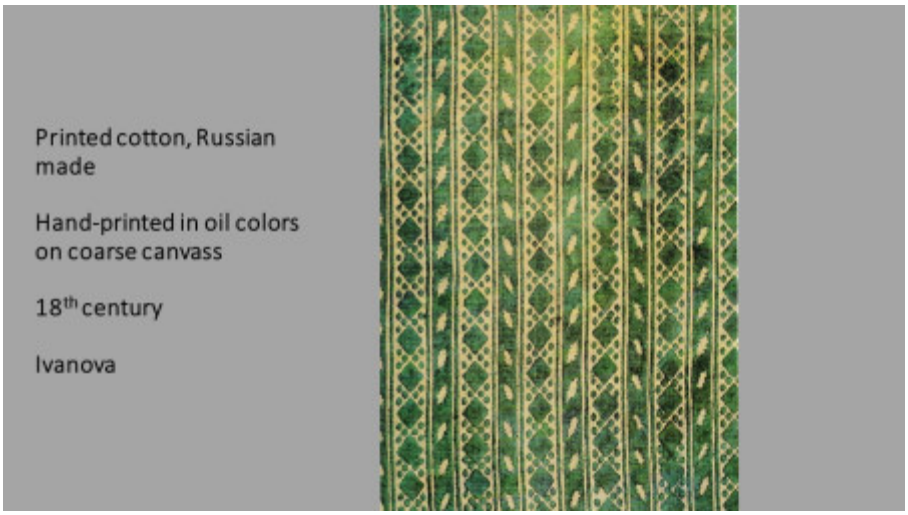
And a late 18th century Indian cotton square printed and painted, that looks a lot like patterns used in Russian printed textiles.

Russian printed textile designs seem, before 1917, to have originated, importantly in India, modulated by a stop in France. Commercial relations between Asia and Europe intensified throughout the 17th Century, and it was due to the foresight of the Portuguese merchants (some say also the Dutch) that the Indian calico prints were imported into a Europe, hungry for an alternative to the heavy silks and woolens, or the rough linens of the times. These imports were a success and the merchant traders, such as those of the "East India Company," flourished.

The rich, decorative designs of Indian origin were often elaborated, even totally changed to suit the particular wishes of European clients. This was a deliberate marketing strategy put into action by the

East India Company that gives well-defined, general instructions for the creation of decorative designs adapted to the European market. Stylized flowers in two dimensions, undulating stems, natural or imaginary geometric plant designs. All these elements create an ornamental botany with a lot of graphic elegance, and a real balance of color use.

Reading the literature, one gets the sense that there were no indigenous Russian textiles design and that everything is borrowed. The authors of the book on Ivanova printed textiles acknowledge the borrowing but say that, because a great deal of Russian printed textiles were made for the peasantry, designs sourced in Russian folk art were extensively employed.



The oldest Russian geometric ornaments – spots, diamonds, circles and squares persisted through the 19th century into the beginning of the 20th.

There are lots of small repeats, articulated spots, if you will, in Russian printed textile designs.

With a lot of the textiles we collect, attribution is difficult. We may know the country or geographic area where a given textile was made. We sometimes cite city names in our attributions (e.g. we often say that something was woven in the Konya area (an estimate that is often used to refer to a very large area). We often think we know what "tribe" wove something. And in a few cases we claim to know the name of the weaver or that of his workshop (e.g. that a given Kashan pile rug was woven by the great Mohtashem). But often we are driven back to saying "western Anatolia," "northeast Iran," or "Turkman. And we are sometimes absolutely guessing about a textile's age.

The literature on Russian printed textiles is much more aggressive about attribution. Some of this is, simply, because they are often closer to us in time than are some of the other textiles we collect.

Some books are organized by factory within town (Ivanova) and give dates as precise as 1863. Another book gives city, factory and the designer's name.

Look at the image above. How often do we have, not just the town, factory and close approximate time when a textile was created, but also the name of its designer and her photo?

Some have suggested that because the information we have about the Russian printed cottons used for the linings or backings of Central Asian piece is often more detailed, it is a more accurate guide to the age of the basic piece than is the fabric of the piece itself. That may well be the case in some instances, but it's dangerous to use as an indicator something that was inserted separately and could be again at any time.

Here is an example. It's a Lakai embroidered piece of a particular sort. It is what is called a "constructed" textile, that it is composed of pieces of textiles of a different format.

The original shape of the Lakai textile was likely like the much older one above.

Armed with this information, you can see (looking closely) that two parts of a square, early 20th century, textile were taken apart and combined in a longer, narrow format. Then a set of borders, estimated to about 1950, was added.

The entire back of this constructed piece is covered with two pieces of a Russian printed cotton with the same design.

Now let us go back to the notion that the Russian cotton backing is a better indicator of the age of this piece than is the field of its front. Since this piece is entirely composed, how do we know that this back (even if it turns out to be old) is a better indicator of age than is the look of the embroidered field front? It could have come from an entirely different textile.

You can see that this argument can be applied to any textile that has been either lined or backed with printed Russian cloth.

So the age of the Russian printed cotton in a textile might be used in a cautious, tentative way, to date a Central Asian piece, for which it seems to have been used originally to as a lining or backing, but you likely need to be looking closely for signs of recent sewing.

Who used Russian printed textiles?

The literature emphasizes that Russian printed textiles were heavily used in Central Asia, and this is true. But Russian printed cottons were used far more widely in "Russia" than that.

Some examples (some of these are older and dated, but some could be re-enactments of traditional costume).

These three girls, in the image above, are from far northwest Russia, west of St. Petersburg.

All the scarves are Russian printed textiles and some of the skirts also likely are.

This lady in Siberia from a distinctive ethnic group has a printed kerchief and a faux ikat dress.

Here we're in Moscow. This lady's scarf is a Russian printed textile although most of the balance of her costume is embroidered or brocaded.

Dagestan is in the northern Caucasus. The lady in the front row, on the right, is wearing a dress of Russian printed cotton.

These ladies are from the Russian arctic north. Archangel. Their dresses and kerchief seem mostly of printed textiles. (This could be a re-enactment, but the clothes are traditional.)

This family is on the Moghan steppe in the southern Caucasus. Lots of printed textiles being used.

And back to Uzbekistan.

As I have said, the literature shows that Central Asians were particular fans of Russian printed cottons. This was likely, in part, because Uzbekistan, was one of the cotton-producing areas, relatively close to Russia, that was a major contributor to cotton needs of the Russian textile industry.

Let's note, just for a second, how the literature on Russian printed textiles is organized. The primary division is between those produced before the 1917 revolution and those made after it.

There is not much treatment I found of Russian printed textiles since the end of the U.S.S.R., in 1991 (in fact, as I will say again, not much after the mid-1930s).

The most prominent book on Russian printed textiles, is by Susan Meller, who focuses on those used in Central Asia. Her book is organized into these seven sections based on design differences.

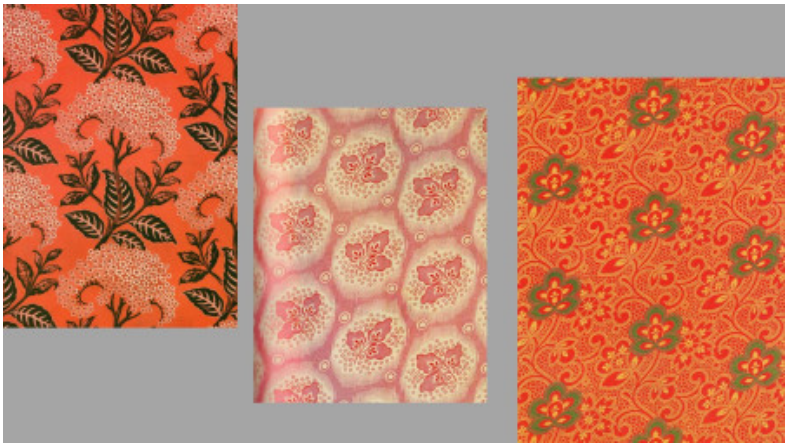
(Click the image above for a larger version.)

Let's take a look at a sample, or so, from each.

Her first section is on paisley designs. These designs are seen to originate in Kashmir shawls, perhaps, passed through France.

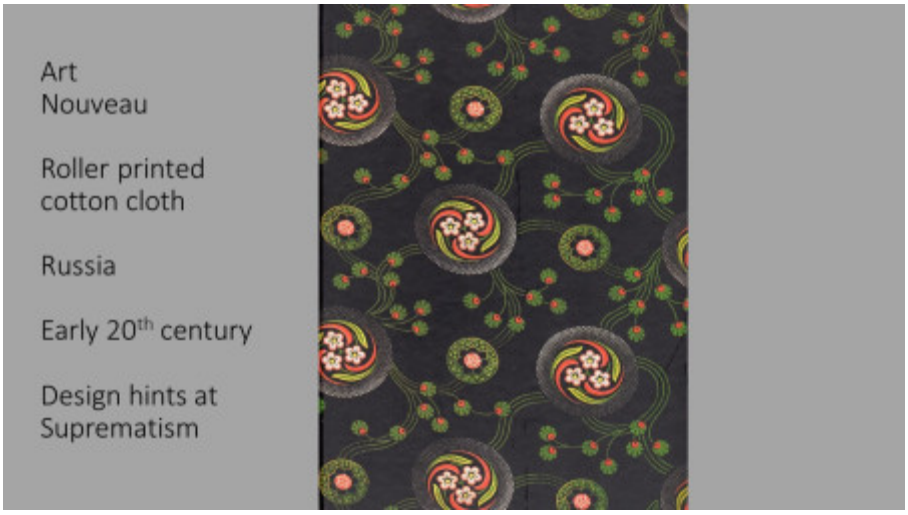
There are a lot of paisleys.

Second she presents "Pre-Revolutionary Floral"



More "Pre-Revolutionary Floral" examples. There are probably more "plant and blossom" designs used in Russian printed textiles than any other.

Meller sees her third category of Russian, printed, textile designs as examples of "Art Nouveau," a style of art, architecture, and applied arts, especially the decorative arts, that traveled from Europe and England. The pattern of this lining fabric is used as the cover of Meller's book.

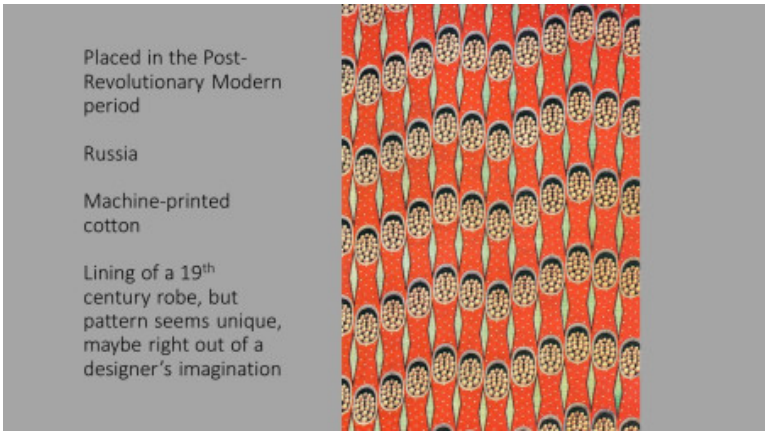


This second Art Nouveau example is a departure. It was likely made just before or just after the 1917 revolution. It hints at "Suprematism," an avant-garde Russian style, we will talk about more, that had some limited influence on Russian textile design in the first years of the 20th century.

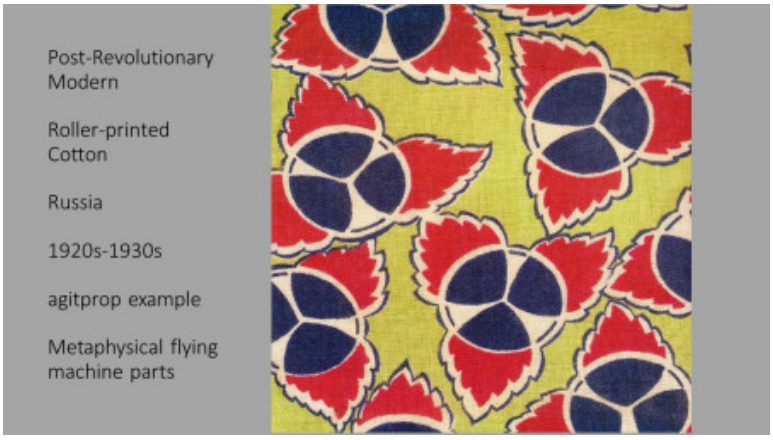
Meller calls this "Post-Revolutionary Floral." Although, as we shall see, the Bolsheviks heavily impacted Russian printed textile design, there were still, often, a lot of floral designs in the Soviet era. People, apparently, liked flowers.

Another Post-Revolutionary Floral example. Note the color palette, without a more usual red.

One more Post-Revolutionary Floral example.



Meller's next category is "Post-Revolutionary Modern."



This is a propagandist design. We'll see more of these.

This is another Meller category: "Outside Influences." She sees the vertical stripes as similar to the designs in Persian shawls, but finds the horizontal devices puzzling. I wondered whether this might be an instance of propagandistic design. I think that the horizontal devices might be sheaves of wheat that do appear in a number of Soviet period textile designs.

Meller calls her last category "Stripes and Chits." This is, obviously a collection of stripe designs.

"Chits" is a term used to describe block-printed textiles made in Central Asia usually on hand-woven material. One reviewer of my planned presentation wondered whether "chits" could be related to the term "chintz." I looked about and think not. It is true that one of the general usages of "chintz" is to refer to textiles that are perhaps pretentious, but of low quality, as in "She had new curtains, but they were "chintzy" as can be. Poor lady." I think "chit" most likely has the meaning I suggested, initially, above.

The lining of this coat is a one or two-color chit. One expert on Indian textiles said that the design of this chit lining has a definite Indian flavor. It also resembles both the design on the oldest printed textile known and some Russian folk art usages, shown in the detail images.

This is another chit with a complex, multicolor design. Again, my Indian expert said that the balance and proportions of the designs of this piece are very Indian.

Now let's move to Russian printed textiles produced in a given location: Ivanova.

I found one book that seems devoted entirely to Russian printed textiles made in Ivanova and its surrounding villages. The designs are, with one 20th century exception, from the 18th and 19th centuries. Russian textile designs in the pre-1917 revolution era seem mostly to have come from Europe, Paris in particular. Russian mill owners haunted Paris for looking for new designs.

The text in this Ivanova book is entirely in Russian, but there is an English-language set of captions that lets me use it. It demonstrates how robust the manufacture of Russian printed textiles was before the Soviet revolution.

These captions indicate the town, the manufacturer, often very precise dates, and sometimes the name of the designer.

I'm going to click through most of these examples without comment beyond what is on the slide.

Printed Cotton

Russian make

17th to first half of the 18th century

Hand printed in oil colors, on coarse canvas

Tablecloth

Hand-printed on calico

Late 18th, early 19th century

Ivanova

M Grachov manufactory, marked with that name

Printed cotton

Late 18th century

Ivanova

M. I. Garelin manufactory, marked with his name.

Two repeats of this design are more than twice the width of this image.

Kerchief detail

Hand-printed on calico

Late 18th to early 19th century

Ivanova

M. Garelin manufactory (marked)

Hand-printed cotton

Second half of the 18th century

Madder dyed

Ivanova

I. Yamanovsky manufactory (marked)

Cotton

Hand-printed on calico

Late 18th to early 19th century

Ivanova

O. Sokov manufactory

Cotton print for furniture

White ground

Late 18th to early 19th century

Ivanova

O. Sokov manufactory

Cotton

Hand-printed on calico

Kokhma (near Ivanova)

I. Sherbakov manufactory

Marked: "Factory of Yaroslavl Merchant…Bakov 1844"

Cotton

Machine-printed

Faux ikat

Ivanova

Prascova Vitova and Sons Factory

1896

Cotton print

Ivanova

Prascovya
Vitova and Sons

Signature of the
artist: Proskurin

1905

The design above seems likely an instance of Supermatism, something we will talk about shortly.

Cotton

Machine-printed

Ivanova

Factory of the
Kuvayev company

1896

Cotton

Hand-printed

Village of Karabanovo

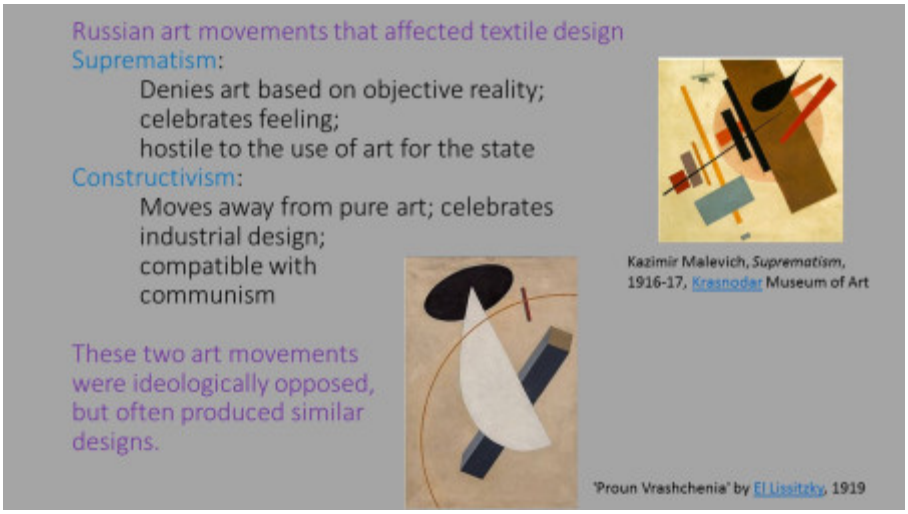
A. and A. I Baranov
factory of the
Commercial House

1863

The above piece has a quite modern look for something done in the 19th century.

Now, let’s move to treat printed textiles of the Soviet era.

There are some perquisites.

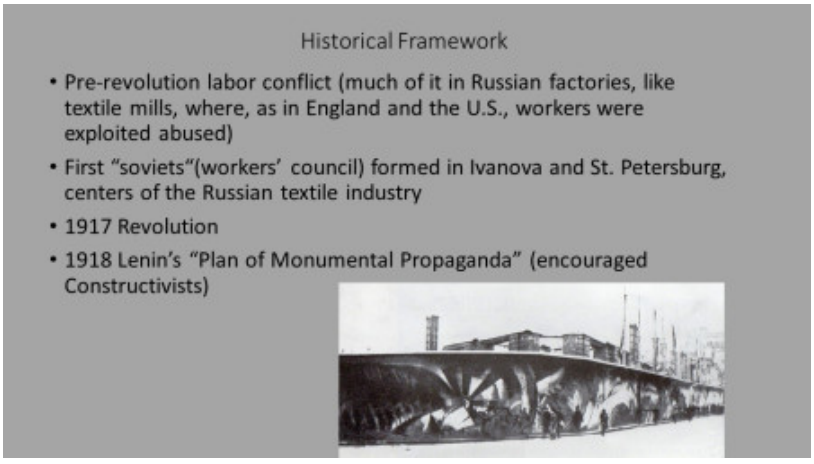


First, there were two art movements that affected textile design, just prior to, and then after, the 1917 Revolution.

"Supermatism," moved sharply away from art based on objective reality. Expression of feeling was celebrated. Lots of squares and circles in these designs. Part of its thesis was that art should not serve the state. So, it opposed "thematic and propagandist" art.

"Constructivism" celebrated the industrial world. Saw itself as modern. Was compatible with thematic and propagandist art and many constructivist artists saw real opportunity in the "new society" envisioned by the Bolsheviks.

While opposed in theory, the products of Supermatism and Constructivism,as you can see above, often look similar. Now let's insert a little history.

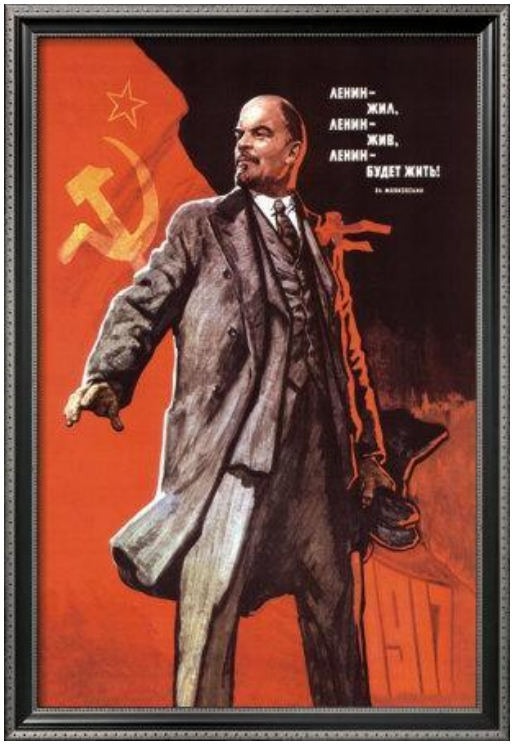


Textile workers were active in prerevolutionary labor strife because textile mills, world-wide, were places where workers were exploited and abused.

The first workers' councils (called "soviets") were formed in Ivanova and St. Petersberg, both, then, important in the Russian textile industry.

The years immediately after 1917 were marked by civil war, loss of raw material and fuel sources, and a need for hard currency. The Russian textile industry withered.

Shortly after the Revolution, Lenin issued a "Plan of Monumental Propaganda."



It was not explicit, and seemed particularly interested in abolishing architecture that celebrated pre-revolutionary values (see the image at the bottom of the "Historical Framework" slide above. That is a wall erected to hide features of a building seen as objectionable in a Soviet society).

But Lenin's "Plan" had implications for art, design and textile design in particular. Some "constructivist" textile designers enthusiastically set about creating textile designs emblematic and celebratory of the values of the new Soviet society.

Fig.2

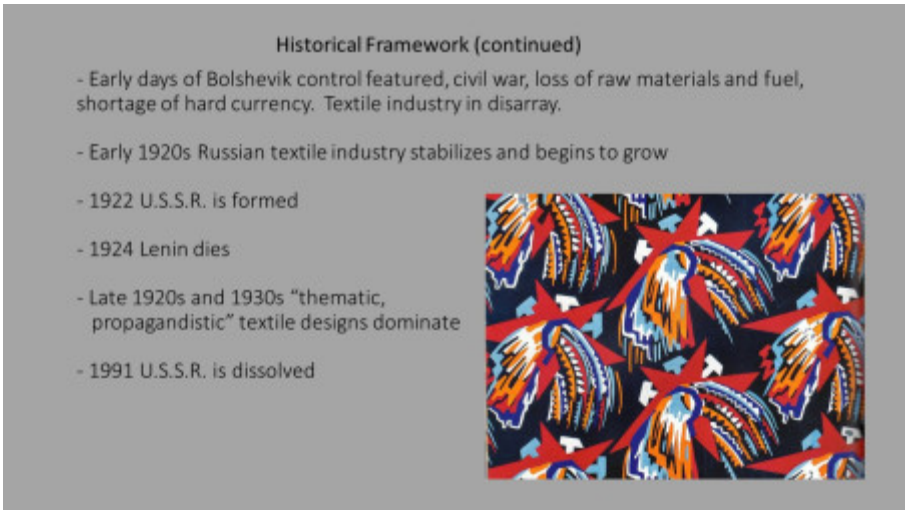
Liubov Popova

Textile Design c.1924

Pencil and ink on paper

234 x 191 mm

Private collection



There were debates about what textile designs were appropriate for the new Soviet society. For a while fabrics without any designs was produced simply because the need for them could not wait for these debates to be settled.

The U.S.S.R. was formed in 1922, one feature of which was that it took the cotton fields of both Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan into the new state.

In 1922 the All-Union Textile Syndicate was created. It controlled all aspects of textile production. The syndicate's Artistic Advisory Council approved or declined textile designs submitted to it.

The influence of the Supermatism art movement did not last long, since it was opposed to the use of art by the state. The constructivists had more impact on textile design, but both of these art movements were avant-garde and elitist, disconnected from public tastes.

Those influential in the world of Soviet textile design debated, but those favoring "thematic" textile designs won in the short term.

While there were still often lots of flowers in textile designs, there was an era beginning in the 1920s and continuing to the end of 1933, when thematic and propagandistic designs were dominant in textiles printed in the U.S.S.R

Major textile themes were not mandated by the Soviet government, but the textile design artists devised them in response to major government initiatives being planned and enacted…and the related propaganda. Major "themes" employed were industrialization, transportation, electrification, youth, literacy for all, (notice that this had a sanguine effect on women) agriculture, collectivization, and sports and hobbies.

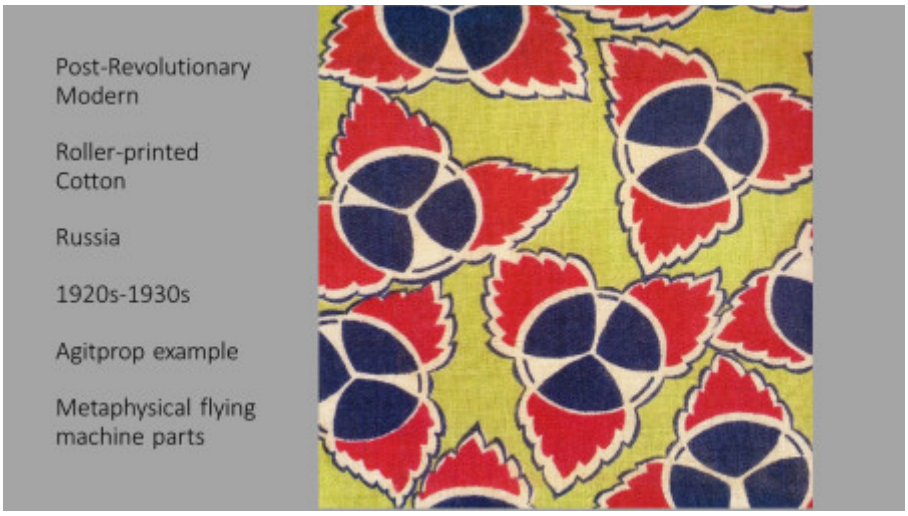
The "thematic" era of Soviet textile design was emphatically ended in late 1933 by the Soviet equivalent of the U.S. president's cabinet. The debates about what textile designs were ideologically appropriate interfered unduly with the actual production and distribution of badly needed clothing. A great many thematic designs were never manufactured. Moreover, citizens, generally, refused to buy or wear textiles with these thematic designs.

While it is obvious that Russian mills have been producing textiles ever since the death of the Soviet thematic requirements, the literature I've found does not treat Russian printed textiles of this later period. I also found nothing on Russian textile design after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991.

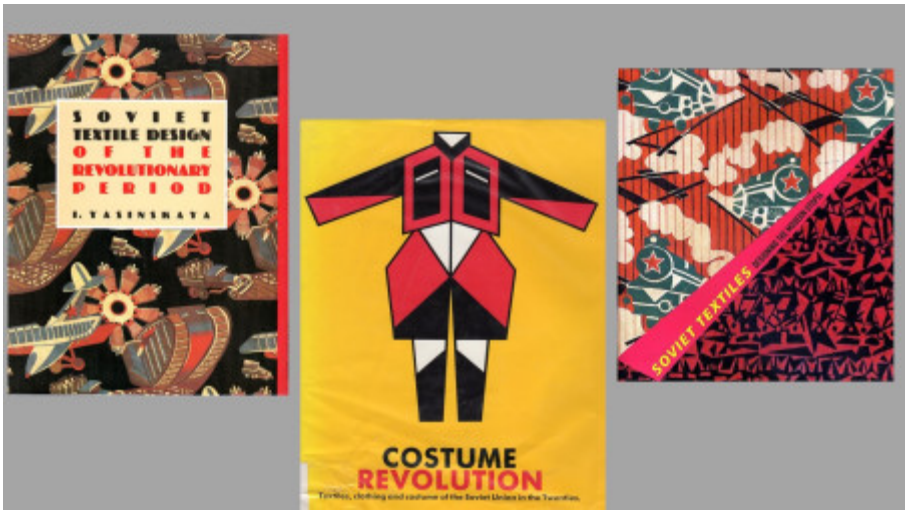
But, above, is a new textile mill in Tajikistan that opened in 2011.

Instead, the literature is focused sharply on the Soviet thematic and propagandist designs produced between the 1920s and early 1930s. For that reason, my treatment of post-revolutionary Russian printed textiles will deal only with such designs produced during this period.

There was, in the 50s, as I was growing up, lots of sneering, in the U.S., about Soviet movies, in which the hero was more in love with his tractor than with his girl. Similarly, most guardians of aesthetic quality have looked down on the Soviet printed textile designs as beneath aesthetic consideration.



You get a sense that Meller was "holding her nose" a bit as she included the propagandist design above in her book.

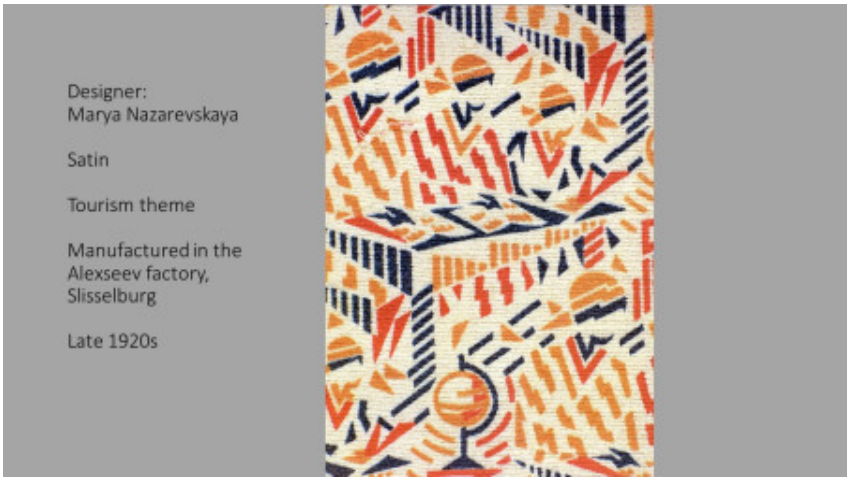


Despite the briefness of the thematic era of Soviet textiles design, and its failure to achieve its propagandist objectives, I found three books that treat Soviet textile designs from the thematic era seriously.

Let me show you a few examples. One reviewer said that a number of the following designs seem uniquely Russian, and, of course, that was what Soviet designers were attempting. Not just "Russian designs, but Soviet Russian designs. They did not want to draw on the traditional, even traditional Russian sources.

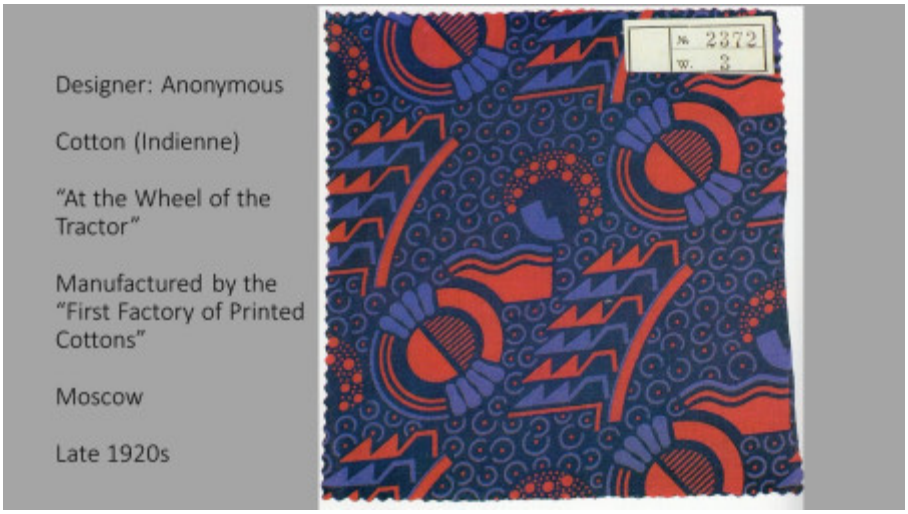
You've seen the pattern above, but I find it attractive, even if the artist was only assigned the task of glorifying gears.

I, also, rather like this "marine" theme abstracted design.



The message aspect of this design is too strong for my taste, but the use of the colors chosen on a white ground is graphically effective.

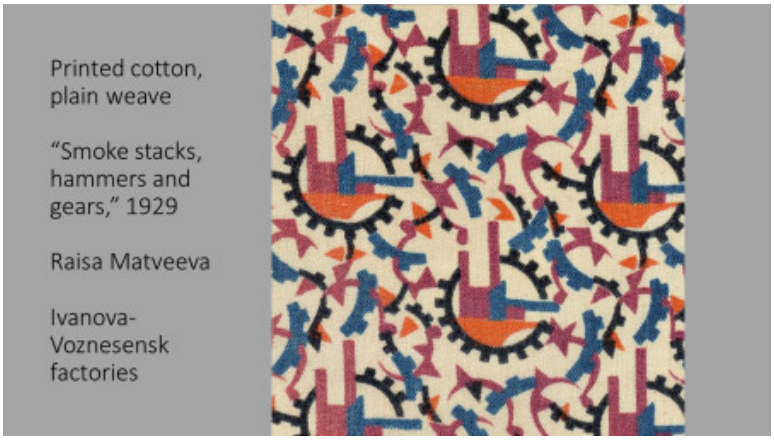
The sickles, in the textile pattern above, are inserted cleverly, even discreetly. But, for me, the message overwhelms the aesthetics of the design.



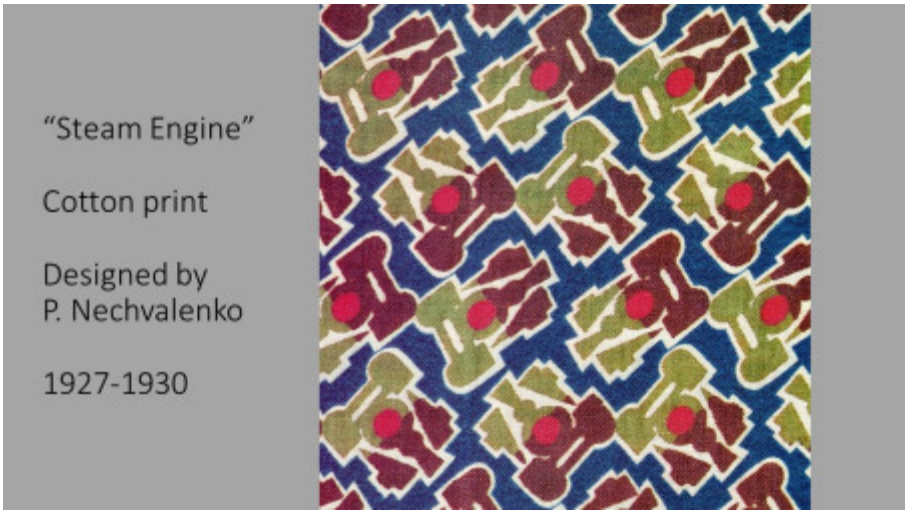
This is also, emphatically the case, with this pattern, despite an attractive use of strong contrasting colors and effective contrast in the size of its graphic elements.

The "railroad" design, above, does not preach and the colors are attractive and effective.

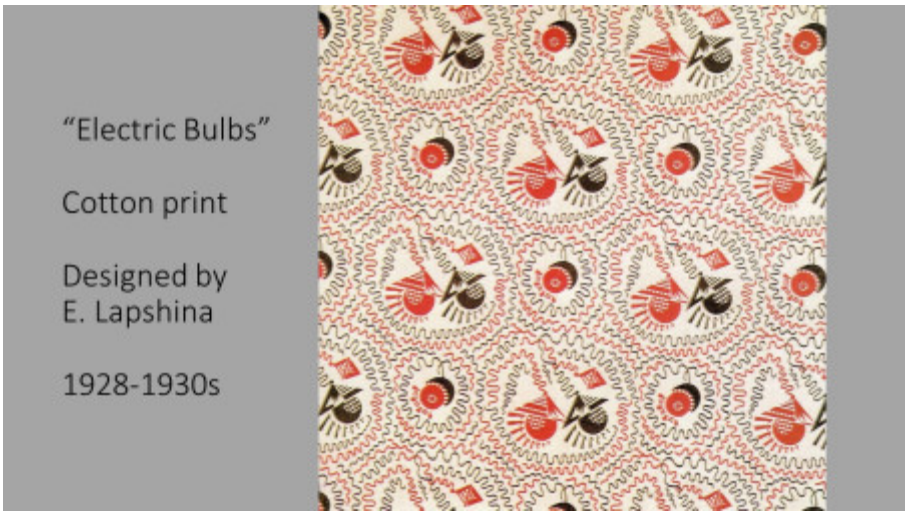
A very explicit theme is softened through abstraction. The green-white contrast is effective as is the differing size of the various design elements.



A very bald theme of "smoke stacks, hammers and gears," is nicely abstracted and treated with pleasant colors. Items of very different scales in nature are brought to a similar one that produces a nicely balanced design.



"Steam Engine" seems a pretty humble theme, but the simple abstraction works to let us enjoy the pleasant color choices (despite the fact that the engine is recognizable).



With this design we're over a line, and, for me, the theme drowns out the aesthetics.

Above, is an ultimate case, in which, the desire to glorify the Soviet military, overwhelms everything else, despite the choice of attractive colors.

We may still be too close historically to make balanced assessments of the merits of thematic Soviet textile designs. (Some scholars and museums ARE treating them seriously.)

There may be no way yet, for most of us, to save Soviet printed textile designs, produced during the thematic era, from the accusation that they are, often, at best, aesthetically "pedestrian."

But I think it is harder not to admire some aspects of the broader universe of Russian printed textiles.

The Uzbeks, who made what are usually judged to be rich, beautiful, and sometimes absolutely, glorious ikat and suzani fabrics, liked Russian printed textiles a lot. They lined these much more expensive textiles with them and seemed to experience neither competition nor denigration.

Until the day before I gave it, this was the end of my presentation.

I've said a couple times, here, that I looked for material on contemporary Russian printed fabrics and didn't really find any.

But, my friend, Melissa Keshishian did.

It was an article on contemporary Russian printed fabrics from a New York Times insert: Style. With the key words in it, I looked around a little and here's just a taste of what is likely about.

This is a textile designer, Olya Thompson, born in Russia, who, with some associates, is producing a lot of Russian-inspired printed fabrics. The cover on the sofa in this picture is based on a Russian constructivist design.

Here are three more examples.

The photo. above, takes us full circle, with Soviet Realism paintings and drawings on the wall.

My sources list, at the end of this post, gives you a few links on this designer and this material.

Now, let's look at the material brought into this session.

I had borrowed a number of pieces with Russian printed cottons and had staged them on three tables. They looked like this.

I'll try to take you through them one at a time.

We began with three items pinned to the front board.

We've treated the reconstructed Lakai piece on the left in some detail in my lecture, so we won't repeat that.

One of the difficulties I had preparing for this session is that I had not found anyone who collected Russian printed textiles. Susan Meller sympathized with me, saying "there are not very many of us."

Although I had borrowed a number of coats and other Central Asian textiles, I had not found a single Russian printed textile by itself.

As it happened, Susan Meller, was selling some of her things on the internet and I ran into the piece, in the middle above, and bought it.

It seemed an unlikely lining for a Central Asian coat because it is full of clock and chandeliers. Very European looking. When I suggested this to Ms. Mellers, she immediately sent me the image you see, full size, below.

She said that this is a Central Asian woman's coat, a "paranjas," with an almost identical Russian, printed, cotton design used as its lining. She dates it to about 1900.

Here, above right, is the back. (Notice the exceptionally long false sleeves. It was worn over the head.)

The next piece was an item of contemporary Uzbek embroidery. Silk with Memling guls. It has three kinds of Russian printed cottons as backing.

The next piece was an Uzbek ikat coat.

Here are glimpses of its cotton printed lining.

Next, four smaller formats and a coat on the board. The smaller pieces were Uzbek silk embroidered bags or hangings.

Here is the small piece on the left.

Its backing seems to be a small piece of ikat.

Second from the left was this one with a printed cotton back.

Third from the left. A small corner of printed cotton backing. Fourth from the left was this one. Again, a cheerful Russian printed cotton backing.

The next piece was an ikat panel, not a coat. An orange-tan, checkered, printed backing.

Color differences are due to different cameras.

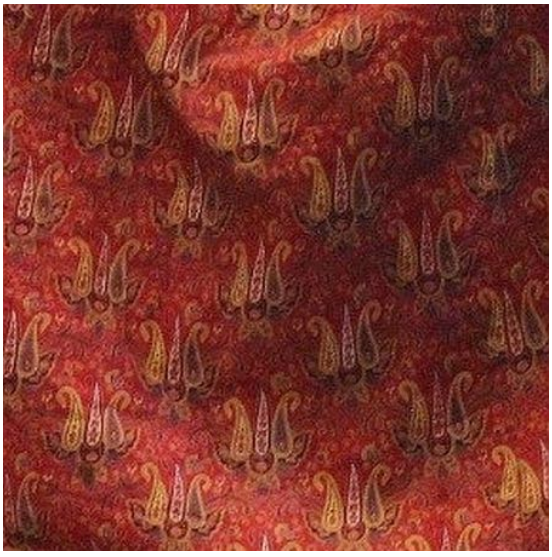
Next was this ikat coat with a red-ground, "printed" lining. (I don't have a clear image of this lining but it looks like it could be woven. We did encounter woven material used as lining in some of these pieces.)

A slightly fuzzy shot of another ikat coat (better details below).

Note that the right half of this coat has been turned inside out to show the lining usages fully.

Another detail of the coat above.

Next, another ikat coat.



Next was a mild-colored suzani with a bright blue-ground print backing.

Details of the piece above.

Next, was a Turkman coat with a striped outside, but a printed textile lining.

The usual striped red-ground edging on the inside of this coat was woven, not printed.

Next, was another ikat, shown only in detail.

Its back is a plain-colored material.

But printed cottons were still used as edge bindings.

Next, was another ikat coat.

Three different printed fabrics used to line it.

(color differences due to different cameras)

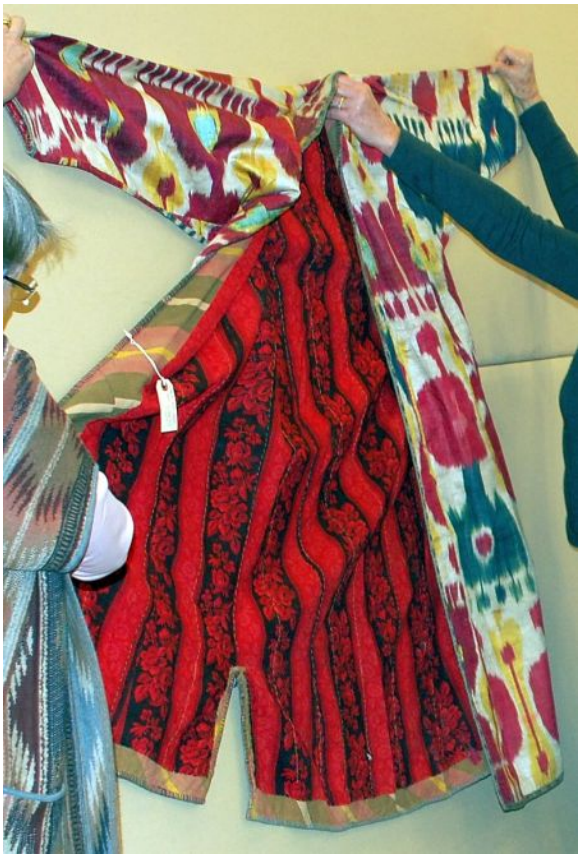
Next was an ikat panel.

Next, a coat with a light colored, striped outside, a light-colored printed lining but, then, with dramatic ikat inside edging.

You can just see the striped outside fabric on the right side of the first of the following two details.

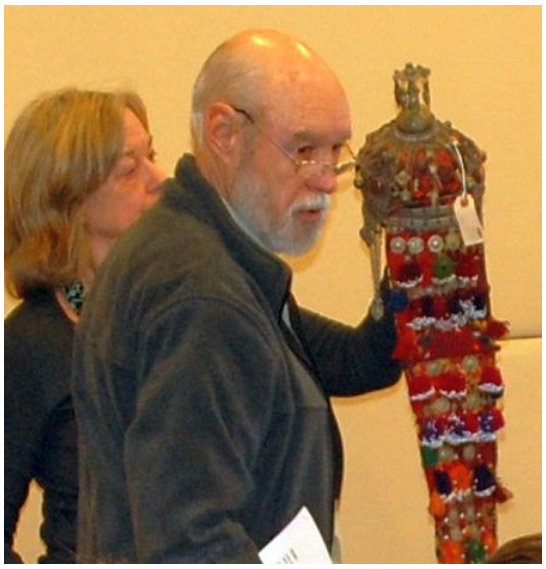
Notice the blue and yellow binding tape.

Next was another ikat coat.



Next, a Turkman hat. Metal at the top, with lots of tassels, but printed fabrics are used underneath the metal in the crown.

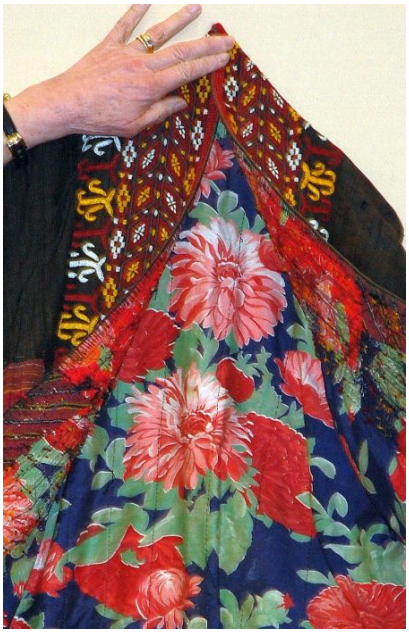
I asked Bob Emry, whose piece this is, to explain.



Another comprehensive view of it.

And here is it's interesting, pieced backing.

With the next piece we moved back to coats. This time a Tekke Turkmen, with a dark outside fabric embroidered around the collar and down the front. Also on the sleeves. Russian printed cotton lining.



And, a woven striped inside coat edging.

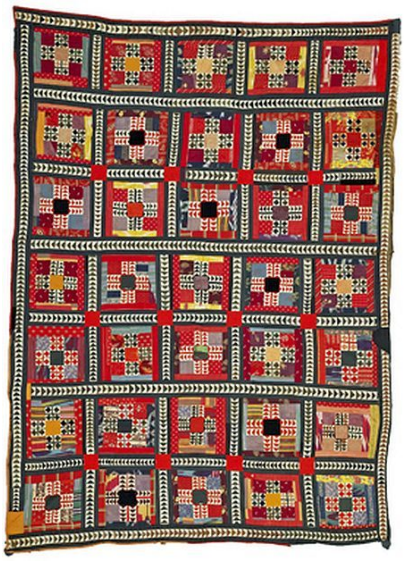
This striped inside edging was also woven rather than printed.

Next, another ikat coat.

One last coat.

The last piece of the day was an applique, Uzbek hanging that resembles a piece in the related TM exhibition.

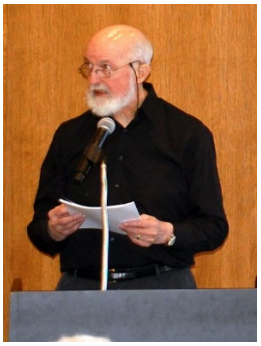
Here is the more complex “Old Patterns; New order” piece.



Roberts Collection / Textile Museum / Renee Comet

Back to the brought in piece. As usual, it has a printed fabric backing.

I brought my session to a close.



I want to thank David Zahirpour, Melissa Keshishian and Bob Emry for loaning the bulk of the pieces shown in the room.

Thanks, also to Karthika Audinet, Sumru Krody and, my wife, Jo Ann, each of whom suffered through pilot tests of my illustrated lecture, at various points in its development, and made useful suggestions.

Tom Goehner, Karthika Audinet and Aija Blitte took photos during the session and shared them with me.

Amy Rispin took another good set of notes.

I hope you have enjoyed my little exploration of Russian printed textiles.

Regards,

R. John Howe[2]

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Russian Printed Textiles

February 27, 2016

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http://www.theodora.com/encyclopedia/t/textileprinting.html (prints red but works)

Russian printed textiles, general:

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How It’s Done: Roller Printing

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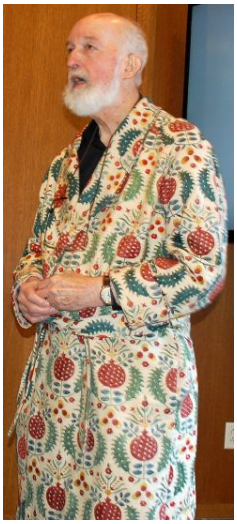
Fun At the End

In 2007, in Istanbul, I bought a piece of contemporary hand-embroidered suzani material done on a silk and cotton ground. Although it was not the usual application, I thought I might have it made into a kind of Central Asian type coat.

Last December, I found a seamstress who was interested and had my coat made.

I wore it briefly at the beginning of the session above, demonstrating that if you sell an American a nice piece of suzani material, he is likely to turn it into a kind of long, smoking jacket, with a shawl collar, side, on-seam pockets and a belt of the suzani material.



But the real problem is that he will likely not honor the Russian printed lining tradition, but will line it with an unimaginative tan.

When I realized what I'd done, I thought a redeeming feature might be that I had inadvertently created a unique version of the spectacular Uzbek coats, since the Uzbeks tend to make their coats of ikat, and suzani material is pressed in the direction of wall hangings.

No such luck. Within two weeks I encountered, on Rugrabbit, two Central Asian coats made from suzani material.

I have no excuse for what I have done, but know already (I've only worn it twice) that I'm going to enjoy my coat.

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for August, 2016

Amy Rispin and Friends: Quilt Potpourri

Posted in Uncategorized on August 7, 2016 by rjohn

On April 23, 2016, Amy Rispin, and three of her friends, gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program "Quilts Potpourri." Amy talked about some aspects of her continuing interest in Amish quilts. Barbara (Bobble) Korengold talked about her recent work with applique quilts. Floris Flam reviewed some recent trends in art quilts. And Pat Reilly, a quilt collector, herself, facilitated.

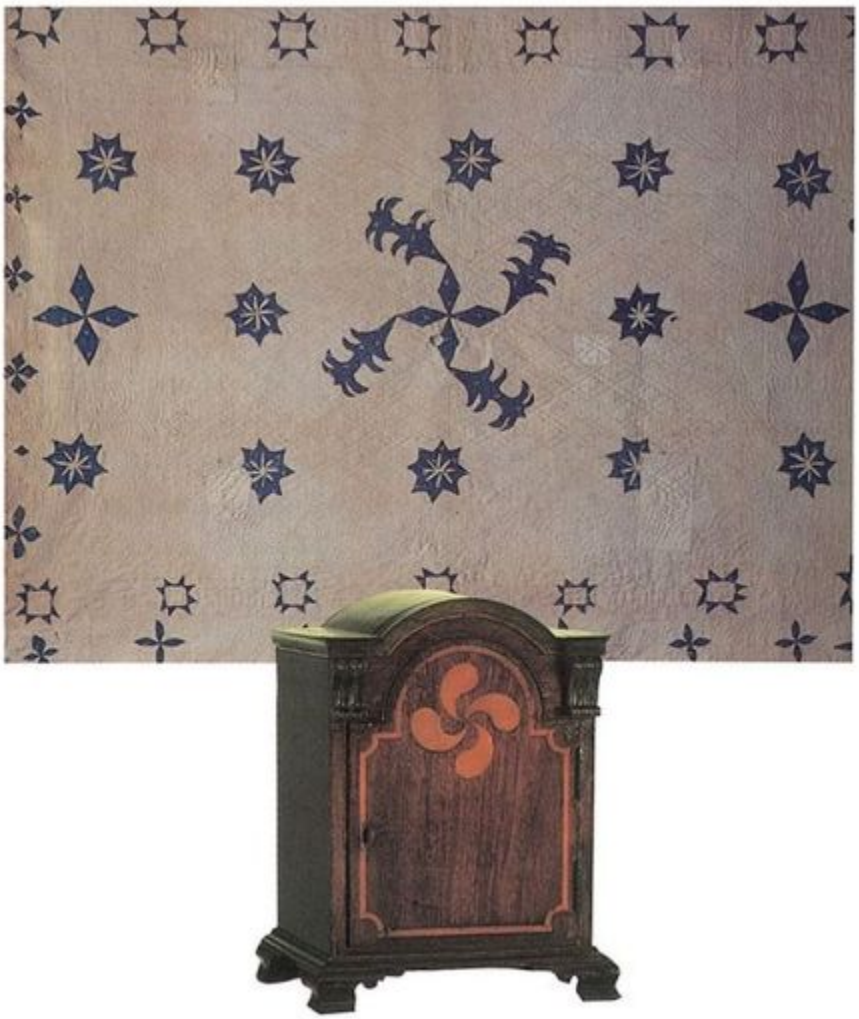
Amy began with a Powerpoint-illustrated lecture.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH FRAKTURS

AND QUILT DESIGNS

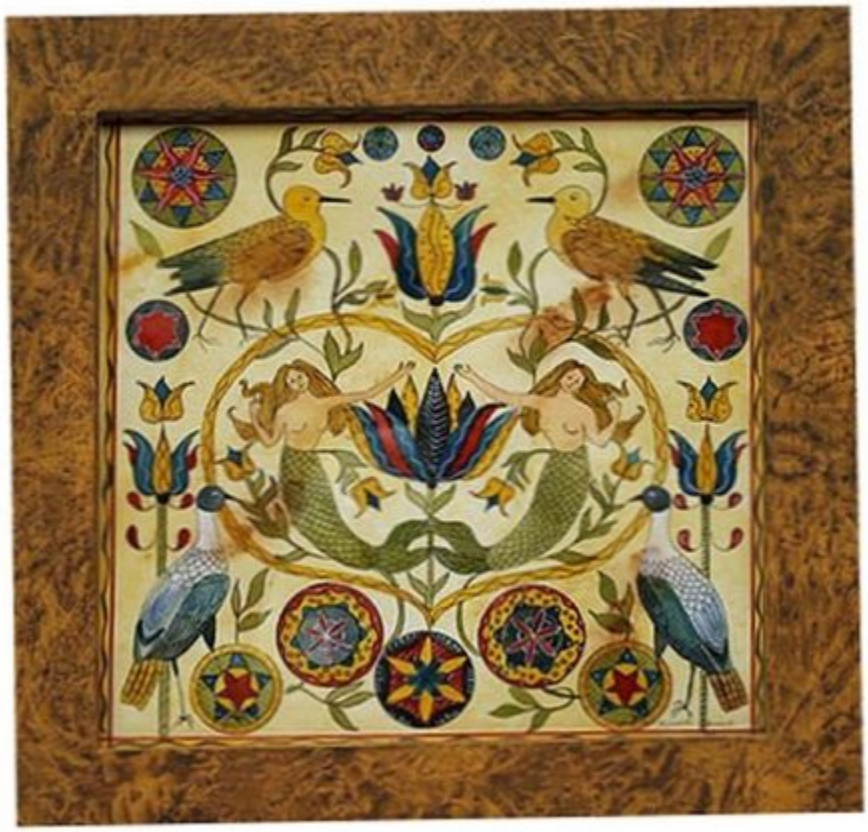
FROM MARYLAND AND PENNSYLVANIA

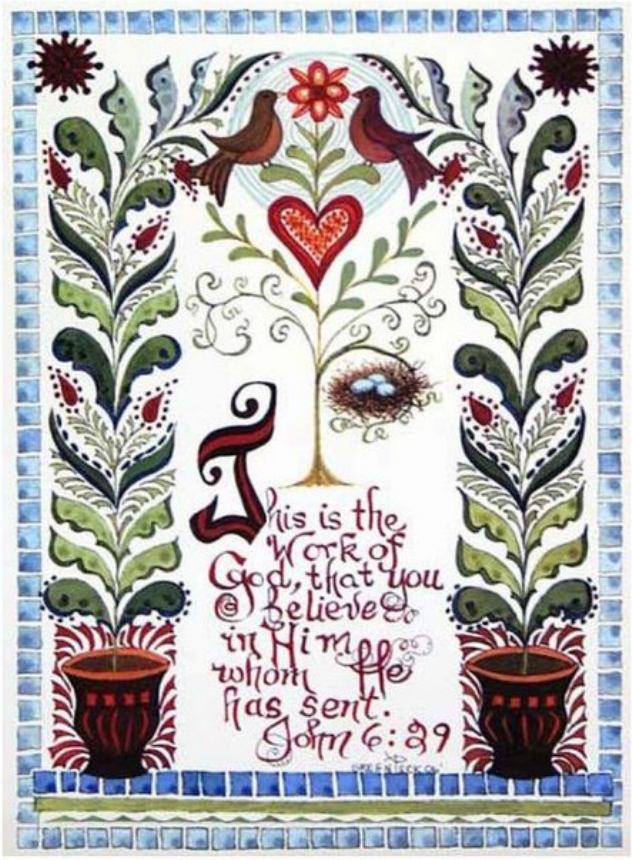
Following the Palatine wars in the seventeenth century, many German-speaking people settled in Pennsylvania (in Lancaster and Montgomery counties) an d later in Maryland (in Baltim ore, Frederick and Washington counties). They brought with them tools, guns and clothing, typically decorated with German folk designs. Some early quilts and cabinetry made by these settlers reflect these folk patterns, for example, the pinwheel design on the appliqued quilt made by Mary Eby of Frederick County in 1759, and the spice cabinet. (Here, the pinwheel design is reversed.)



Pennsylvania-German frakturs are illuminated texts, typically birth or marriage certificates, or biblical excerpts, which demonstrate local design practices from these settlers' home regions in Europe.

They are characterized by symmetrical patterns featuring birds and flowers. Hearts are frequent design motifs, and red and green color schemes may predominate.

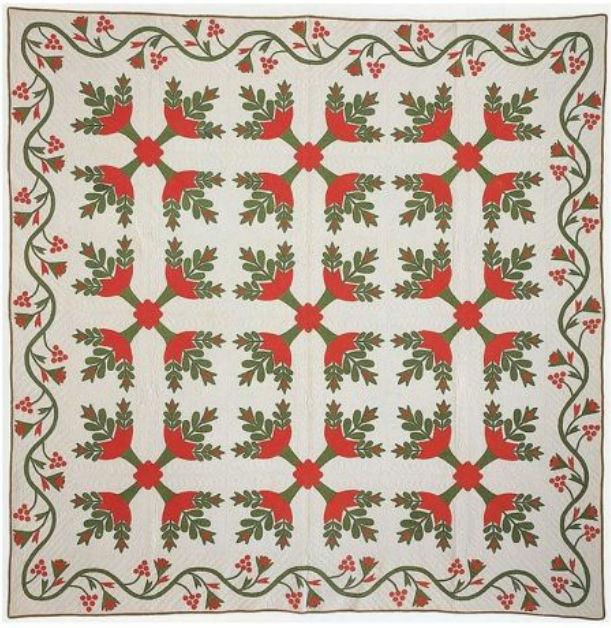




The fraktur above features feather-like arrays of nested leaves. Note also the strong bilateral symmetry in the design.

This red and green Washington County fraktur, above, is a birth certificate for Magdalena Schmitt, born in 1781 (the red and green are much more definite than those in this image).

Quilt squares were used as patterns and were passed from person to person. This red and green quilt square was made between 1858 and 1878 in Washington County, Md. (the colors in the image above are actually red and green).



This red and green appliqued quilt, above, was probably made in Pennsylvania between 1860 and 1880. Note the wavy vine-like border design, which also appears on Pennsylvania-German plates and cabinetry. The distinctive colorfast red color was called Turkey red, although the process originated in India.

Settlers took their quilts and quilt patterns with them when they migrated West. This appliqued quilt is from 1889 and was made in Marion County, Ohio. Although the quilt was appliqued using red and green fabric, some green dyes used in the latter half of the nineteenth century were fugitive and changed to tan.

The 1874 quilt, above, is appliqued and pieced; the pieced design is called North Carolina Lily. The green has faded to tan.

The flowers on the red and green mid-nineteenth century quilt, above, are pierced, an d the curved stems and leaves are appliqued.

In the mid-nineteenth century Pennsylvania quilt, above, red and green predominate.

Amy had brought in four quilts that exemplified the red-green combination she had accented in her lecture.

Here is the first one.

A1

The piece, above, probably dates from the 1920's and was never meant to be quilted, but rather was used as a blanket cover, with a plain green backing. The design is North Carolina Lily.

Her second brought in piece was this one.

A2

This is an appliqued quilt, probably made in Maryland or Virginia, and features some of the quilt designs we have just seen. Some of the dye has corroded the fabric.

Amy’s third green-red quilt was this one.

The appliqued design here is a variant of Whig Rose and features the pinwheel patterns, both is the applique and the quilt stitchery.

This quilt was made using red and green fabric from different dye lots. As you can see, most of the green has faded to tan.

This quilt was owned by Flora E.Gunt, who obtained it from Susan Byerly Brannow. We believe we have traced Flora E. Gunt to Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Ms Glunt lived from 1869 – 1957. The quilt may date from 1860.

Amy’s fourth green-red quilt was this one.

This quilt was pieced in 2015 by Magdalena Stoltzfus and quilted by many of her daughters and daughters-in-law. The colors are a psychedelic array of reds, pinks and greens. Much of the piecing shows her expertise gained from the log cabin patterns. Quilt stitchery shows feather-like swirls. Details.

Every year, the old order Amish community in Southern Maryland holds a quilt auction on the Sunday just before Thanksgiving.

Most quilts sold at this auction feature colorfully printed cottons, designed to appeal to "English" or non-Amish buyers.

The quilt, brloe, came from the quilt auction and could have been made for use by an Amish family.

Magdalena Stoltzfus has a grandchild being treated for a rare genetic disorder at Dr. Morton's Clinic for Special Children.

Clinic *for* Special Children

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME I NUMBER 38 * LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA * SUMMER 2015

It is Time! The Quilts and the Clocks tell us it is Time for the Clinic's 25th Annual Benefit Auction to take place. We hope the "Nautical Star" quilt inspires all to join us at the Leola Produce Auction on Saturday, September 19th. Please Join Us!

2015 Benefit Auctions

TWO TO GO:

September 19, Leola, Lancaster County, PA

The 25th Annual Benefit Auction for Clinic for Special Children will be held at the the Leola Produce Auction on September 19th.

Quilts, furniture, handmade toys, wood crafts, carriages, ponies and landscaping plants will be available for buyers. A wide choice of food including chicken barbecue, pulled pork, freshly made pies, donuts, whoopee pies in many flavors, ice cream and many other delicious treats will be featured. Breakfast is available starting at 7:00 am and the auction opens for bidders at 8:30 am. Remarks by Dr. Morton, Dr. Strauss and Dr. Williams are scheduled around 11:00am with special items, quilts and furniture sales immediately following their remarks.

Quilts ready for the auction include Nautical Star, (pictured above), Mariner's Compass, Postage Stamp, Diamond Jubilee, Wedding Ring, Flame Star, Stepping Stone, Lone Star, Diamond Back Log Cabin, Trip Around the World, Log Cabin, plus many more including wall hangings, comforters and pillows.

A new Amish carriage, a spring wagon with three seats, made of fiberglass and equipped with LED lights, pony carts and ponies will be there for the bidding.

Furniture to be auctioned includes a grand father clock, cherry bedroom suite, 5 piece oak bedroom suite, swivel glider rocker, sofa bed, a Bernina 330 sewing machine, pine furniture, red cedar log bed, deacons benches, and many other pieces.

Outdoors there will be swing sets, chain link dog kennel, picnic tables, PVC hot bed, Martin bird houses, lawn furniture, mini-barns, and various size storage sheds. Leola Produce Auction is at 135 Brethren Church Road, Leola, PA 17540.

September 12th, Blair County, PA

The Blair County Auction will be held on September 12th at Morrison's Cove Produce Auction, Rt. #36 South of Roaring Spring, PA. This auction, always on the second Saturday of September, supports CSC and the new Central Pennsylvania Clinic for Special Needs (CPAC) in Belleville.

Always a source of beautiful mums and other nursery items, handmade quilts and locally made furniture, this auction also features delicious chicken barbecue, soft pretzels and freshly churned ice cream, including low protein ice cream and other treats for those with MSUD to enjoy! For donations of items or information, please contact Paul Ray at 814-224-5442.

Magdalena surpassed herself last year when she created this Mariner's Compass quilt, which fetched a superb price for the clinic at auction there last September.

Pat Reilly, also a quilt collector, with a relationship with Magdelina Stolzfus, introduced Barbara (Bobbie) Korengold, who has shared her minutely constructed, simply astounding applique quilts with us in some other RTAM sessions.

Applique quilts are made by cutting out pieces of fabric and assembling them on a background, similar to collage, to make a design. This is different than patchwork, which is the process of cutting pieces of fabric and sewing them together like a jigsaw puzzle, to make the design. There are many different styles and techniques of applique in use today. Barbara talked about three different styles.

B1 is an example of what is called Broderie Perse.

It was made by Judy Bankson, formerly of Bethesda, and now Gaithersburg, Maryland.

BI

In the 16th century, printed cotton textiles were being imported from India to Europe, and were used as bed coverings and wall hangings. These were what became known as chintz. They began to be produced in England and France, and eventually in America. Needleworkers started cutting the motifs of these fabrics apart, and assembling them in new arrangements on a background fabric, creating appliqued quilts. Soon, chintz fabrics were being manufactured specifically for this purpose.

Judy has taken modern fabrics to make her "Bethesda" quilt. Some of her fabrics are reproductions of old designs. Eight of the blocks have inked line drawings of Bethesda landmarks surrounded by floral designs.

The great challenge in making this kind of quilt is to take disparate, unrelated fabrics and find a way to combine them so that they make an agreeable, cohesive finished product.

Details of B1.

Bobbie said that her second quilt, B2, was "in progress."

B2

This quilt is based on very traditional Baltimore album quilt designs. The patterns for the center basket, and the four rectangular baskets are from a very well known antique quilt in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The four small bunches of flowers tied with ribbons in the

corners are adapted from other old quilts. The inner and outer borders were designed by Barbara using motifs taken from the blocks.

Barbara uses the needleturn method for her applique. This involves placing each colored piece of fabric on the background and turning under a narrow seam allowance as it is stitched in place. Barbara has also done a great deal of embroidery to embellish the applique. This came about because a friend gave her a collection of silk embroidery threads that she had brought back from China, and Barbara felt compelled to use them. So, the name of this quilt will be "Carol's Gift".

Details of B2. (color differences are do to lighting and camera action)

Bobbie said that her third quilt, B3, was of a type that she doesn't do very well, but she'd share it anyway.

B3

This small wall hanging was made using a method that is very popular today: raw edged, fused applique. It is still applique, because it is pieces of fabric placed on a background to create a picture. Products are available today that are heat activated glue on paper. The glue is ironed onto the back of the applique fabric, the paper peeled away, the fabric then cut into the desired shape, and ironed on to the background. There is no seam allowance, the raw edge of the fabric is visible. When the piece is quilted, the quilting stitches help hold the pieces in place to reinforce the glue.

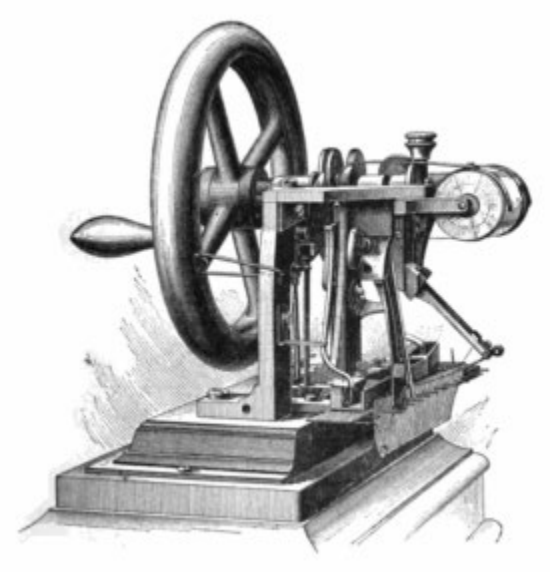
Pat now introduced Floris Flam, a local art quilt designer and maker, who has also spoken at The Textile Museum before.

Floris took us into the current world of machine-made quilts. This is Floris speaking:

I'm going to show some examples of recent quilts that use a variety of machine quilting approaches.

First, a bit of history.

There have sewing machines of sorts since the 1750s, but Elias Howe is generally given credit for inventing one, in 1845, that marked the beginning of machines that could be used in the home.



Sewing machines first became popular with consumers in the 1860s.

The DAR museum owns a fruit basket quilt its donor says was made prior to 1850 that is machine and hand pieced and appliqued, but was machine quilted using one of the earliest treadle sewing machines in Texas.

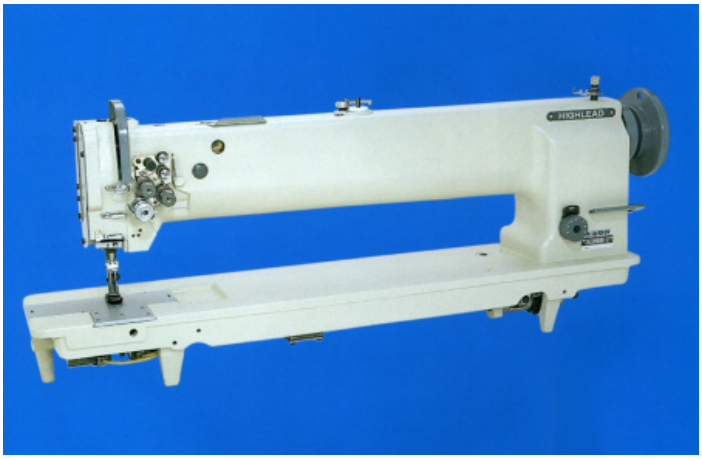
Prize-winning quilts were generally hand-quilted until the late 1980s. In 1988, Lois Smith was the first to win best in show at the Houston Quilt Festival for a machine-quilted piece, *Golden Memories of Christmas.* Carol Bryer Fallert's top prize at the American Quilter's Society show in Paducah, KY, in 1989 for *Corona II: Solar Eclipse*, aroused outrage at the time.

In recent years, most art quilts have been primarily machine quilted. For our purposes here we need to distinguish "domestic" sewing machines from "long-arm" machines often used now in quilting.

Here is an older domestic machine.

And this is what more recent domestic sewing machines can look like.

"Long-arm" sewing machines are a more ambitious "animal." They vary a great deal, but here is just one.



These machines can do wonderful things, some say, things that cannot be done by hand. They can, also, be expensive. A little search will reveal some that cost $10,000 and more.

Long arm machines are used now by many quilters.

With that introduction, I'm going to move to show you eight quilts, that illustrate a variety of quilting styles and approaches.

Very dense quilting has become popular. We see a lot of straight-line quilting, either done with a walking foot or free motion.

Betty Ford moved to the outskirts of Silver Spring in 1966, while the area was still fairly rural.

Betty Ford
Orchard 8

Orchard 8 was inspired by a nearby orchard, abstracted in this quilt.

Betty Ford
Orchard 8, detail

Her work is fused collage and she does dense straight-line quilting on her domestic sewing machine.

Cynthia Corbin also uses dense straight line quilting in her current work, but she uses a long-arm machine.

Cynthia Corbin
Weathering Out

Weathering Out incorporates a piece of white fabric Cynthia folded, weighed down with a flower pot, and left in her back yard in Seattle all winter. The pot left a mark and bugs ate into the cloth, leaving a lacy texture.

Cynthia Corbin
Weathering Out, detail

She used dense machine quilting to hold the weathered fabric to her background. Cynthia's work is abstract, but she feels her recent interest in weathered and weather-beaten surfaces reflects her own experience of aging.

Lois Smith takes a very different approach to long-arm quilting in her work, here using radial and circular stitching lines to reinforce the shapes in her quilt.

Lois Smith
Woodpile

This is *Woodpile*. She says that her neighbor on Chincoteague Island has a woodpile that she sees when she looks out her window. She says "I love the ancient and weathered gray patina of each piece.

Lois Smith
Woodpile, detail

Assuming that the "logs" originated from local trees, I mused at the history each could reveal in its rings and other delicate patterning. " *Woodpile* incorporates this imagery using hand-dyed and commercial fabrics.

The rest of my examples were quilted using domestic sewing machines.

Karen Schulz makes abstract pieced work and uses dense machine quilting, both straight-line and patterned.

Karen Schulz
Girl in the City with Blue Hair

She also incorporates line in her quilt by couching rayon ribbon, using an open zigzag stitch to hold the ribbon in place.

Karen Schulz
Girl in the City with Blue Hair, detail

While Karen's work often starts with a small sketch and not from a story or an emotion, she finds that sometimes a narrative appears. This is *Girl in the City with Blue Hair.* After finishing this quilt, Karen realized that it is about her daughter, who moved to the city when she was 17 and who, at the time, had bright blue hair.

Dominie Nash does machine applique. Her work is a collage of cotton and silk fabrics she makes using various surface design techniques.

Dominie Nash
Stills From a Life 32

The fabrics are joined and quilted at the same time, not the more usual process of making a top, then layering it with batting and backing and quilting it.

Dominie Nash
Stills From a Life 32, detail

The stitching both holds the fabrics in place and adds visual interest. This piece, *Stills from a Life 32*, one of a series of quilts abstracted from the objects that surround her in her studio and her home.

Diane Doran does her collages in Photoshop, prints them on fabric, then machine quilts them on her domestic machine. *California Dreaming* is composed from several photographs she took while on vacation with her family in Florida and California.

Diane Doran
California Dreaming

The three pelicans represent her three sons, ages 15, 13, and 10, flying free and enjoying themselves, testing out their wings.

Diane Doran
California Dreaming, detail

She stitched repeatedly over the lines of the yellow flowers to add some weight to those areas. The lavender and purple flowers are completely created with thread.

Susan Callahan is a professional chef. She incorporates her love of food and kitchen equipment into her quilts. *Homage to Downtown Abbey* is an homage to the beautiful tables in great houses.

Susan Callahan
Homage to Downton Abbey

This quilt uses hand-dyed cotton. It was machine pieced and quilted. Her stitching here represents culinary vignettes and candelabrum at each end of the piece. The flatware was painted after the piece was quilted.

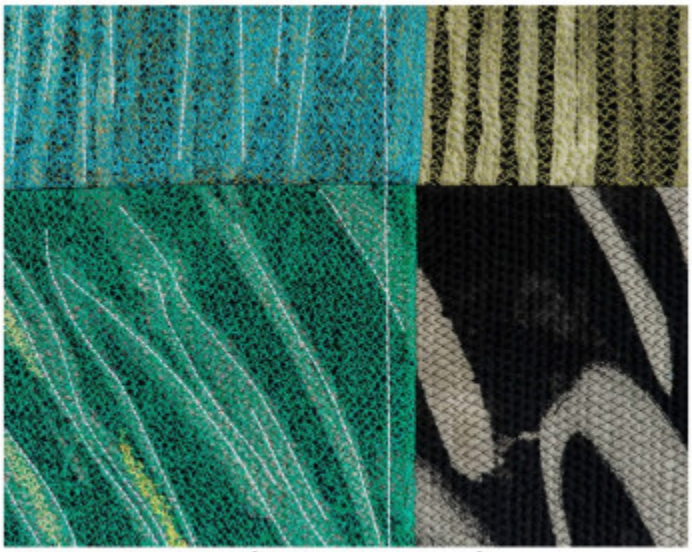
Susan Callahan
Homage to Downton Abbey, detail

I've rotated the detail image 180 degrees to make it easier to see the stitched candelabra.

My final images are of Judy Hooworth's *Rainy Day Dora Creek #12*.

Judy Hooworth
Rainy Day Dora Creek #12

Judy is an Australian who used to live in Sydney. Several years ago she moved to a more rural area. She often walks along Dora Creek and has incorporated abstract images of the creek in her work. This quilt is made from four squares of cotton fabric that she discharged, a process that involves using a chemical to remove some of the color in the fabric.



Judy Hooworth
Rainy Day Dora Creek #12, detail

She has used dense free motion zigzag stitches in the center area of the quilt to change the apparent color of the fabric and used heavy white thread to emphasize the direction of the lines in the fabric.

Size:

I didn't want to clutter the narrative, unduly, as we went along, but, for interest, here are the sizes of these eight quilts.

Betty Ford Orchard 8 30.5 x 29.5

Corbin *Weathering Out* 41 x 61

Callahan *Homage to Downton Abbey* 27 x 60

Doran *California Dreaming* 24 x 60

Hooworth *Rainy Day Dora Creek #12 40 x 40*

Nash *Stills From a Life 32* 27×27

Schulz *Girl in the City with Blue Hair* 32 x 59

Smith *Woodpile 60 x 60*

Next Floris moved to three pieces she had designed and quilted herself.

The first was entitled "Windows 5."

F1

Comment on F1: Windows 5 was pieced using cotton fabrics Floris dyed and was quilted on her domestic sewing machine. Like much of her work, it's abstract, but suggests architecture. Details of F1.

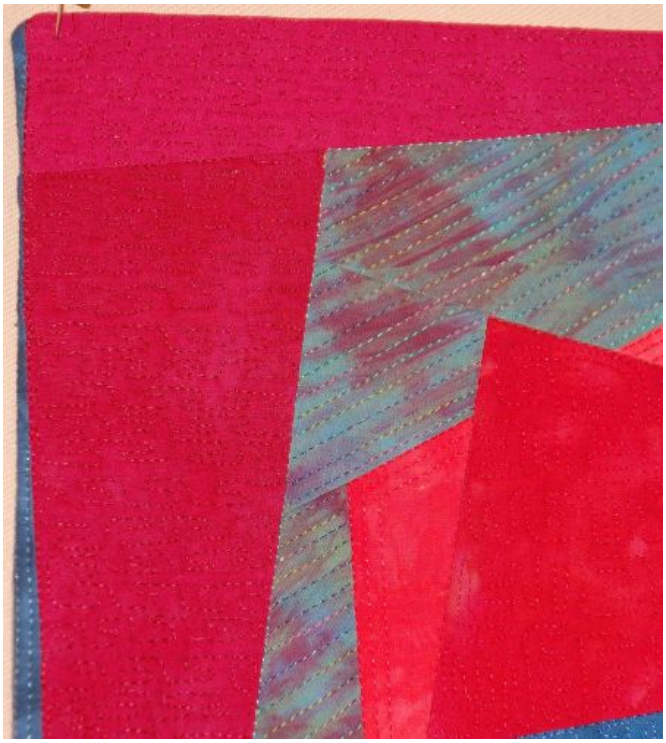
This was Floris’ second piece.

It was entitled “What Lies Within 3.”

F2

Comment on F2: What Lies Within 3 is the third quilt in a series that used the same shapes but different colors to explore the effect of color in how the shapes are perceived. Floris quilted it with both straight line and free motion stitching.

Details of F2.



This was Floris’ third piece was unusual.

F3

Comment on F3:

It was one of her card cases. These are collaged and stitched as one would make a tiny quilt.

Members of the audience brought pieces in. The first of these was striking.

BI1

This quilt is green and pink, color characteristic of the 1915-1920 period.

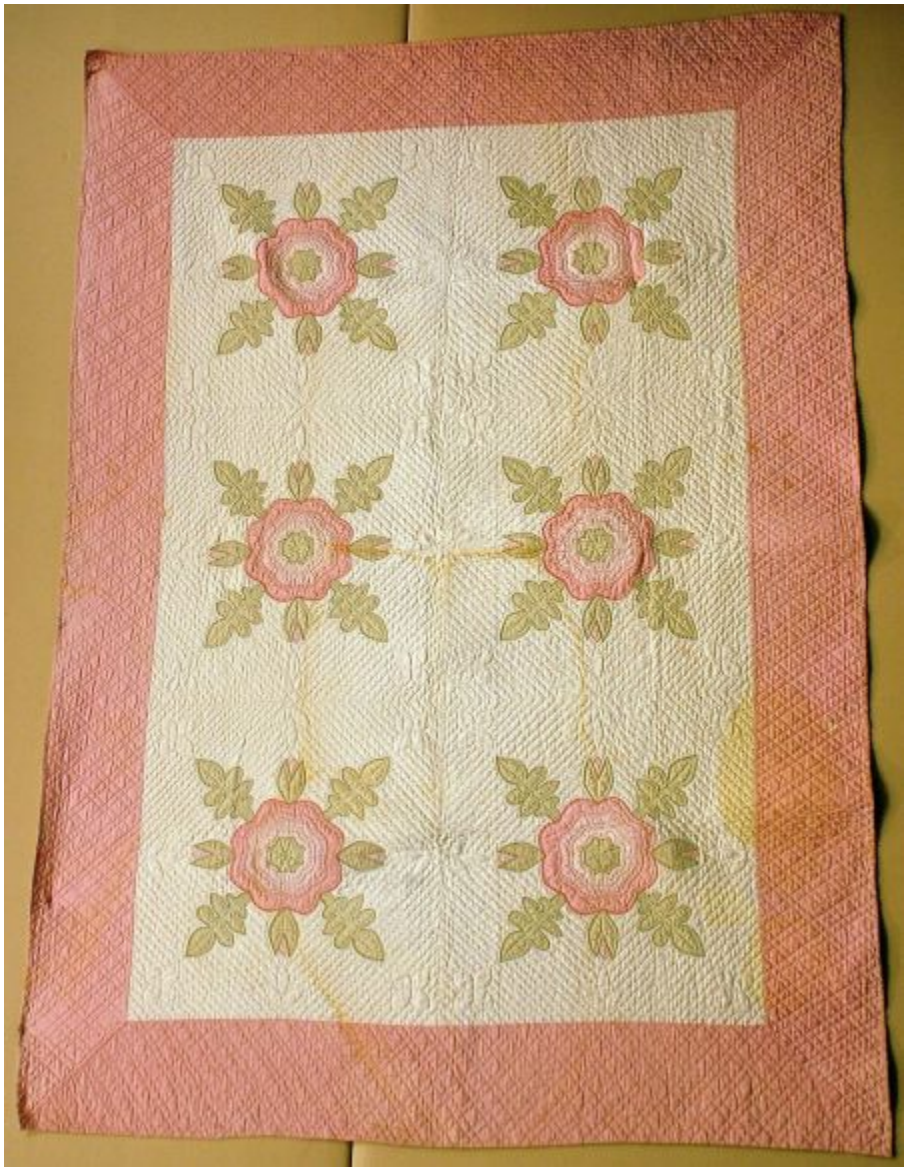
It was found in an estate sale in Falls Church, Virginia, of things said to have been in the same family for five generations. This particular piece was made by the grandmother of the audience member who brought it in. Poppy design. The face is applique.

Amy said that both this quilt (BI1) and BI3 below, have thin batting, indicating that they were meant to be "best" quilts. Here are some detail images of BI1.

Notice the quilting stitches.

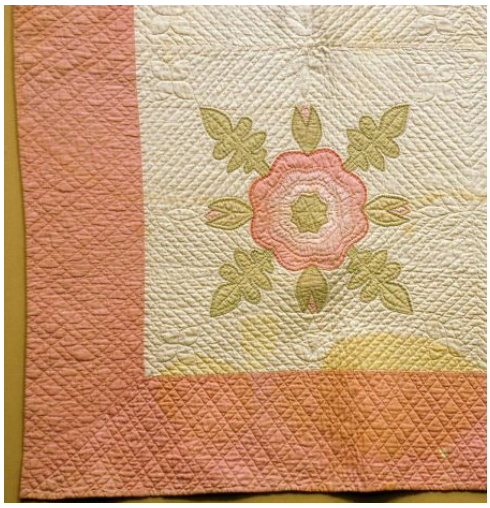
The second brought in piece was a traditional quilt also bought in the same estate sale as BI1. Again the colors are pink, green and white. Palette suggests this piece was made in 1915-1920.

BI3



The quilting is very dense.

Details of BI3. Color differences are due to camera and lighting.



The third quilt was contemporary.

BI2

This quilt was by T. Rusella, who decided, about ten years ago, to focus on color and texture.

This piece is entitled "Painted Desert." Each section has different texture.

Details of BI2

The next piece was a “penny quilt.”

BI4

Such quilts do not have the usual face, batting, and back levels, quilted together. Instead, three different size pieces are sewn together, concentrically, and then that assembly is sewn to a backing. But penny quilts are often classified with quilts. One thing more: they are entirely of plain-color felt, usually wool.

Details of BI4. You can see that there are texture aspects of penny quilts, but they are mostly about color.

Penny quilts have been made for a long time, but this one is not old. Its owner said that it has a tag that indicates that it was made in India for a U.S. firm in Georgia.

The next piece was another textile rather marginally a quilt but also often classified with them. It is called a "yo-yo" in reference to what is now a vintage toy.

Yo-Yo textiles are made in all sizes (the owner of this one said that he owns one for a king-size bed). But this is a miniature, only 15 by 11 inches.

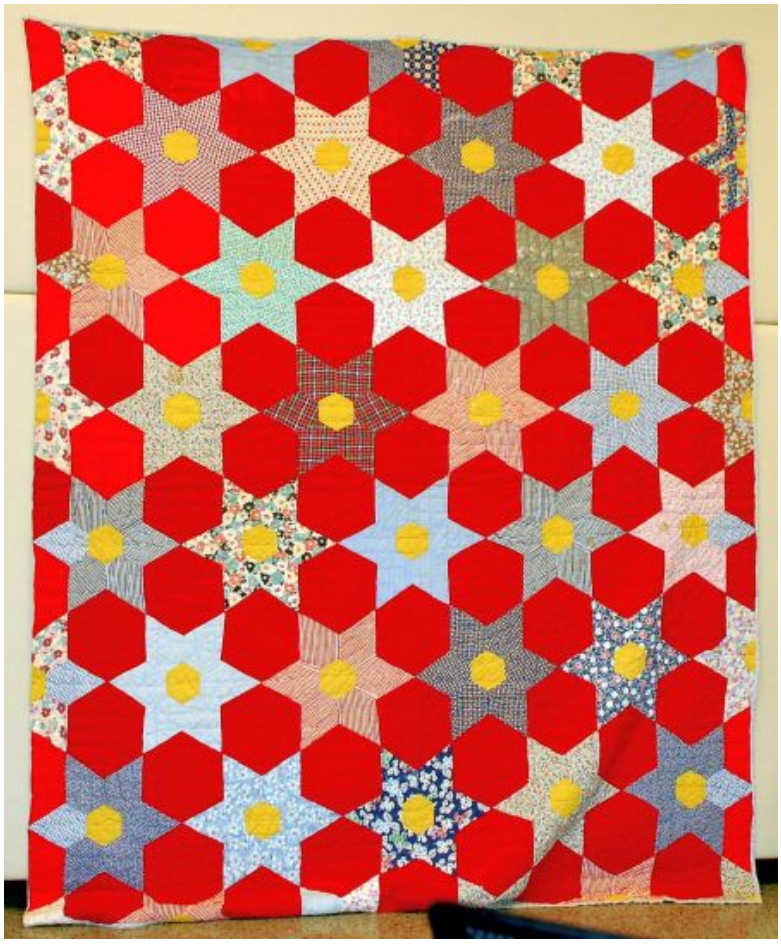
BI5

Details of BI5.

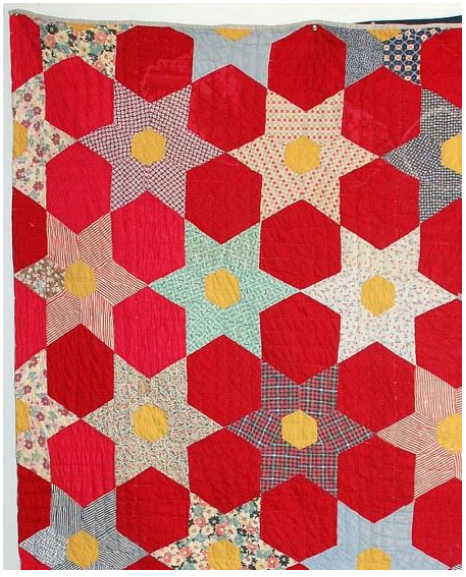
Yo-yo's are made by bringing the edges of a circular piece of cloth forward and toward the center, then stitching it to produce a texture medallion. Then these medallions are sewn together top, bottom and sides so the connecting stitches don't show.

Its owner said that the next quilt was an example of what you can buy, readily, at your local flea market.

BI6



Its owner said that he started as a Turkmen collector and so is a sucker for red. Details of BI6.



The quilting stitches in this piece are functional rather than decorative. Here is a close-up look at its back.

We don’t see many Chinese quilts but the next piece was one.

BI7

As you can see, it features day-glo colors of the sort that would make a natural dye aficionado cringe.

In the center of each of the compartments is a 3-D device sewn on and hanging out.

Here's what an authority on Chinese textiles said about it:

"It is typical of the type of work done in Shaanxi Province, notably the area around Xian, which is where it was probably purchased originally. I would guess that it is either contemporary or at most 25-30 years old. It may have been made as a baby or small child's quilt, or it could have been made to sell to the large number of tourists in the Xian area. The design is based on the "Five Poisons". These were 5 or more dangerous creatures shown together and meant to protect the wearer, especially during the holiday "Duanwu" or dragon boat festival which falls on the 5th day of the fifth lunar month. That would be around mid-July when illness and infection were most likely. You can find information on both the holiday and the 5 poisons in various sources including on-line.

"In the rondelles I can see the tiger (with wang on forehead) which, as the greatest protector, is usually shown somewhere with the five poisons. The five poisons themselves include frog or toad, scorpion, spider, lizard and snake. So all of them are represented either in the rondelle or in various squares on your quilt. As far as I can see, no cranes in the rondelles. The butterflies, deer and rabbits in the rondelle do symbolize longevity although in my opinion, that is not the main message on this piece, and I think in this context, it more likely that they were just decorative elements.

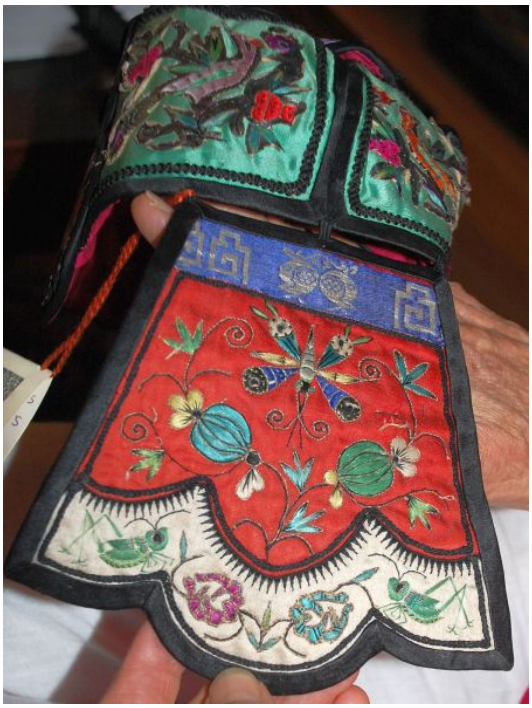
Details of BI7.

Amy Rispin had a Chinese child's hat that had quilt-related features. It is not actually quilted, but it is included because it is a wonderfully delicate example of applique which is featured in many quilt faces.

This is a tiger face child's hat with silk floss embroidery over metallic paper. The tiger, as we noted with the Chinese quilt above, is a Chinese symbol of great protection. This hat is estimated to the late Quig Dynasty (1643-1911).

BI18

During the Quig Dynasty, it was customary for a child to receive a special hat created by his mother or grandmother. This hat would have been worn on special occasions, such as, birthdays or holidays and was designed with two purposes in mind: to protect the child from evil spirits and to offer wishes for future success and a happy life.



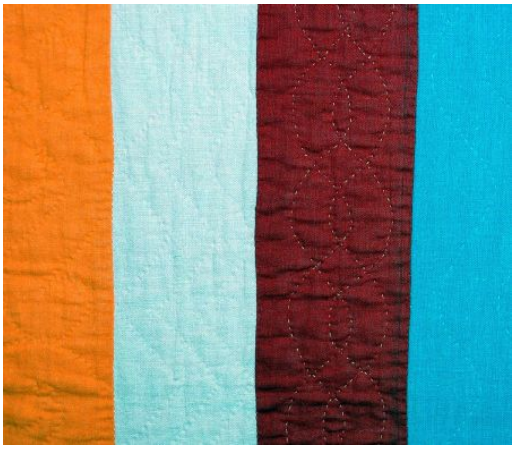
Embroidered by hand and covered with Chinese characters and emblems symbolic of all good things, a special hat like this made any child a little emperor or empress. Here are a few more details of it. Melons auger many children, and the crickets, high position.

With the pentultimate piece of the day, we returned to traditional quilts. This piece is called a "Joseph's coat" quilt, a Biblical reference. Joseph's coat was one of "many colors," and this quilt has them.

BI9

Amy Rispin said that she thinks it was made by the Amish. It was bought in southwest Ohio, near some Amish communities.

The quilting pattern used is not elaborate but is typical of Joseph's coat quilts.



The last quilt of the day was this one.

BI10

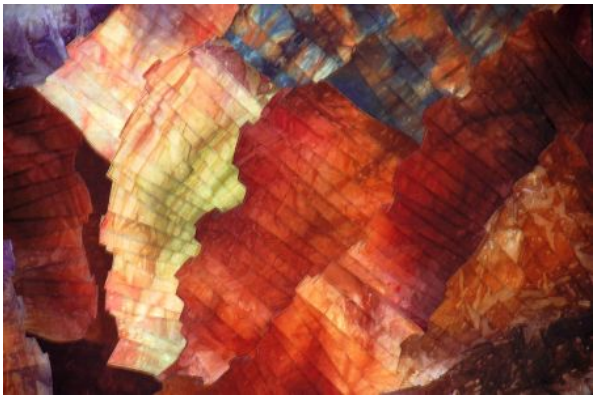
The owner said that this is in her series of canyon quilts, made using pleated fabric.

She further said "My inspiration often comes from nature, or from the materials with which I work. The fabrics I collect allow me to work intuitively, letting them inspire me to create new designs and images.

"My recent series is also inspired by the the rocks and canyons of the American southwest and other natural images, such as the rocky coast of Maine.

"My current technique involves cutting curvy strips from hand dyed fabrics, pleating them and using them to create a collage which is then quilted."

Details of BI10.



Amy answered questions, and brought her session to a close.

There was a lot of material to get your hands on.

I want to thank Amy, Bobbie and Floris for giving me permission to fashion this virtual version of their program and for their considerable assistance in doing so.

Hope you've enjoyed this eclectic look at quilts.

Regards,

R. John Howe[3]

[3] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2016/08/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

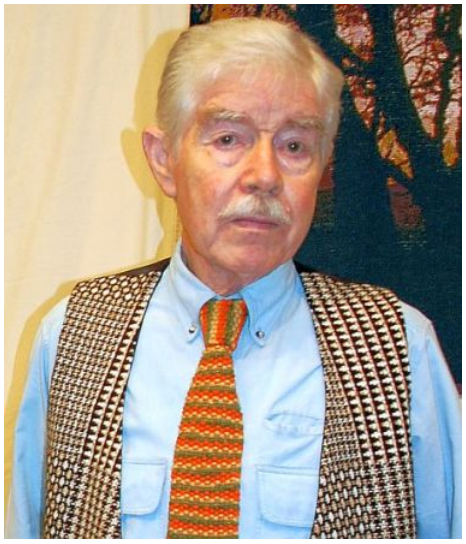
Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for August, 2016

Alan Donaldson on "The Natural Idea"

Posted in Uncategorized on August 14, 2016 by rjohn

On June 18, 2016, Alan Donaldson, gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program entitled "The Natural Idea."



Alan is a retired professor of Textile Design at the North Carolina State University. His early training in textiles was in Scotland. He then worked in the textile industry in the U.S. He is a skilled photographer and a weaver who works with both traditional hand looms and electronic Jaquards. He has had a wide experience in a number of fields related to his textile design work too extensive to detail here (for example, he was a resource for a while to the Xerox Corporation).

(Note: You will be able to see larger images of those in this post by clicking three times on them and are encouraged to do so.)

Alan began:

Throughout the history of product decoration, images from nature have been used more than any other source of pattern and design.

This is especially true in the world of textiles – whether it be pictorial or in textural form, as is seen in the 400 year-old Jacobean fabric below.

I am going to present you with a series of nature photographs I have taken. In each case, I will also show you a textile I have woven that was inspired by a given photograph.

Here is the first pair and example.

On the right below is an image of some flower heads. On the left is a fabric of silk, wool and Reindeer hair, that is modeled after them.

Here are a closer image of the flower heads(left), and, below, the unusual fabric of fabric of silk, wool and Reindeer hair. The properties of these three materials work to let the fabric simulate the flowers(right).

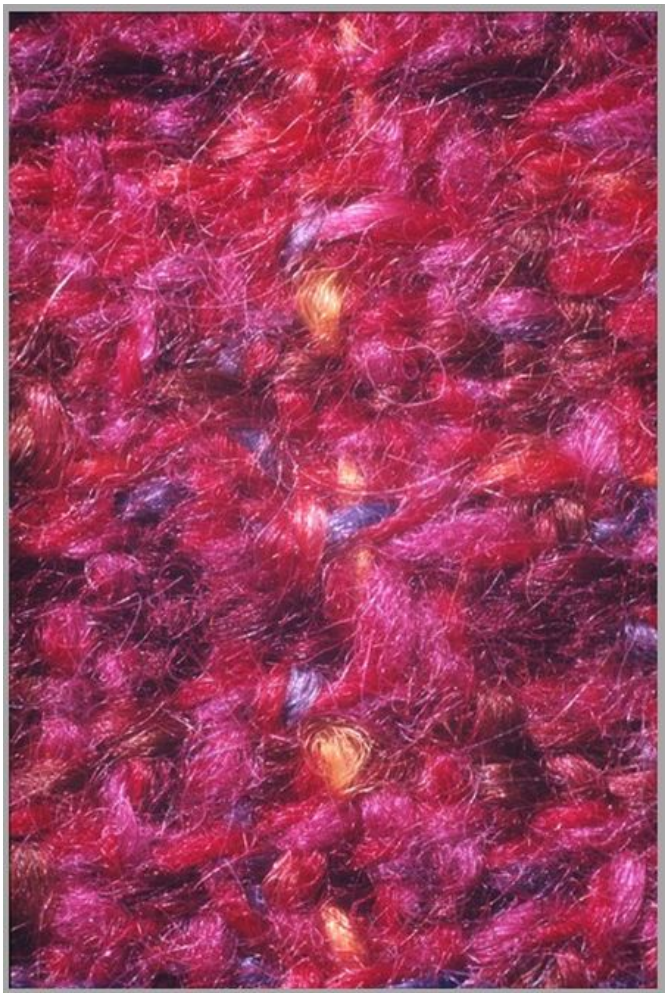
Here is the next example. The Fuchsia heads on the left were the inspiration for the fabric on the right.

Here are larger images of this comparison.

The next example asks you to work a bit. What is the "secret, hidden" element in this photo that gives it life? (click three times on this image to get a larger version)

Give up? I think it is the small vertical highlight shown in the blown-up image below (start at the bottom).

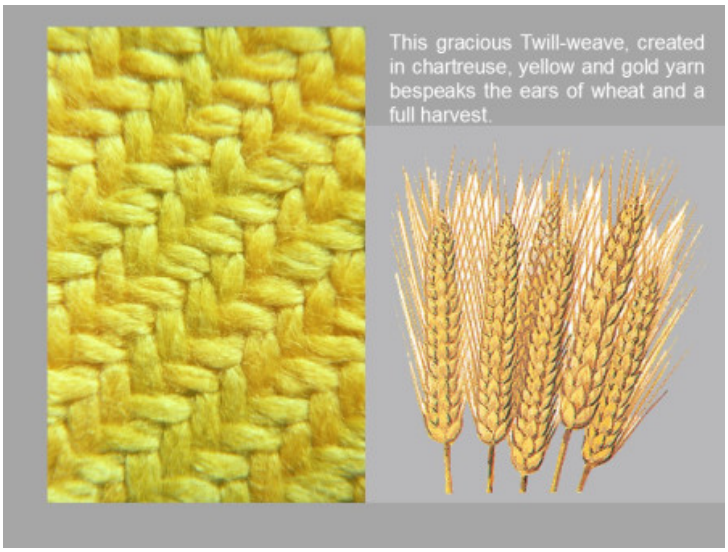
I felt that this feature of this photograph was critical and so worked it into the fabric of my woven piece.



Alan took us into his next comparison.

The inspiring nature photo is of a ripe wheat field, near Whitekirk Church, in East Lothian, Scotland – full of rhythm, and repetition of shape and color.

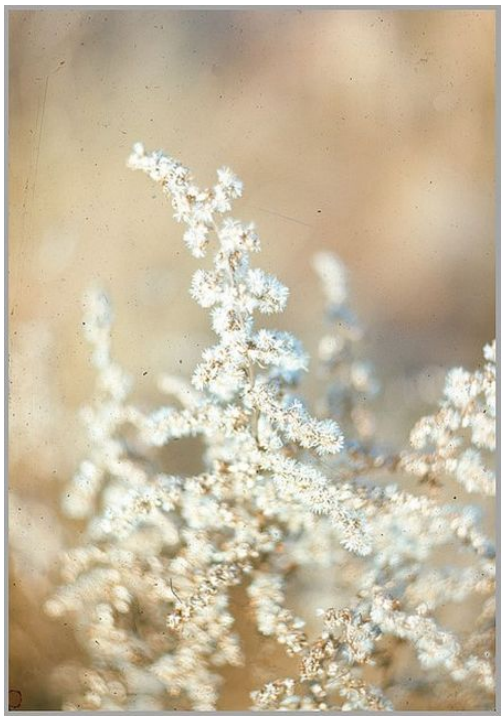
And, below is the woven permutation.

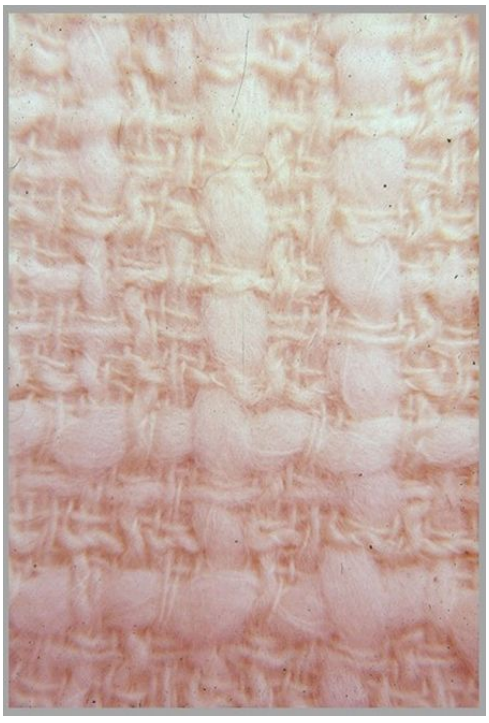


A larger image of the twill.

Next, a simple wayside weed that inspired the fabric for a wedding dress.

Below are larger images of the weed and the wedding dress fabric.





Even the humble Goldenrod, below, metamorphoses into this shimmering silk.

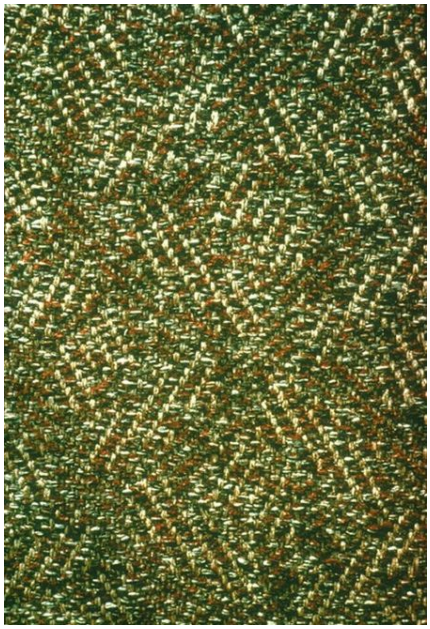
Sometimes words are not much needed.

Again, two inspiring photos of Thistledown.

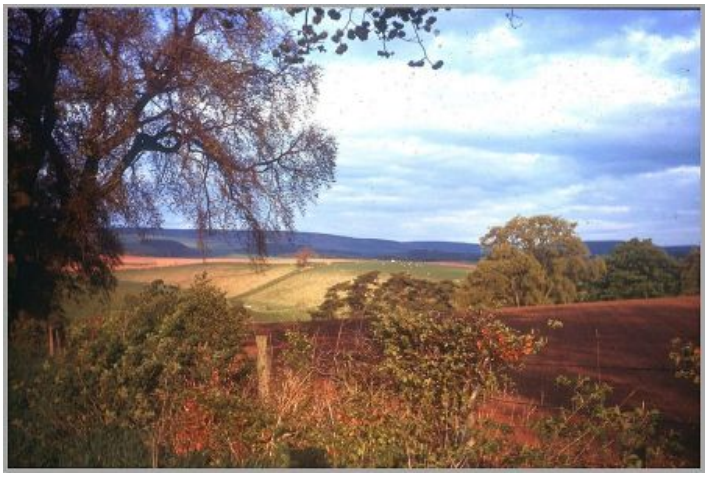
And a resulting pile fabric.

This close-up shot of a budding Maple, reminded me so much of Velvet.

Larger inspiring image and the resulting favorite textile.



"Seasons of Mists and Mellow Fruitfulness…" (Keats)



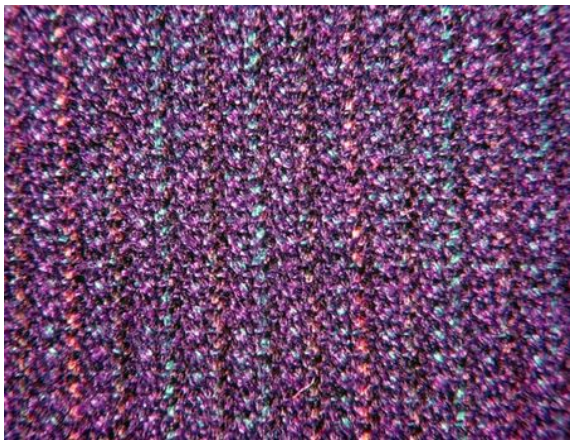
But, can anything really best the ultra-spectacular New England fall?

Weaving inspired by these images. First "Autumn Glory" (House of Alain LaLonde, Paris)

A New England ‘study.’

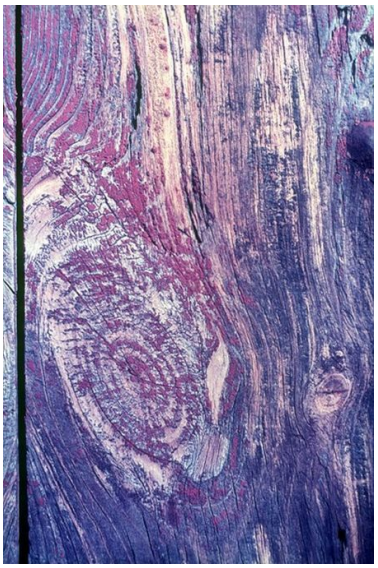
Below, “Spanish Mosaic” my professional tour-de-force, in 100% pure lana virgen.

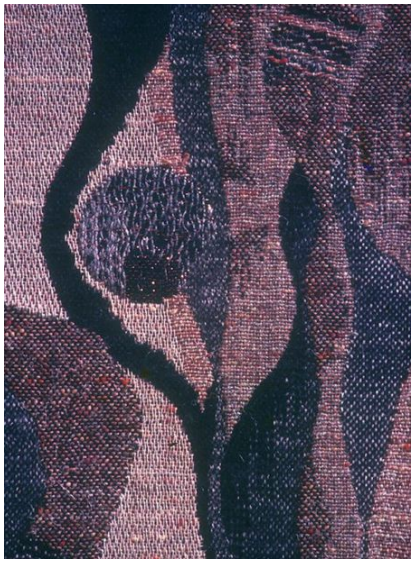
Floral source, interpreted for a high-class men’s suiting fabric.



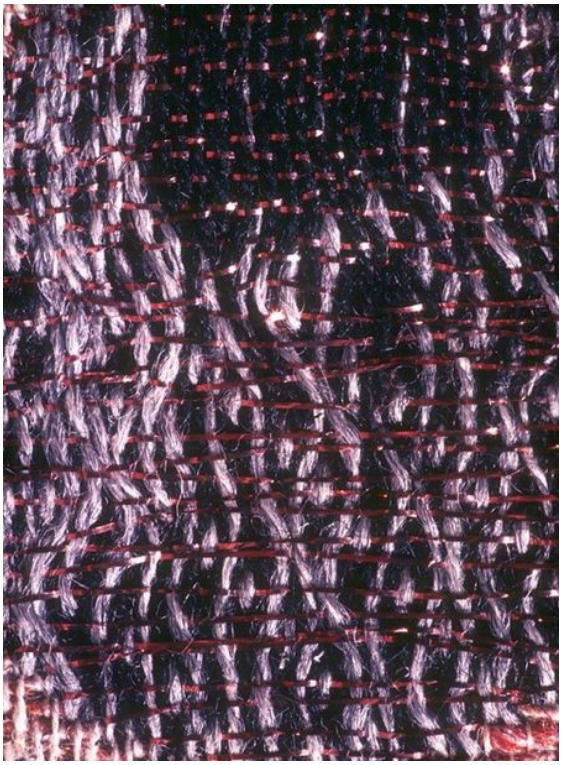
The brilliant colors, up-close, fade to rich, blue-grey from a distance.

A knot in an old door in the image below inspires this Jacquard textile.





A close look at this Jacquard fabric.



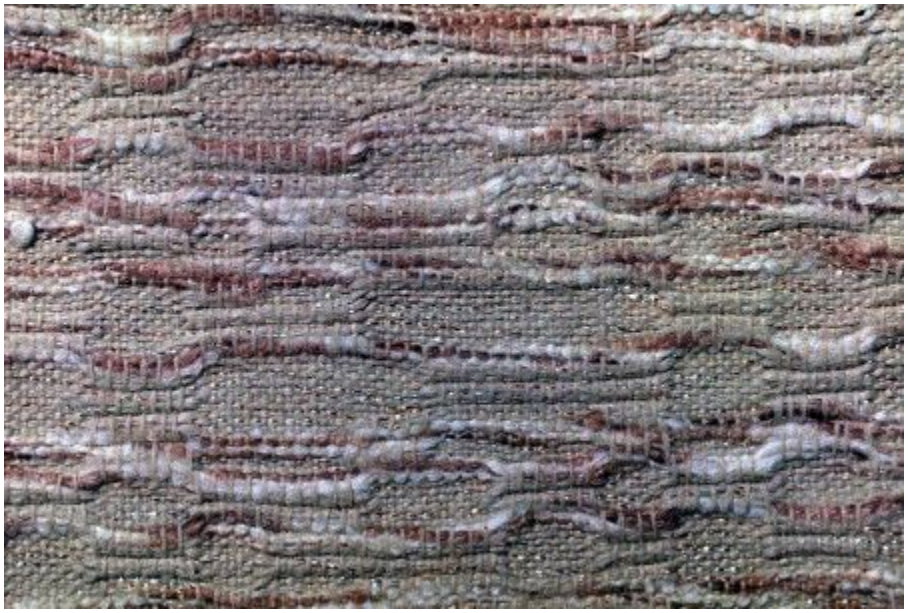
Sometimes, I've been attracted to pictorial renditions of inspiring nature photographs.

This is photo I've entitled "The Red Hot Tree." It is one I took in East Lothian, Scotland in November, 1964.

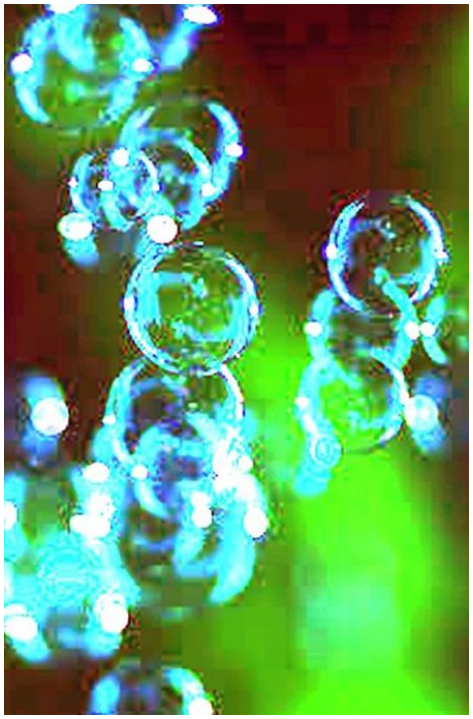
And this is my Jacquard representation of this same scene.

Here are three photos of restless water, ever flowing, constantly moving, finding its destiny.

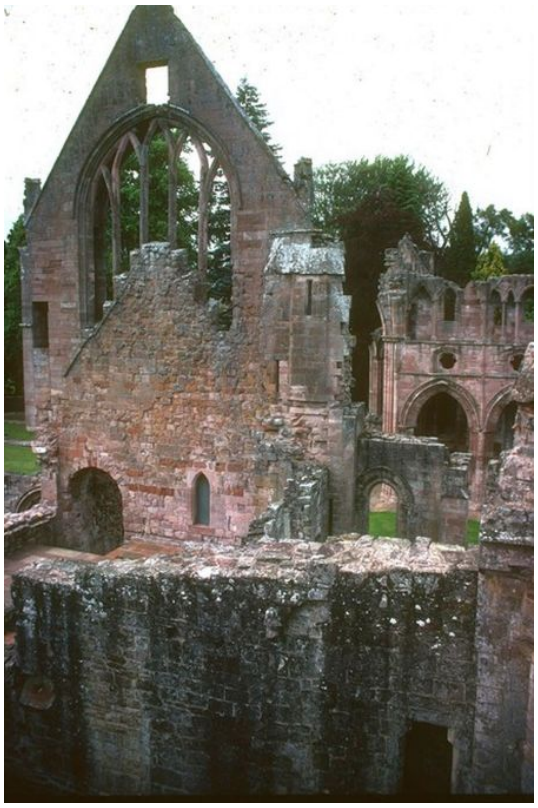
And this is a textile such images inspired.



Photos of bubbles, Mighty-Fine! And here is a textile they inspired, chosen for a cover in December, 1971.

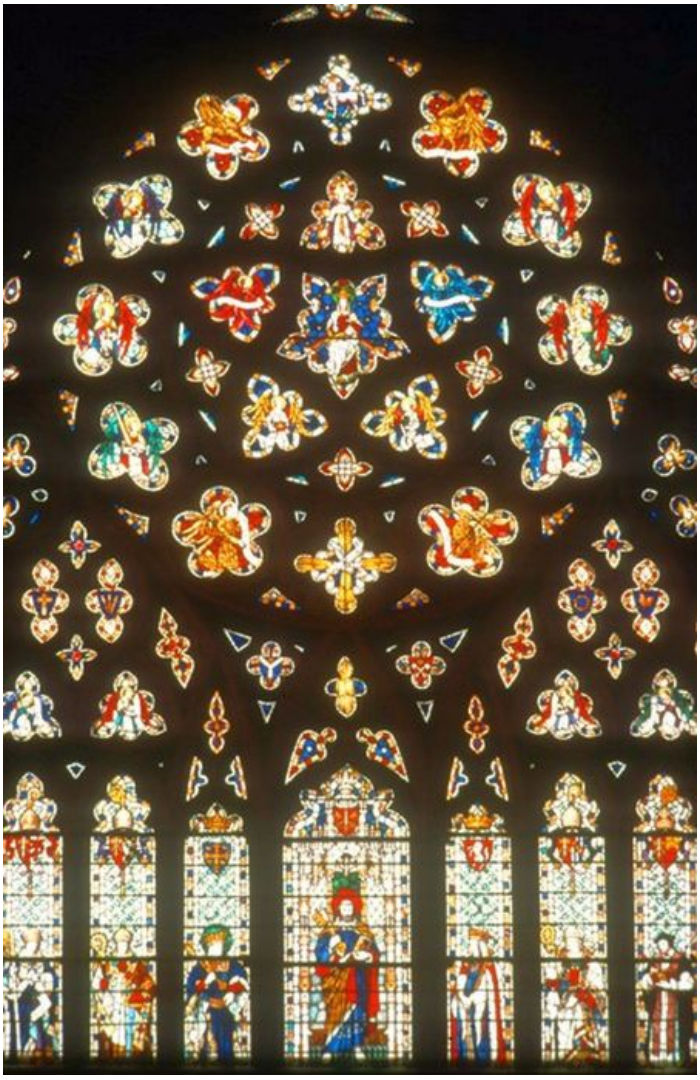


There are a lot of old castles “Over There.”



This one got me weaving.

Of Castles and Cathedrals!

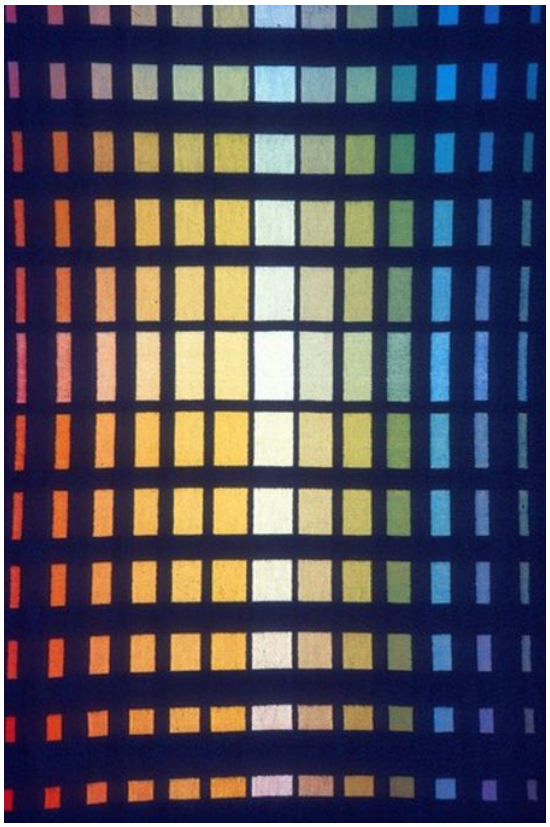


Close-up (below) of a high-class men’s suiting fabric interpreted from the great stained glass window (above) in Exeter Cathedral, England.

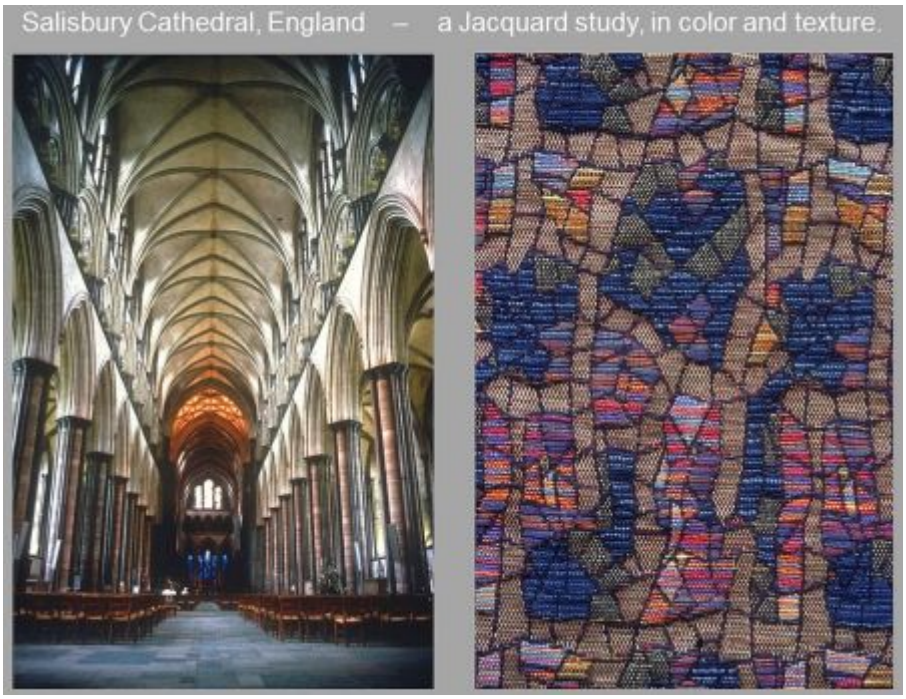
(c.f. Reid & Taylor, Langholm, Scotland)

But there is also Mother Nature’s unbelievable stained glass window!

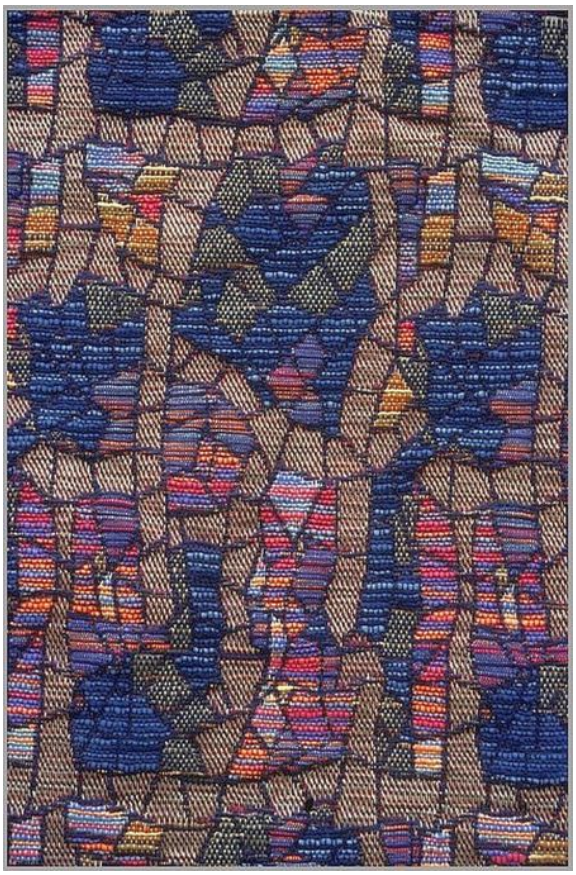
That inspired my own compartment-ed textile version.



I’ve done it more than once.



Larger image of the Jacquard.

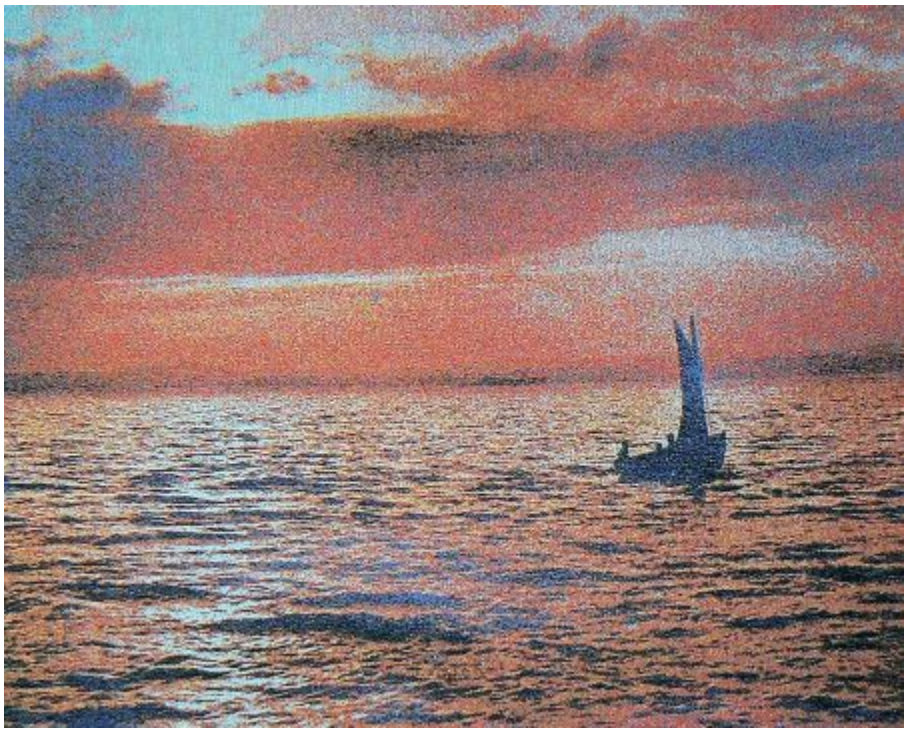


At the going down of the sun . . . .

The sun takes a long time to go down in these northern climes…

The old photograph, below, was in the house where I was born and is here, still.

And here is my recent Jacquard interpretation.



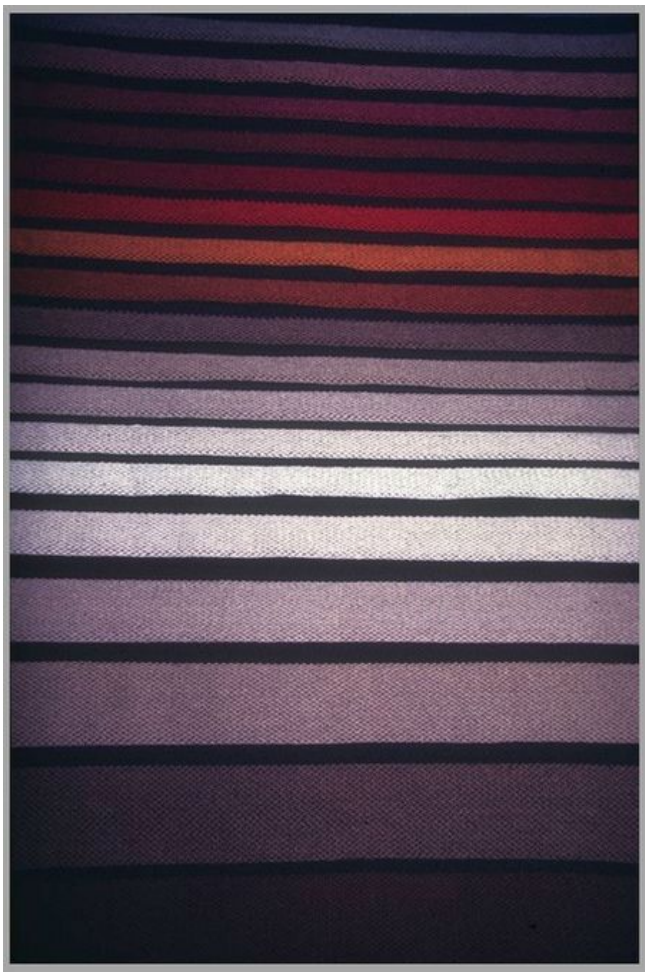
The sun is still sinking in the western sky,

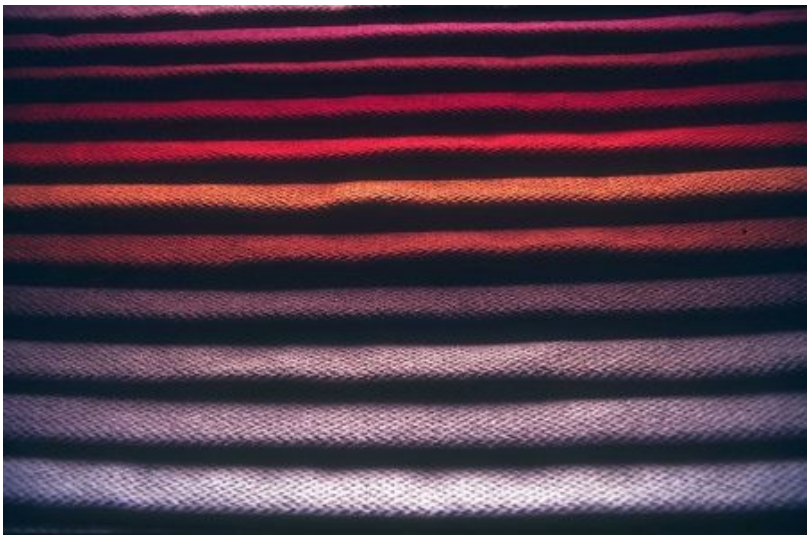
but gives plenty of time for contemplation and new ideas.

JOY

Created for the 150th anniversary of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, 1974

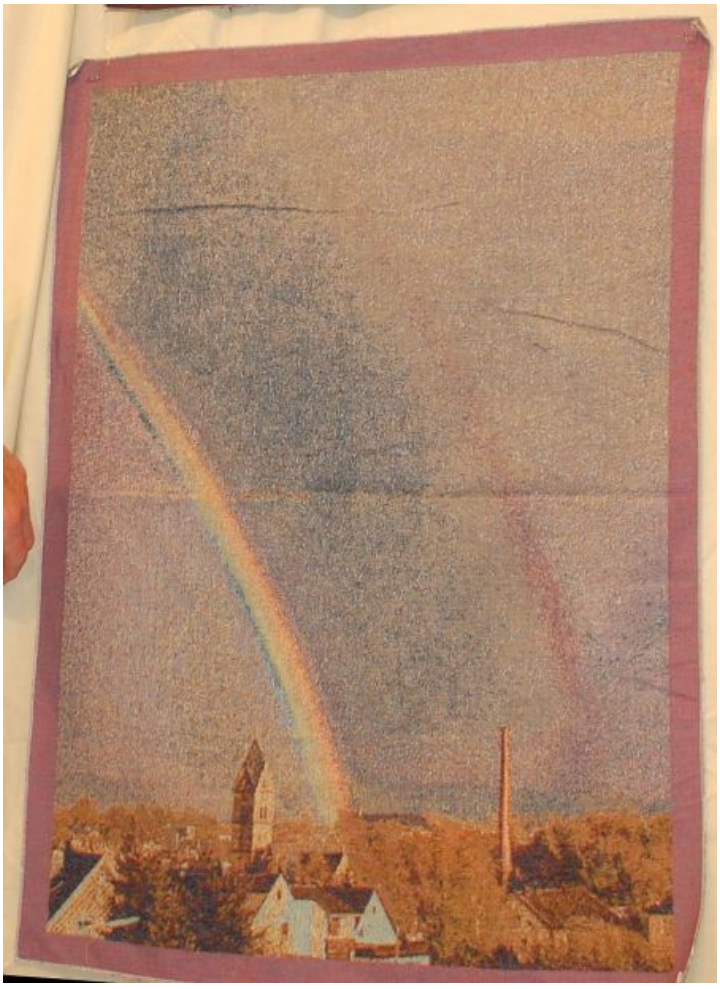
Here, I'm watching the ripples at the water's edge, looking for yet another fabric challenge….to interpret these soothing, ebbing, overlapping wavelets in the dying sunlight that is almost gone.





This was the end of Alan's lecture, but he had brought a number of pieces he had woven into the room. Let's look at a few of them.

This is one of Alan’s pictorial textiles from the image above.

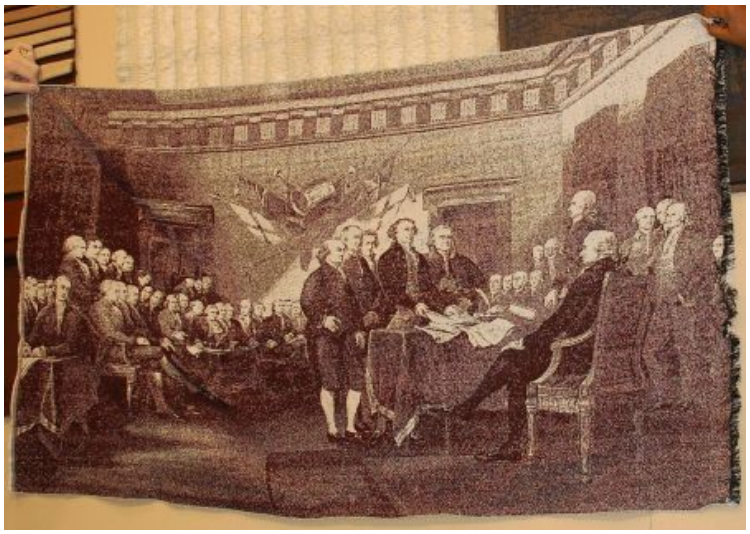


Next was a pictorial textile that seems nearly a photograph.

You've seen some of these fabrics during the lecture, but they are worth seeing again.

The pictorial Jacquard weaving, below, that was the last piece Alan showed, is really for another session.

Let me say here, only, that it is Alan's version of an astounding silk textile that was woven on the basis of a famous painting and etching of the signing of the American Declaration of Independence.



You will only be able to appreciate what an achievement it and the original, were and are, when we tell the whole story, something we'll try to do in another post.

As we were setting up before Alan's lecture, I asked him whether he had woven the material from which his vest was made.

He confessed that it was one of his fabrics and that his tie had been knitted by his wife, Betty.

I want to thank Alan for bringing us this presentation that gives us a look at both his accomplished photography and the impressive textiles they have inspired. Thanks, also, for his permission to fashion this virtual version of his program and for his editing of it.

I hope you have enjoyed this look at the work of a skilled photographer, textile designer and weaver.

Regards,

R. John Howe[4]

[4] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2016/08/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for August, 2016

Mike Tschebull on Zeikhur Caucasian Rugs

Posted in Uncategorized on August 24, 2016 by rjohn

On April 9, 2016, "Mike" Tschebull gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program on Zeikhur Caucasian rugs, here at The Textile Museum, in Washington, D.C.

Mike, many readers will know, is a long-time student of Caucasian weaving.

His early classic "Kazak" exhibition catalog is still referenced usefully. He has written for what was once the Oriental Rug Review and has written, early, and on a continuing basis, for Hali.

He has been active in the New England Rug Society and in 2004 curated an exhibition on transport and storage bags, entitled "To Have and To Hold." (see link at the end of this post).

Mike has lectured to a number of textile groups and at conferences, here and abroad, and has previously given a number of Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning programs here at the TM (again see links at the end).

Here is the description of Mike's session in the Textile Museum announcement:

"Zeikhur" rugs from the NE Transcaucasus have a very distinctive structure, plus complex and varied designs – taken from embroideries, other textiles, tiles, and large carpet designs. Zeikhur indicators include a blue and ivory "running dog" border and tone-on-tone reds. Sumak Zeikhurs are fairly common. Slit-tapestry weaves and bags are not easy to identify.

Mike's program consisted of a short lecture and then a number of rugs in the Zeikhur group that we had arranged to have brought in.

Here is his lecture.

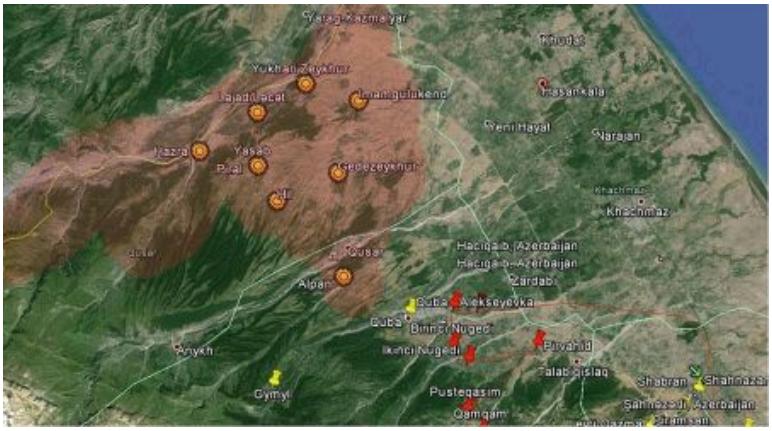
Mike started with this map.

Slide 2: The Zeikhur weaving area is in the foothills of the Caucasus mountain chain, about 30 km north of the city of Quba, at an altitude where livestock raising would have been common. See the map detail in slide 3, colored in tan. The best known villages in the weaving area are Zeikhur and Alpan, but there were several others. The weaving area is spelled in English variously as Zeikhur and Zeykhur, but not "Seychour" or some version of that. The latter spelling is a German transliteration of the Turkic name. Old rugs from nearby Quba are a bit different, separated from Zeikhurs in time and space, which would not have been unusual in an era when transportation would have been by mule or donkey, and 30 km over rough paths and ravines would have taken a long time.

Here is a closer look at the map on the left (click image two or three times to get an even larger version)

The red and blue arrows in Slide 2 right point to the area of interest and Slide 3 gives a closer detail (click on all of these images to get somewhat larger versions).

And here is a detail that makes the specific areas of interest visible and readable.



Slide 3: The map and village locations are from a friend in Baku, whose local knowledge is very much appreciated.

Ed: In our treatment of the following rugs, we will begin with two rugs shown side by side. This permits direct comparison. Click two or three times on these two-rug slides to get a somewhat larger image.

Larger versions of the two rug shown in the two-rug comparisons are also repeated below it for ease of viewing.

Slide 4: Reviewing three of the most interesting Zeikhur field patterns and their origins, the first is fairly easy to unravel.

It is a vase design derived from an Indo-Persian tradition, probably brought to the Transcaucasus from India by about 1800 via printed, painted and resist dyed cotton textiles like the example, right, that were imported into Baku.

The Zeichur rug, left, with a bisymmetrical design, has a woven date which is the equivalent of 1860. The rug is a good dated example of how high the quality of dyes was when it was woven.

Here is a somewhat larger image of Slide 4 left.

Slide 4 right: Textile catalogued as from Burhanpor. Note that the highly stylized floral arrangement in the rug approximates that in the textile.

Slide 5: The second Zeikhur field pattern, sometimes called the “Bijov”, probably a Russian corruption of the name of a nearby village called Bijo, has a long complex history.

The ascending design of three columns of palmettes with clasping leaves in the Zeikhur rug, left, seems to have started out on a group of 16th century Ottoman silk and metal thread textiles, sometimes used for kaftans.

The Ottoman design is fairly clearly tulip flowers with clasping leaves, all within an ogival lattice. In later versions, the lattice can fall away.

Slide 6: Left, a Bijov Zeikhur with a border made up of rose forms, likely either due to Qajar or Russian influence.

Right, Ottoman kaftan back with tulip form, now palmette-like and the clasping leaves much larger. No more lattice. Stylization is not always linear.

Slide 7: Zeikhur Bijov rug, left.

Anatolian pile rug, right, probably 18th century, with exaggerated clasping leaves and palmettes on stems. An example of further stylization, probably in a village context.

Slide 7 Right: The single column of ornaments fits well in a small format when the weaving technique is coarse. May be a yastic.

Slide 8: Zeikhur Bijov, left, Anatolian pile rug, right, probably 18th-19th century.

In the right hand example, the single column design from previous slides has morphed into a three column repeat, at least in part because of the larger format. The clasping leaves are further stylized. A stiff version of the Ottoman textile lattice has reappeared.

The basic three column version of this design for pile rugs has been established.

Slide 9: Left, a “Shirvan” rug, 19th century, with a field design based on “Bijov”, but a bit different.

Right, partial view, Zeikhur Bijov.

The same village rug designs were interpreted differently in different parts of the Transcaucasus.

Slide 10. Another version of the Ottoman original.

Detail from a Shirvan “shield” rug, left, probably 19th century. The “shields” are pretty clearly a stop on a path of continued stylization of the tulip design. Clasping leaves are almost unrecognizable.

Right, the same design, probably late 19th century, photographed in a mosque in Zakatal, in the NE Transcaucasus.

Slide 11: Inwoven dates: left, 1202/1787, the earliest dated Zeikhur Bijov (see top of the larger Slide 11 left image below). But is the date accurate? It doesn't look like it has been fiddled with, but the rug could easily have been woven at a later date.

Right, Bijov palmette detail with date, 1297/1879 plus an unreadable inscription. From dated examples, it is clear that some real good rugs and kilims were woven late, but generally, earlier times meant better weavings, especially when dye use/color sensitivity is considered.

Slide 12: The third Zeikhur field design of interest is based on a tile design, probably originally unglazed floor tiles, as in the right hand slide (two large images below).

The orientation of the slide helps make clear the comparison of the long hexagonal tiles to the diagonal cartouches in the rug, left; the repeat medallions in the rug are represented by the diamond-shaped tiles.

Slide 12 right

Slide 13: The tile design is to be seen in Isfahan, on vertical columns. But is picked up in the Transcaucasus on silk embroideries, see right hand example.

All the rug elements are present in the embroideries, just that the rugs have more straight lines, reflecting structural limitations. The claw-like elements on the ends of the diagonal cartouches are more complex and curvy in the embroidery.

Zeikhur rugs and the embroideries were likely produced in the same region, and probably had some time overlap, but the embroideries are generally considered to have been earlier.

Slide 13 left: This fragmented rug has a bottom border sewn on, which was taken from a later piece with some synthetic dyes; the rug has less disciplined drawing than the previous example. This may reflect age, or maybe not.

Slide 13 right: Sinuous lines are made possible in fine embroidery.

Slide 14: Tile design Zeikhurs rarely have multiple columns of ornaments. This old somewhat battered example on the left, is Transcaucasian, or from NW Iran.

It apes a slightly different embroidery style on the right.

Slide 15: Zeikhur weavers also produced floral and sometimes quite abstract designs, on the left, probably at first for a Russian market.

Stylized roses on the right were a favorite.

Slide 16: The reasonably reliable identifier for Zeikhur weaving is the pair of borders, left, especially the two-toned inner one. It seems likely that border conventions changed over time.

The inner border concept may be derived from the type of rug seen, right.

Slide 17: There are contemporary versions of old rugs, like this Bijov, woven in the Caucasus with handspun local wool and natural dyes.

They are based on existing rugs. Is a good reproduction as interesting as an original?

It depends on the buyer.

(This is the end of Mike’s illustrated lecture.)

We had arranged for a number of rugs in the Zeikhur group to be brought in and Mike moved to treat them next.

(Identifying numbers are not always consecutive)

BI1

Comment on BI1: Zeikhur cross design rug, meant to be a repeat design. Charlie Ellis thought the design was Ukrainian in origin. The floral borders are not traditional, probably as a result of export market demand.

Details of BI1:

BI2

Comment on BI2: Cross design with traditional borders. Sometimes these rugs have ivory fields.

Details of BI2:

BI3

Comment on BI3: An unusual cross design rug with end borders with different background color.

Details of BI3:

BI4: The lion may be European origin, but also exists in ME art.

Comment on BI4: A short vase design rug. It looks almost like a sampler. Details of BI4.

BI5

Comment on BI5: An unusual field design for a Zeikhur. The border on green is rare and quite sophisticated.

Details of BI15:

BI6

Comment on BI6: Standard Zeikhur borders, but with unusual dark wool warps and dense structure. Field design is taken from a class of Transcaucasian kilims. Details of BI6.

BI6

Comments on BI6: Palmette design on dark brown, which is almost all corroded away. The field design is taken from large carpets, but simplified.

Details of BI6:

BI7 Finishes are intact, colored pile is unworn, which shows the power of dark brown dye corrosion.

Comments on BI7: Treated in lecture above.

Details of BI7:

BI8

Comment on BI8: Treated in lecture above.

Details of BI8:

B19

Comment on BI9: Apparent older tile design rug with design elements looking closer in style to embroideries, but old style does not always mean the rug is older.

Details of BI9.

Note partial intact end finish

BI10

Comment on BI10: Zeikhur tile design with palmettes introduced. These weavers could often could innovate.

Details of BI10.

BI1

Comment on BI11: Fragment of a tile design rug, with strong color but one synthetic, which helps date it. Details on B11.

BI14

Comment on BI14: Fragment of a European inspired field design, but with some local design input.

Details of BI14.

Comments on BI15: Zeikhur-like rug with sumak bag-derived field design. Details of BI15.

BI16

Comment on BI16: European market design called “French Rose” in translation. Reflects market demand for these weavers.

Details of BI16:

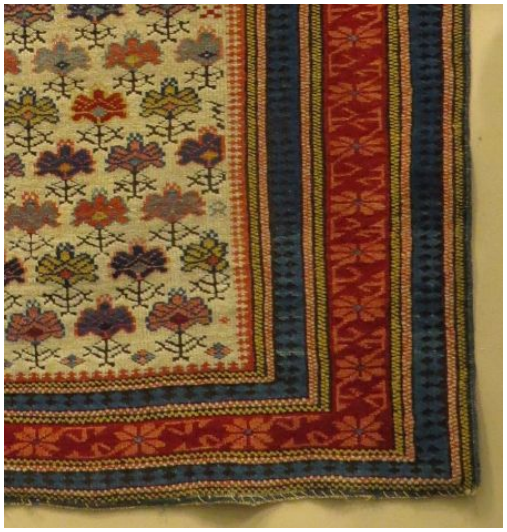
BI17

Comments on BI17: May be a Zeikhur, with an unusual field design. Details on BI17.

BI18

Comment on BI18: Typical Quba with mini ascending palmettes. Joe McMullan had a similar rug in his collection that is dated the equivalent of 1856.

Details.

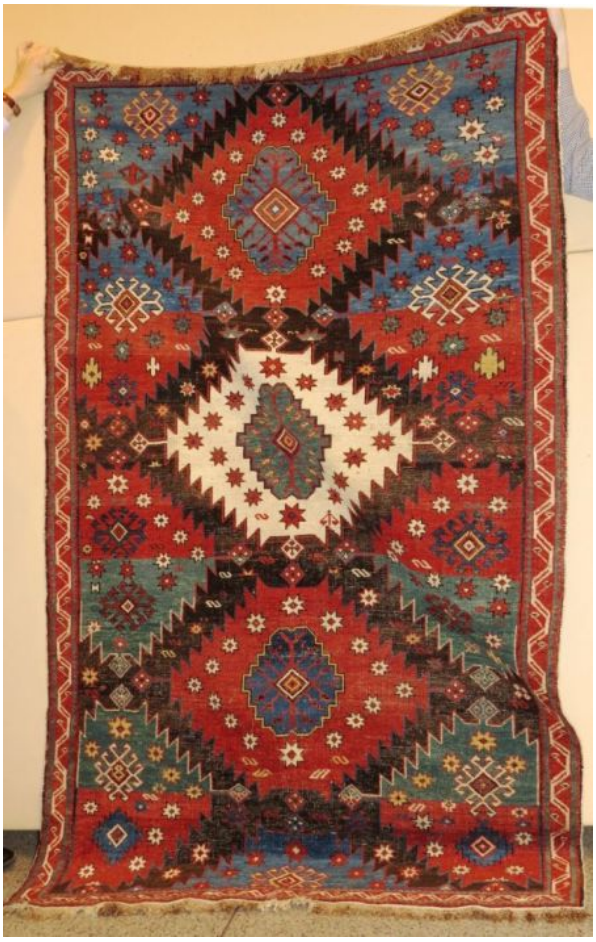


BI19

Comment on BI19: Zeikhur cross rug. This was a very popular style in this weaving area.

Details of BI19.

BI20



Comment on BI20: Diamond-shaped forms. May be from a bit further north than Zeikhur.

Details on BI20.

BI21

Comment on BI21: Bijov in a short format. A very stable design, surprising because it is so complex.

Details on BI21.

BI22

Comment on B22: Another Zeikhur rug design that can be traced clearly to an embroidery pattern.

Details of B22.

A last rug was a little off-topic, but too good not to treat.

BI12

Comment on BI12: Terrific Persian Herati design Shirvan. Note that the border varies from the original Persian workshop model. Probably this rug was woven under controlled conditions.

Details of BI12.

Mike took questions and adjourned his program. The usual movement to the front of the room began.

Mike has been interested in and investigating Zeikhur rugs for a long time. He wrote a very substantial article on them in 1992 in Hali, 62, pp. 84-95. It's worth looking at.

At the beginning, I also mentioned Mike's curating of a New England Rug Society exhibition "To Have and to Hold." You can enjoy an on-line version of this exhibition using this link: http://ne-rugsociety.org/gallery/bags/index.htm

I want to thank Mike for designing and presenting this program, and for considerable subsequent work in preparing this virtual version. Thanks also to Jim and Connie Henderson. Jim took and provided me with many photos, and Connie took notes.

I hope you have enjoyed this authoritative look at this interesting group of quality Caucasian rugs.

Regards,

R. John Howe[5]

[5] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2016/08/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for September, 2016

Jaina Mishra on Kutch Embroideries

Posted in Uncategorized on September 11, 2016 by rjohn

On June 4, 2016, Jaina Mishra gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program here at the Textile Museum in Washington, DC, on "Wedding Embroideries of Kutch."

In the 1990s Jaina began to collect the "souls" of vanishing cultures embedded in the traditional arts. There are three streams of her work. First she is a collector, a consultant, and curator. She is also a skilled photographer, and she writes and lectures on these cultures. Her web site: WovenSouls.com is an entry to her work.

She began her program on Kutch wedding embroderies.

Good morning,

I am going to talk about the textiles of the salt desert region of Kutch. I will treat these textiles through the cultural paradigm from which they emerge.

In Kutch, the geography has played an important role in shaping the social structure. The people are migrants and the history of their migrations has influenced their life-style.

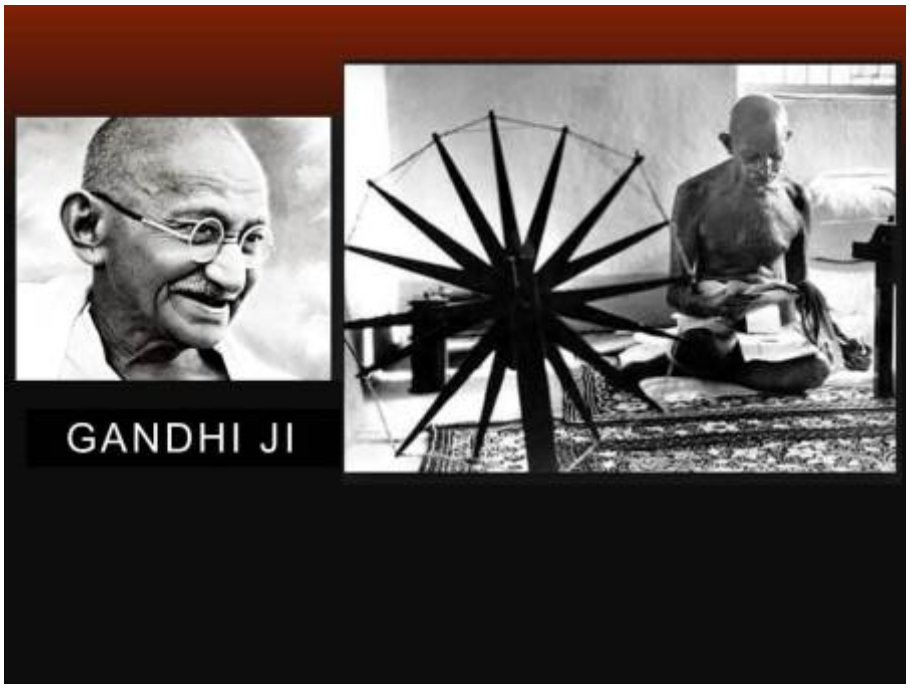
Let's look at this cultural background before proceeding to examine their textiles.

I am going to focus, particularly, on the Rabaris, who are nomadic herders who live scattered throughout the western Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

It is said that the Rabaris originate from the Kachhi region of Baluchistan.

One source of this alleged connection is that one of the goddesses they worship. "Hanglaj" has a major temple in East Baluchistan and before the partition of India, Rabari elders made pilgrimages to Hinglaj at least once in their lifetimes.

The brown area in the map above indicates the location of the state of Gujarat.



Some famous people hail from Gugarat. Gandhi and the newly elected Prime Mininster of India, Modi, and even some not-so-famous people, like myself, are from Gujarat. Gujarat is the home to several tribes, some of Gypsy origin, but, as I've indicated, I'll treat only the Rabaris of the Kutch.

The upper jaw of Gujarat (red) is largely a salt desert.

Let’s look at some Rabari people and their social context.

Below are pictures I took in 2007.

This is a Rabari woman carrying water to her home.

Here are two other Rabari women. They are going to their temporary home in a field where they are parked for a fortnight.

The economic model the Rabaris migrants follow is interesting. Because they are constantly moving, it is to their advantage to have only things they need.

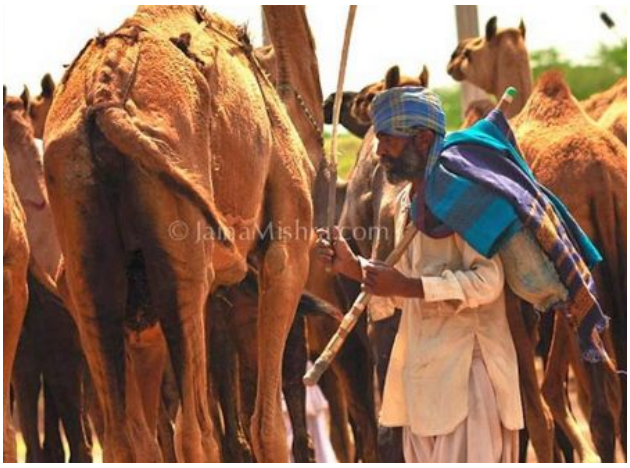
Below is a bare Rabari home (a simple tent), with meagre belongings.

The perspective of these people is that the more things one owns, the less freedom one has.

It is as if our possessions become “Gulliver’s pegs” and tie us down.

There is truth to that.

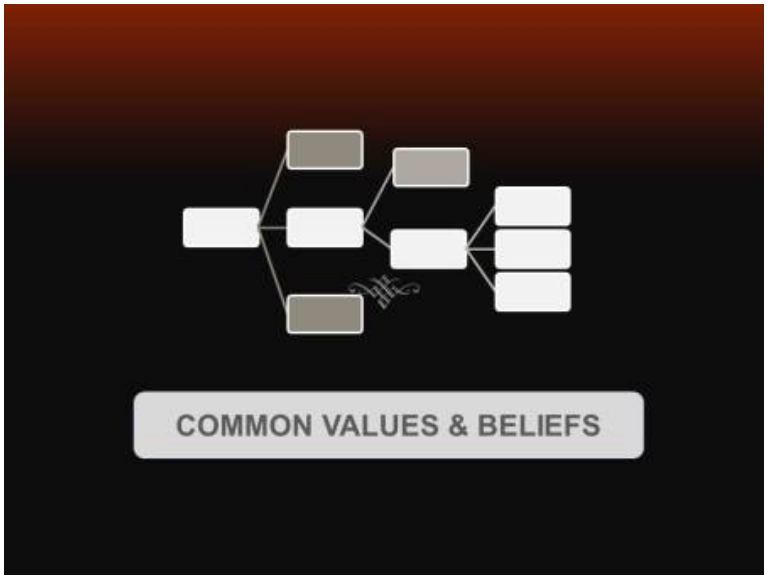
The Rabaris are expert camel breeders, cattle herders and shepherds. They are said to have introduced camels to the subcontinent.



Rabaris trace their ancestry to the Lord Shiva. They are Hindu and devout worshipers of the Mother Goddesses.

Rabaris also have connection to the Rajput warriors of Rajasthan through marriage. This establishes their position in the caste hierarchy through their association with the second rung of the pecking order.

Periodically a given Rabari community grows too large for the environment in which it lives, even with migration, to sustain it. The group divides and part of it migrates to a new region. As a result of this periodic division there are many subgroups of Rabari.



While many of the lifestyle elements differ from one Rabari subgroup to another, they still all retain a common set of Rabari values and beliefs that over-ride all other differences.

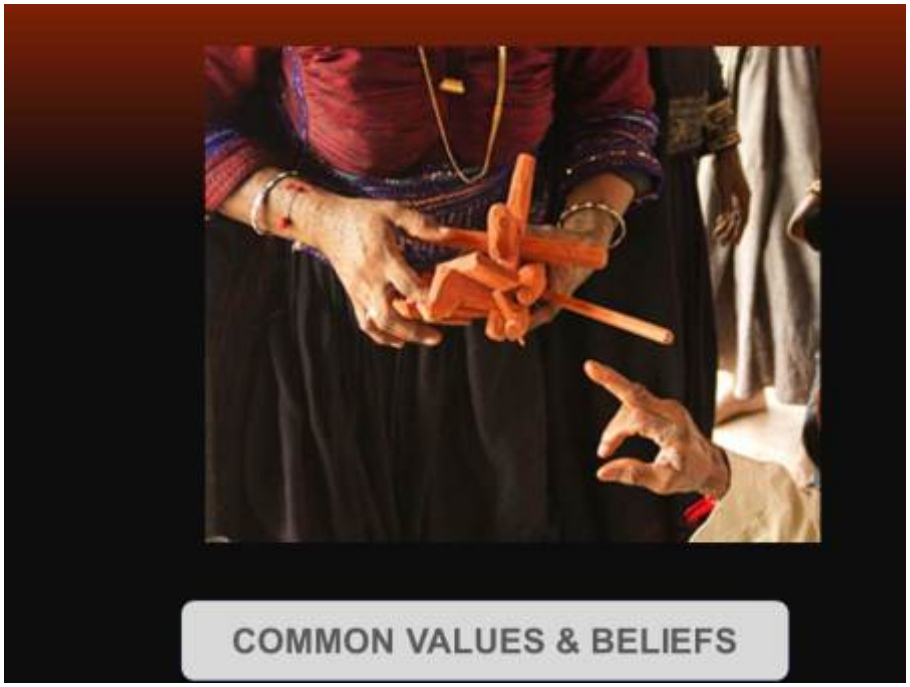
Rabaris have a strong sense of Rabari identity and belief that is the most important aspect of their lives.

When many non-Rabari strangers meet they introduce themselves as "I am from village X or city Y," but Rabaris introduce themselves by saying "I am Rabari."

(ed. This strong sense of identity as a Rabari is a remarkable thing. It contrasts with the sense of identity in some Central Asian tribes. For example, one large Turkman tribe has, historically, been called the "Ersari," but none of them would say "I am Ersari." Instead their identity is tied most strongly to a subgroup of the "Ersari" tribe.)

Within the Rabari group, identity is defined by genealogical origin and expressed as “Shahkh” (or branch) and “Atak” (or surname).

All Rabaris determine marriage rules and allowable marital alliances based on genealogy.



There is a strict code of social behavior among Rabari community members, bonded by the belief that they are descendants of Lord Shiva.

We are going to treat wedding textiles, but first let's look at the Rabari concept of weddings and marriages, which is quite different from that in much of the modern world.

These concepts can seem strange to us, as outsiders. But we must realize that our constructs seem equally strange to them.

In a society of scarcity, as opposed to one of abundance, it is necessary to utilize scarce resources to full capacity.

So in poorer countries, such as the India of the past, resources that require heavy investments of time or money, such as living quarters, child rearing, etc. are shared within an "extended family."

These extended or joint families include several generations: grandparents, parents and children, all living under one "roof."

The functions that must be performed are divided among the generations of the extended family by tradition.

The grandparents mind the children. The middle-aged women mind the processes of managing domestic finances and inventory. The younger married women manage the "kitchen," domestic finances and inventory. The men of all ages go out and earn an income (primarily by working with the livestock). So while all the women have had some tasks assigned to them in their traditional roles, this traditional division of labor provided enough free time for them to invest in the considerable work required for their embroidery.

Now this division of labor was most strongly observed in the past. Nowadays, it is more loosely defined and does not apply to every household. And it is changing rapidly as people move to larger cities for work in nuclear units. The gradual breakdown of the traditional division of labor will impact the creation of Kutch embroidery such as that we are treating here.

For such an arrangement to work, the selection, training and assimilation of a new incumbent – the bride – was critical. Her entry into the extended family was critical to the continued smooth functioning of such a collaborative organization within the home.

So marriages were arranged.

The families selected the bride/groom based on commonalities of lifestyle: religious beliefs, food habits, etc, so that the amalgamation results in the least possible friction for all concerned.

So when a young man or woman comes of age, proposals come to the parents from various relatives and clan members through common connections.

Once the parents are satisfied that the proposed new member is alright, an alliance is proposed.

Then, following negotiations of bride price an alliance is struck. (In some communities outside Kutch, this practice is reversed and is called the "groom price or dowry."

When a new bride comes in, she absorbs the family's ethos (and the previous arranged process has made this easier and more likely) and becomes an effective contributor to the "well-oiled machinery" of the extended family she has joined.

Now arranged marriages like this run counter to the modern notion of individual choice of marital partner, and of romance. But there are many aspects of life over which (at least initially) individuals world-wide have no choice. One's parents are a given, as is the place where you will live in your early life. Most are raised in the religion of their parents without the question of choice ever arising. So the notion of not exercising one's choice in important matters, is not necessarily as alien as some, nowadays, might think. Nor is it limited to arranged marriages in India.

It is also important to note that romance and individual choice of marriage partner is, historically, a rather recent development world-wide. In the traditional world love and romance (if it was to occur) happened after marriage. So arranged marriages have for most of history, also "worked" for the purposes for which they were designed.

When a girl of less than 18 marries – it is deemed a child marriage. Child marriage is a custom prevalent even today in several states of India. Actual number of child marriages in India is not clear, but at least several million occur each year.

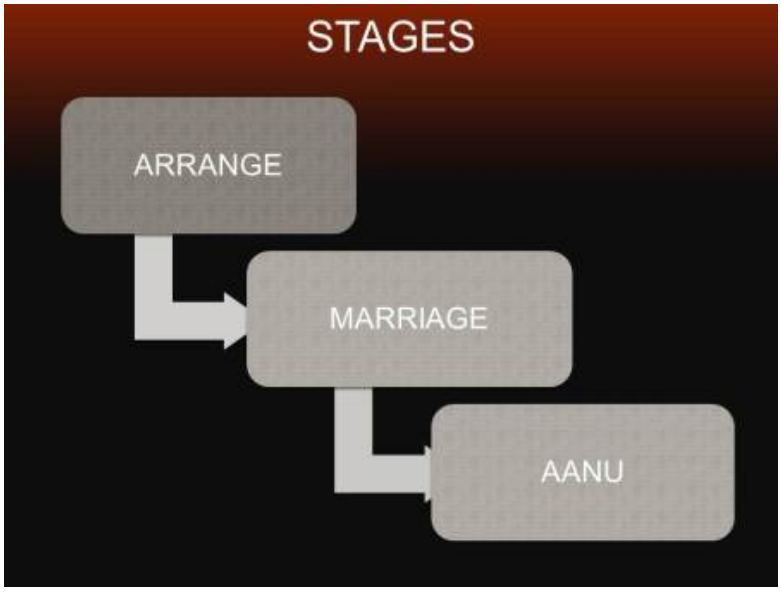
Child marriages are sometimes presented as horror stories by the media, but examination of the actual facts shows that this is not the case.

First, in societies in which child marriage is part of the traditional structure, the age difference between the girl and the boy is usually 2 – 5 years.

Second, child marriage has been practiced, and its functionality tested, in traditional societies for centuries. It is not salacious. It is focused on family stability.

We cannot always assume that modern marriage practices are superior to those of traditional societies.

It might well by that, sometimes, the reverse is the case.



So how does it work?

First the marriage is arranged, then some ceremonies are conducted to affirm the wedding.

And then the girl continues to live with her parents, to play and to go to school – just as she used to do before here wedding, until she attains child-bearing age.

Now preparations are made for her "gauna" or "aanu" or "farewell."

This is the occasion when her husband's family comes to the girl's home to pick her up and take her to her new home.

This event is practiced in all communities that practice child marriage in its pure traditional form.

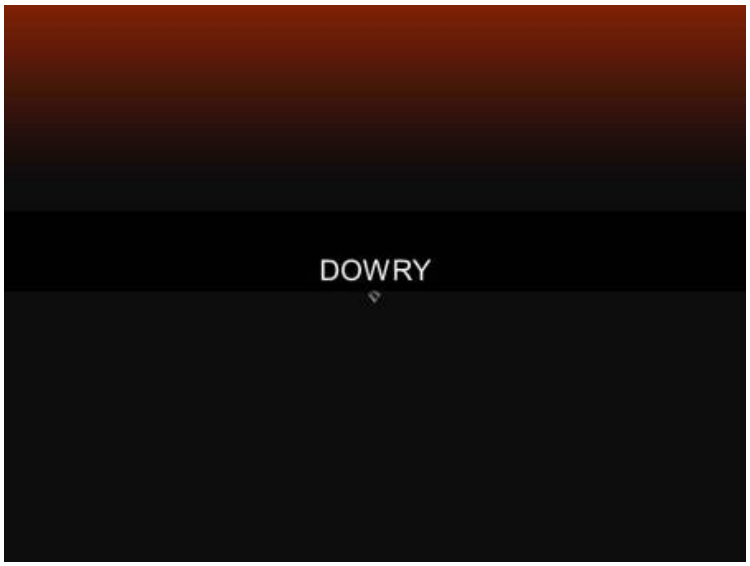
In the Rabaris, the bride wears a special Ludhi shawl – red with yellow dots for this occasion.

What is the logic behind the practice of child marriage?

The thought is that, if the biological clock has begun to tick, then, it is time for the married couple to embark on family life.

Just as other animals do, humans live life according to the rules of nature. Even in modern societies, we know that teenagers are, often, active in the biological sense regardless of the social and moral prohibitions imposed. Modern societies have the problem of unwanted teen pregnancies.

Arranged marriages, even child marriages, are a solution that takes nature into account. They have created a social structure – the arranged marriage and the joint family – for bringing up the babies, rather than having teen pregnancies with no social structure to support them.



The dowry is the bride's trousseau, and consists of clothing and jewelry and household items.

She also takes, with her dowry, things that remind her of her old home: things filled with love and memories.

For some, the dowry might be comprised of things purchased in the market. But those who are fortunate, the dowry contains pieces that were made by her mother, and grandmother, and her aunts before her own eyes during her childhood.

One stitch at a time, the textile is embroidered – together – by the women of the family. They sing and embroider together in the afternoon. They chat, passing stories of their ancestors and their wisdom.

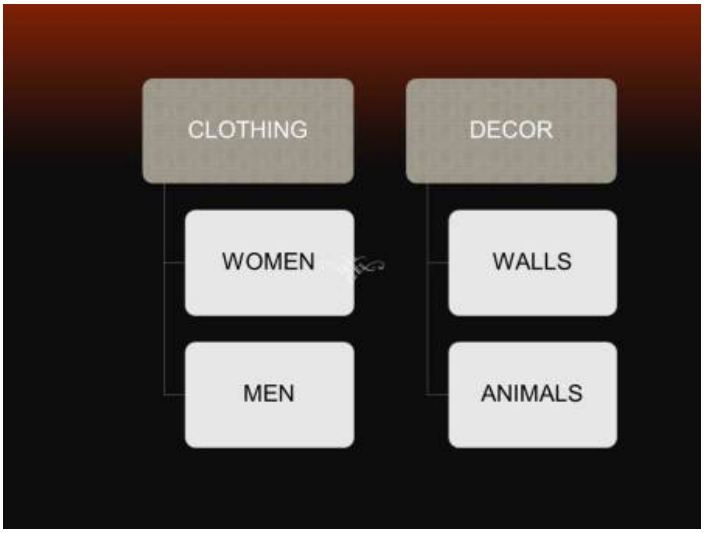
So these home-made dowries contain, not just artistic wealth, but also memories of moments spent together.

Now let's take a quick visit to a home on the morning of a wedding.

Note: Not all Rabaris are migrants and live in tents.

This the decorated door of the bride's home. A member of the bride's family, likely her mother, is a greeter.

During our visit, we will treat textiles for women and men and, also, textiles for decorating walls and animals.



We start with textiles that women wear.

The next two images below are of Rabari women in traditional clothing. As you can see, the first is an occasion of a wedding.

Here are some individual items of traditional Rabari women's dress.

The first, below, is a backless blouse, called a "kapdu." It has only narrow panels at the back, tied together with strings. The black veil hangs over the bare back so it isn't exactly bare.

The kapdu is tight fitting, in front, and does not require a brassiere underneath. The examples below are from a different Rabari subgroup than those above.

The next three images show examples of Rabaris skirts.

The examples of blouses and skirts above are those Rabari women wear everyday. They are not reserved for ceremonial events.

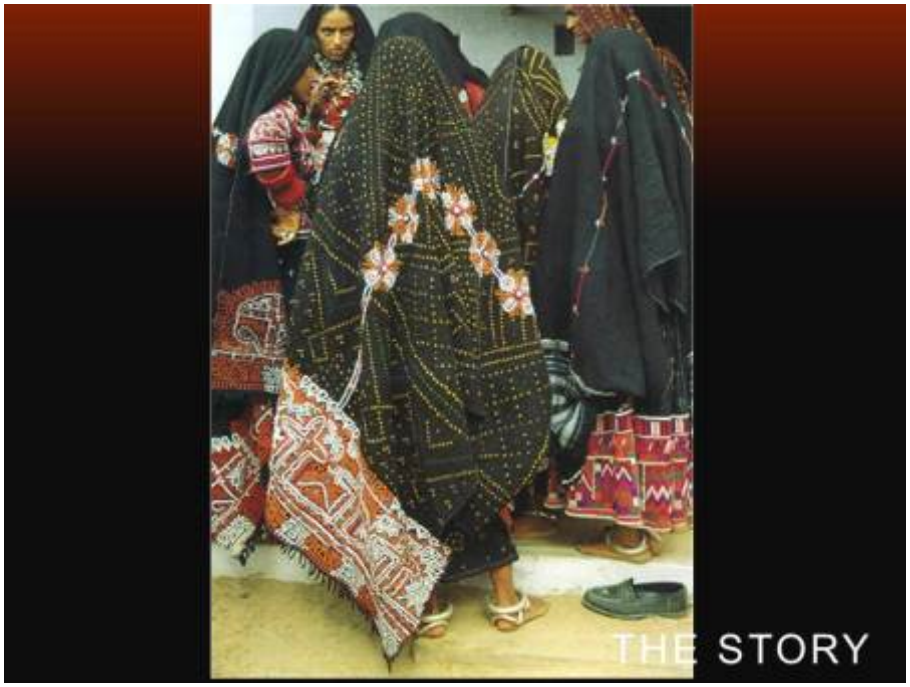
One item of the clothing of Rabari women stands out: the black veil.

Hindus form 80% of India's population. The color black is not preferred by Hindus. Not for wedding; not for funerals.

Black is considered inauspicious and, in the past, it was not worn at all.

The Rabaris are Hindus, so why the color black was chosen needs explanation.

We will talk, in a moment, about how black came to be the color of the veil used, uniformly by the women of the entire Rabari tribe.



But let’s first have a look at the art and the craft of this important black veil.

The veil is made of hand spun wool from goats.

The veil is hand-woven on a narrow loom. The woven material is tied and dyed (the orange-yellow on the piece below). Then two pieces of the material are placed side-by-side and attached together along the long side.

It is then embroidered together at the center.

Now let’s return to the question of why Rabari women’s veils are black.

Legend has it that “once upon a time,” a few centuries ago, the Rabari tribe with their herd roamed the lands ruled by a particular Muslim or Islamic king.

Nomadic tribes have symbiotic and cordial relationships with rulers, acting sometimes as escorts, sometimes as messengers, spies, or advisors in political matters of state.

In this case, the Rabari tribal lord and his family came to be on very good terms with this particular Islamic king and both families became close.

The wife of the Rabari chief declared the Islamic king her brother and the family ties strengthened.

From that point the families of the brother and sister participated in each others life celebrations and festivals.

Life went on and one day there was a battle between the Islamic king and some enemy of the state in which the king lost his life.

Since he was the Rabari "first lady's" brother, mourning was declared among the Rabaris as well.

Black was worn because the king was a Muslim king.

All celebrations and joyous activities ceased for the mourning period.

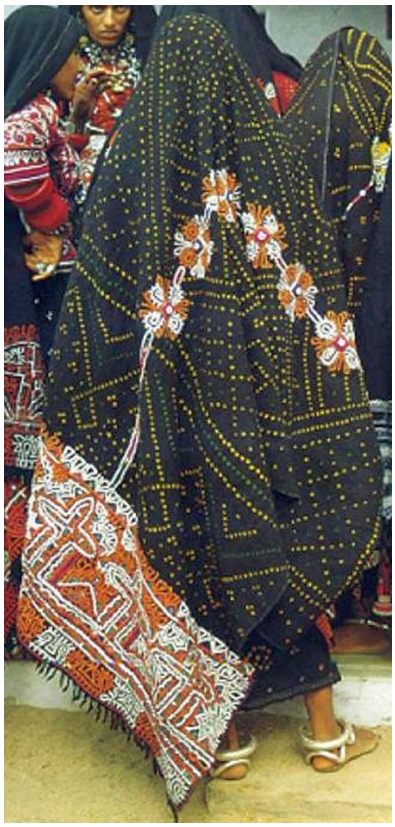
Mourning usually lasts for up to 13 days, and ends with a ceremony, in which a feast is offered.

In this story, the Rabari's tribal lord's wife – the declared sister of the Islamic king – was so deeply devastated that that she declared more stringent terms for the end of the mourning. She declared that mourning for the tribe would continue until an offering of a feast was held at which 2000 kg of salt would be used in the cooking.

Since such a feast was beyond the preparation capabilities and the eating capacities of the tribe, the end of the mourning period never came and the tribe continued to wear black. This practice continues today.

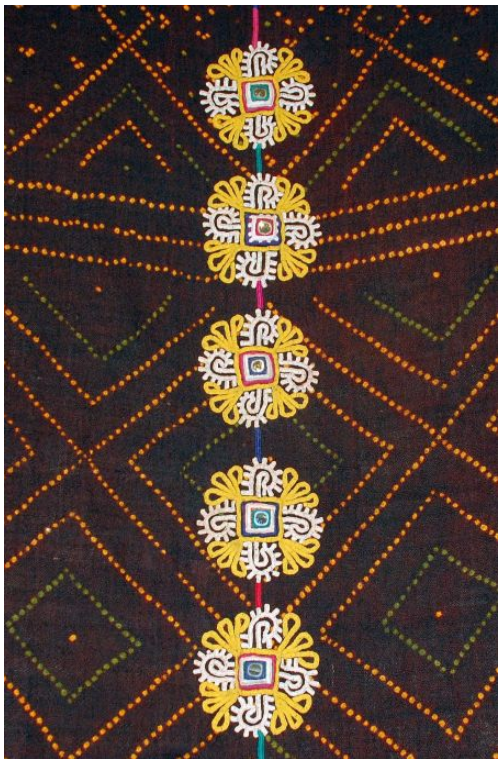
Since all this happened centuries ago, most of normal life has resumed, but the dress tradition of the black veil continues.

"This legend was heard from a prominent Rabari tribal patriarch. The discovery of the tale in this textile and its multiple layers of beauty that make is a remarkable palimpsest, has made it one of my favorite textiles to collect."



The image below is of a veil oriented horizontally, and not stretched out.

Below, again, is a row 3-D floret embroidery done to seal the two narrow panels of cloth along the spine. The greater the number of florets, the greater the value of the veil (ludhi or ludgadi).



The bridal veils, below, are more decorated and ornate than some of the others we've seen.

Now let's turn to Rabari men's clothing.

The men in the photo above are wearing short tunics. The sleeves of such tunics are fitted to allow the hands to be unobstructed for work. But at the chest of these tunics, there are dozens of tiny gathers making it loose and airy. These tunics are called "kediyus."

The shirt, above, is a kediyu that would be worn at a male child's marriage.

A similar one was exhibited at the "Fabric of India" exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

The next textile is the men's pants or dhoti.

The dhoti is a panel of cloth (usually about five yards long) that is taken around the waist and the brought between the legs to form flexible pants. One size fits all.

Above is an open dhoti of the Debariya Rabari subgoup.

Below are closer images of the ends of this dhoti.

Now, while we are treating this sort of pant form as one worn by men in India, in truth, this basic format is widely used in south and southeast Asia by both men and women.

I make that point because I want to show one way in which a dhoti-like garment is put on and tied.

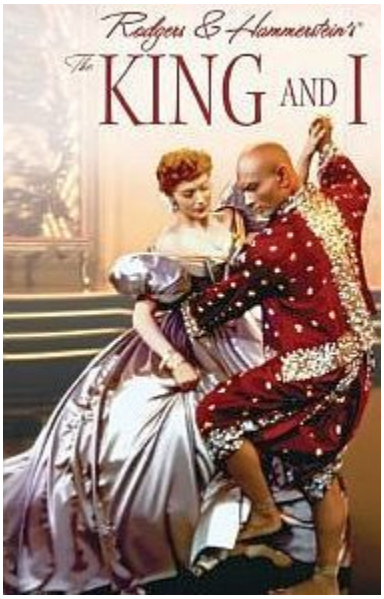
The example I want to use is one worn in southeast Asia and is there called a "hip wrapper." In this example, this pant form is being worn by a woman volunteer in another Textile Museum program.

It starts by putting the long strip of cloth around her, kind of like a horizontal sling.

Next, she holds the two sides together around her waist (I think a clip of some sort is used; she's holding it closed with her hand).

The man helping her, holds the ends of the sling, and twists them together to form a sort of "rope." The "rope" then gets passed through her legs and the end is tucked into the waist at the back.

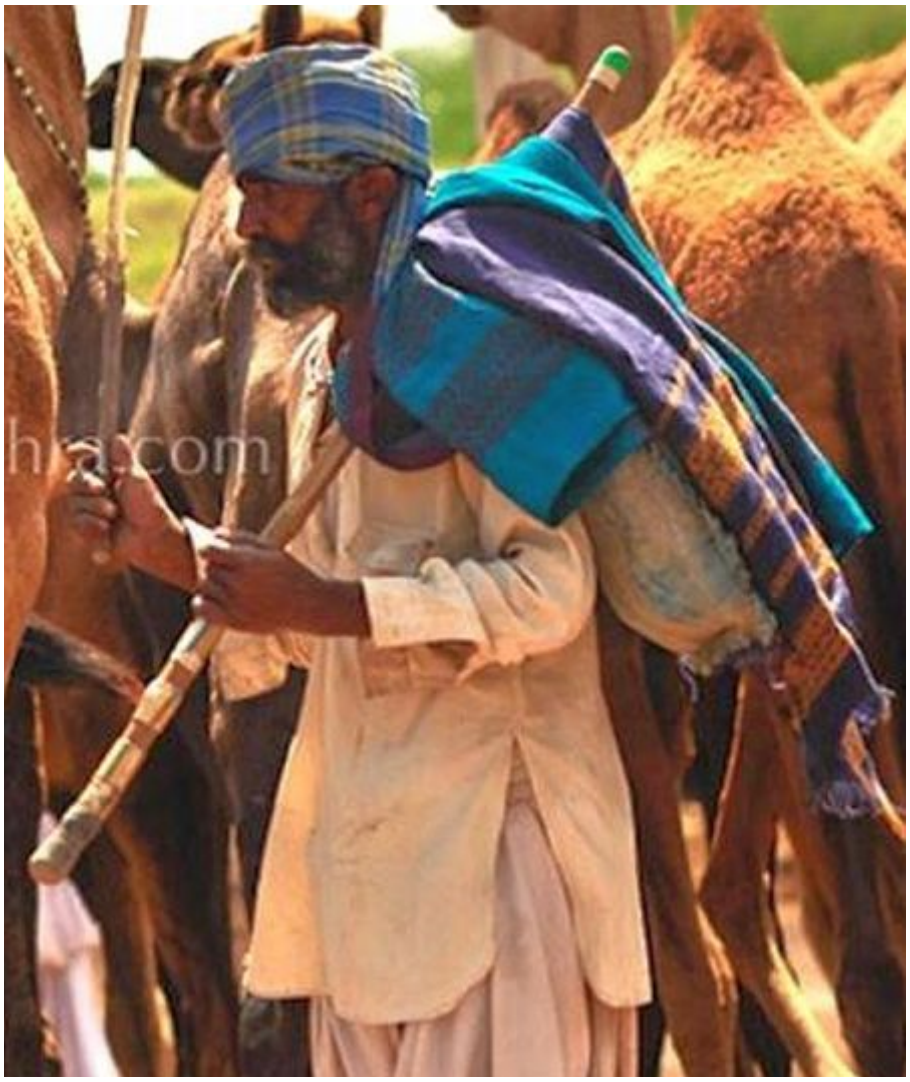
As we noted above, this is a unisex garment. Yul Brynner wore one in his role as the King in "The King and I."



Now, with that explanation, we move back to India and to Rabari men's dress.

The next item is the shawl. The man in the image below is wearing one.

Here is a closer view of it.



The images above and below are of men and their camels at a religious fair where even the livestock are brought to worship.

The sense of style with which these shawls are worn is evident. And the color is distinct.

Now we turn to the accessories worn at a wedding by the Rabari groom.

We are going to treat some of the groom accessories individually, but notice in the multicolor-banded, silk-cotton, Mashu shawl and pants (about which more later), worn by the groom over his clothes.

Note also the sword sheath, held over the shoulder, and the panel worn above his turban.

Below are two, isolated examples of groom decor. The first is a turban panel; the second a sheath.

Below are two examples of the shoulder cloth, worn by the groom and called "bokani" or "bukani."

The turban is the crown worn by every man.

It represents the dignity and honor of the man and his family in societies where material wealth is not the focal point of life.

A little background on the turban and its role in marital ceremony.

The identity of every community rests on a few anchors.

For the Rabaris, the honor of the individual is among the most important anchors, and it is this anchor that drives all his behavior and makes him do things that will enhance his honor.

One of the factors that is critical to a man’s honor is the virtue of his daughter(s).

Daughters are raised with care and protected from the outside world and are expected to be virgins at the time of marriage.

A daughter is her father’s honor and pride.

At the time of the wedding, the father of the bride places this honor in the hands of his son-in-law.

The groom is responsible for treating his wife well, protecting and looking after her.

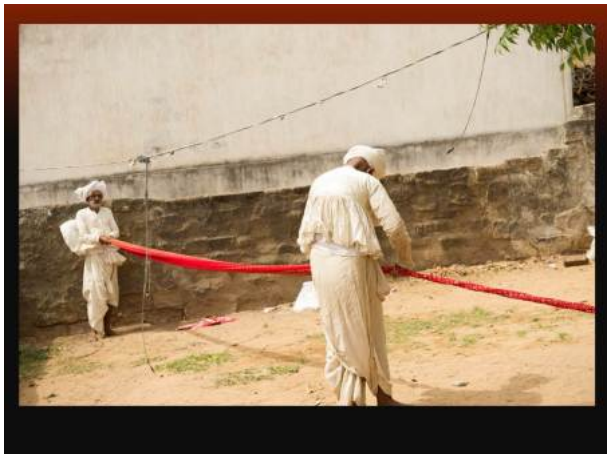
Divorce is permitted among the Rabaris, and if the groom sends his new wife back to her birth family, the honor of the bride’s father is at stake.

So the turban represents the honor of the bride’s father and the turban ceremony is one of the important rituals of a Rabari wedding.

The turban being made here (the red strip) is the one worn by the father of the bride. Here is how the making proceeds.

A long strip of material is first twisted to make it roundish.

The twisting goes on… and on.

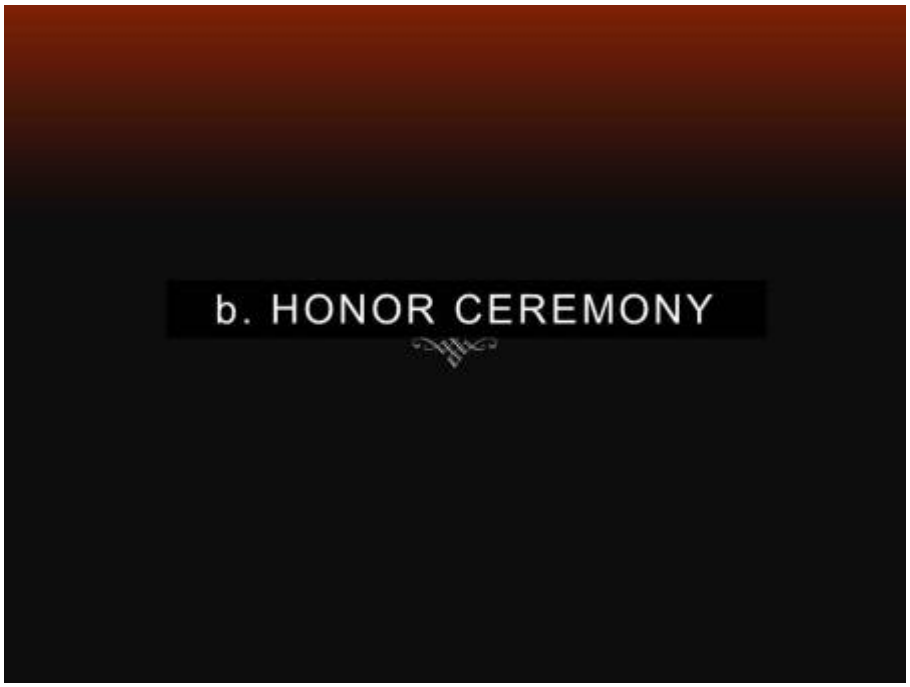


Then it begins to be coiled, a few beginning turns, around an arm, to begin to take on the shape it will have when placed on the bride's father's head.

Next, the beginning coils are placed on the head of the father, and further coiling turns are made, building it up.

Eventually, the winding of the turban on the head of the father of the bride is completed, the end is tucked in, and completed turban looks like this.

Now we are ready for the turban honor ceremony.



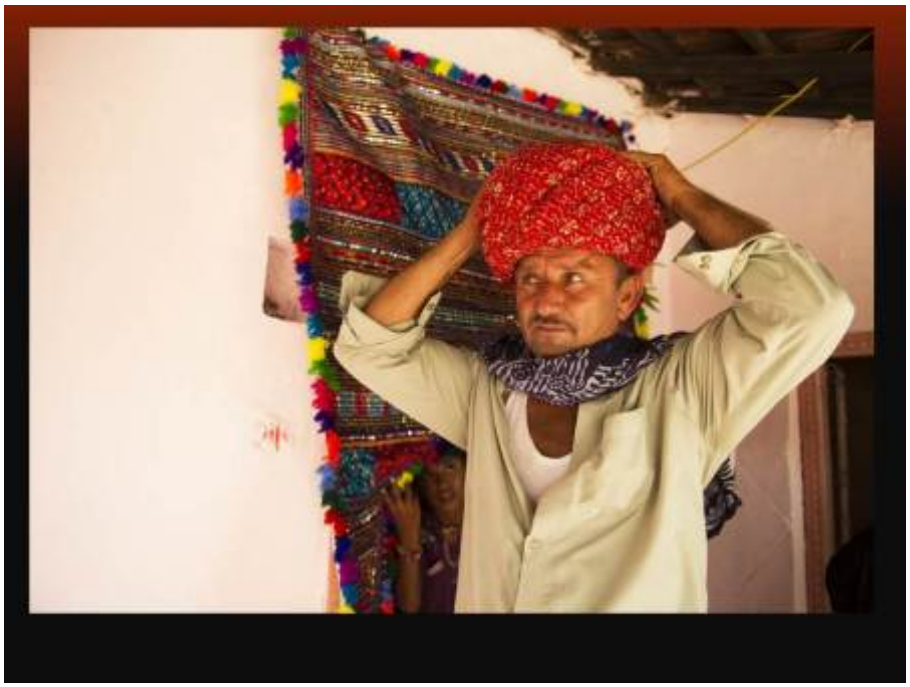
The groom, dressed in white, has arrived and is being received at the door.

There is a long, decorated strip of material, held on his head, as he goes through the door.

Once through the door, he removes the head cloth and here he is.

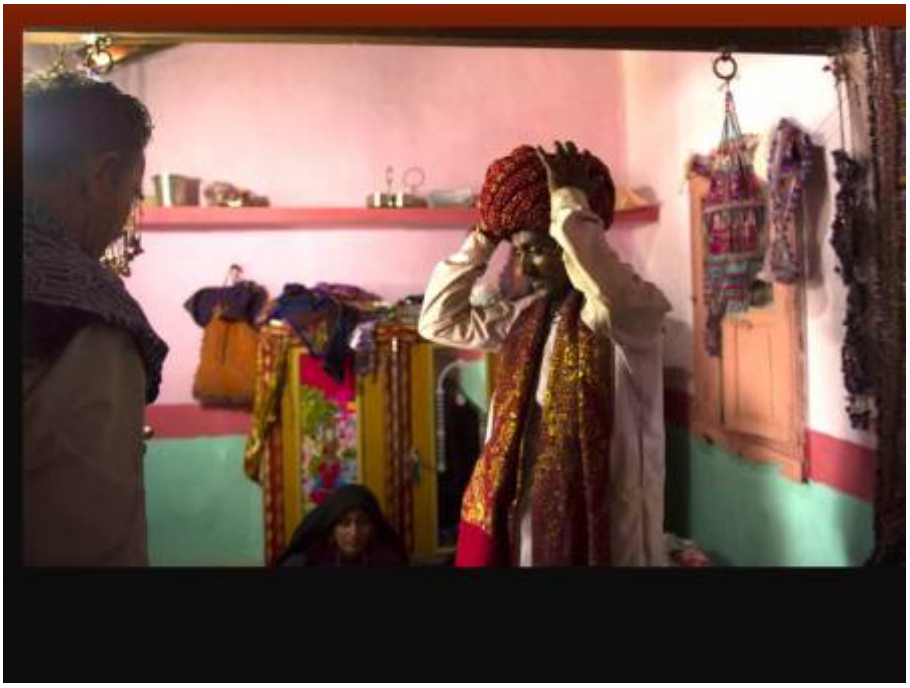
The father of the bride enters the chamber.

He takes off his turban, and places it on the bridegroom’s head.



This is a solemn moment; the bride's father, is symbolically, conveying the family's honor to the bridegroom.

The bridegroom makes a few adjustments.

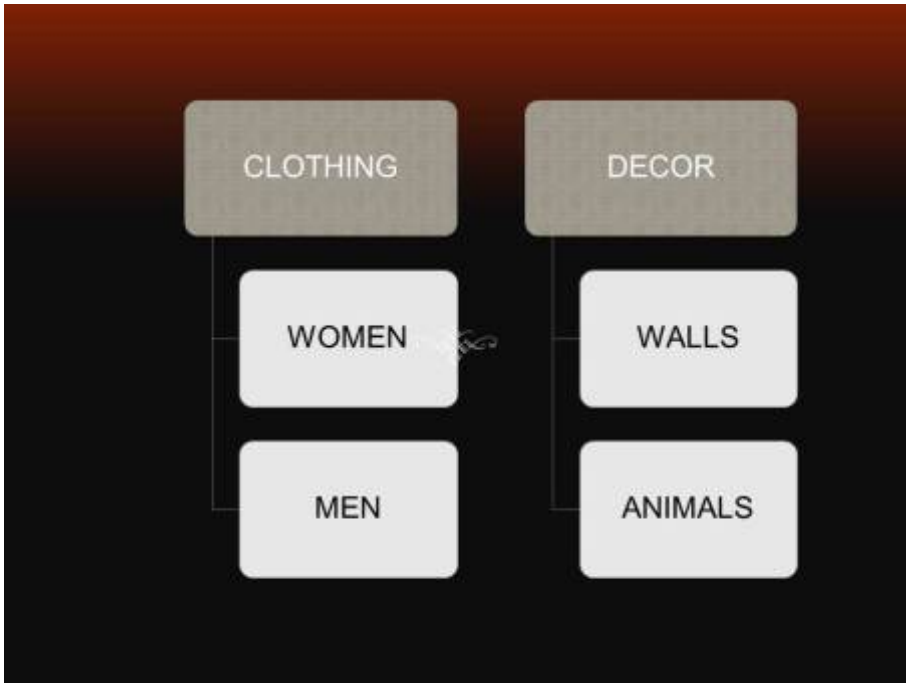


Almost right…

Yes, this is as it should be.

He emerges from the chamber, proudly, with his new crown of responsibility.

This is the second example that shows us how important textiles are to the cultural traditions of the Rabari people.



In the pictures so far, you may have noticed textiles on the walls. Wall hangings are another instance of Rabari textile practice.

Above are three types of panels used to decorate doors. The piece on the left is hung on either side of the entrance. The upper right piece hangs above the door. The lower right piece is arranged on the wall, either as a square or a diamond.

Below is another wall hanging.

The textile below is a cover, called a “dhaniyo” or a “dharaniyo.” In nomadic households, it is not possible to have wooden cabinets for storage. As a result, things are stacked one upon the other and, even if neatly stacked, the assortment of items makes it look untidy. So covers have been created to make such a space look good. Such covers are thrown over or hung in front of messy stacks to conceal the mess.

A dyaniyo usually conceals grain boxes, trunks full of clothing, bedding, and vessels meant for occasional use.

Despite their primary functional purpose, covers, such as the one above can be fabulous examples of folk art.

Animals are essential to migratory Rabari life and the Rabari want them to look good for special occasions.

Above are some animal decorations. Bottom center is a camel hat with space for ears. It could also be used as a horn cover. The the upper right piece is a ceremonial bullock-forehead decoration. The two pieces on the upper left are also said to be head decorations for bullocks.

Simple pieces of this sort, are, now, beginning to be made for the sole purpose of selling them.

Once commerce takes over, the taste of the buyer comes into play and the character of the art changes dramatically.

The contents of the "dowry" will have different meanings depending on the Rabari group, place, customs and economic level, but it is essentially the bride's trousseau.

The bride's trousseau consists of things she may wear over her lifetime and things that will offer her memories and comforts when she moves to her new home.

The dowry may also contain heirloom items that are passed from generation to generation. It may also contain a textile that the bride's mother began work on with her.

Rugs, bags or other textiles in a dowry may also be gifts from relatives, mostly likely from the mother, the mother's brother, or an aunt.

The selection of items for the dowry may take place over a long time.

A bride and her family will put into her dowry items that are as good as circumstances permit.

The maternal uncle: the brides mother’s brother, is the person expected to give the most gifts in the dowry.

Performance of this function is the honor, responsibility and duty of this man and must be planned for by the uncle’s family as well.

Here are members of the bride’s family carrying items of her trousseau.

More trousseau items.

Now family members of the bride, led by the maternal uncle, carry the trousseau items for presentation.

The maternal uncle and other family members carry the trousseau item into the ceremony chamber.

The bride’s trousseau is presented.

A senior member of the groom’s family meets the trousseau entourage at the door. Being met at the door by a senior member of a family is a sign of respect.

The maternal uncle has done his duty.

Now we return to the textiles.

Here are some Rabari dowry bags. They are made in various sizes and construction depending on the objects that would be placed in them.

They are extravagantly embroidered and embellished with mirrors. The one on the left, below, is likely used for clothing.

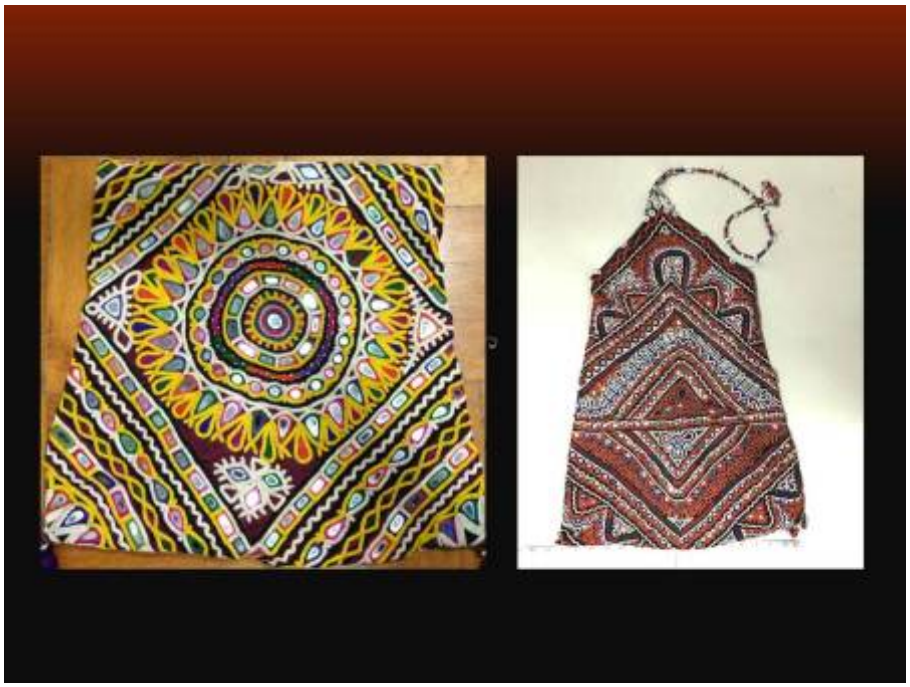
The small bag below is probably for jewelry.

The dowry bags were used to pack the bride's things when she moved from here parents home to her husband's.

Because camels were the means of transport, suitcases were not appropriate. Instead, pliable bags were used that could be comfortably carried on the camel's back.

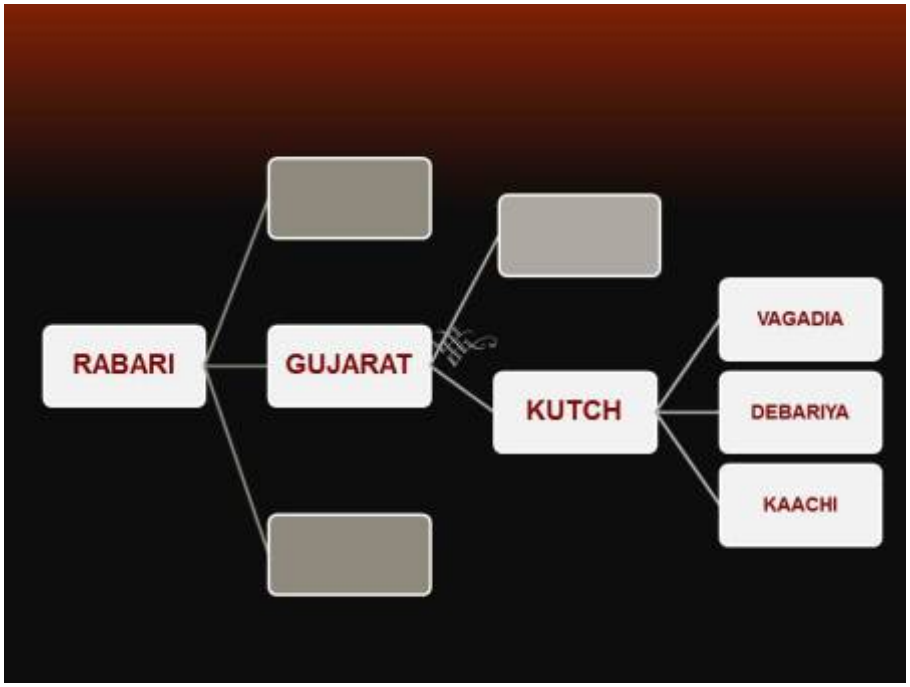
Here are some more examples.

The bag on the right below has an “envelope” format, with the triangular top flap folding over to close it.



The Kutch employ a variety of embroideries. As the Rabari subgroups splintered, and moved away from each other, the embroidery art of of the subgroups evolved differently.

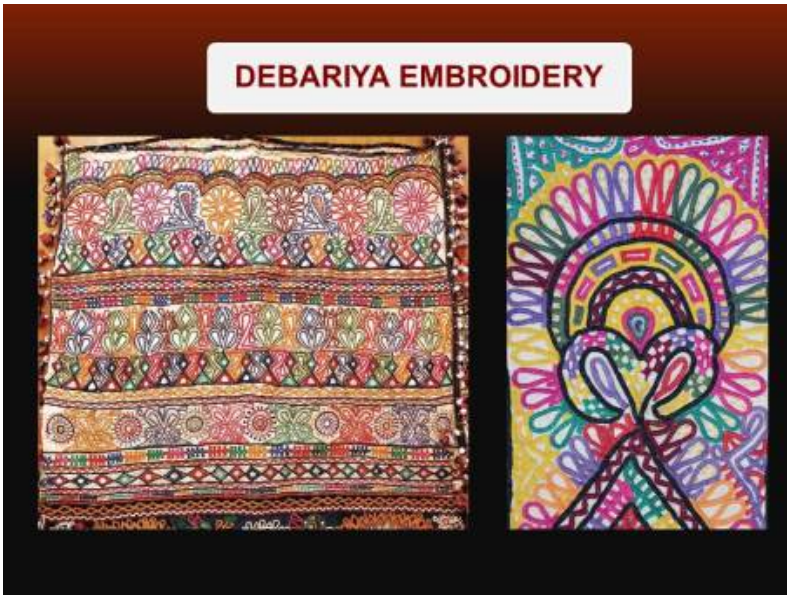
So we have three distinctly different types of embroidery, each practiced by one of the Rabari subgroups.

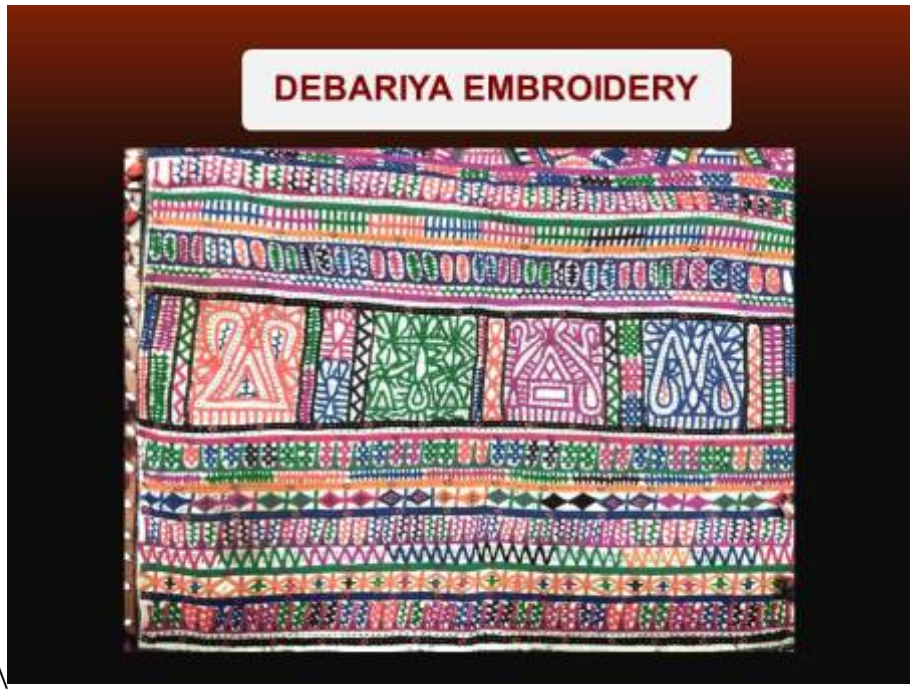


The three types of Rabari embroidery are vagadia, debariya and kaachi.

A close look at the work, above, from the Vagadia subtribe, reveals their preference for high-density stitching, rendered in yellow and white.

The next two images below, show a Debariya preference for many unique motifs each rendered in a single color. Mirrors are not necessarily found all over Debariya work – they may be restricted to border panels.





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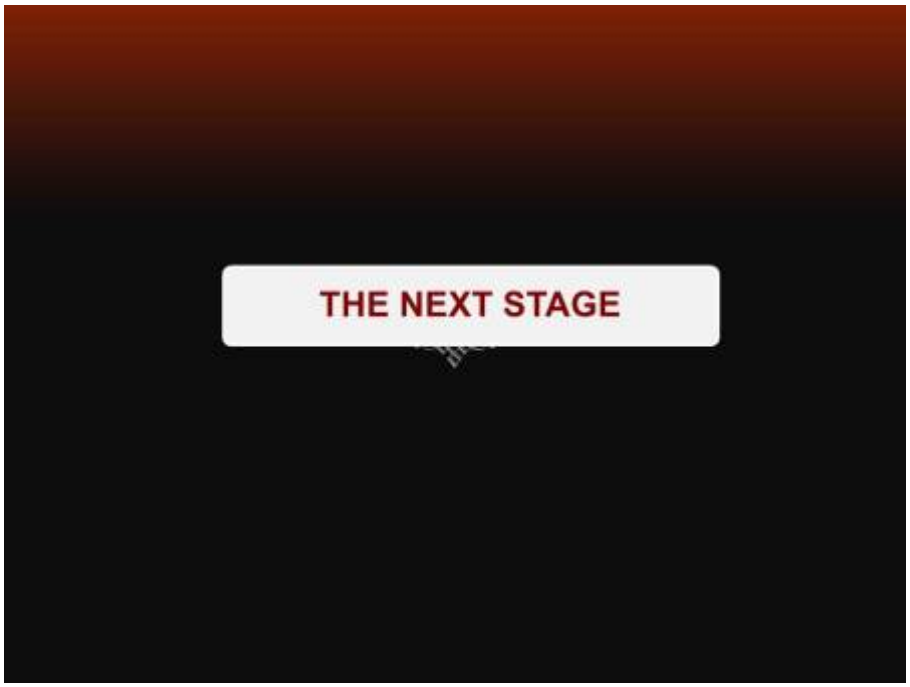
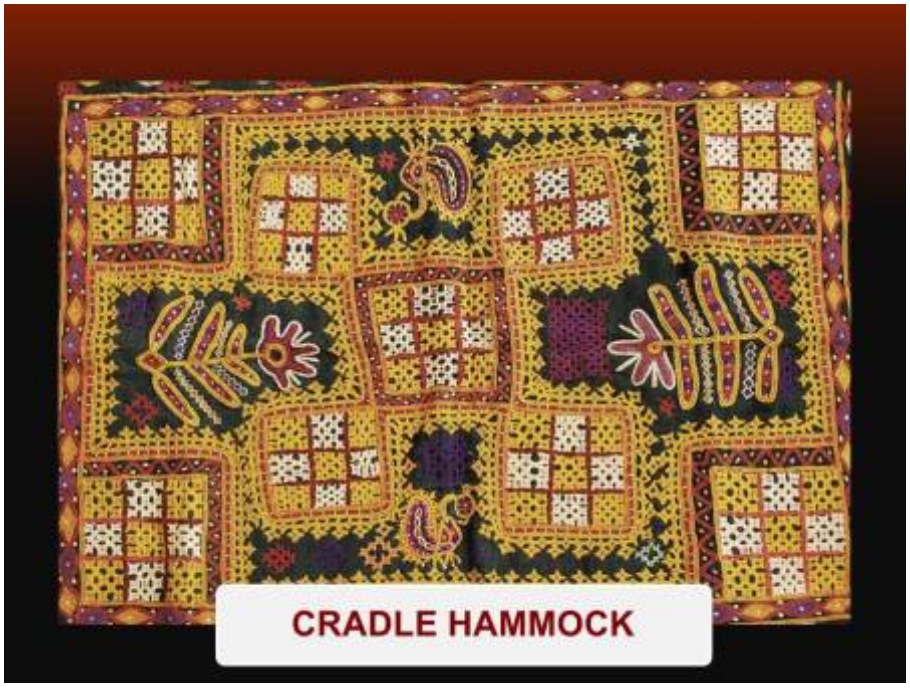
The Kaachi Rabari embroidery work, below, employs mirrors, all over, and a variety of motifs, each rendered in several colors.

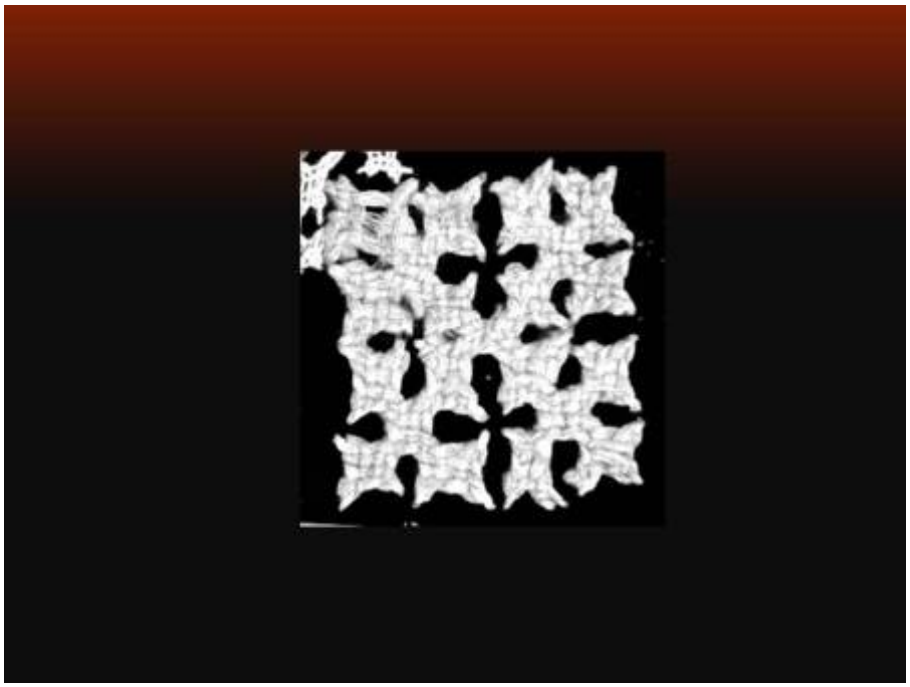
A look at a dozen examples of each of these types of Rabari embroidery is sufficient to make good guesses about the particular subgroup a given piece originates from. It is important to remember that these subgroups did not exist a century ago, so in older pieces they may have not attained the unique identities that we see today.



Below is one more Rabari textile format: the cradle hammock



Jaina said that she wanted to examine an interesting aspect of the Rabari embroidery stitch used in this cradle hammock.



The stitch in the detail above (and also in the cradle hammock above) is one that is common in Rabari work.

It seems not a simple stitch that could have intuitively arisen in different parts of the world.

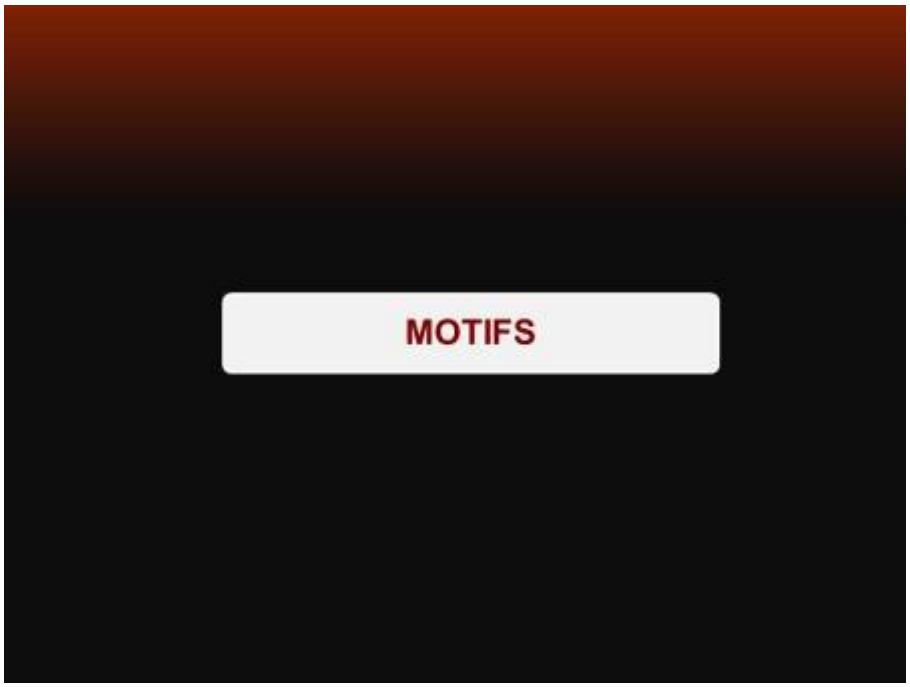
Above are some clips of embroidery stitches. Would you agree that they all look similar?

Would you agree that the stitch used in the two pieces above are also similar?

The surprise is that the piece above is not Rabari, but rather, “Marash embroidery” from Armenia.

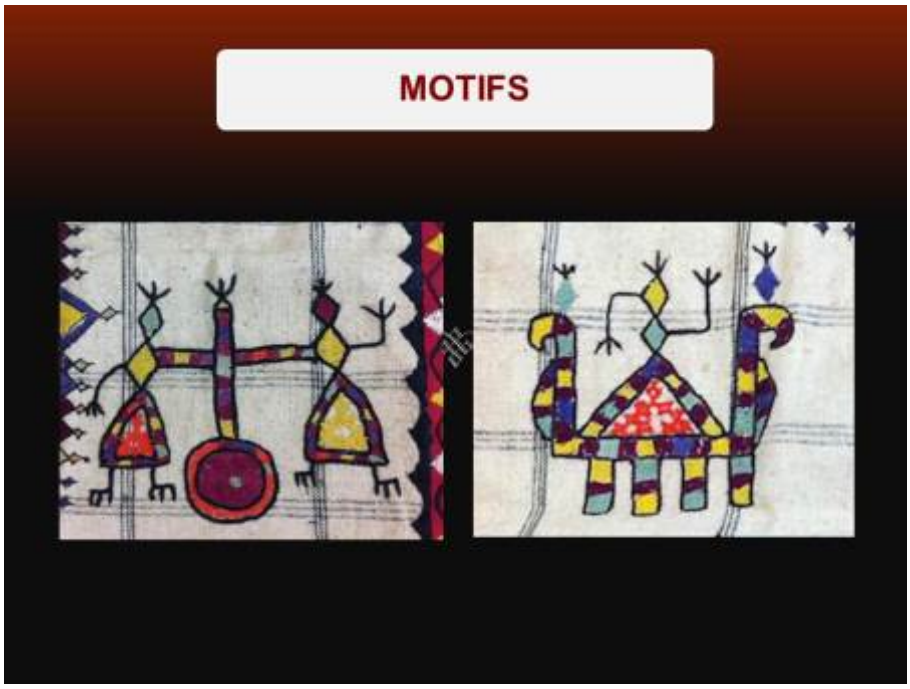
Jaina said that she finds it intriguing that this little cultural usage – a "meme," if you will, is found in two geographically separated cultures. She said that she wonders how these these two groups came to have the same complex stitch and what their connection might be.

But that, she said, would be a topic for a future exploration.

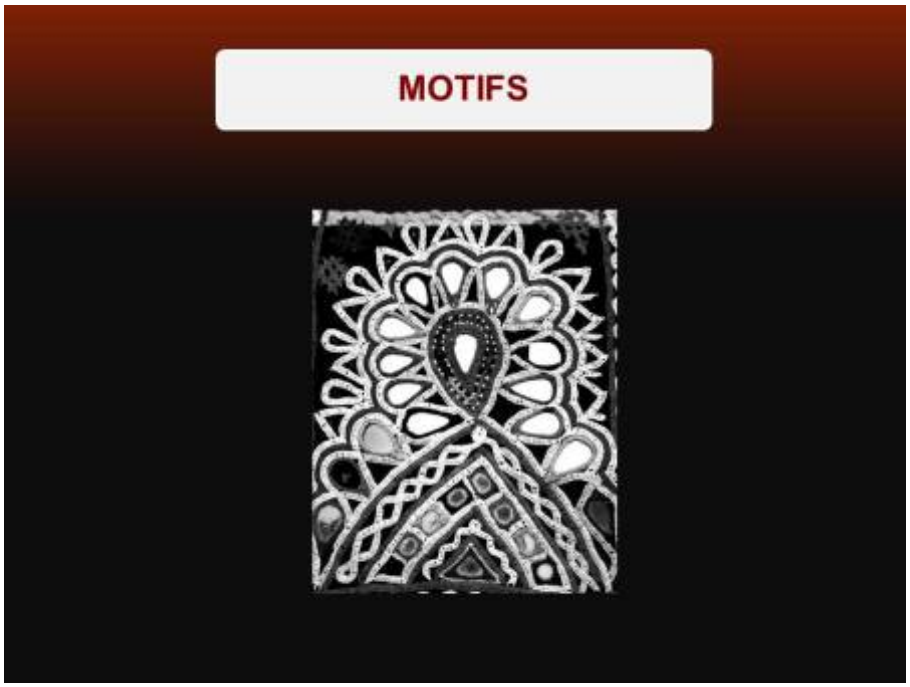


She said that she would end her lecture by examining some of the motifs used in Rabari embroidery.

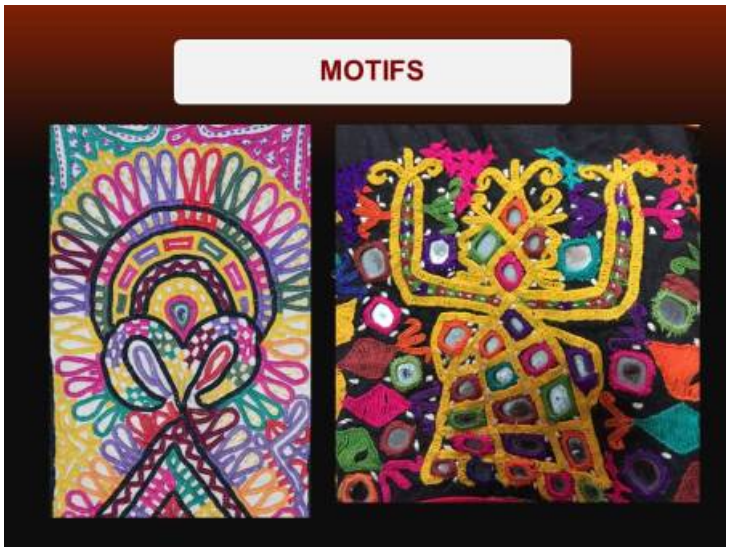
Here, below, is a first set of two.



The motif on the left above is of "butter-churning girls." The one on the right is a girl on a camel.



Below are a second set of similar motifs. They are of a girl or a goddess. They are rendered differently from slide to slide.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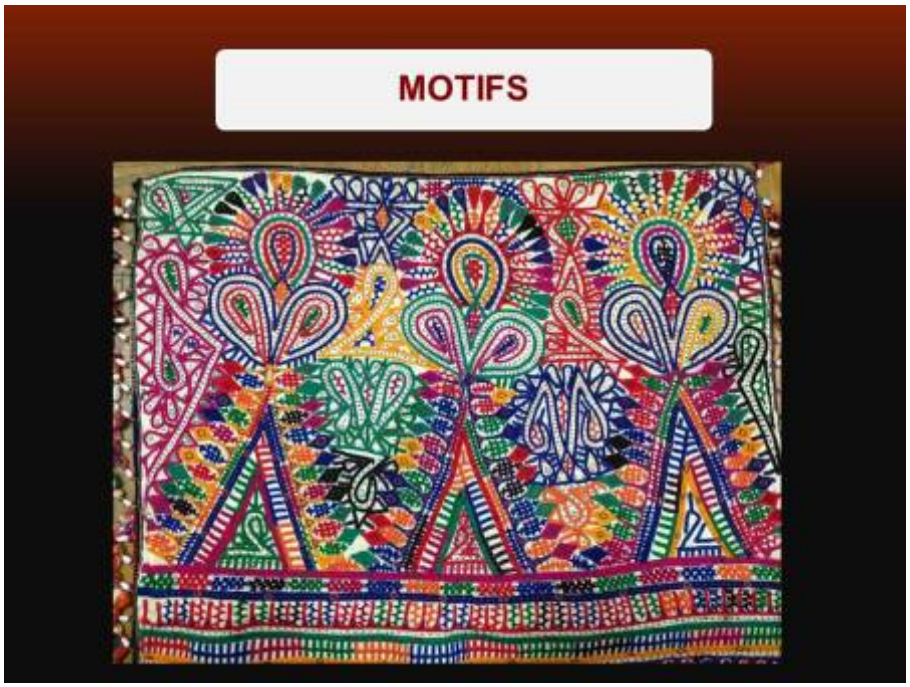
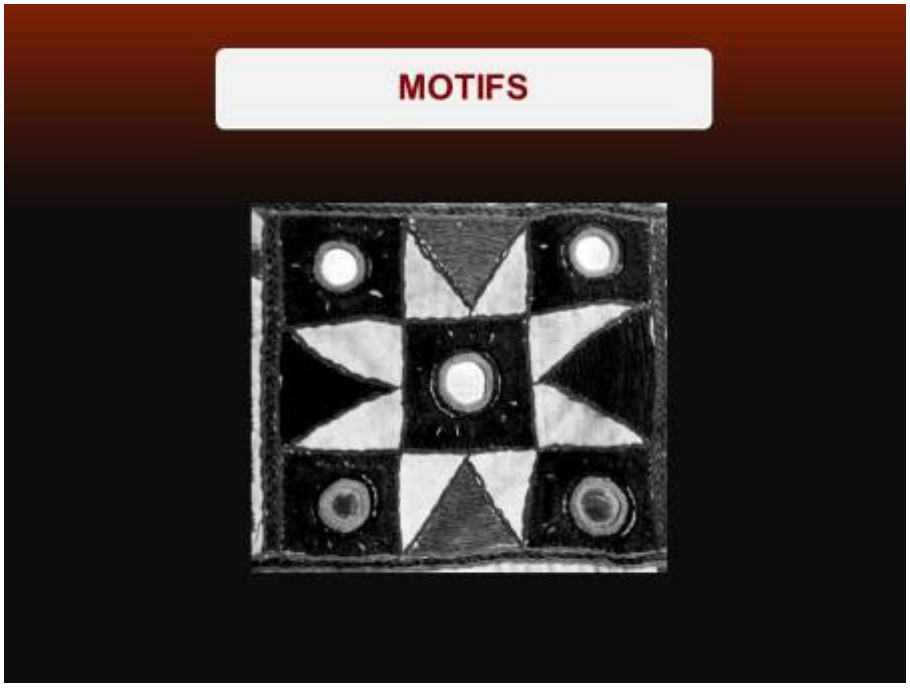
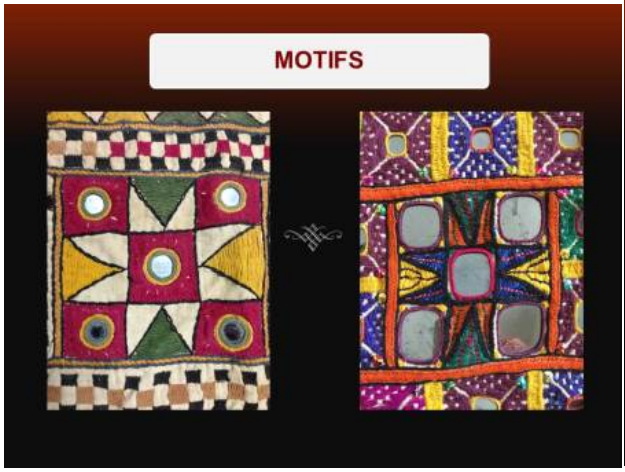
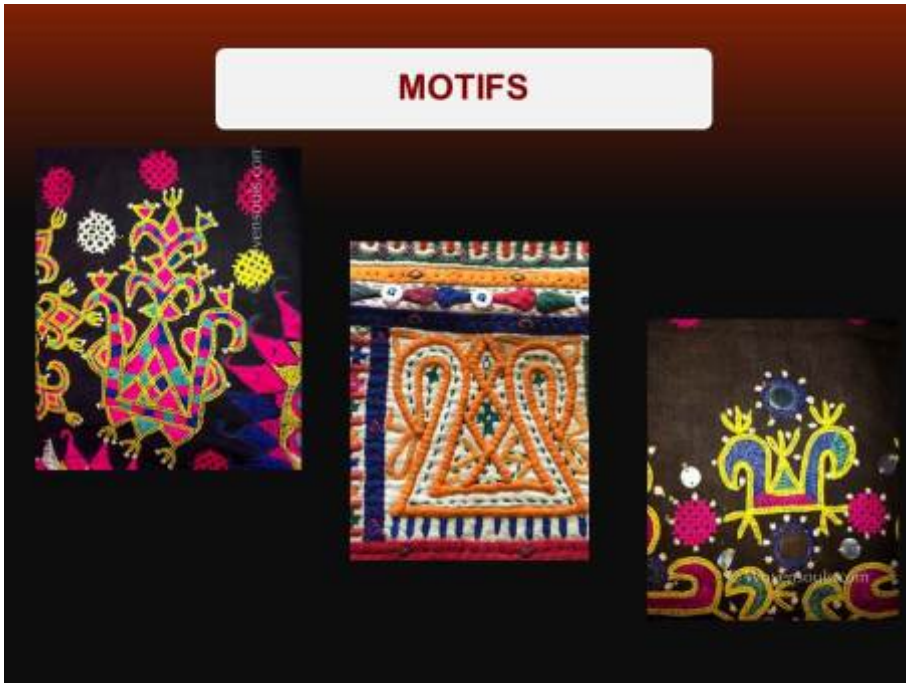


The next set of motifs are versions of the eight-pointed flower or star, as seen frequently.

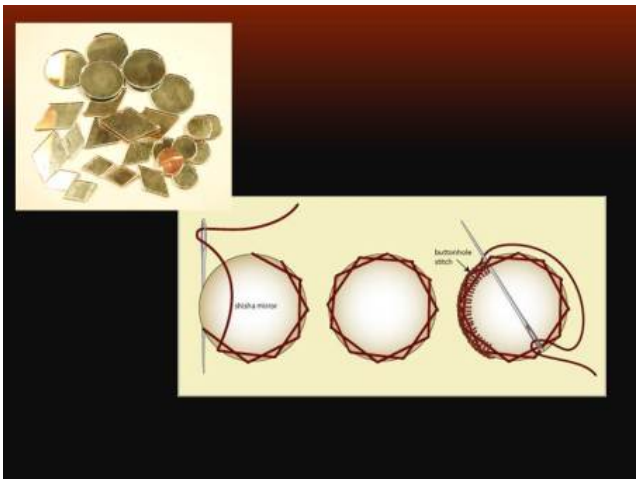




A next set of motifs are seen to be a girl or a goddess on a camel.



Finally, Jaina said, are two set of embroidery stitches that can be used to fix mirrors on cloth.



Jaina had brought a number of Rabari embroideries and some audience members had brought Rabari textiles, and she turned to them now.

Some are treated in the lecture, but are worth seeing a little closer and in more detail.

I have not distinguished between pieces brought by Jaina and those brought by audience members. Photos were taken opportunistically and, often, non-sequentially.

Comments: Jaina described this piece as a tie-dyed, Gaji, silk, wedding shawl, called "odhana or ab0chani" in different regions.

It is an example, not just of the micro tie-dyes that create the red dots on the black background, but also the larger black devices on the yellow areas of the field.

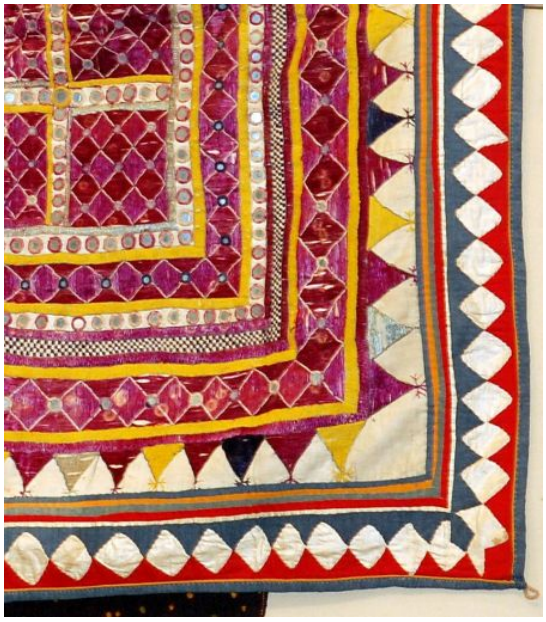
Detail images.

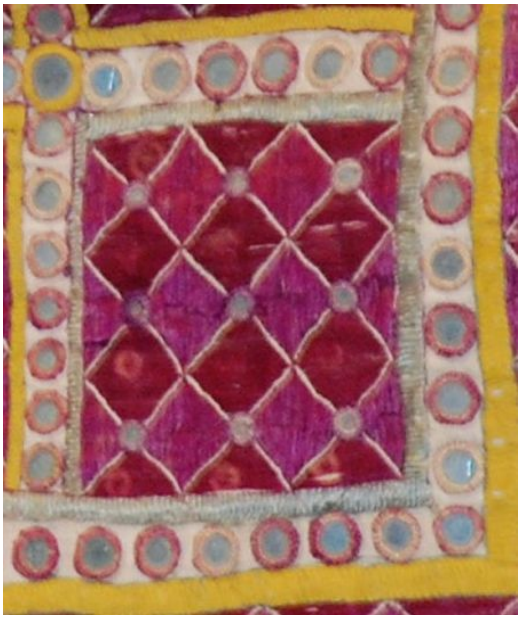
Comment: Jaina said that this is a little boy's shirt that may have been his wedding suit.

The motifs suggest that it is probably from the Ahir community that shares geography with the Rabaris. Their work is very similar. Details.

Comment: Jaina said that this is a dowry bag. Details.

Comments: The use of silk floss thread and the type of stitching suggests that this work is probably from Saurashtra and not Kutch. Details.



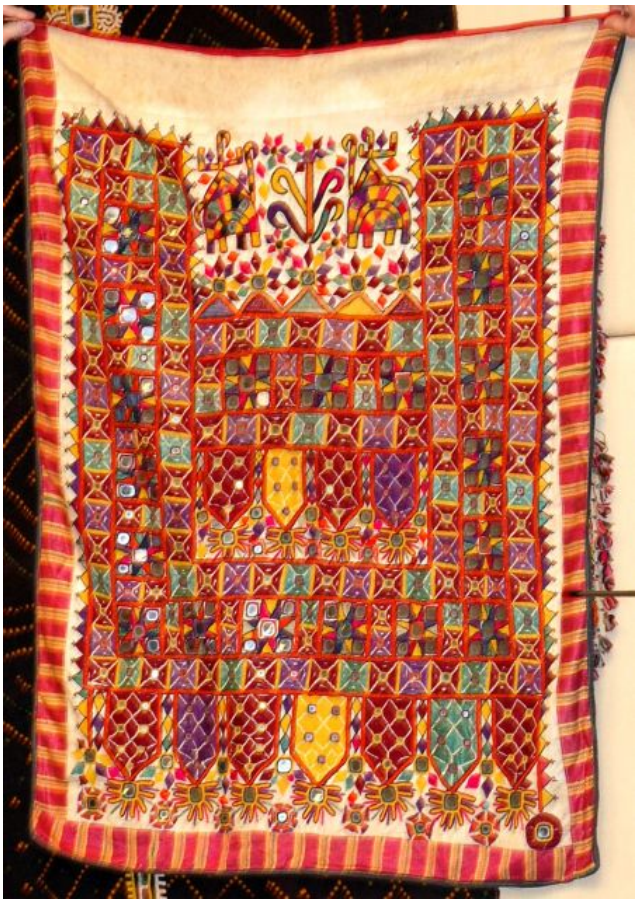


Comments: This shirt front is not from Kutch but from a neighboring region.

Details.

Comment: This is a "welcome" panel to be hung on the door. The use of silk floss and the type of stitch suggests that this is not a Rabari piece. Note the use of negative space to create lines between the diamonds.

Details.



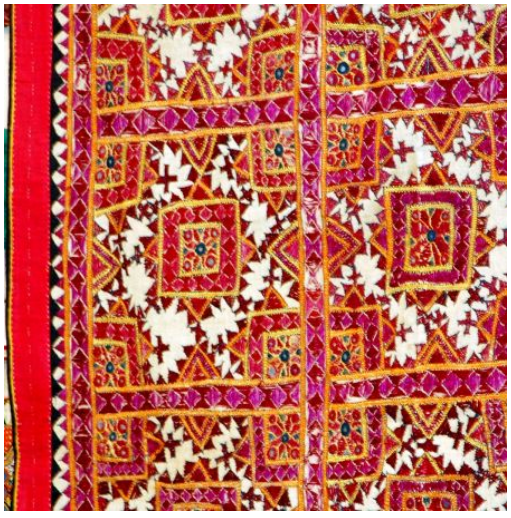
Comments: Jaina said that this is a beautiful dhanivo or dharaniy0 – used to cover up household goods. Probably from the Jat community in Kutch. Details.

Note the use of the camel and girl/goddess motif detailed below.

Comment: This is a skirt made of Mashru material. Details.

It is made with silk on the outside and cotton on the inside and is created on a complex loom. Such a structure came to be in order to circumvent the mandate of the Islamic community that silk could not be worn on the skin. With this fabric, the cotton side faces the skin and the silk faces outward.

Comment: Jaina said that this is a lovely dhaaraniyo or dhaniyo. She said that she is not sure which group it belongs to but that it is not Rabarai. Details.



Comment: This is a blouse called a "kapdu." Note the various animals and birds on it in the detail images below. Details.

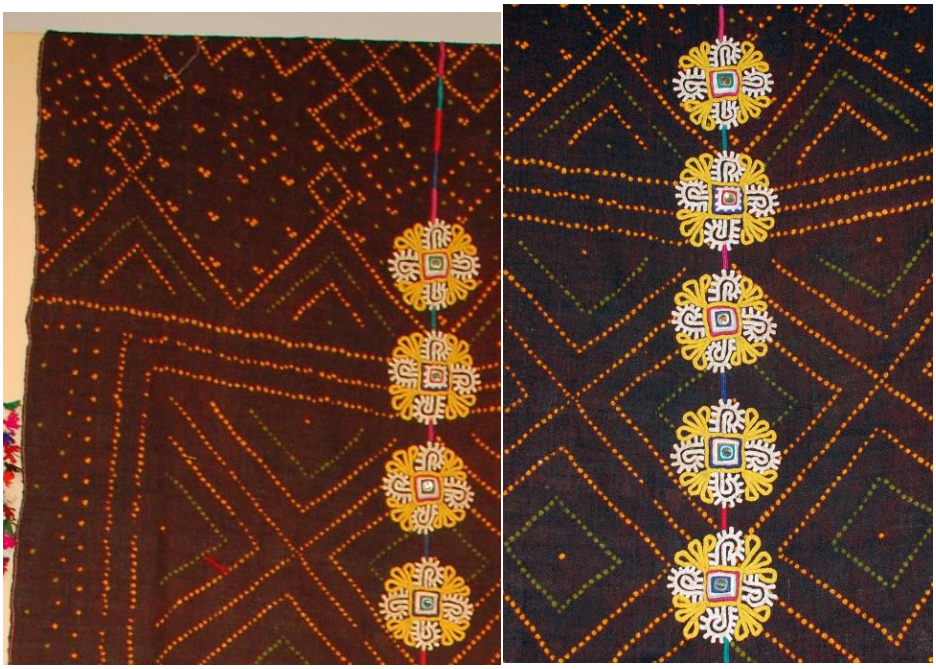
Comment: Jaina said that these are a pair of ceremonial bullock headdresses. When I first saw these, in Jaina's lecture above, they seemed similar to knee decorations for camels in Central Asia and Turkey. If they were headdresses I was not clear why there were two.

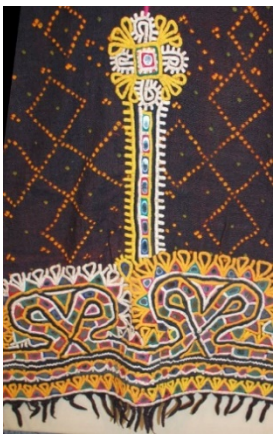
I thought that perhaps bullocks are usually used in pairs, but have seen some photos of singles.

Jaina indicates that bullocks are used both singly and in pairs and that fact there there are two of these bullock head decorations suggests that they are intended for use on a bullock pair. Details. Probably natural dyes.

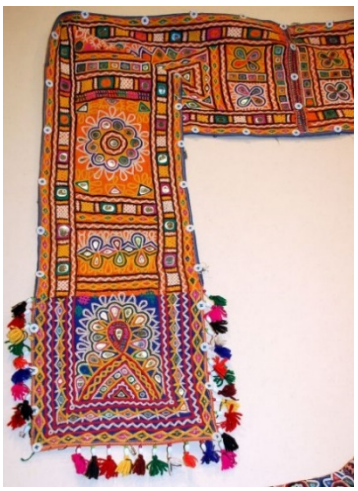
Comment: This is a groom’s ceremonial sword shield of the Debariya Rabari. Details.

Comment: This is a Ludhi – ceremonial "Aanu" shawl of the Vagadia Rabari tribe, with eleven florets. An expensive one. Details.





Comment: This is a groom's shoulder cloth/scarf called "bokani" or "bukani." Kaachi Rabari tribe. Details.

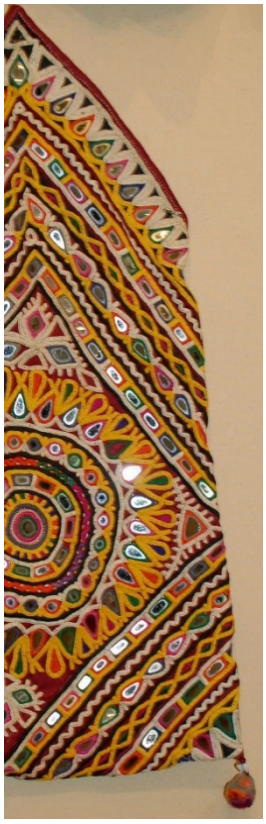


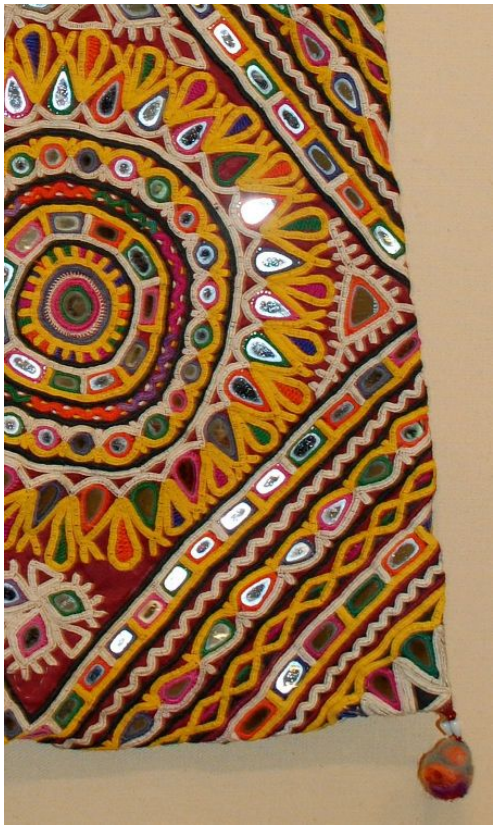
Comment: This is a ceremonial "kediyu" for a Debariya Rabari child. Probably used for a wedding.

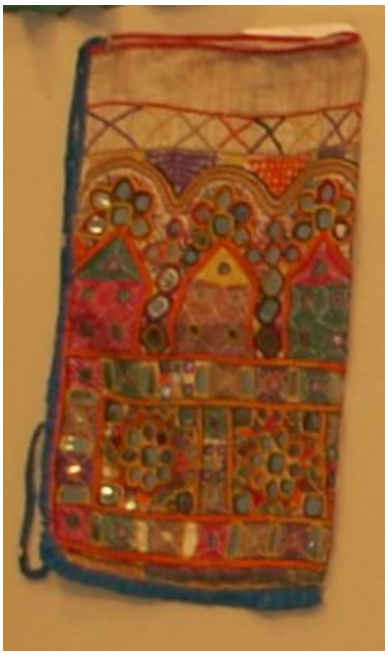
Details.

Comment: This is a Vagadiya dowy bag – envelope style.

Details.







The image above is not good. Here, below, is a better image of a similar piece from the lecture slides.

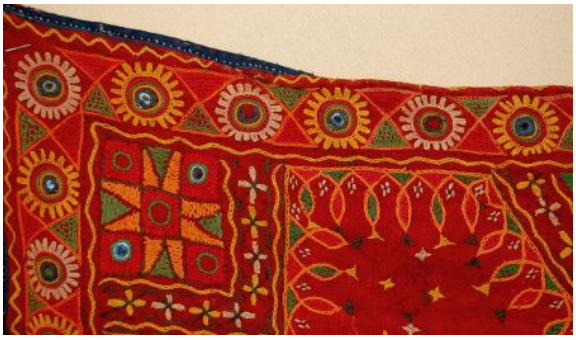
Comment: This is a superb Jat community (not Rabari) dowy bag. Note the use of silk floss and negative spaces.

The detail, below, shows its character much more clearly.

Comment: Not sure where this is from, but, it is, certainly, Gujarat. The flowers could be mochi work.

The last piece of the day was below.

Comment: This piece is also from Gujarat, with rich, natural dyed red hand-spun cloth. Probably not Rabari.



Jaina answered questions and adjourned her session. The forward migration began…

Jaina’s dress deserved notice.

I want to thank Jaina for coming and presenting this interesting program. She and I have known one another via the internet, since, perhaps, 2004, so it was especially good to see her in person. She not

only came from a great distance, she gave two programs: this one, and another she gave, the next day, to our local textile club. You will eventually also be able to enjoy that second presentation on my Eccentric Wefts site.

Jaina expressed her own thanks with this calling card.

I hope you have enjoyed this program by a person who travels widely in traditional societies, documenting their ways of life and their textiles.

Regards,

R. John Howe[6]

[6] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2016/09/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for January, 2017

Amy Gould and Matthew Polk on Radiocarbondating of Andean Textiles 2

Posted in Uncategorized on January 3, 2017 by rjohn

On July 9, 2016, Amy Gould and Matthew Polk gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program here at the Textiles Museum in Washington, DC on carbon-dating of Andean textiles.

Amy is a Graduate of Rhode Island School of Design with degrees in Fine Art and Architecture.

In 1983 Amy founded her own firm, Gould Architects, based in Baltimore and specializing in healthcare and institutional architectural services. Her client list includes many of the regions great institutions such as the National Aquarium, Johns Hopkins Medical System, the University of Maryland Medical System and the Baltimore Symphony.

In 1996 Amy was elected to the American Institute of Architects National Board of Directors and was elevated to the College of Fellows in 2000 for her leadership in the legislative arena.

She is a former Trustee of the Textile Museum and is currently serving as a Trustee of the Baltimore Museum of Art in Baltimore where she has chaired the Accessions Committee for AAAPI- Arts of Asia, Ancient Americas, and Pacific Islands.

Matt is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University with a degree in Physics and is also a graduate of the Harvard Business School, OPM Executive program.

In 1972 Matt co-founded Polk Audio, one of the best known makers of high quality loudspeakers. He sold the company in 2006 and retired in 2008. From 2009 to 2011 he served as President of Gibson Island. In 2010 he co-founded MSI-DFAT Services which is the premier provider of acoustic testing services for spacecraft.

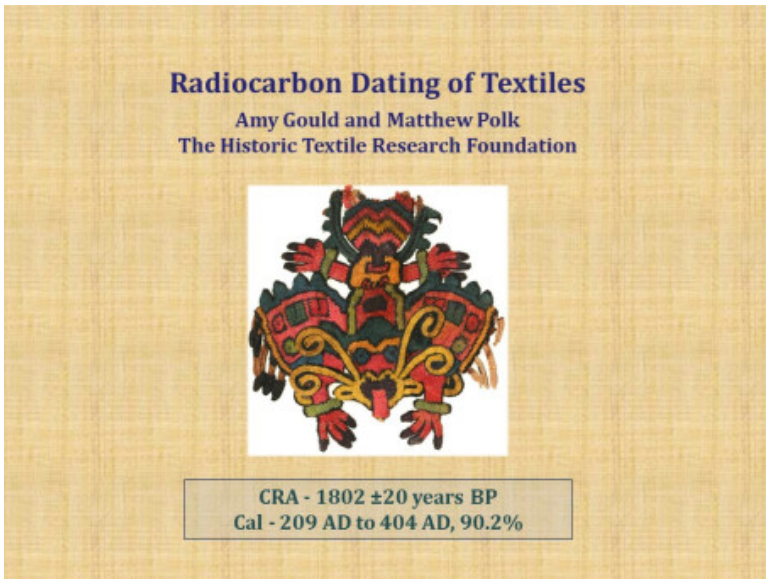
Matt is a former trustee of the Baltimore Museum of Art and currently serves on the Johns Hopkins Department of Physics and Astronomy advisory board and its executive committee.

Over the last 35 years their common interest in textiles has led them to create an eclectic collection which includes one of the nation's most important groups of Andean textiles and Central African textiles along with significant groups of ethnic Chinese, Japanese and other Asian textiles. And, yes, more than a few nomadic carpets.

In 2009, as an outgrowth of their interest in understanding more about historic textiles, they established the Historic Textile Research Foundation, a 501-C-3, dedicated to creating a database of textile radiocarbon dating information for use by museums, scholars, collectors, dealers and other interested parties.

They began with an illustrated lecture. Mostly, we are going to let the slides in it tell the story, with occasional additional comments.

You can see larger versions of any slide by clicking on it up to three times and you are encouraged to do that.

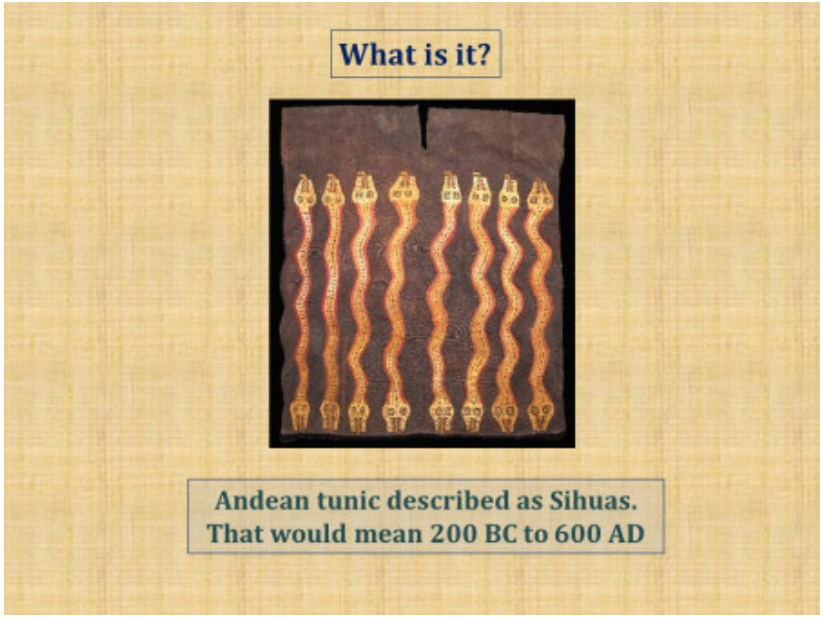


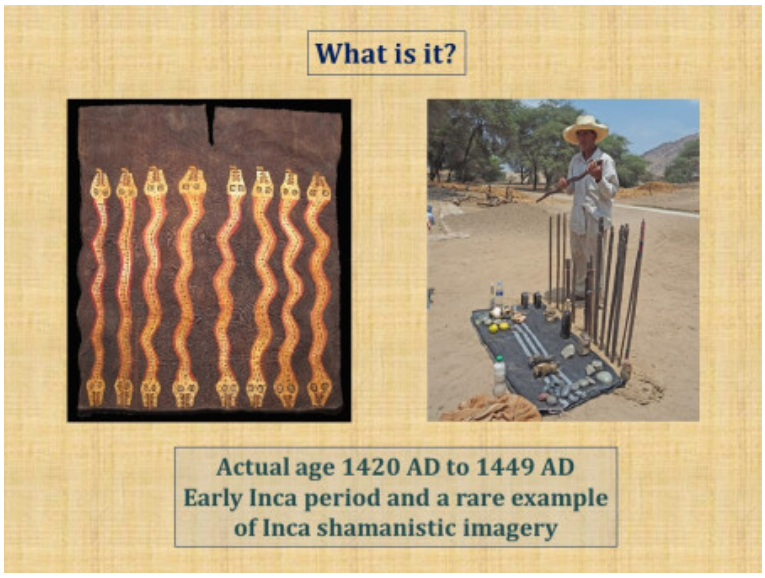
Sometimes the age of an object is a subject of great importance. For example carbon dating of the Shroud of Turin has been very controversial. The results have questioned the authenticity of the relic causing some to question the validity of the Radiocarbon dating method itself.

Nevertheless, the science behind radiocarbon dating is well accepted and most things are not so controversial. When something about a piece doesn't seem right carbon dating may shed some light. In this case carbon dating showed that a textile believed to be Nazca was actually early Inca period with a red square added in the center using old wool, presumably, from another piece to improve it's marketability.

Sometimes carbon dating can answer questions about how textiles were used. Multiple samples from this central African Kuba Overskirt showed that it is composed of panels from 19th, 18th and possibly 17th centuries suggesting generations of owners modified and added to the piece.

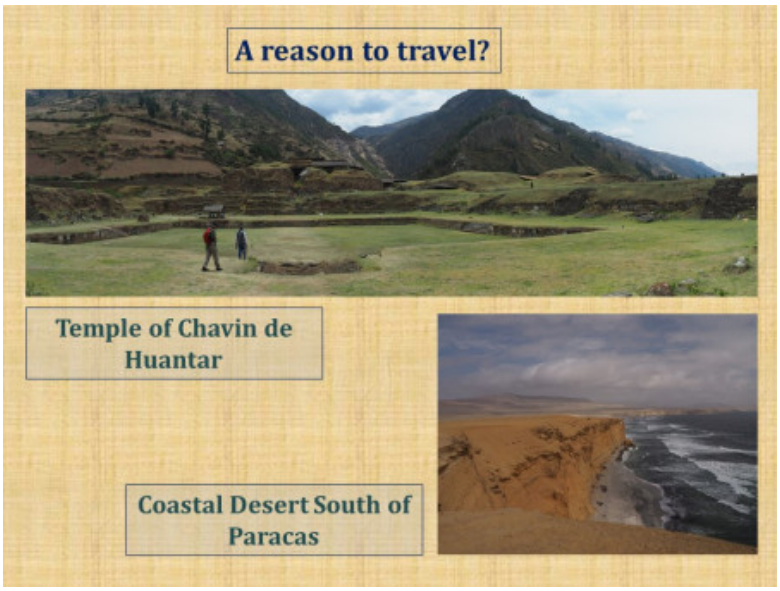
The textile traditions of the Hainan Island ethnic groups were virtually unknown outside China until the 1990's. Little research has been done into the origins of these traditions. Carbon dating of this "Ghost Cover" showed that it was at least early 20th c. and possibly much older.





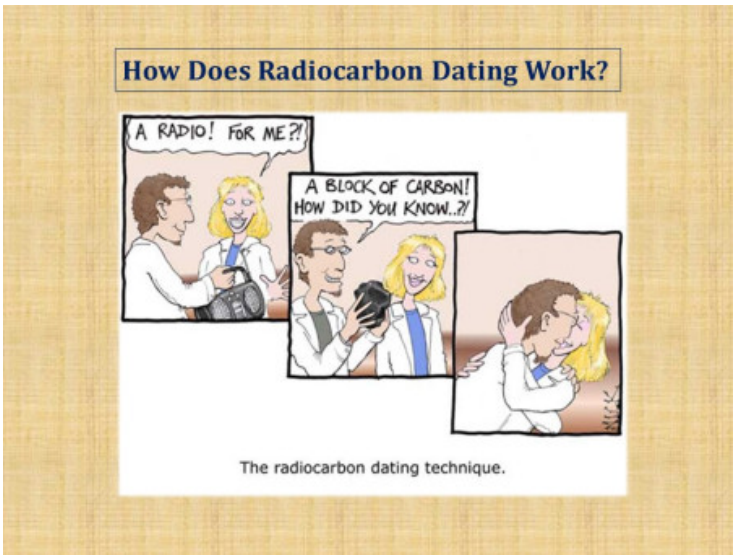
When a piece is not like anything else carbon dating can sometimes help us figure out what it is. Many who looked at this unusual piece thought I could be Sihuas, possibly as early as 200AD. But the carbon date placed it in the early Inca period, 1420AD to 1449AD. The two headed snakes suggest it was associated with shamanistic rituals observed by the Spanish conquistadors and still practiced today by Shamans such as the one pictured above.

Carbon dating of groups of pieces can sometimes reveal important patterns. Carbon dates on several dozen Andean textiles from the 1st millennium BC showed a sudden shift between 500 BC and 400 BC from painted, plain woven cotton textiles to colorful, wool textiles with motifs executed in complex tapestry, embroidery and knitting techniques. How and why this occurred is still an unanswered question.

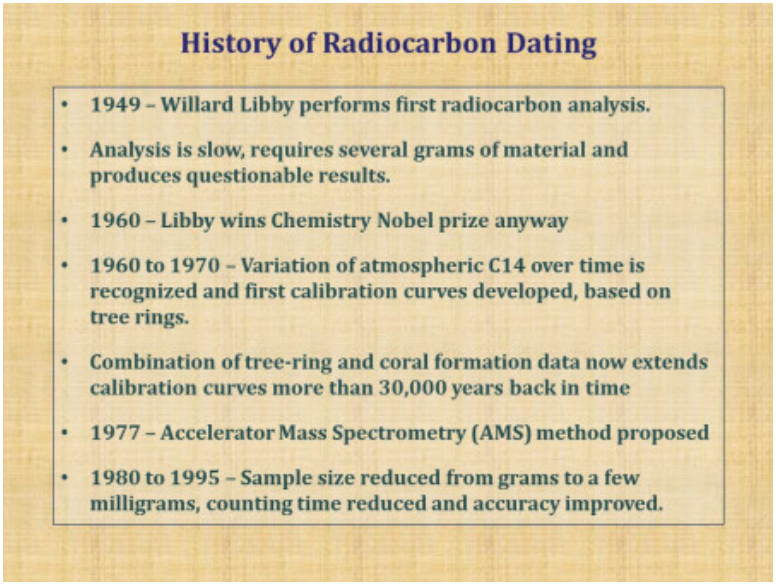


And, of course, investigating these questions can be a great excuse for travel. Our visit last year to the Temple of Chavin de Huantar (circa 1200 BC) on the Amazon side of the Andes in Northern Peru really helped us understand how the Chavin civilization exerted such a powerful influence over the entire region for more than 600 years.

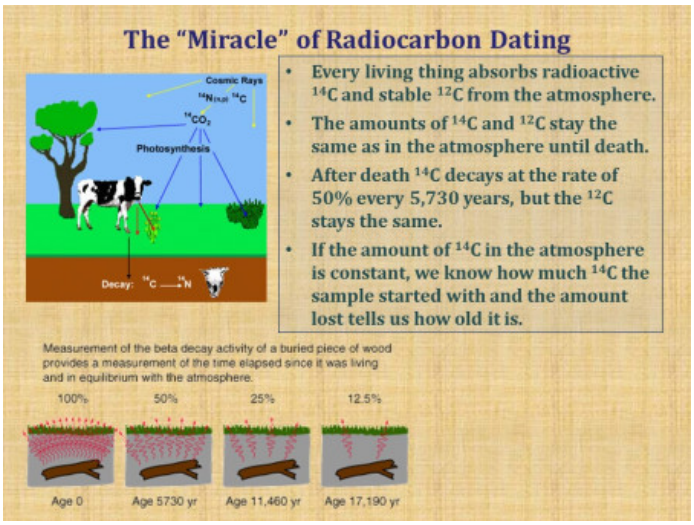
The answers to many other important questions lie in museums who have virtually no research funding. Through our foundation we have begun a project with the Museo Nacionale in Lima carbon dating layers of Paracas bundles to understand whether these bundles were maintained over time by their communities. The answers to this question will provide important clues to understanding ancient Andean burial rituals and their culture of ancestor worship.



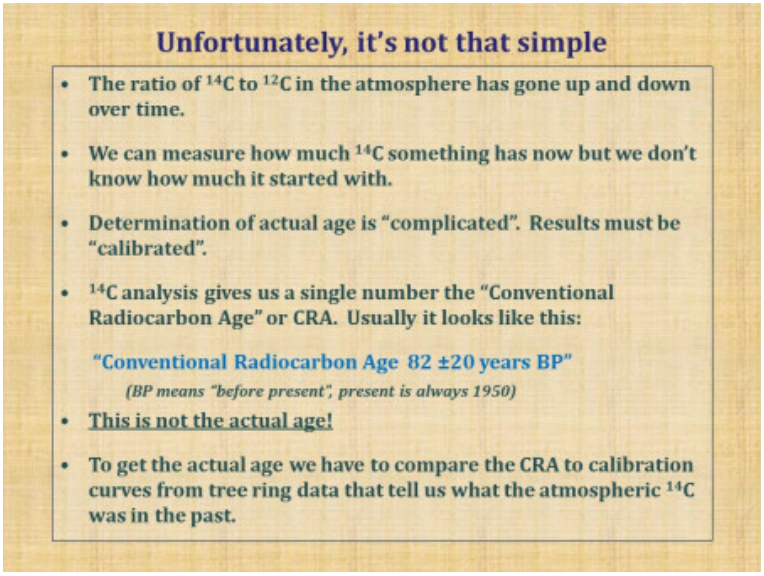
Okay, just a joke. But, the Radiocarbon dating technique is a quite modern development which has only recently evolved to become a really practical method for dating objects, such as textiles, where removal of only the tiniest amount of material for analysis can be tolerated.



Reduction of sample size and improved accuracy over the past 30 years has made it possible to apply this technique to many more objects. Analysis is now possible with less than 10 milligrams of material meaning that samples can be taken from pristine textiles with no visible impact.



The idea behind carbon dating is pretty straight forward. Every living thing constantly absorbs radioactive carbon 14 (C14) in small quantities from the atmosphere. As a result all living things have the same amount of C14 as their surroundings. After death, however, the C14 is no longer replenished and starts to decay at a known rate. If we measure how much C14 has disappeared from a sample we can calculate how long it has been since the sample was alive.



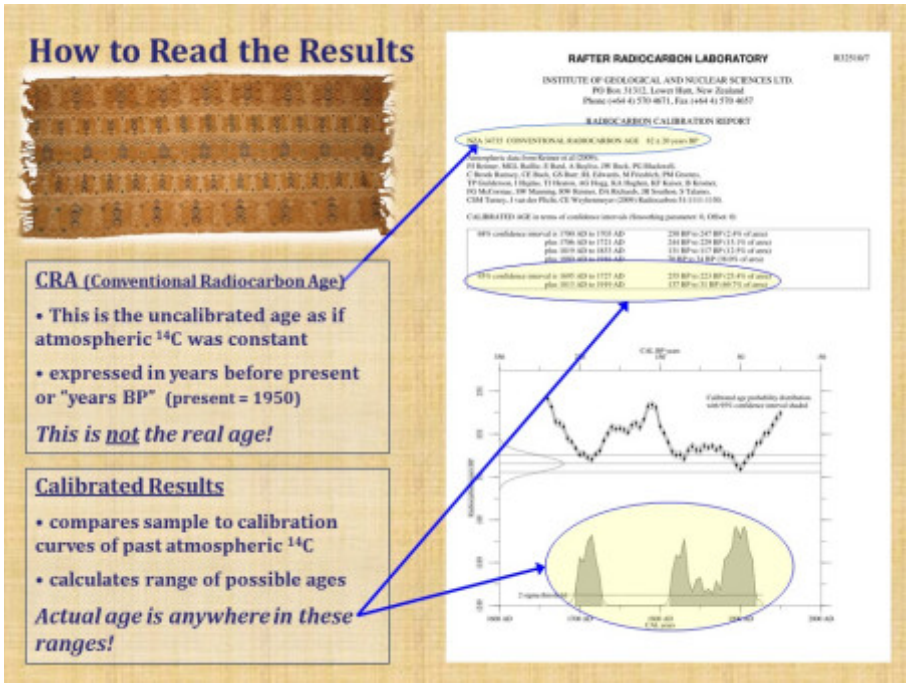
But, nothing is ever simple. When we analyse a sample today we measure how much C14 is left but because the amount of C14 in the atmosphere has changed up and down over time, we don't know how much it had to start with. That makes the determination of actual age a more complicated process.

We start with the Conventional Radiocarbon Age (CRA). This is how old our sample would be if the amount of C14 in the atmosphere had never changed and was always the same as it was in

1950. The CRA is not the actual age of the sample it is just an approximation and the starting point for the analysis.

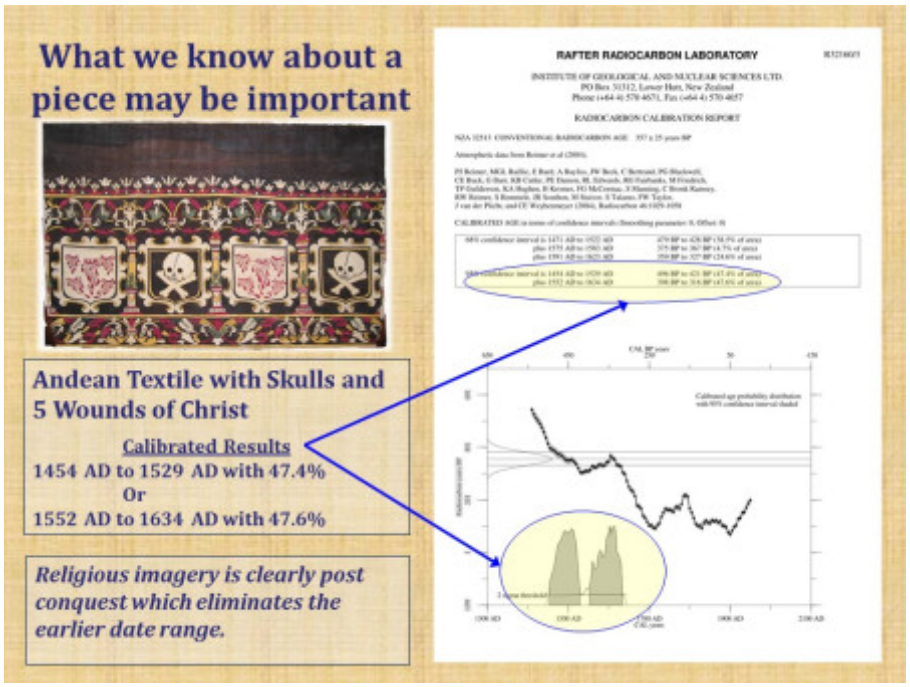
The amount of C14 in the atmosphere over the past 10,000 or so years has been determined by making measurements on tree rings of known age. This 'calibration curve' can be statistically compared to the amount of C14 we measure in a sample today to give us a number of *possible* age ranges for the sample. The analysis also gives us the probability that the actual age falls within any particular range.

This is the most difficult thing to understand about Radiocarbon dating and has led to many false impressions about how accurate or useful it is.

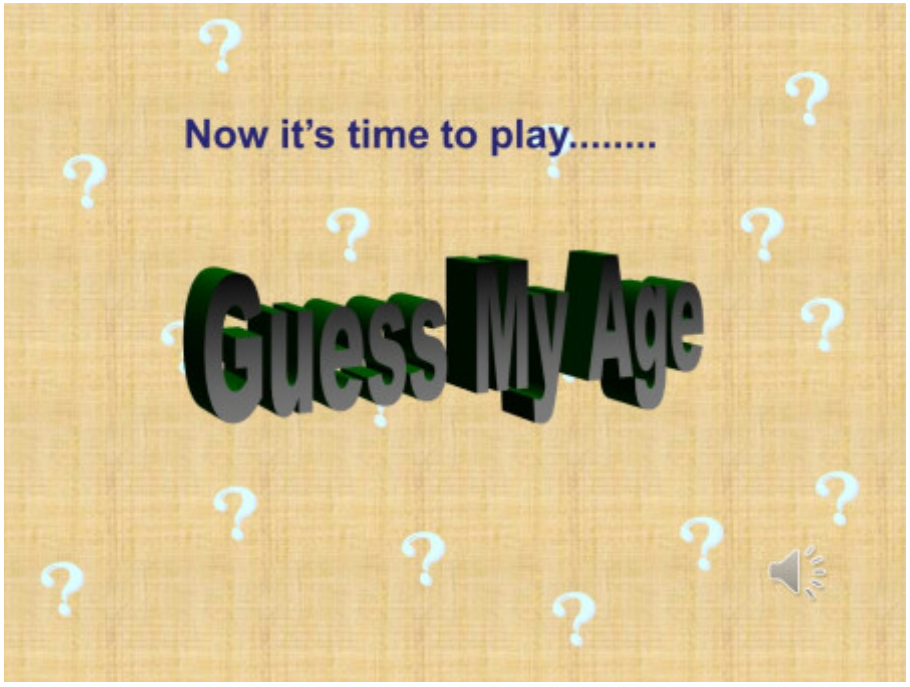


For example, the CRA of this Hainan Island "Ghost Cover" is 82 years before present (BP) +/- 20 years. (We always use 1950 = the present.) So, the CRA tells us this piece dates to approximately 1868 +/- 20 years.

If we compare this result to the calibration curve we get the possible age ranges with probabilities: 1813 to 1919 at 69.7% probability and 1695 to 1727 at 25.4% probability. The actual age could be anywhere in these two ranges. We can say for sure that the piece is earlier than 1919 but could be as old as 1695. Although this is not very precise it is still useful in telling us that this textile tradition dates to at least the beginning of the 20th century and probably 19th c.



Sometimes what we know about a piece can help us narrow the range of possible dates. The calibrated results for this early colonial era Andean textile were 1454 to 1529 with 47.4% probability and 1552 to 1634 with 47.6% probability. But, the European religious imagery of the piece tells us it must have been created after the conquest in 1532. So, the earlier date range can be eliminated meaning the wool used in this piece was harvested some time between 1552 and 1634 and the piece itself most likely made within the same time period.



(click two or three times on the image above to get a larger version)

It's always fun to test your textile instincts. Without reading beyond the descriptions below take a look at the five textiles above and choose the one you think is oldest. Write its number on paper. Below is a more detailed description of each to help.

These five pieces have been carbon dated and span a range of nearly 2,000 years. All are warp faced Andean tunics made of wool probably alpaca.

#1 is a beautiful, finely woven tunic with a light, very soft feel, made in two pieces joined in the center, with distinctive red wool stitching joining the sides.

#2 is a very heavy wool tunic made of thick, ropy natural color wool yarns with crude elemental brown stripes at the sides.

#3 is a classic Aymara marching stripe design. It has discontinuous warps at the shoulder, often seen in pre-Columbian pieces, with a blue field on the other side. The warp faced weave is very tight and slightly stiff.

#4 is a very soft, somewhat loosely woven tunic with an unusual trapezoidal form. The edge bindings and neck treatment are beautiful multi-colored Inca style.

#5 has a nice floppy feel and makes extensive use of yarns spun in alternating directions creating subtle changes in surface texture to enhance the narrow pin stripe design.

Done that? OK, now, scroll down.

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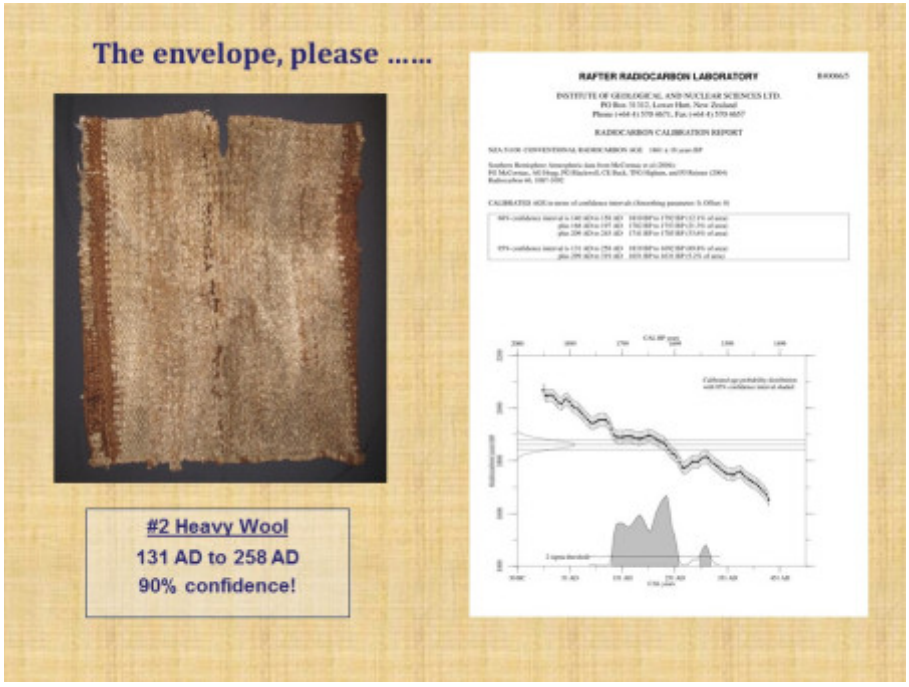

We were shocked to learn that this heavy wool tunic was nearly 2,000 years old! Utilitarian garments like this rarely survive this long.

Now, removing the oldest piece which of the remaining four is oldest:

Again, write down the number of the one you think is oldest, the scroll down to see the carbon-dating-based answer.

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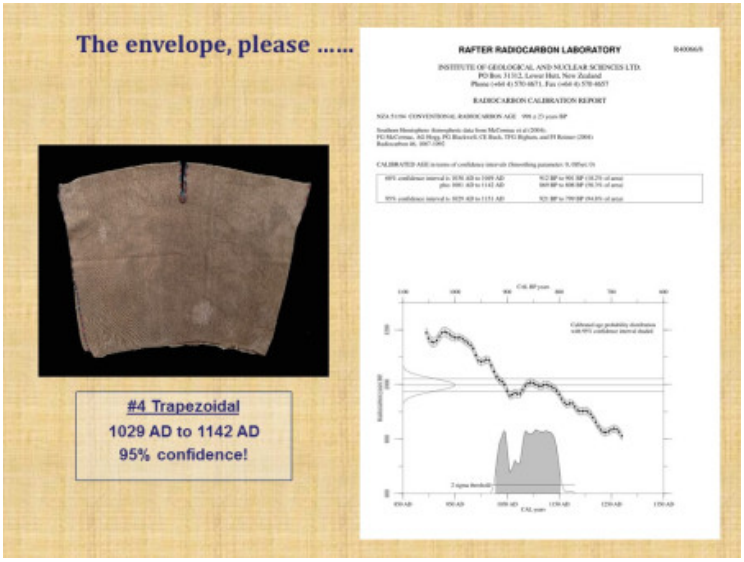

It was not surprising to learn that this adorable little tunic is nearly 1,000 years old. The trapezoidal form is seen in a few pre-Columbian pieces but never, to our knowledge, in post conquest

tunics. Since making this presentation we have separately carbon dated some of the old repairs in this piece as having been made around 1750. That suggests this piece was still in active use six to seven hundred years after it was made.

Now we are down to three. Again, write the number of the one you think is oldest before scrolling down to the book answer.

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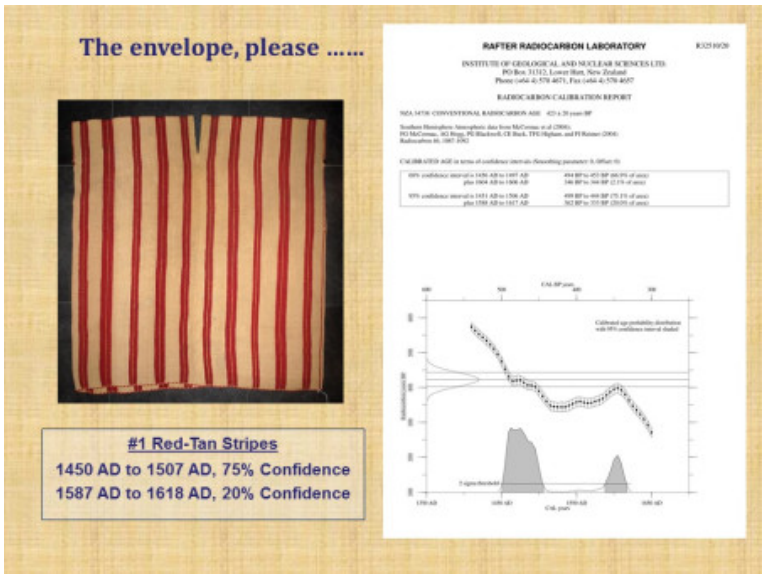

Again, not surprising to see that this piece is most likely to be Inca period and pre-conquest. The two piece construction is often seen in pre-conquest pieces from the Arica area in Northern Chile.

The final two tunics are 250 years apart. Write down your candidate for the oldest then scroll down to see the answer.

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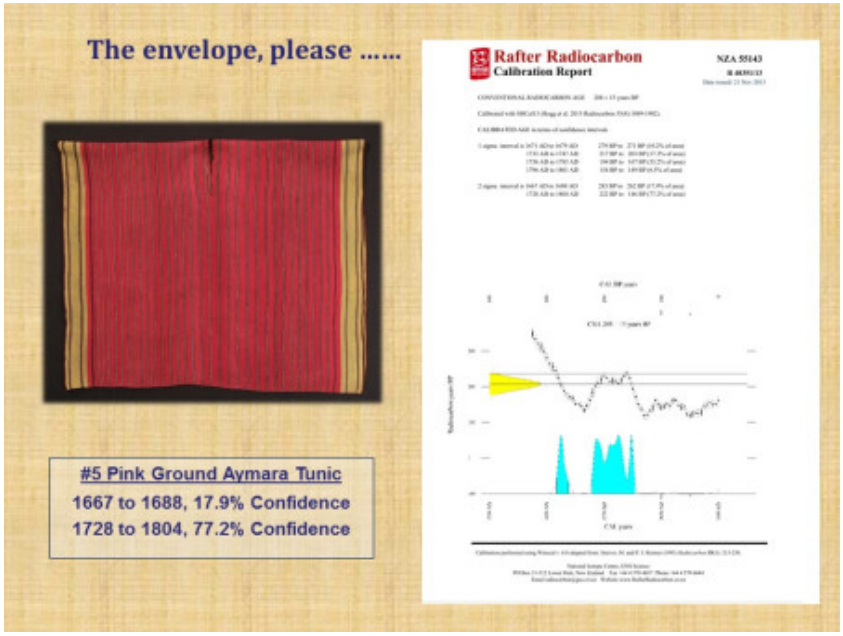
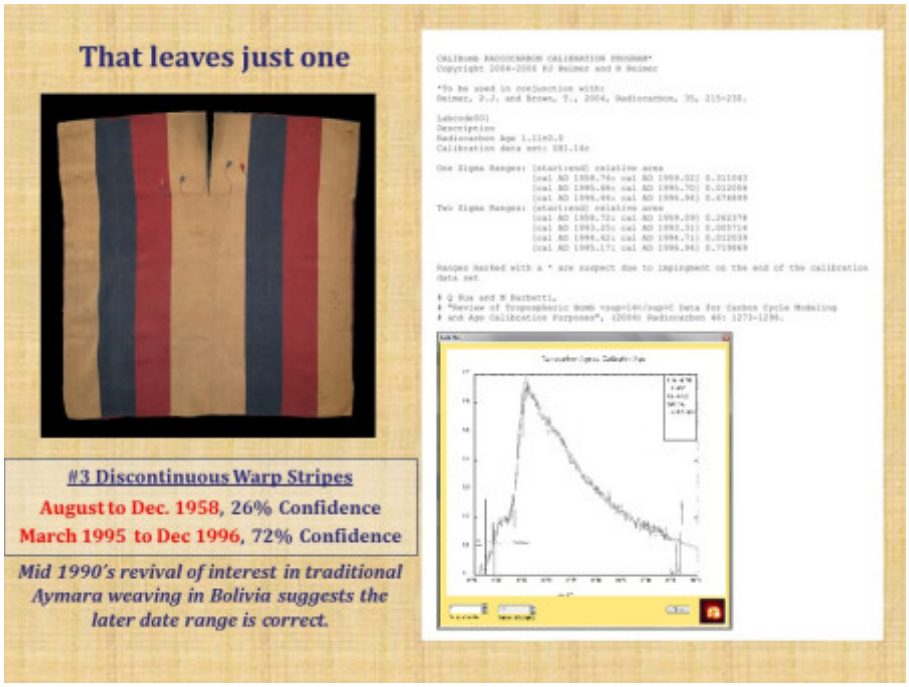


Tunics and other forms of traditional dress were outlawed by the Spanish after the nearly successful rebellion of the 1770's. So, we can say with that this very sophisticated tunic is most likely mid-18th c. with some possibility it could be late 17th c..

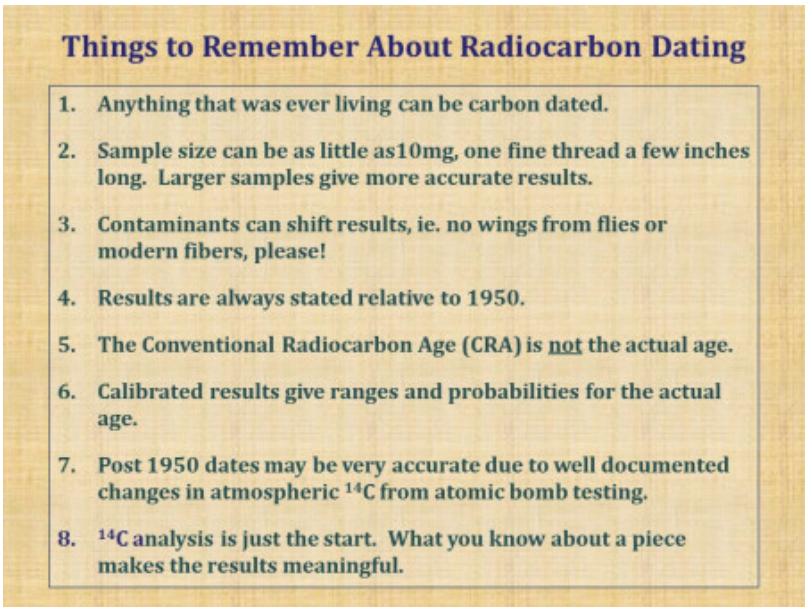
Now, you may be wondering about the last tunic.



We've included this piece to make the point that looks can be deceiving and that even quite modern pieces can be accurately radiocarbon dated. The discontinuous warp and marching stripe design is characteristic of some of the most beautiful and iconic Aymara tunics of the 16th century. Our instincts told us something wasn't quite right with this piece but we really hoped carbon dating would prove that it was a genuine 16th c. tunic. Unfortunately carbon dating results show that the piece is modern, most likely made between March and December of 1996 (72% probability). This coincides with a revival of interest in traditional Aymara weaving in the early and mid-1990's. Whether it was made as a tribute or meant to deceive we will never know.

However, it does show that it is possible to carbon date very recent items, sometimes with great accuracy. The signature of Atomic bomb testing after 1950 is immediately recognizable when analyzing a sample and can lead to a very precise determination of age.

Finally, here's a quick summary of things to remember about radiocarbon dating.



Also, Amy and I have established a foundation dedicated to building a database of radiocarbon dated textiles. If you have any carbon dated textiles we'd love to include that information in our database.

Thank You!

Matthew and Amy then took questions on their lecture before moving on to discuss the pieces they had brought in.

The pieces they brought included some featured in their lecture.

They walked us through these in the wool allowing for treatment on different aspects. I will treat them in the order in which they were arrayed in the room, not, necessarily in the order they were treated.

First were the five tunics from "Guess My Age". Here they are left to right, one at a time. Matthew and Amy are speaking in the Comments.

Comment on AM1: #1 is a beautiful, finely woven tunic with a light, very soft feel, made in two pieces joined in the center, with distinctive red wool stitching joining the sides and "evil eye" style rabette along the bottom edge. Z2S yarns, possibly Vicuna wool. As mentioned previously the two piece construction style is typical of pre-conquest tunics from the Arica area.

*

Comment: #2 is a very heavy wool tunic made of thick, ropy natural color wool yarns with crude elemental brown stripes at the sides. A very rare example of a utilitarian garment that has survived for nearly 2,000 years. Very beautiful in my opinion.

Detail.

Comment: #3 is a classic Aymara marching stripe design. It has discontinuous warps at the shoulder, often seen in pre-Columbian and conquest era pieces, with a blue field on the other side. The warp faced weave is very tight and slightly stiff. Although it looks just like a fabulous 16th c. tunic it is, in fact, modern and probably made in 1996. The give away was the stiff feel and the Z3S yarns. Genuine antique pieces are always Z2S or S2Z. Nevertheless, it's still a beautiful piece. Detail.

Comment: #4 is a very soft, somewhat loosely woven tunic with an unusual trapezoidal form. The edge bindings and neck treatment are multi-colored Inca style. As mentioned before the piece itself is nearly 1,000 years old but we've carbon dated repairs to as late as 1750. It is a well loved piece which has clearly enjoyed many, many generations of affectionate ritual use. A very 'honest' piece and one of our favorites.

Comment: #5 has a nice floppy feel and makes extensive use of yarns spun in alternating directions to enhance the narrow pin stripe design through changes in surface texture. The combination of Z2S and S2Z yarns creates a herringbone effect in the surface of the textile that sets off the stripes. Use of this technique along the edges is also said to allow the textile to drape without curling. A great example of how the Aymara employ great sophistication in weaving to achieve subtle effects.

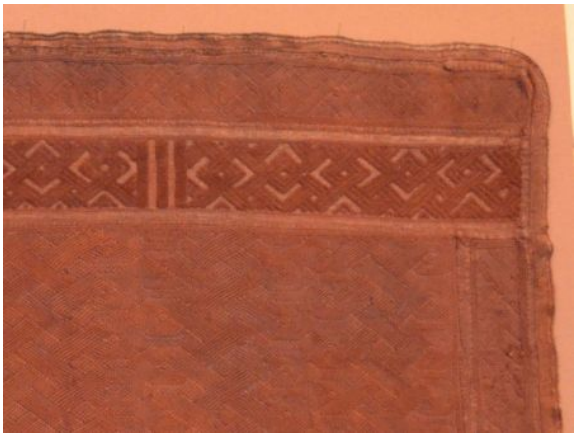
Amy spoke to a textile on the right.

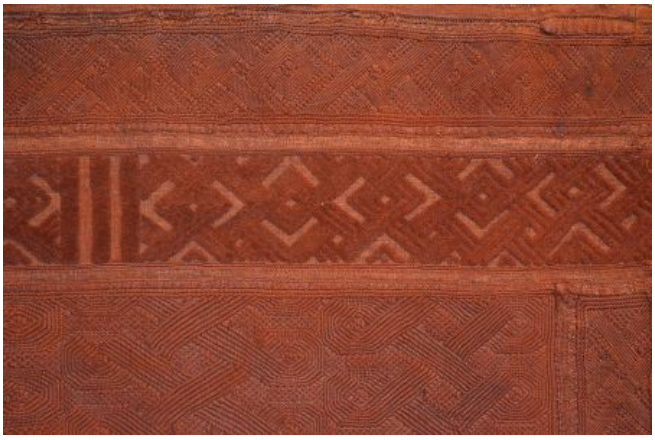
Comment on AM6: as mentioned earlier no one was really sure what this tunic was when it first came to us. Carbon dating showed it was early Inca period. But, it wasn't until last year during a meeting with a Shaman in northern Peru that we began to really understand the piece. His use of a snake motif staff demonstrated to us the ritual significance of the double headed snakes shown in this tunic. Also of note is that the snakes are woven, not painted, employing an unusual displaced weft technique to produce the curving forms.

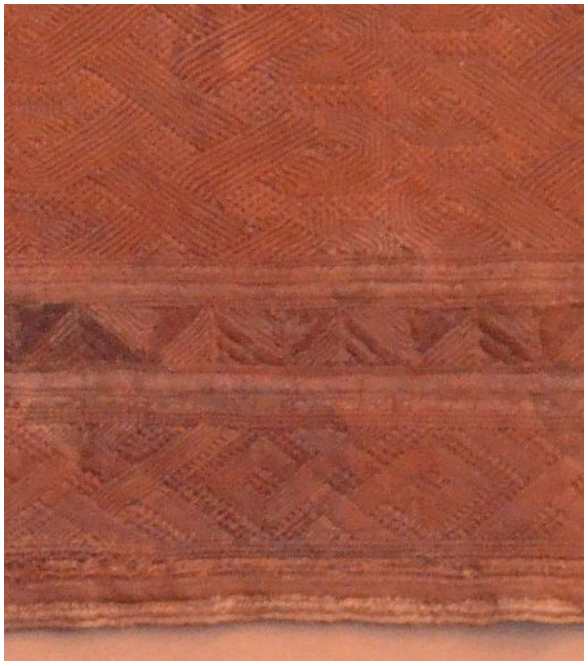
There was a textile on a tripod on the left.

Comment: This is a Kuba Overskirt from what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The very fine weave and deep red color suggests it was part of the royal family's collection. It is made of rafia palm fibers with many separate panels in a combination of embroidery and cut pile techniques. By separately carbon dating six of the panels we determined that some panels were 19th c. while some were 18th c. and possibly 17th c suggesting it was handed down and modified by many generations of owners.

Details.







There were two textiles on the front board.

Comment: This so called "Ghost Cover" from the Li ethnic group of Hainan Island (South coast of China) is an example of the textiles used in funerary rituals. During open air cremation a Ghost Cover such as this is thrown gently back and forth over the smoldering pyre. Such use, although infrequent, is hard on these textiles. Few have survived intact and fewer still with a white ground.

Little is known about these Hainan island ethnic groups who were so isolated that they did not even have a written language until the mid-1950's. The late 19th c. to early 20th c. radio carbon date for this piece and several others we have dated sheds some light on the ritual textile traditions of this area. Detail.

Comment: This is the piece we talked about early in the presentation that when it came to us had a red square in the middle of the brown field.

The dealer said it was Nazca which would have placed it in the range of 200AD to 600AD. However, the technique looked like classic Aymara warp faced weaving to us, suggesting that it was much later. Also, the red square in the middle just seemed out of place and even without magnification one could see the cut ends of brown warps tucked back into the weave around the red square suggesting that the red yarns had been added later. Carbon dating of the original brown warps placed the piece in the middle Inca period, 1450AD to 1500AD. However, a sample of the red yarns from the center dated to 1220AD to 1280AD, 200 years earlier.

It's not uncommon to see old yarns from a very damaged piece used to repair or restore another piece. Here, it looks like someone used yarns from an old piece just to make the piece look more interesting. This was probably done prior to 1980 after which the importance of early Aymara textiles was beginning to be appreciated. After making this determination we had the red yarns removed and the area rewoven with matching yarns to restore the original appearance of the piece. Ironically, today a genuine Inca period Aymara textile is far more valuable than a relatively plain Nazca textile.
Detail.

Amy and Matthew answered questions, on the pieces brought in and brought their session to a close.

I want to thank them for yet another excellent session that was both interactive and authoritative. Thanks to them also for making it possible to construct this virtual version of this program, and for their patient work in the editing of it.

I hope you have enjoyed and learned from it, too.

If radiocarbon dating and/or Andean textiles interest you, you can see another program of this sort that Amy and Matthew gave here at The Textile Museum a few years ago.

https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2010/05/23/carbon-dating-for-andean-textiles/

Regards,

R. John Howe[7]

[7] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/01/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for February, 2017

Michael Heilman: American Rugs from American Tools

Posted in Uncategorized on February 25, 2017 by rjohn

On February 4, 2017, Michael Heilman, a long-time weaver, here in the Washington area, gave a program at The Textile Museum, entitled, "American Rugs from American Tools.

Michael said that his career, making rugs, began when he encountered an 1881 tool that he still uses today. He makes rugs using hooking, tufting and weaving approaches. He has taught in these areas and has exhibited his work a several respected, juried, craft shows on the Eastern Coast. He does some of his own dyeing. He added that he is self-taught.

In his work life he was an attorney for the State and Justice Departments. An assignment to Morocco inspired his interest in rugs, when he commissioned one and saw it woven.

Michael displayed a number of the tools he uses to create rugs.

He said that he had brought some hooked rugs, tufted rugs and woven ones, that he had designed and made, to display and describe.

Michael began with a flat-woven rug (about four feet by five).

He said that he built his own loom for this piece and took this design from 1920s Bauhaus rug by Gunta Stozl (below).

The structures of Michael's rug include slit tapestry, dovetail tapestry and curved areas required extra, eccentric wefts. Each section of this rug presented different challenges, like maintaining consistent tension in both warps and wefts.

Michael said that it took two years to weave and will one day go to a family member. He considers it a marker of the current pitch of his weaving skills.

Here are some details.

A colorful rug with strong graphics and designs inspired by a distinguished source.

The inspiration for Michael's second rug is from Turkey. It was also flat-woven.

As you can see the field has only three colors, black, red and turquoise, with a touch of white in the end elems.

Michael did the dyeing for this rug.

He said that the red is from cochineal. He found that the reds obtained from cochineal varied depending on the mineral content of the water use (something that changes in different periods of the year).

He said that the clearest reds are produced by using distilled water (ed. note that this red is clear but still on the orange side; we often say that we suspect a given red is from cochineal because it has a blue cast; clearly not always the case).

The turquoise is from indigo over onion skin.

Details.

Two interesting features of Michael's weaving of this rug.

First, although the vertical color changes (see below) might tempt one to resort to slit tapestry, the shallow angle of them is so gradual that that might not be necessary in this rug.

Second, notice in the image below that Michael has used black warps in some areas and red ones in others.

This is a weft-faced weave. The wefts have been pounded down so tightly that the warps, regardless of color, do not show (notice that this is true even for the white stripes). But the use of different color warps in some areas ensures the saturation of the appearance of the red and the black in these areas.

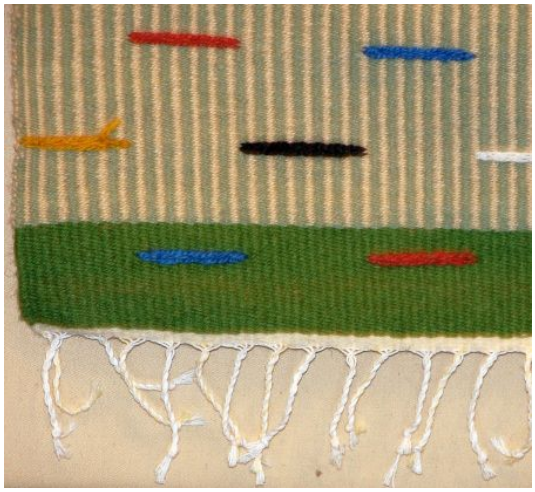
A third weaving seems simple but had its difficulties.

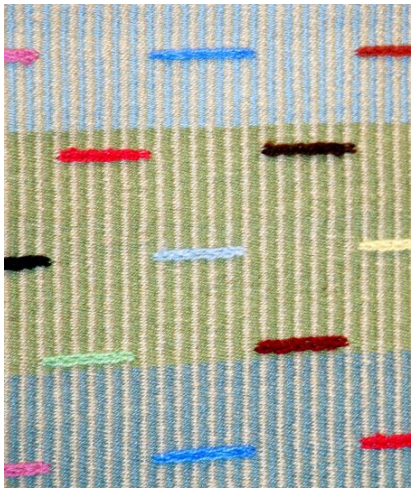
Here is a comprehensive view of this rug, unencumbered.

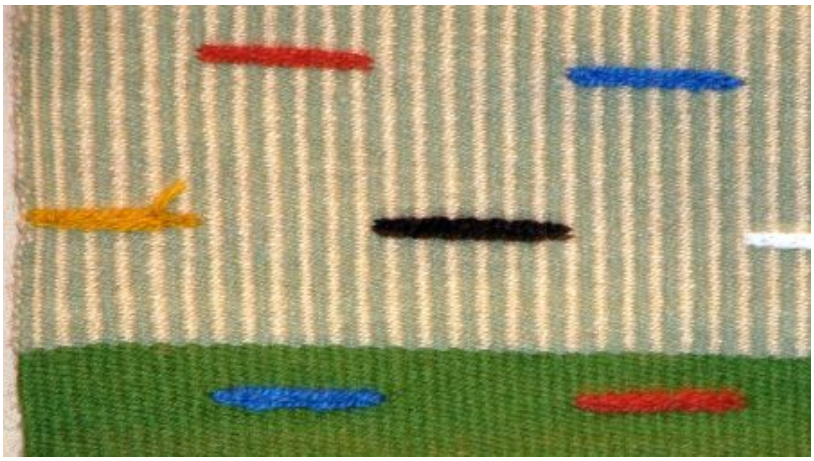
The weaving here seems straight forward with horizontal dashes done in sumac weave on horizontal bands of lighter color (the sumac bands raise above the surrounding ground, giving this piece an attractive texture). But Michael reports that working with these sumac dashes gave him an enormous appreciation of the challenges indigenous weavers faced working with sumac.

This piece has cotton warps, reputed to make such a rug lie flat. Michael said that the dyes are acid dyes set with vinegar.

Detail images.







The fourth rug was of the same type but with knotted horizontal dashes rather than sumac. The knotted dashes have pile tufts that stick out from the background fabric, more insistently that did the sumac dashes.

Michael said that this is his take on a type he saw in Turkey.

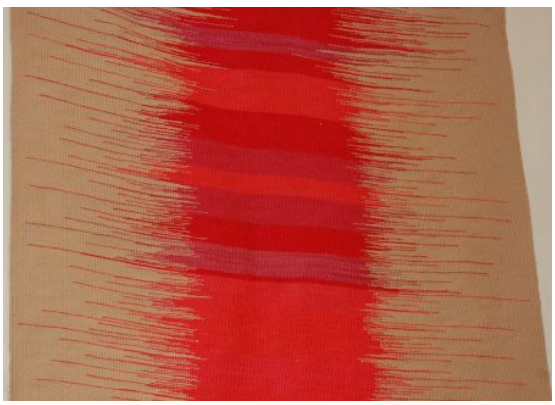
Details.

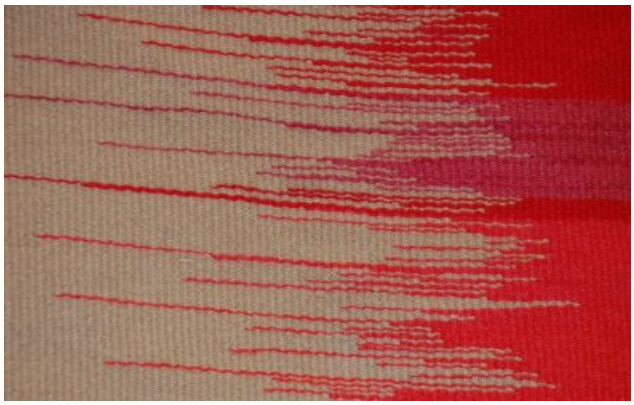
Here is a detail of the back of this piece. You are looking at the back of the pile knotted dashes.

Michael said that the next piece was inspired by Persian Mezandaran kilims.

He did the dyeing on this rug. The red is cochineal, done in small lots, using Fairfax water. The small lots work to produce the variations in "red" called "abrash." Michael said the mordants he used for the reds are tin and alum. With indigo he has used lye (says he used to use Liquid Plumber). He says that using synthetic "acid" dyes is safer.

Details.





The next rug was graphically dramatic. The design was inspired by a Turkish niche pattern (it has the look of one section of a "saf," a rug used in prayer with multiple niches like this one side by side, each for a single prayer, in a continuous textile). A narrow palette is used with real visual "punch."

*

Note that the white warps are perpendicular to the directional design (that is horizontal in the image above). The decision to orient the warps in this way in relation to pattern made long vertical color changes easy to do.

The image below has been turned 90 degrees so that the warps are in a vertical position.

This lets you see that the long "vertical" color changes are not that, but just changes in weft color. It is the short yellow bar that has the "long" vertical color changes. The slits, the use of slit tapestry would create, are closed by the use of dovetailed tapestry (see the telling jagged side edges on the yellow bar). Slits in the diagonal lines require a similar tapestry variety. Additional details.

Michael's next rug was the first hooked rug that he made that he liked. (The pattern was his own.) A cotton base, monks cloth, fabric was stretched on a frame, and a variety of tools used, including a "Rumpelstiltskin" hand needle.

Made with a newer version of the shuttle hook (the "Rumpelstiltskin Hand Needle).

This tool hooks the rug material onto the base fabric. Can use either yarn or fabric. Can make different heights of "pile" in designs.

This tool can replace the basic rug hooking tool, the even simpler "proddy."

(It simply pokes the hooking material through the holes in the backing, but has no hook. More frequent in England.)

Or the a little more complex, "latch hook."

This tool can do what all these three other tools can do.

Here are some details.

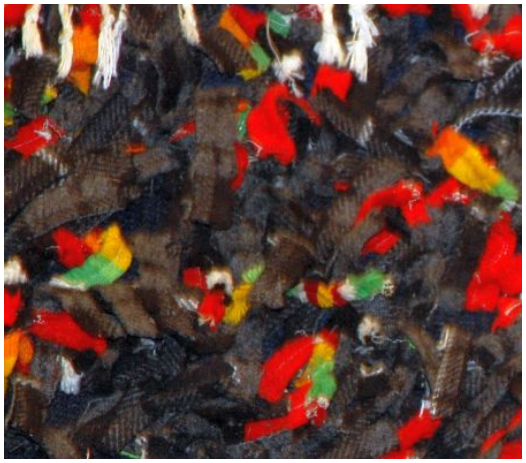
The next rug was entirely different.

Michael said that this rug is made from Pendleton coat fabric cut into strips 12 to 15 inches long. The strips are wrapped around to cotton warps but not knotted. Made on an upright floor loom. Michael said that it looks like some rag rugs, but was inspired by a Swedish bed rug he saw in a book.

What it threw up for me was a type of Moroccan rug that has begun to appear in the last few years.

These Moroccan rugs are called "boucherouite," a reference to worn or torn clothes. They have this same kind of long pile, are woven with symmetric knots, from a wider variety of materials. Some have synthetic fabrics and even plastic. They are drawing some collector attention.

Here are some detail images of Michael's piece.



Here is a detail of it, showing its front in the upper part and its back below. Notice that although the pile is not knotted, the piece is woven with several rows of weft between rows in which the pile strips are wrapped around two warps. And, of course, the dark blue area between the pile section is plain weave. The end finish is also woven, as you can see in the detail below.

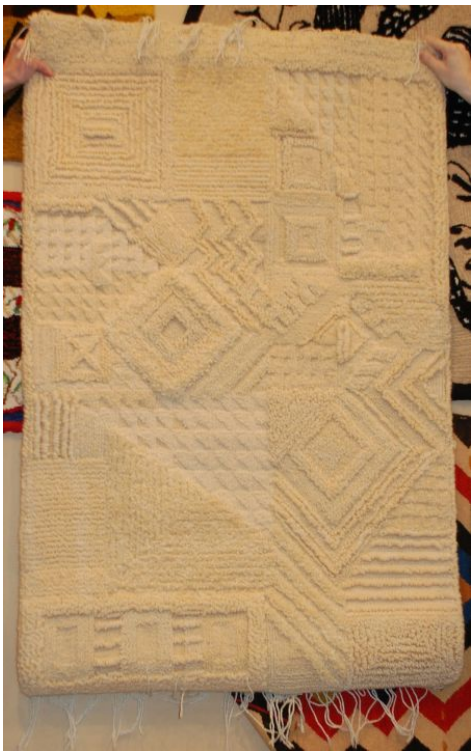
Michael said that the next piece demonstrate how flexible hooking rugs can be.

Unlike woven pieces that have to be built up from the bottom row by row (tapestry permits some sections to be built up further than others, but eventually the areas not built up need to be) hooked rugs can be made in any shape one wants.

It is possible to weave knotted pile rugs that are round, but when one hooks a rug a great deal more flexibility is available. Not only are the "hooked" stitches digital (this lets you fashion any design you like), there is no necessary sequence in which a given hooked stitch needs to be put into a given hole in the backing. It is Michael's demonstration of how easy it is to weave a round hooked rug. He said that his inspiration was a Moroccan plate. Although the shape of the backing with its hole is often rectangular, one can fill in only the holes needed to produce a round rug.

Michael said that the gazelle in this rug was made with a tufting gun that cuts the yarns used as it does the "hooking." The remainder was made with a Rumpelstiltskin hand needle.

The next one is one that features texture to enhance pattern. It is all beige but features different heights in different areas. It is an answer to the frequent textile saw that the only thing that matters is color.



Detail images.

The detail below shows both the front and the back of this rug. Michael covers the back of the ground material (that has the holes) of many of his hooked pieces to give them a more finished look.

Michael said that the next two pieces with similar horse designs are whimsical pieces he hooked to show students that you can imitate anything in hooking.

The placing of human and animal forms inside animal patterns is a frequent usage in traditional tribal weaving in many parts of the world.

Details.

Michael was asked, from the audience, what his practice is when hooking a rug onto a backing with holes in it?

(I have inserted a commercial hooked rug backing to let you see the holes)

The question from the audience was does Michael fill every hole as he works? (The questioner noted that one of the quality indicators for the famous "Grenfell" hooked rugs was that every hole in the backing material had to be filled.)

Michael said that filling every hole makes a hooked rug last longer, but the drawback is that filling every hole can cause the piece to pucker, so he does not advise or do that.

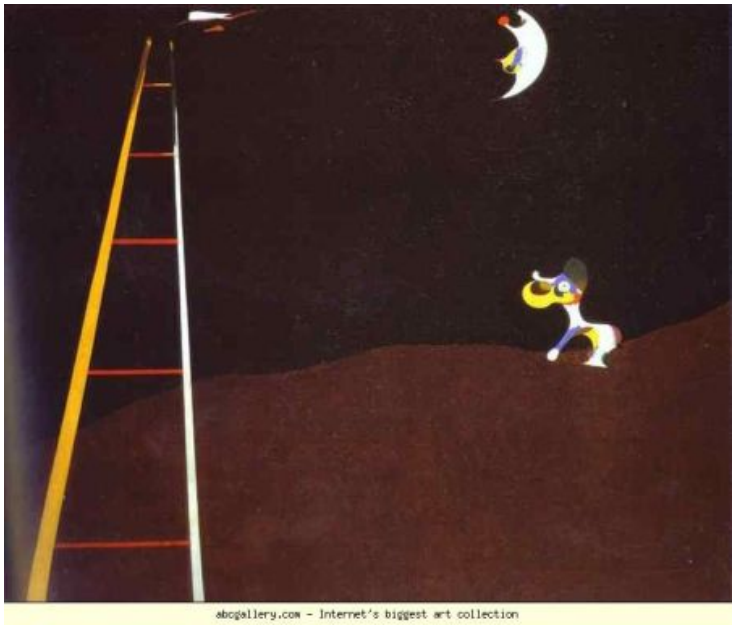
Michael's second horse rug features plaid.

Details.

Michael said that the next rug is one that he has made and donated for on-line auction during the Smithsonian Craft Show in April. It will be on display at the Craft Show.

The design is inspired by Miro.

Not the one below, but you get the idea.



Here are some detail images of Michael's rug.

Michael had another round floral rug (this piece is actually round; the rectangular areas at what seem to be corners are not part of it).

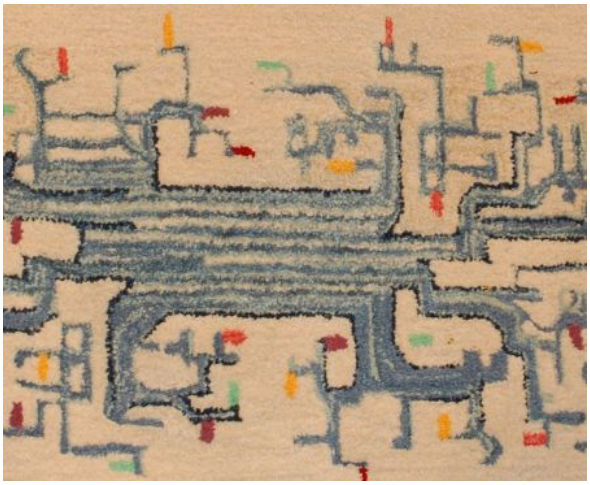
He said think of this piece as one done with brushes or pencils. Any part and any color could be done in any sequence. The tool with which this rug was made permitted that kind of flexibility. Detail images.

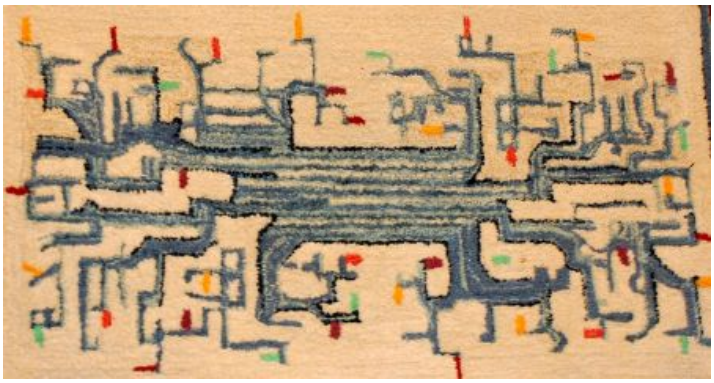
The next piece was a demonstration and test of the things we sometimes impose on the designs in rugs as we look at them.

Michael said that there might be a temptation to see this as an abstracted double "tree of life" design. In fact, it was inspired by computer circuit board.

Remember this example the next time you see a design element in a rug that looks like a "cross." It may be sourced in something entirely different. The blue is from indigo.

Details.





The next rug was the one below.

M16 is a flat-woven rug woven on a floor loom, with hand-dyed wool yarn. It is an early example of Michael's work, drawn from a tribal design from either Turkey or Iran. Details.

The next rug was the one below.

*

This rug was hooked with a Tru Gyde shuttle hook, which gives the same look as a traditional hooked rug. The material is mostly dyed wool fabric, cut into 3/16” strips and hooked onto a linen backing.

Details.

Image below is of the front of this piece on the upper left and shows the cover on the reverse of the foundation material.

The next rug was the one below.

This rug was made from both fabric strips (deer, tree trunks and foreground) and wool yarn (the green background). The former was done with a shuttle hook, the latter with the Rumpelstiltskin hand needle. Different pile heights give contrast to the different design elements.

Details.

Michael's last rug of the day was the one below. Again, note warps are horizontal. Not sure what the preferred position is.

Here is this same piece turned 90 degrees to the right.

Michael: "This was an early attempt to create a geometric design, which might have succeeded if I had used a consistent size of yarn.

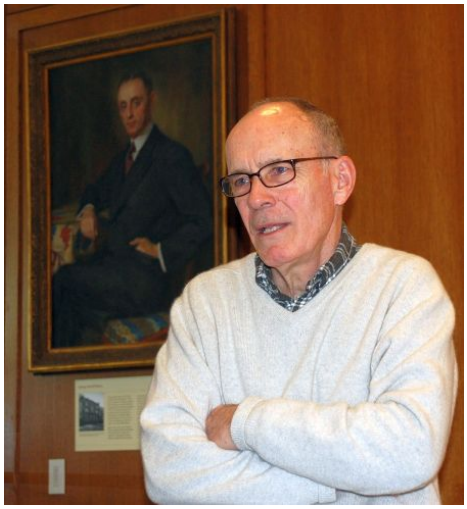
"The result, using different diameters of yarn was a degree of puckering that grew larger as the weaving progressed."

The originally planned rug was not completed. "It is the surviving portion cut from the loom."

Detail images.

*

Michael took questions and brought his session to a close.



People began to move forward to talk to Michael and get their hands on this material.

Michael had brought several publications on contemporary weaving, such as Hali's new magazine "Cover."

http://shop.hali.com/issues/cover

We gave a catalog on an exhibition of Ronnie Newman's hooked rugs as a door prize in this session.

Light From The Past: Early American Rugs From The Collection of Ronnie Newman

Check: http://used.addall.com/

My thanks to Michael for another fine program and for his considerable help in fashioning this virtual version. Thanks, too, to Sheridan Collins for an excellent set of notes.

If you want to see more of Michael's work you can see a previous program he gave here at the Textile Museum a few years ago.

https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2012/09/06/rug-hooking-and-tufting-materials-and-tools-1840-to-present/

This previous program has drawn more viewers than any other other post on this site: now over 25,000

I hope you have enjoyed this program by a real practitioner, who is very knowledgeable about, and connected to, contemporary rug making.

Regards,

R. John Howe[8]

[8] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/02/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for March, 2017

Paul Kreiss: Using Books to Learn About Rugs and Other Textiles

Posted in Uncategorized on March 21, 2017 by rjohn

On March 11, 2017, Paul Kreiss gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program, here at The Textile Museum, in Washington, D.C. on Using Books to Learn About Rugs and Other Textiles.

Tom Goehner, the Textile Museum's Curator of Education introduced Paul.

Paul is one of the few book dealers in the U.S. who specializes in rug and textile books. He lives in Baltimore, Md. His firm is The Rug Book Shop. He has a web site:

http://www.rugbookshop.com/

but also sends out periodic listings to a mailing list. He has been operating his business for over 40 years. He knows something about rug and other textile books.

Paul is trained as a biologist, and taught biology at the college level for a number of years, so he has an appreciation for information about rugs and other textiles that is grounded in scientific evidence.

Paul began by saying that there are a number of different ways to learn about rugs. You can look at some, with them in hand.

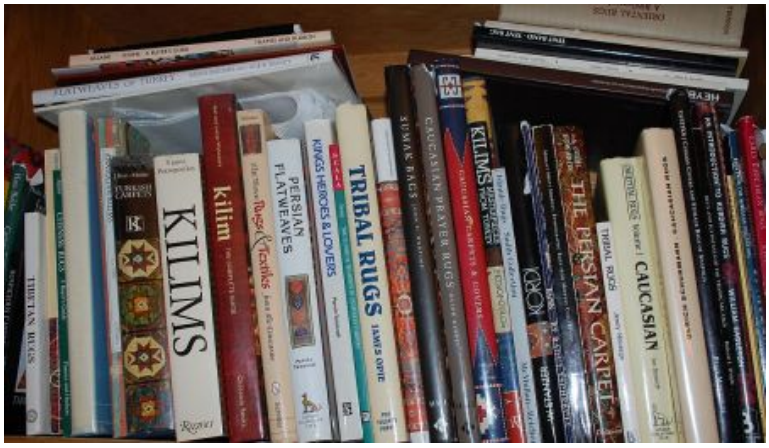
Looking at a rug, in hand, you will be able to see the colors and designs accurately, be able to feel the wool, and tell whether the handle is firm and thick or thin and floppy.

But looking at a rug won't tell its you age, its site of manufacture, the meanings of its motifs, what its quality is, or how much to pay for it. For these you need to consult additional sources. Dealers are one such.

- Dealers will give you prices and may be willing to talk to you about what they think they know about rugs. If, a given dealer knows anything, and if he/she is analytic enough to tell you how they know what they say they know, they may be able to answer questions like:
- Why is this rug Persian?
- Why is this floral-designed Persian a Nain and not an Isfahan, Sarouk, Qom, Kashan, Kerman or Tabriz?
- How can you tell that this rug was woven in the early 19th century?
- Why do the 5 flowers in the corner ward off evil?
- Why is this a "princess Bokhara?" Another dealer told me that it's a Tekke ensi.

Rug and textile collectors are another source of such information.

A further way to learn about rugs and textiles is to consult books, and other textile literature, about them.



Although the information about rugs in books has its own problems of accuracy, one advantage of learning about rugs from books is that you can, very efficiently, see a great deal of information about a lot of them.

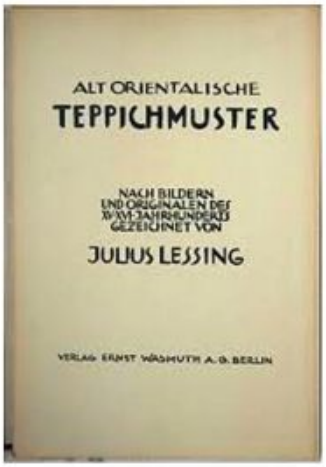
And that's what we're going to talk about today: using books and related literature to learn about rugs and other textiles.

A first question might be: "How many books are there on Oriental Rugs and other textiles?

The first book, solely on rugs, was published in 1877 by Julius Lessing.

Lessing: Altorientalische Teppichmuster nach Bildern und Originalen des XV -XVI. Jahrh.

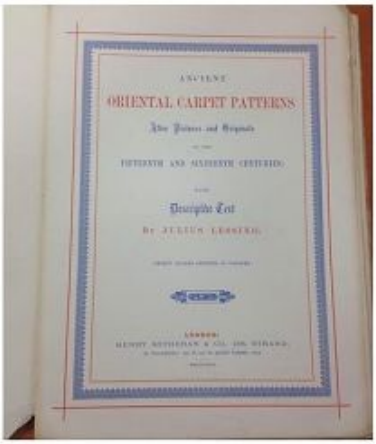
1877



There was a rapid translation in 1879.

Lessing
Ancient Oriental Carpet Patterns

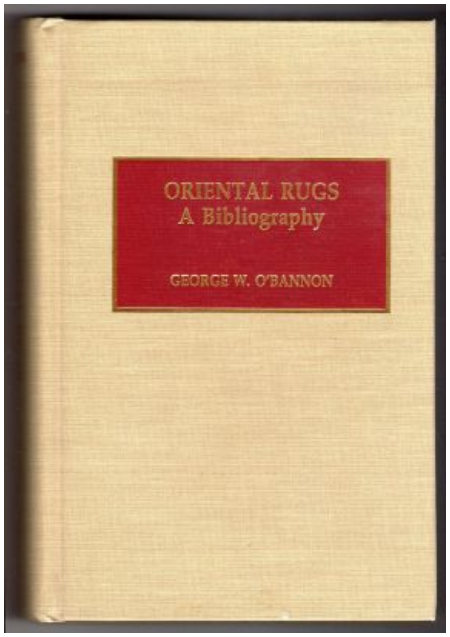
1879



Since then a great many rug and textile books have been published. Paul said that he estimates that the current total is about 3,000.

The components of this estimate are as follows.

In 1994 George O'Bannon published an extensive Bibliography.



He listed about 2100 items. Paul said that about 400 have been published since and that perhaps an additional 500 are missing.

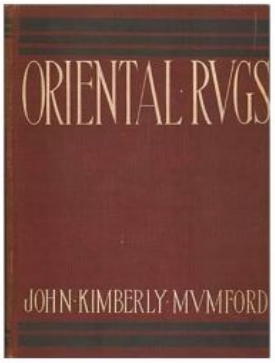
In addition, he said there have been about 1500 auction catalogs, about 400 issues of magazines on rugs and about 200 articles in journals.

So that's the estimated universe of rug and textile books and related publications.

The balance of Paul's talk was taken up with discussion of particular books or groups of books.

He said that to return to the question of why consult books to learn about rugs, an early book by Mumford is relevant.

Mumford, J.K.
ORIENTAL RUGS



1900, 1st edition, and
1902 and 1905 and
1920's and 1981, 284 p.,
32 illus., 16 in color,
28.5 x 20 cm.

Mumford had some ideas about why it's advantageous to consult rug books:

1. to consider the deep and enjoyable meaning of Oriental floor coverings

2. to throw light upon the life and work of the weavers

3. to place the reader in possession of such information regarding the rugs, both genuine and spurious, now generally offered for sale, as shall deliver him from the mercy of the decorator, the salesman and the auctioneer

4. to emphasize the superiority of the old vegetable dyes

5. to give an idea of what constitutes the value of, of the comparative worth of the various Oriental weavings, and the means of distinguishing them.

Mumford's ORIENTAL RUGS. 1900, 1st edition, 284 p., 32 illus., 16 in color, 28.5 x 20 cm, is one of the standard early works on Oriental rugs.

The author was associated with Kent Costikyan, one of New York's major Oriental carpet importers and dealers. So he knew much more about rugs than many other authors of that period. So this book is still useful today.

The plates are useful for illustrating rugs available at the turn of the century and they have to be 19th century or earlier. Mumford's description of modern rugs (i.e. circa 1900) is useful, since these rugs are today's antiques.

Attributions are not always accurate. He started the erroneous notion of "Kazak" being related with Cossacks. He uses the term "Bokhara," and says that they were woven by Tekke weavers, but says that he's using it only because he doesn't want to add new terms.

There are a number of editions. The 1900 edition is the 1st. But there are also editions in 1902, 1905, 1915, 1923, 1925, 1929, 1937 and 1981. This book contains an Index, and two folding maps.

Paul said that his own list of the advantages of consulting rug literature is different from Mumford's.

1. to get an idea of prices for rugs

2. to see what variety of rugs is available

3. to see rugs which are not commercially available, e.g. classic rugs in museums

4. to explore a weaving area: Turkey, the Caucasus, Iran, Turkestan, East Turkestan, Tibet, China, Belouch

5. to explore a specific area, as for example, Turkish kilims, Persian pictorial rugs, short pile Caucasian rugs.

Paul added:

To get an idea of prices for rug (very few books give prices) use auction catalogues, rug dealer's stocks, and the internet.

These sources will also let you:

- see what variety of rugs is available, lots of color pictures from a variety of areas
- (for a beginning collector) see 19th & early 20th century rugs, so you can determine whether you want Persian Heriz carpets or Anatolian "prayer" rugs
- see plates of rugs that are commercially available
- see rugs from all over, something it is hard to do in person
- see the range of designs for a given area.
- For books in general, it is desirable to have an author:
- who grew up in given areas, or who has traveled to them,
- who speaks the languages,
- has good taste,
- knows about rugs themselves,
- has knowledge of the related literature,
- is able to evaluate what he or she has heard with a fair amount of skepticism
- are able to explain the reasoning behind his or her statements
- is able to illustrate the rugs, in color

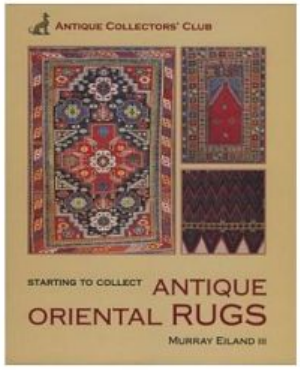
Paul divided the balance of his talk into three groups of books.

- More general introductory books
- Books about rugs that are not usually commercially available (e.g. rugs in museums)
- To explore a particular weaving area: Turkey, the Caucasus, Iran, Baluch, Turkestan, East Turkestan, Tibet, China

General Introductory Books

He started with a listing of general introductory books. (Note: Paul will often refer to books not treated here in his comparisons.)

Eiland, M. III
STARTING TO COLLECT ANTIQUE ORIENTAL RUGS

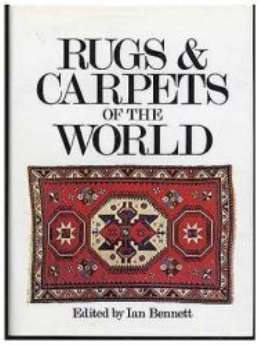


2003, 192 p., 178 illus., 170 in color, 24 x 19.5 cm.

Eiland, M.L. STARTING TO COLLECT ANTIQUE ORIENTAL RUGS. 2003, 192 p., 178 illus., 170 in color, 24 x 19.5 cm. A book for the beginning collector, with sections on where to buy, what to look for, care and restoration, materials and techniques, dyes and designs, and then coverage of the major rug producing areas: Iran, Turkey, the Caucasus, Afghanistan, India and China. Flatweaves and modern rugs are also covered. Hardcover.

Next was a book by Bennett.

Bennett, I. RUGS AND CARPETS OF THE WORLD

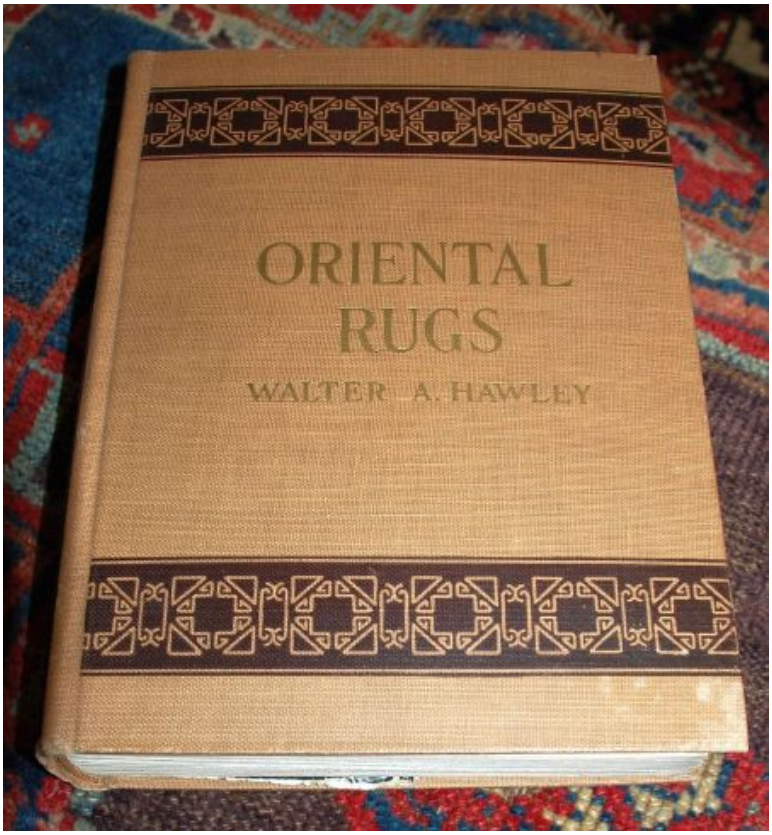


1977, 1983, 2000 printing, 351 p., 500 illus., 160 in color, 33 x 24 cm.

Bennett, I. RUGS AND CARPETS OF THE WORLD. 1977, 2000 printing, 351 p., 500 illus., 160 in color, 33 x 24 cm.

An advanced introduction to rugs, comparable to Eiland's or Hubel's in depth & tone, but tending to emphasize older rugs more; also a section on Navajo rugs. Hard. also a 1983 printing.

Howe insertion: While we are talking about general treatments of oriental rugs, I can't resist inserting one of my own.



Here is Paul's description, from his web site, of this book and its several reprints.

Hawley, Walter A. ORIENTAL RUGS, ANTIQUE AND MODERN. 1970 reprint of the 1913 ed., 320 p., 87 pl., 11 in color, 23.5 x 15.5 cm. A standard early work, which was one of the two best general guides for about a 30 year period; it is now mostly useful for the illustrations of rugs which predate 1913. Hardcover and paperback reprint. Out of print.

Howe: I have a large format 1937 edition of this book. The reason I'm inserting it here is that it seems to be one of the earliest systematic treatments of technical aspects of oriental rugs. I was not sure that these technical descriptions were included in the original 1913 edition, but Paul says they were. Here, below, is one instance of the technical information Hawley provides:

TECHNICALITIES IN THE WEAVE OF PERSIAN RUGS

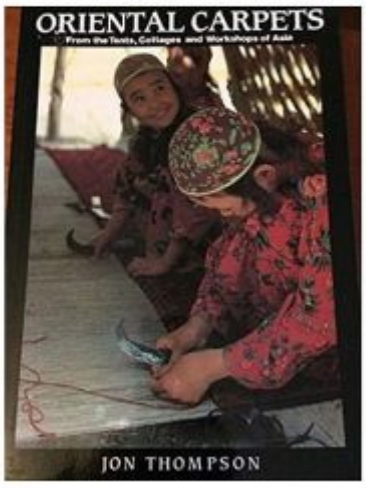
PERSIAN	Knot				Warp						Weft				Sides		Lower End				Upper End				Nap	Weave	Tenture
			Number to inch					At back																			
	G=Gliaudes	S=Sehna	Horizontally	Perpendicularly	w=wool	c=cotton	s=silk	s=rock equally prominent	d=1 to the knot depressed	h=1 to the knot doubled under	w=wool	c=cotton	l=lign s=silk	No. of times crossing incl. two rows of knots	O=overcasting	S=Selvage	W=web S=selvage	K=cows knots	L=wavy loops	F=fringe	W=web S=selvage	K=cows knots	T=turned back and hemmed	F=fringe	l=long m=medium s=short	f=fine m=medium c=coarse	l=loose m=medium f=firm
Hiar	G		6-10	8-12	w					h	w			2	O		W [S]				W [S]			F	m	m	f
Feraghan	[G]	S	8-12	7-13		c		c				c		2	O		W				W			F	s	m	m
Gaurvan	G		8-8	8-13		c		[c]	d			c		1-2		S				F				F	m	c	l
Hamadan	G		8-8	8-13		c		c			[w]	c		1	O		W		L		W		T		m s	m	f
Hosai	G	[S]	8-11	8-13	[w]	c			[d]	h	w	[c]		2 [3-4]	O		W		L		W			F	m	c	f
Kona	G		8-10	8-12		c		[c]	d		[w]	c		2		S	W			F				F	m	c	l
Iran	G		8-11	7-13		c		c				c		2 [1]	O		W				W			F	m	c	l
Mod. Ispahan	G		8-8	8-11	w	c		c			w	c		1-2	O		W				W	[K]	[T]	F	m s	m	f
Jaghaghan	G		7-11	8-13	[w]	c		c	d		w			2	O		W			F	W			F	m	f	m
Kashan		S	16-20	16-24		c	[l]			h		c	[l]	2	O		W				W			F	s	f	f
Karadagh	G		7-11	7-11	w			c			w			2		S	W			F	W			F	m	m c	m f
Karaja	G		8-11	7-13	w	[c]		c			w	[c]		1 [5-4]	O		W		L		W			F	m l	c	l
Kermanshah		S	16-18	11-19		c				h		c		2	O		W		[L]	F	W			F	m	s	f
Khorasan		S	8-13	16-20		c				h	[w]	c		2 [8-9]	O		W			F	W			F	m	m f	m f
Kirman		S	11-20	11-20		c				h	w	[c]		2	O		W			F	W			F	s	f	f

[ ] indicates the less frequent condition.

Hawley includes a technical summary of this sort at the end of each of most of his treatments of rugs from a given area. It seems to me a remarkable thing that he may have published such technical information as early as 1913. The general rug literature seems mostly not to have begun to include it until the 1970s.

I'll stop messing with Paul's listing now.

Thompson, J. ORIENTAL CARPETS: FROM THE TENTS, COTTAGES AND WORKSHOPS OF ASIA



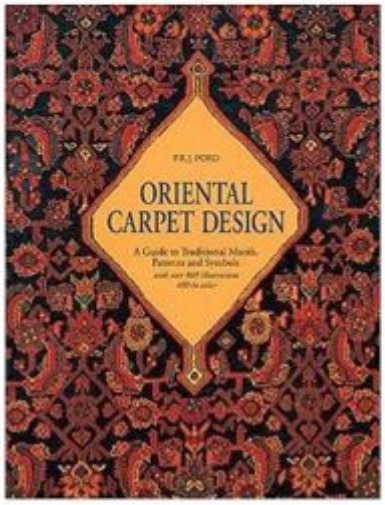
1988, 2nd ed., 175 p., 159 illus., 148 in color, 29 x 21 cm. Also called CARPET MAGIC.

Thompson, J. ORIENTAL RUGS. 1988, 2nd ed., 175 p., 159 illus., 148 in color, 29 x 21 cm. Exhibition catalogue, with rugs which vary from commercial to antique.

The text is a nice introduction to rugs, dividing them into tribal, cottage industry, village/city workshop, and court rugs; the rugs are nicely supplemented by pictures of rugs in use and being made; the text serves as a useful general introduction to Oriental rugs.

The second edition is the same as the first except for added sections with some advice for buyers and sellers, a glossary, and some notes on rug and flatweave construction. Paper.

Ford, P.R.J.
ORIENTAL CARPET DESIGN



1981, 1989, 352 p., 800 illus., 400 in color, 33 x 24.5 cm.

Ford, P.R.J. ORIENTAL CARPET DESIGN. 1981 (1989 reprint), 352 p., 800 illus., 400 in color, 33 x 24.5 cm. An advanced introductory book, based on the idea of identifying rugs by first examining the complexity of their designs and not by the country of origin. It is extremely well illustrated.

The author was a buyer in Iran for OCM, the Oriental Carpet Manufacturer company in the UK, and the book relects the knowledge he gained from that. Chapters are based on designs: border designs, boteh, herati, tree, vase, prayer rug, garden, picture, geometric designs with and without medallions, and floral designs with and without medallions.

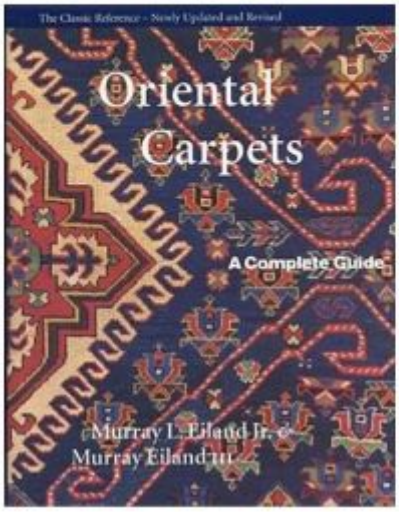
Within each chapter Ford describes production of that type of rug from about 200 different villages, cities, and regions in Turkey, the Caucasus, Iran, Turkestan, China, Tibet and to a lesser extent Pakistan, India, and Romania. As might be expected from his buying background, there is more detail

on rugs from Iran. The focus is on current production, that is the middle of the 20th century, so there is coverage of manufacturers in Pakistan, India, China, and Romania. 19th century and earlier rugs are illustrated mostly to show the evolution of designs.

More so than many other books on identification, Ford bases a lot of the identification of the origin of a rug on the construction: color and composition of warps and wefts, feel of the wool, tightness of weaving, colors of the rug and sizes. Ford also does not hesitate to comment on prices, on the quality of a design, of wool, and of colors.

This, along with the books by Thompson, Bennett, and Eiland, is one of the best general books on Oriental rugs. Paperback. Originally a hardcover.

Eiland, M. L. Jr, & Eiland, M. III
ORIENTAL CARPETS



1998, 4th ed., 368 p.,
365 illus., 330 in color,
31 x 24 cm.

Eiland, M. L. Jr, & Eiland, M. III. ORIENTAL CARPETS. 1998, 4th ed., 368 p., 365 illus., 330 in color, 31 x 24 cm. The first three editions were excellent for their times; this one follows the footsteps of the earlier ones.

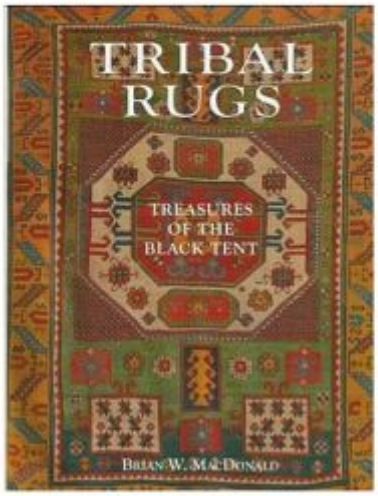
There is more emphasis on attribution and the text reflects the developments in rug scholarship that have occurred since the previous, 3rd edition.

As with the early editions, there have been major changes, and this is an essential book for every serious rug collector. Hardback.

They have traveled in Turkey, the Caucasus, Iran, and Central Asia. They do know the literature, and comment on things accurate and inaccurate. They are a psychiatrist and an archaeologist, which means some degree of a science background and thus some awareness of why evidence is important.

Lots of illustrations and color is good. Much of the time gives evidence for attributions or explains why there is none.

MacDonald, B.W.
TRIBAL RUGS. TREASURES OF THE BLACK TENT



2010, 302 p., 448 illus., 339 in color, 28 x 21. 5 cm.

MacDonald, B.W. TRIBAL RUGS. TREASURES OF THE BLACK TENT. 1997, 1st edition, 302 p., more than 200 color plates, 28 x 22 cm.

A survey of tribal rugs: Turkish, Turkmen, Caucasian, and Persian, although the focus is on Persian, reflecting the author's fieldwork in Iran. The specific areas are Turkmen, Anatolian Yuruk, Kizil Bash, Caucasian areas, Shahsavan, Afshar, Qashqa'i, Khamseh, Lor, Bakhtiyari, Baluch and Taimuri. Most of the examples are 19th century and many are localized to specific tribes or sub-tribes. Colors are good; quality of the rugs are good. Rugs include carpets, kilims, bag faces, sofrehs, and bags including salt bags. The comments on the textiles have some focus on symbolism.

For example, a small Shirvan bag with 8 deer or gazelles in the field "here we see the interpretation of life in paradise – the light colored animals representing the males and the dark colored animals representing the females".

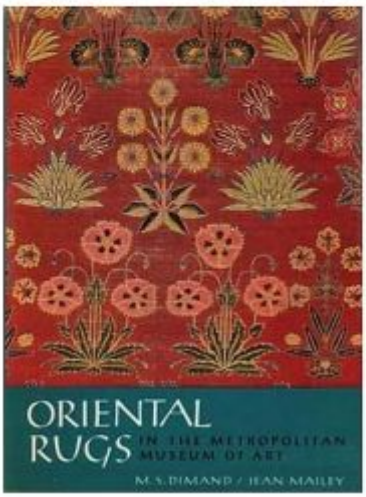
There are brief sections on the historical background of the areas. One chapter on modern rugs to show the contrast with older ones, and one chapter gives advice on what to look for and what mistakes to avoid. Hard. There is a new edition coming out in 2017.

Rugs Not Commercially Available,

(e.g., Museums)

Paul's next set of rug books was those not commercially available: for example, museums. Visiting museums can involve a lot of travel, and arranging to get into storage areas.

Dimand, M.S. & Mailey, J.
ORIENTAL RUGS IN THE
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



1973, 353 p., 318 pl., 19
in color, 28.5 x 21.5 cm.

Metropolitan Museum of Art: Dimand, M.S. & Mailey, J. ORIENTAL RUGS IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART. 1973, 353 p., 318 pl., 19 in color, 28.5 x 21.5 cm.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has one of the best 3 collections of rugs in the US; this is the catalogue of this collection, with discussion of the major rug producing areas. The text is informative and puts rugs in the context of other Islamic art.

Kendrick, A.F. and Tattersall, C.E.C. / Victoria and Albert Museum
GUIDE TO THE COLLECTION OF CARPETS

1931, Victoria and Albert Museum, 120 p., 52 black and white plates. Third edition; 68 pages of text.

Victoria and Albert Museum: Kendrick, A.F. and Tattersall, C.E.C. / Victoria and Albert Museum / Department of Textiles. GUIDE TO THE COLLECTION OF CARPETS. 1931, Victoria and Albert Museum, 120 p., 52 black and white plates. Third edition.

68 pages of text describing the rugs: Persian, Caucasian, Turkish, Central Asian, Chinese, Spanish, North African and European; then plates of them.

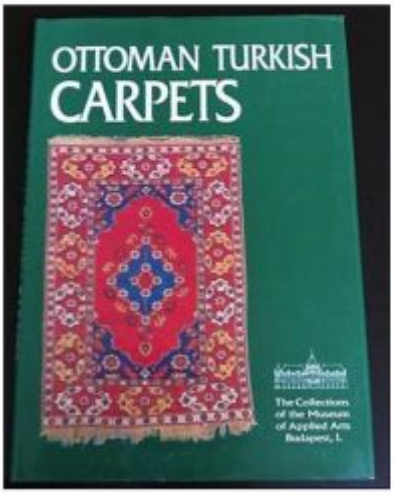
Völker, A.
DIE ORIENTALISCHEN KNÜPFTEPPICHE IM MAK

(Oriental Carpets in the Museum for Applied Arts, Vienna). 2001, 436 p., 168 illus., 160 in color, 31 x 22 p.

Museum fur angewandte Kunst Völker, A. DIE ORIENTALISCHEN KNÜPFTEPPICHE IM MAK (Oriental Carpets in the Museum for Applied Arts, Vienna). 2001, 436 p., 168 illus., 160 in color, 31 x 22 p.

A catalogue of 150 rugs from this major museum, ranging from Mamluk rugs (5 of them!) through 16th century Persian and Turkish to 19th century Turkmen and Moroccan. There is a 30 page introduction on the museum; most of the book consists of the plates with brief comments about the rugs. In German.

Batari, F.
OZMÁN-TÖRÖK SZŐNYEGEK /
OTTOMAN TURKISH CARPETS



1994, 216 p., 184 color illus., 28.5 x 19.5 cm. Both English and Hungarian editions.

Iparművészeti Múzeum / Museum of Applied Art Batari, F. OZMÁN-TÖRÖK SZŐNYEGEK (Ottoman Turkish Carpets). 1994, 216 p., 184 color illus., 28.5 x 19.5 cm.

A catalogue of the Turkish rugs from the Iparmuveszeti Museum; there are 176 of them, from the 15th – 19th centuries; all are illustrated. This is a major collection of Turkish rugs, and this is the major description of this museum's holdings.

The text describes all the rugs, with technical descriptions and references to previous publication; there is also an extensive bibliography. Colors look good, but maybe a bit pale.

Cootner, C., ed.
FLAT-WOVEN TEXTILES. THE ARTHUR JENKINS COLLECTION

Vol I, 1981, 221 p., 62 illus., 40 in color, 31 x 23 cm.

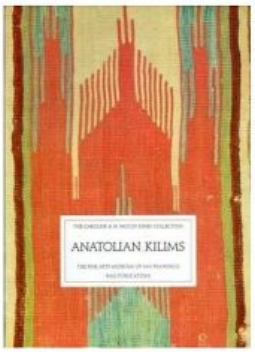
M.H. de Young Museum Cootner, C., ed. FLAT-WOVEN TEXTILES. THE ARTHUR JENKINS COLLECTION. Vol I, 1981, 221 p., 62 illus., 40 in color, 31 x 23 cm.

An analysis of the 62 flat-weaves in this collection; the flatweaves are from Iran, Turkey, and the Caucasus. Cootner provides an extensive essay on flatweave production in Iran, Turkey and the Caucasus and on the specific textiles.

The second part of the book contains 5 essays: Cootner: Flat-weaves and knotted pile: An historical and structural overview; Bierman: Medieval flatweaves in the Urban Middle East; Beattie: A note on zilu; Wertime: Weft-wrapping in in nomadic and village flat-woven textiles from the Near-East and Central Asia, and Wertime: A guide to flat-woven structures.

This is volume 1; there was no volume 2. Hardcover.

Cootner, C.M.
ANATOLIAN KILIMS. THE CAROLINE & H. MCCOY JONES COLLECTION

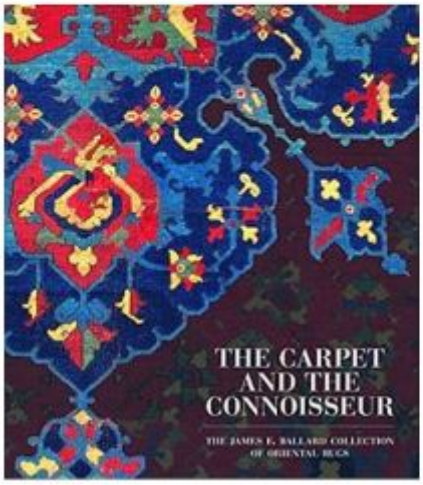


1990, 275 p., 172 illus., 115 in color, 32.22 (hard), 30.5 x 21.5 (soft) cm.

Cootner, C.M. ANATOLIAN KILIMS. THE CAROLINE & H. MCCOY JONES COLLECTION. 1990, 275 p., 172 illus., 115 in color, 32.22 (hard), 30.5 x 21.5 (soft) cm. Colors are good; kilims are mostly pre-19th century.

The text describes the colors and designs of each kilim; this is done briefly, which is just as well, since the reader can see the colors and designs him- or herself; the major part of the text attempts to analyze kilims as art and in the context of other crafts: basketry and pottery

Denny, W. B. and Farnham, T. J.
THE CARPET AND THE CONNOISSEUR.
THE JAMES F. BALLARD COLLECTION
OF ORIENTAL RUGS



2016, 240 p., 279 illustrations, 272 in color, 28 x 24 cm.

St. Louis Museum with Ballard's rugs Denny, W. B. and Farnham, T. J. THE CARPET AND THE CONNOISSEUR. THE JAMES F. BALLARD COLLECTION OF ORIENTAL RUGS. 2016, 240 p., 279 illustrations, 272 in color, 28 x 24 cm.

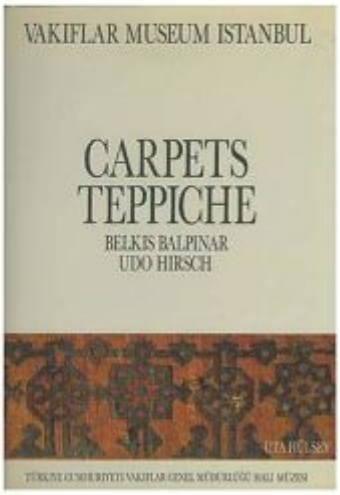
Ballard was a wealthy drug manufacturer, who collected rugs in the 1st quarter of the 20th century, when 16th, 17th, and 18th were readily available (to wealthy individuals). He at one time had some 300 rugs.

This catalogue accompanied a 2016 exhibition at the St. Louis Art Museum of the rugs Ballard left there. The exhibited items are the most important of Ballard's rugs: 50 carpets and 2 Persian tents. All have interesting comments about them by Denny, and are illustrated in full with smaller illustrations of details of the back.

The rugs are 16th to 18th, with a few later ones. Most of the rugs are Turkish: Lottos, Ushaks, a variety of classical prayer rugs, but there are also Persian, Caucasian, Mamluk, Turkmen, and Mughal examples. An appendix has illustrations 51 more items of less importance.

Chapters: one on Ballard as a collector by Farnham; the general topic of rug varieties in this collection in a larger art historical context by Denny; and introductions to each geographical area by Denny.

Balpinar, B. & Hirsch, U.
CARPETS OF THE VAKIFLAR MUSEUM ISTANBUL / TEPPICHE DES VAKIFLAR-MUSEUMS ISTANBUL



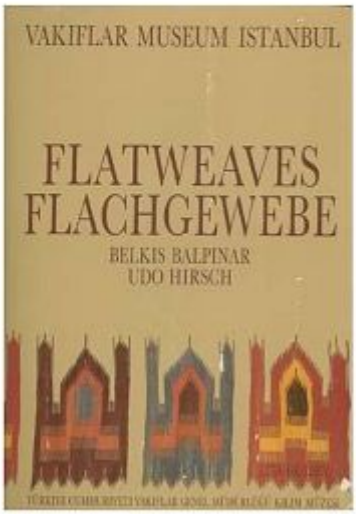
1988, 343 p., 83 color pl., bl & wh illus., 31 x 22.5 cm.

Vakiflar Museum Balpinar, B. & Hirsch. U. CARPETS OF THE VAKIFLAR MUSEUM ISTANBUL / TEPPICHE DES VAKIFLAR-MUSEUMS ISTANBUL. 1988, 343 p., 83 color pl., bl & wh illus., 31 x 22.5 cm.

The long-awaited sequel on carpets of this museum. Most of the carpets are Turkish. There are two 13th century Seljuk carpets; most of the rest are from the 15th – 17th centuries. There are two 17th to 18th century Iranian carpets, and ten Caucasian carpets including four Dragon carpets from the 17th and 18th centuries. Dating is done in part by comparison with similar rugs in dated Western paintings and illustrations in manuscripts, and with designs in woodwork and other Islamic arts.

The text describes the museum and the origins of the collection; then analyzes each carpet illustrated, in detail. Many of these rugs are well known in the rug literature and the text summarizes what other authors have said about them. Hard.

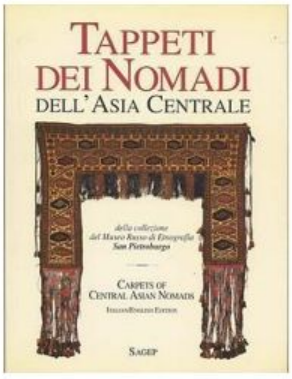
Balpinar, B. & Hirsch, U.
FLATWEAVES OF THE VAKIFLAR MUSEUM ISTANBUL



1982, 295 p., 120 color pl., 32 x 22 cm.

Balpinar, B. & Hirsch, U. FLATWEAVES OF THE VAKIFLAR MUSEUM ISTANBUL. 1982, 295 p., 120 color pl., 32 x 22 cm. Catalogue of the rugs collected from the Vakif (Pious Foundation) mosques throughout Turkey. The kilims are impressive; the text describes possible tribal origins & flat-weave techniques. Hard.

Tzareva, E.
TAPPETI DEI NOMADI DELL'ASIA CENTRALE. CARPETS OF CENTRAL ASIAN NOMADS



1993, 142 p., 66 illus., 30 in color, 27.5 x 21 cm.

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Russian Ethnographic Museum / Rossiiskii Ethnographicheskii Muzei Tzareva, E. TAPPETI DEI NOMADI DELL'ASIA CENTRALE. CARPETS OF CENTRAL ASIAN NOMADS. 1993, 142 p., 66 illus., 30 in color, 27.5 x 21 cm.

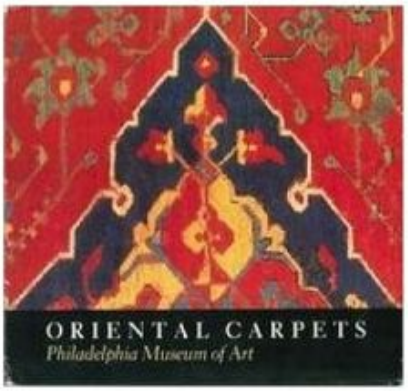
Based on an exhibition of rug, tent bands, sacks, felts, suzani from the Russian Ethnographic Museum, St. Peterburg; detailed technical descriptions, including analogous published examples.

Many were given to the museum by Bogolyubov, who collected them before 1900, and Dudin, who bought them between 1900 and 1902; thus many are clearly 19th century or before.

There are short sections on the museum, on Turkmen, Kirghiz and Uzbek nomads; on yurt furnishings; on the symbolism of red; on textiles for weddings. This is an interesting look at Turkmen textiles from a major Turkmen collection. Italian / English text. Hard.

*

Ellis, C.G.
ORIENTAL CARPETS IN THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART



1988, 304 p., 182 illus., 76 in color, 31 x 30.5 cm.

Philadelphia Museum of Art Ellis, C.G. ORIENTAL CARPETS IN THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART. 1988, 304 p., 182 illus., 76 in color, 31 x 30.5 cm.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art has one of the top 5 collections of rugs in the US. This is a scholarly discussion of 81 15th to 19th century carpets. Most of the rugs come from the collections of two wealthy Philadelphia businessmen: McIlhenny and Williams and were bought in the first quarter of the 19th century.

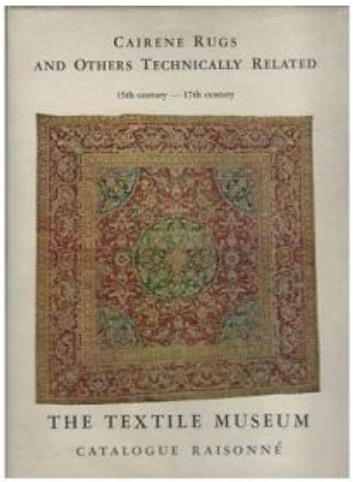
For each rug, there is a detailed description of the pattern, comparison to other rugs with the same or similar field or border designs, summary of and comments on earlier mentions of the rugs, a list of European paintings with this or similar rugs (which gives information on the age of the rugs) and technical descriptions.

The color illustrations are of the rugs in the Museum; the black and white illustrations are of paintings and similar examples. The text is interesting, as are the rugs. Hardback and paper.

And then there are the books on the Textile Museum rugs.

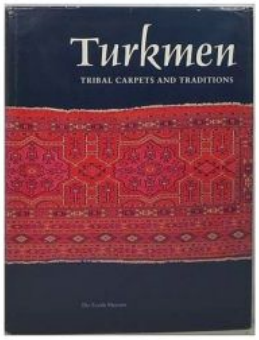
Kühnel, E. & Bellinger, L.
CAIRENE RUGS AND OTHERS
TECHNICALLY RELATED,
15th CENTURY - 17th CENTURY

1957



The TM has nothing on the entire collection: Kühnel, E. & Bellinger, L. CAIRENE RUGS AND OTHERS TECHNICALLY RELATED, 15th CENTURY – 17th CENTURY. 1957.

Mackie, L.M. & Thompson, J.
TURKMEN TRIBAL CARPETS AND TRADITIONS



1980, 239 p., 95 color pl., 31 x 23 cm.

*

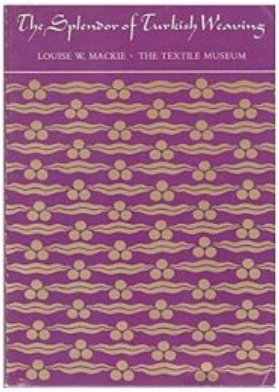
Mackie, L.M. & Thompson, J. TURKMEN TRIBAL CARPETS AND TRADITIONS. This is the catalog that accompanied a 1980 exhibition of Turkmen rugs at The Textile Museum.

It was one of the books that marked the shift to tribal names and increased attention to technical descriptions of materials and structure. Text by Thompson, detailed technical descriptions by Mackie. This is the book in which Thompson proposed some Imreli attributions (questioned and quickly withdrawn).

Articles at the end: Hans Konig on Ersari Carpets; Robert and Leslie Pinner on Tekke chuvals; and Mark Whiting on Dyes in Turkmen Carpets. Hardback. 239 pages.

This catalog was considered by many, until recently, to be the standard treatment on Turkmen rugs and other textiles.

Mackie, L.M.
THE SPLENDOR OF TURKISH WEAVING



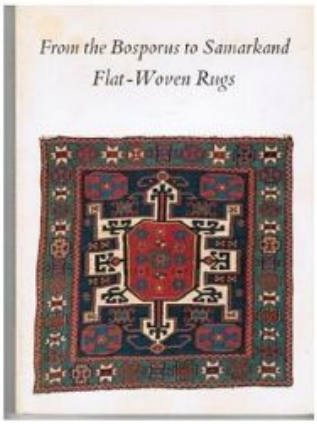
1974, 86 p., 48 pl., 4 in color, 25 x 18 cm.

*

Mackie, L.M. THE SPLENDOR OF TURKISH WEAVING. 1974, 86 p., 48 pl., 4 in color, 25 x 18 cm.

Exhibition catalogue from the Textile Museum of Turkish silks & rugs from the 13th to 18th centuries

Landreau, A.N., & Pickering, W.R. FROM THE BOSPORUS TO SAMARKAND: FLAT-WOVEN RUGS



1969, 112 p., 113 pl., 9 in color, 28 x 20 cm.

Landreau, A.N., & Pickering, W.R. FROM THE BOSPORUS TO SAMARKAND: FLAT-WOVEN RUGS. 1969, 112 p., 113 pl., 9 in color, 28 x 20 cm. A good exhibition catalogue, with an introduction to flat-weaves in general. From the Textile Museum.

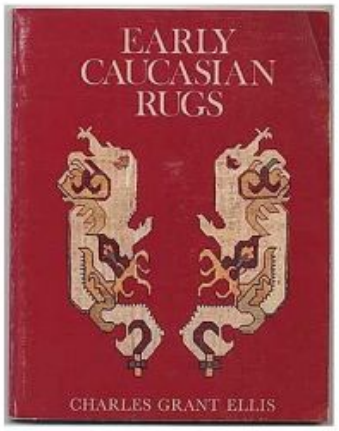
Seen by some to be the first U.S. publication that treated flat-woven material seriously.

Landreau, A.N. & Yohe, R.S. FLOWERS OF THE YAYLA: YORUK WEAVING OF THE TOROS MOUNTAINS

1983, 110 p., 12 color plates 90 black and white.

Landreau, A.N. & Yohe, R.S. FLOWERS OF THE YAYLA: YORUK WEAVING OF THE TOROS MOUNTAINS. This Textile Museum catalog reports on an effort by Landreau and Yohe to do systematic field work on "Yoruk" weaving in Toros Mountains of Anatolia. One of the few attempts to do serious field work by a U.S. curator and a U.S. collector.

Ellis., C.G.
EARLY CAUCASIAN RUGS

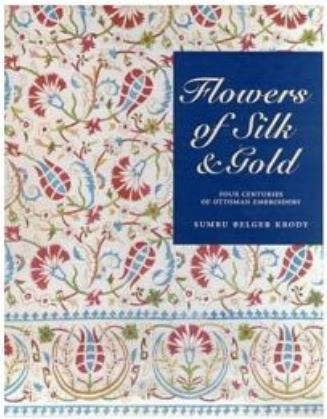


1975, 112 p., 37 pl., 10 in color, 28 x 22 cm.

Ellis., C.G. EARLY CAUCASIAN RUGS. 1975, 112 p., 37 pl., 10 in color, 28 x 22 cm.

Exhibition catalogue from the Textile Museum, with an extensive introduction to early Caucasian rugs; 37 rugs, mostly from the Textile Museum.

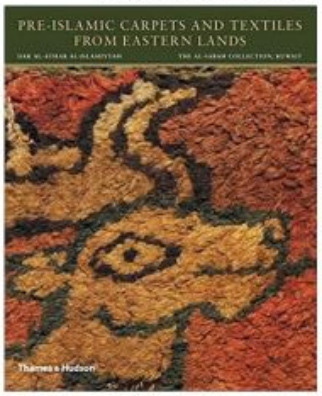
Krody, S.B.
FLOWERS OF SILK AND GOLD. FOUR CENTURIES OF OTTOMAN EMBROIDERY



2000, 160 p.,180 color illus., 29 x 24 cm.

Krody, S.B. FLOWERS OF SILK AND GOLD. FOUR CENTURIES OF OTTOMAN EMBROIDERY. 2000, 160 p.,180 color illus., 29 x 24 cm. This accompanied a Textile Museum exhibition, and provides a detailed discussion of Ottoman embroidery, including techniques used in making them, as well as the social, political and economic factors influencing their production and consumption.

Spuhler, F.: PRE-ISLAMIC CARPETS AND TEXTILES FROM EASTERN LANDS. DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH. THE AL-SABAH COLLECTION, KUWAIT



2014, 160 p., 112 color illus., 28.5 x 22.5 cm.

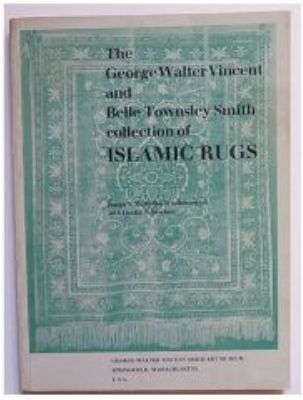
Al-Sabah Collection Spuhler, F. PRE-ISLAMIC CARPETS AND TEXTILES FROM EASTERN LANDS. DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH. THE AL-SABAH COLLECTION, KUWAIT. 2014, 160 p., 112 color illus., 28.5 x 22.5 cm.

As might be expected, these textiles are fragments; they include Sassanian carpets and flatweaves and a variety of Sogdian textiles. They come from Central Asia or China and Eastern Iran and range in age from 4th to 12th centuries, as determined by radio-carbon dating.

The text describes the textiles in the context of history of art in Sassanian and Sogdian cultures. Hardcover.

Two minor collections with special interest:

McMullan, J.V. & Reichert, D.O.
THE GEORGE WALTER VINCENT AND BELLE TOWNSLEY SMITH COLLECTION OF ISLAMIC RUGS



n.d.(1970), 169 p., 75 illus., 12 in color, 25 x 18 cm.

Smith Collection McMullan, J.V. & Reichert, D.O. THE GEORGE WALTER VINCENT AND BELLE TOWNSLEY SMITH COLLECTION OF ISLAMIC RUGS. n.d.(1970), 169 p., 75 illus., 12 in color, 25 x 18 cm.

Most of these were purchased in l893 and l897-l898; the rest were purchased by 1905, so nearly all are l9th century; most are village or nomadic rugs from Turkey, the Caucasus & Turkmenistan, with a few Persian. This is then an invaluable documented record of 19th century village and nomadic rugs. Paper.

Roberts, E.H.
ISLAMIC CARPETS

In Bulletin, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, 36:4-113, 1978. 71 illus., 5 in color.

*

Allen Memorial Art Museum Roberts, E.H. ISLAMIC CARPETS. In Bulletin, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, 36:4-113, 1978. 71 illus., 5 in color.

About 50 of these rugs were donated to the museum from the estate of Charles Hall, one of the two inventors of the Hall-Heroult process, used to make aluminum from aluminum ore.

Hall died, quite wealthy as might be expected, in 1915, so these rugs are 19th century.

4 more came from another donor in 1904 and the other examples in this exhibtion are also 19th century, including a 19th century Caucasian dragon sile flatweave used as wrapping to ship an archeological altar from Pergamon to the Berlin Museum.

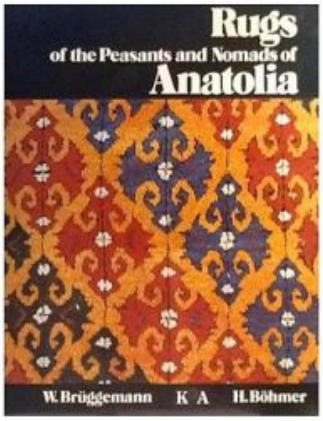
The rugs are mostly tribal and village. The collection is unusual in that at this time, many collections were of classic and city rugs, so this is an interesting snapshot of what village and tribal rugs were available around 1900.

There are 20 Persian, 22 Turkish, 10 Caucasian, 13 Turkmen, and 6 Indian and Chinese. Illustrations are sometimes fuzzy. New. Paper.

To get depth on a weaving area:

The next reason for reading books is to explore, in depth, specific weaving areas: Turkey, the Caucasus, Iran, Turkestan, East Turkestan, Tibet, China, Belouch

Brüggemann, W. & Böhmer, H.
RUGS OF THE PEASANTS AND NOMADS OF ANATOLIA



1983, 356 p., 114 color illus., bl & wh photographs, 29.5 x 25 cm.

Turkey: Brüggemann, W. & Böhmer, H. RUGS OF THE PEASANTS AND NOMADS OF ANATOLIA. 1983, 356 p., 114 color illus., bl & wh photographs, 29.5 x 25 cm. The winner of the 1983 Quatrefoil Award; this book is the result of an exhibition of 19th century nomad & peasant rugs from 4 German museum and 30 private collections.

Both the rugs and the quality of the color plates make this book valuable; there are comments for each rug, a technical analysis which includes a dye analysis.

Brüggemann's introductory essay – 80 pages – covers ethnic groups in Anatolia, problems in attribution, colors, design construction, motifs and symbolism; the flavor of his writing can be gotten from this sentence "At all times, the woman at the loom had only this in mind: sorrow and hope, rejection and devotion." He also has two short essays, one on the development of a motif in Turkish rugs and one on stepped mihrab rugs.

Böhmer's section – 30 pages – is on dyes – including nice drawings of various dye plants – and how they can be used to determine ages and origins of specific carpets. Hard. There is also a German edition.

Butterweck, G. & Orasch, L.
HANDBOOK OF ANATOLIAN CARPETS. CENTRAL ANATOLIA

1986, 229 illus.,22l in color, 356 p., 30 x 21 cm.

Butterweck, G. & Orasch, L. HANDBOOK OF ANATOLIAN CARPETS. CENTRAL ANATOLIA. 1986, 229 illus.,22l in color, 356 p., 30 x 21 cm.

The value of this book lies in the huge number of pictures of Anatolian rugs, kilims, and tulus, with attributions to specific towns in central Anatolia. The areas covered are Konya and towns nearby, Kirşhehir, Mucur, Avanos, Ürgüp, Kayseri, the area between Nigde and Taşpinar, Samsun area, Mihaliççik area, and Ankara.

The rugs are from private collections and dealers. A few rugs have dates in the 19th century and some look worn enough to be old; many look to be 20th century. Since some of the towns do not produce good rugs, not all the rugs are attractive.

The text is organized around rug-weaving areas with some information on the characteristics of that area and a lot of digressions; it did not need, for example, a paragraph on Nasreddin Hodja and a page on the Dutch tulip craze. It is also not obvious that the designs in the border of a Ladik prayer rugs represent unripe and ripened poppy capsules with the unripe ones shown sliced open for eventually making opium and thus representing profit, and the ripe ones, because of the oil from their seeds, representing food for the farmer.

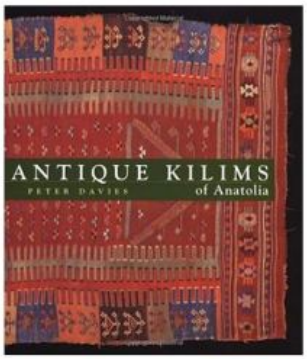
Hard. No dust jacket, as so issued. In German/English.

There seem to be a lot of books on Turkish kilims:

No image

Brüggemann, W. YAYLA. FORM UND FARBE IN TURKISCHER TEXTILKUNST. 1993, 424 p., 149 color illus., 30 x 24 cm. A very much expanded exhibition catalogue, with sections on the history of flatweaves in Turkey, culture & religion, dyes, structure, designs, as well as descriptions of the textiles in the illustrations; most are flatweaves. In German. Hard.

Davies, P.
ANTIQUE KILIMS OF ANATOLIA



2000, 160 p., 160 illus., 80 in color, 27.5 x 24 cm.

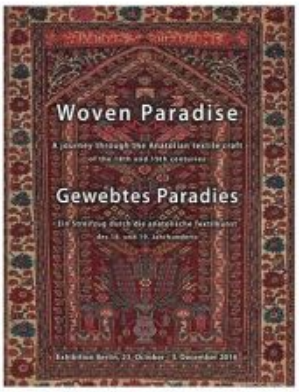
Davies, P. ANTIQUE KILIMS OF ANATOLIA. 2000, 160 p., 160 illus., 80 in color, 27.5 x 24 cm. This is a revised and expanded version of his earlier book on kilims.

There is substantial, informative, and balanced text which starts with wool: the best areas on a sheep and how the difference between carding and combing creates wool for threads and wool for felt, continues through the virtue of hand-weaving for creating threads for different purposes in a rug, through dyes and looms and how the split-weave tapestry technique can limit the range of motifs in a rug.

There is a good chapter on the meaning of symbols, or rather how hard it is to assign meanings to symbols; a chapter which gives the evidence for each of the three theories on the origin of kilim production in Anatolia; a chapter with an argument that the designs of three-colored Yüncü kilims originate in Central Asian felts; and a chapter which explores the esthetic sense of Turkish weavers in how they determine which kilims are beautiful.

Illustrations of 73 kilims from a variety of areas; nearly all are 19th century. Hardcover.

Butterweck, G.: WOVEN PARADISE. A JOURNEY THROUGH THE ANATOLIAN TEXTILE CRAFT OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES / GEWEBTES PARADIES. EIN STREIFZUG DURCH DIE ANATOLISCHE TEXTILKUNST DES 18. UND 19. JAHRHUNDERTS



2016, 179 p., 268 illus., 241 in color, 19.5 x 21 cm.

Butterweck, G. WOVEN PARADISE. A JOURNEY THROUGH THE ANATOLIAN TEXTILE CRAFT OF THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES / GEWEBTES PARADIES. EIN STREIFZUG DURCH DIE ANATOLISCHE TEXTILKUNST DES 18. UND 19. JAHRHUNDERTS. 2016, 179 p., 268 illus., 241 in color, 19.5 x 21 cm.

This is the catalogue to Dr. Martin Posth's collection of 19th and a few 18th century rugs and kilims exhibited at the Bumiller Collection – University Museum Islamic Art in Berlin. The 58 textiles are of excellent quality and from a variety of places in Anatolia; each is illustrated.

The extra illustrations are small and are of similar pieces gleaned from a huge number of sources: other books on Oriental carpets, books on museum collections, rug dealer's catalogues, auction catalogues – there is a 14 page bibliography.

The introductory essays focuses on how the motifs in the rug and the composition of the design can display symbols that show the traces of Kurdish, Armenian, Greek, Caucasian, Byzantine and Buddhist influences on this Turkish art. Some of the rugs have been previously printed in Posth's earlier book. Paperback. New.

Koll, H. and Steinbock, S.
DIE POESIE DES EINFACHEN. EINE SAMMLUNG ANATOLISCHER KELIMS. (The Poetry of Simple Things. A Collection of Anatolian Kilims)

Aachen 2015. 292 pages, 131 color illus., 30 x 30 cm.

Koll, H. and Steinbock, S. DIE POESIE DES EINFACHEN. EINE SAMMLUNG ANATOLISCHER KELIMS. (The Poetry of Simple Things. A Collection of Anatolian Kilims). Aachen 2015. 292 pages, 131 color illus., 30 x 30 cm.

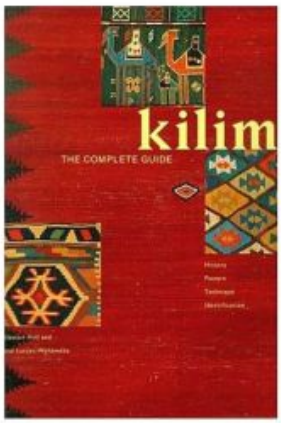
This massive book come from these dealers' activities as sellers of high quality kilims. The large size and photographs of details permits close examination of details of the weave and color.

The wide range of kilim types includes early examples and a number of completely unexpected material which contributes to the formerly discussed and previously published spectrum of the Anatolian kilims created in the 18th and early 19th century.

It is remarkable, among different systems of ornament, the large number of kilims reflecting patterns based on fascinating rhythms of stripes, as well as of flatwoven items containing camel hair. In German and English. One of 70 or 100 copies.

Books on kilims and rugs, not solely on Turkey:

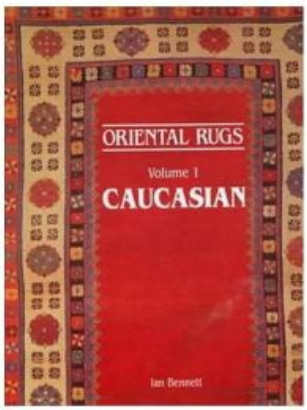
Hull, A. & Luczyk-Wyhowska, J. KILIM



1993, 352 p., 649 illus., 370 in color, 33 x 25 cm.

Hull, A. & Luczyk-Wyhowska, J. KILIM. 1993, 352 p., 649 illus., 370 in color, 33 x 25 cm. Hull travelled a lot in Asia; Luczyk-Wyhowska had a kilim store. Many illustrations, although some are drawings of designs or enlargments of parts of rugs; there is an attempt to give distinguishing features of kilims from different areas; the emphasis is on Turkey, the Caucasus & Iran, but there are sections on North Africa and Central Asia as well as some advice on collecting (with a list of about 100 dealers in Europe, the US, New Zealand & Australia) and on new kilim production. This is now probably the best introductory book on kilims in these areas. Hard.

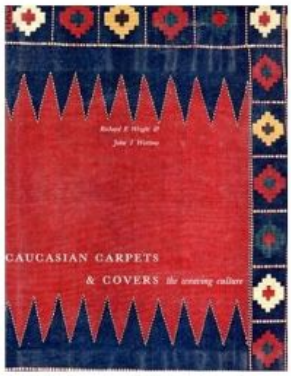
ORIENTAL RUGS, VOL I: CAUCASIAN



1981, 376 p., 491 illus, 336 in color, 25.5 x 21 cm.

Caucasus: Bennett, I. ORIENTAL RUGS, VOL I: CAUCASIAN. 1981, 376 p., 491 illus, 336 in color, 25.5 x 21 cm. This is designed for the serious collector of Caucasian rugs woven after 1800; the 491 examples, from the Nagel auctions, are analyzed in terms of how old they are, where they were produced, and what other authors might call them. Hard.

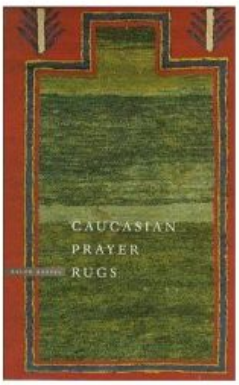
Wright, R.E. & Wertime, J.T.
CAUCASIAN CARPETS AND COVERS



1995, 184 p., 132 illus., 34.5 x 25 cm.

Wright, R.E. & Wertime, J.T. CAUCASIAN CARPETS AND COVERS. 1995, 184 p., 132 illus., 34.5 x 25 cm. A comprehensive survey of Caucasian weaving, using travelers reports and 19th century Russian literary sources to localize specific rug designs to specific areas, and also using census data to identify the ethnic groups making rugs and flatweaves. There is some focus on flatweaves & utilitarian objects, since the authors argue than these were more traditional than the piled rugs, many of which were made for the Western European or Russian export market, although the Czarist government did encourage use of traditional designs. Hard.

Kaffel, R.
CAUCASIAN PRAYER RUGS



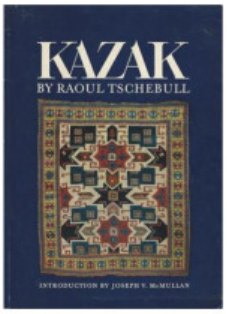
1998, 192 p., 170 illus., 160 in color, 34.5 x 24.5 cm.

Kaffel, R. CAUCASIAN PRAYER RUGS. 1998, 192 p., 170 illus., 160 in color, 34.5 x 24.5 cm.

The author has a database of over 2000 Caucasian prayer rugs, and has used 97 of them as a base for this survey of rugs.

There is an introduction on what is know about rug weaving and the rug trade in the Caucasus, and on the various types of prayer rugs. Hardcover.

Tschebull, R.
KAZAK: CARPETS OF THE CAUCASUS

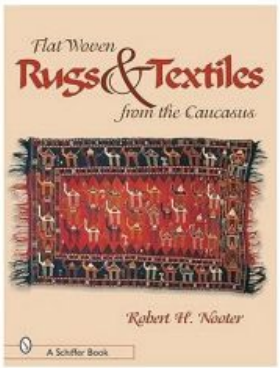


1971, 104 p., 40 illus.,
23 in color, 28 x 20 cm.

Tschebull, R. KAZAK: CARPETS OF THE CAUCASUS. 1971, 104 p., 40 illus., 23 in color, 28 x 20 cm.

Pictures & descriptions of superb Kazak rugs, from some 20 private and museum collections. There is a short introduction by McMullan, describing the Kazak weaving area, pointing out that there is very little evidence for assigning Kazak rugs to specific towns, and describing what technical features define Kazak rugs. Paper.

Nooter, R.H., Koshoridze, I., and Tatikyan, V.;
edited by J.T. Wertime. FLAT WOVEN RUGS AND TEXTILES FROM THE CAUCASUS



2004, 255 p., 436 color
illus., 31 x 23.5 cm.

Nooter, R.H., Koshoridze, I., and Tatikyan, V.; edited by J.T. Wertime. FLAT WOVEN RUGS AND TEXTILES FROM THE CAUCASUS. 2004, 255 p., 436 color illus., 31 x 23.5 cm.

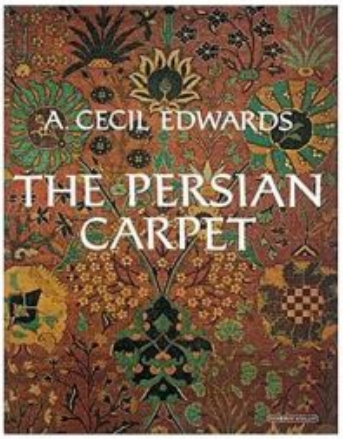
The first author is with AID and the World Bank; Nooter's part of the text is based on interviews with weavers on his field trips in the Caucasus plus data from Russian and Azerbaijani museums, plus what he has gotten from rug dealers in the Caucasus; the other authors are from the Caucasus and specialize in textiles from this area.

Most of the examples are flatweaves; chapters on kilims and palases, sumakhs, zilis and shaddahs, jajims, mafrash, khorjins, and Georgian textiles. The text focuses on geographic attributions, and the authors provide justification for them, based partly on what was observed in villages and partly on attribution by dealers. The examples are early 20th century and late 19th century, a time when flatweaves were being woven for personal use and not for commercial sales.

Gives places where the pieces were bought and the prices paid for them.

An excellent book on Caucasian flatweaves. Hardcover.

Edwards, E.C.
THE PERSIAN CARPET



1953, 1967 reprint, also
2016, 424 illus., 4 in
color, 28.5 x 21.5 cm.

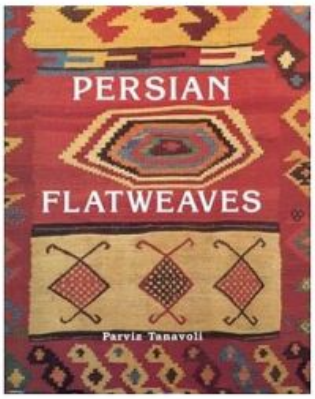
Edwards, E.C. THE PERSIAN CARPET. 1953(1967 reprint), 424 illus., 4 in color, 28.5 x 21.5 cm.

This is a re-issue of the 1953 edition & is the standard work on older Persian carpets. Iranian rug production, especially city and village, from circa 1880 to 1950, although with hardly any color plates.

Edwards was a rug buyer in Iran for many years, and this book reflects his first-hand experience. Each area is covered in detail, almost village by village, and provides a comprehensive view of rug production in Iran up to 1950. In Hamadan between 1911 and 1923 where he set up factories; returned around 1950 to gather information for the book; with OCM and was eventually a managing director. Hardcover. A new reprinting appeared in 2016.

General flatweaves:

Tanavoli, P.
PERSIAN FLATWEAVES



2002, 350 p., 244 color illus., 28 x 22 cm.

Tanavoli, P. PERSIAN FLATWEAVES. 2002, 350 p., 244 color illus., 28 x 22 cm. An extensive survey of Persian flatweaves of all areas in Iran and all construction.

The information is based on Tanavoli's personal knowledge and on wide reading in the European and Iranian literature.

The first part of the book is a history of flatweave production, showing example from Safavid times and pointing out the extensive trade in flatweaves.

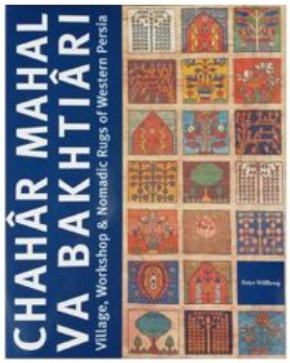
The second part provides examples, largely 19th century, of flatweaves. Areas covered include Azerbaijan, Khamseh area, Kurdistan, the Alborz foothills, Mazanderan along the Caspian, the Northeast, Bakhtiyari, Loristan, Khuzistan, Fars, Kerman and Sistan.

Multiple examples are presented for some 60 different areas and towns of all types of flatweaves: weft-faced ones and with with various kinds of supplementary wefts.

This will be the definitive book on Persian flatweaves. Hardcover.

Bakhtiyari

Willborg, P.
CHAHÂR MAHAL VA BAKHTIÂRI.
VILLAGE, WORKSHOP AND NOMADIC
RUGS OF WESTERN PERSIA



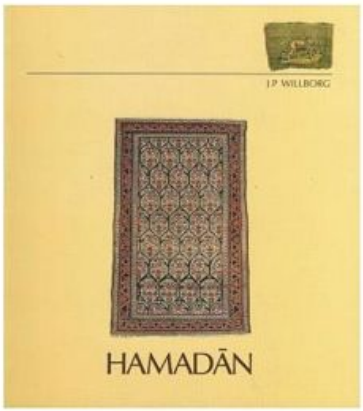
2002, 404 p., 407 color
illus., 30 x 25 cm.

Willborg, P. CHAHÂR MAHAL VA BAKHTIÂRI. VILLAGE, WORKSHOP AND NOMADIC RUGS OF WESTERN PERSIA. 2002, 404 p., 407 color illus., 30 x 25 cm.

A dealer's monograph on Bakhtiari and related rugs, based partly on field trips to Iran; so the author is able to talk about specific features of rugs of some 40 villages. Well illustrated; a major publication in this area. Hardcover.

Hamadan:

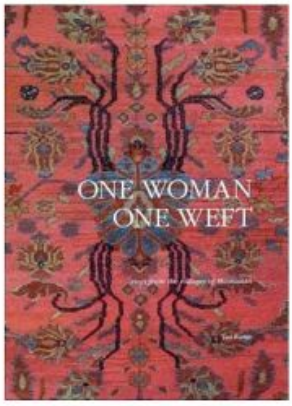
Willborg, P.
HAMADAN



1993, 51 p., 86 color
illus., 24 x 21 cm.

Willborg, P. HAMADAN. 1993, 51 p., 86 color illus., 24 x 21 cm. Dealer's exhibition catalogue of 43 rugs from the Hamadan area; most of the items are from the 1st third of the 20th century and are localized to villages. Technical analyses; each rug is illustrated front and a detail of the back to show weaving technique (a la Neff & Maggs). Paper.

Runge, T.
ONE WOMAN, ONE WEFT. RUGS FROM THE VILLAGES OF HAMADAN



2002, 152 p., 165 illus., 155 in color, 30.5 x 24.5 cm.

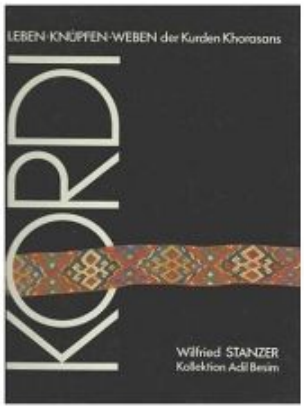
Runge, T. ONE WOMAN, ONE WEFT. RUGS FROM THE VILLAGES OF HAMADAN. 2002, 152 p., 165 illus., 155 in color, 30.5 x 24.5 cm. 2/3 of the book consists of illustrations of 75 Hamadan rugs, front and a small detail of the back; the rugs are attributed to specific areas.

The introductory text describes the sociology of rug production in this area, based partly on letters from Hamadan by Clara Case Edwards (A.Cecil Edwards' wife), and then goes over rug types from the various villages in the Hamadan area; the text is interesting.

The author argues, successfully, that among the huge production in this area are many good rugs, and also that they are undervalued. Technical descriptions. Hardcover.

Khurrasan

Stanzer, W.
KORDI. LEBEN KNUPFEN WEBEN DER KURDEN KHORASANS / LIVES RUGS FLATWEAVES OF THE KURDS OF KHORASAN



1997, 2nd edition, 248 p., 98 color illus., 29 x 23 cm.

Stanzer, W. KORDI. LEBEN KNUPFEN WEBEN DER KURDEN KHORASANS / LIVES RUGS FLATWEAVES OF THE KURDS OF KHORASAN. 1988, first edition; 1997, 2nd edition, 248 p., 98 color illus., 29 x 23 cm.

Stanzer has travelled in this area; the textiles are from the Adil Besim Gallery and both Besim and his partner also travelled in this area.

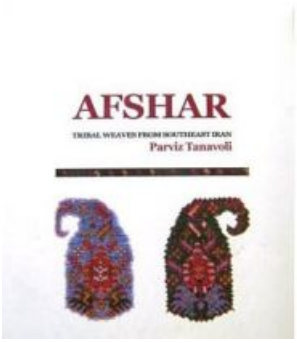
The book is on this group: how they got there, recent history, nomadic life style, rug production, tribal subgroups.

The section on the recent history discusses how the impacts of Turkmen raids, forced settlement by the government, droughts and hard winters have affected nomadism and types of rug production. The replacement of camels by trucks, for example, has wiped out the production of camel trappings.

Very detailed; good color, 19th to mid 20th century rugs. The revisions for the second edition consist of a report of a field trip in 1992, confirming, or not confirming some of the attributions. In German and English. Hard.

Afshar

Tanavoli, P.
AFSHAR. TRIBAL WEAVES
FROM SOUTHEAST IRAN



2010, 255 p.,133 color
illus., 30 x 22.5 cm.

Tanavoli, P. AFSHAR. TRIBAL WEAVES FROM SOUTHEAST IRAN. 2010, 255 p.,133 color illus., 30 x 22.5 cm.

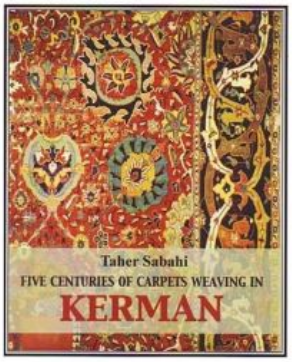
This is a book reflecting first-hand knowledge by an Iranian. The introductory sections include a history of Afshars, using Persian, Arab, and European sources; where Afshars are found in Iran; and problems of identifying Afshar rugs.

Then 106 examples of rugs, bags, salt bags and saddle covers from Afshars and some of the other tribal groups south and east of Kerman. Most of the textiles are from the 19th century, before there were changes in these tribal weavings coming from being influenced by changes in commercial production in Kerman in response to what Europeans and Americans wanted.

Textiles are localized to specific Afshar areas: Sirjan, Baft & Aqta', Shahr Baba, Jiroft, Kuhi, and Esfandajeh. There are technical descriptions for about half of the textiles. In English and Farsi. Hardcover.

Kerman and Tribal Southern Persian Rugs

Sabahi, Taher.
FIVE CENTURIES OF CARPETS
WEAVING IN KERMAN



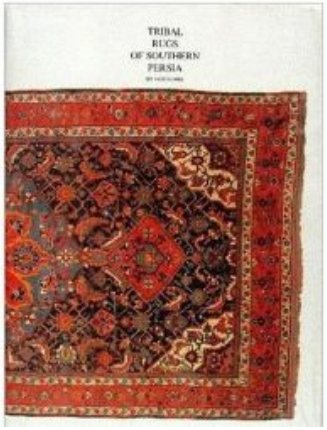
2012 168 p., 193 color
illus., 30.5 x 24.5 cm.

Sabahi, Taher. FIVE CENTURIES OF CARPETS WEAVING IN KERMAN. 2012, labelled as a special edition for the Textile Museum Associates of Southern California and Rug Ideas, 168 p., 193 color illus., 30.5 x 24.5 cm.

Brief sections on the history and geography of the Kerman area; then chapters on 16th & 17th century rugs; 18th and 19th century rugs and shawls, 20th century rugs, pictorial rugs, and saddle rugs.

The colors look good; the rugs are from a variety of museum and private collections. This is a translation of an Italian edition. Hardcover.

Opie, J.
TRIBAL RUGS OF
SOUTHERN PERSIA



1981, 223 p., 100 color
pl., 30.5 x 22.5 cm.

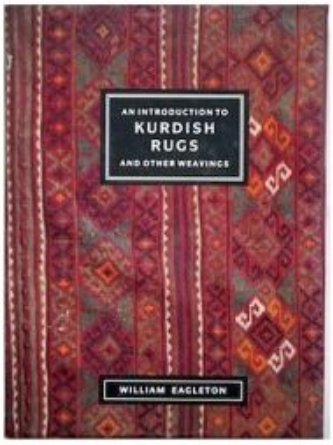
Opie, J. TRIBAL RUGS OF SOUTHERN PERSIA. 1981, 223 p., 100 color pl., 30.5 x 22.5 cm.

Most of the book is plates with facing text; the plates are divided into Qashqa'i, Khamseh, Lur, Bakhtiyari, Afshar, & uncertain rugs. The text describes the rugs, pointing out the details which define them as Qashqa'i, etc., & often locating the rug in a subtribe.

The explicitness of this makes the book unusual & valuable. Bibliography; technical analyses. Hard.

Kurd

Eagleton, W.
AN INTRODUCTION TO KURDISH RUGS AND OTHER WEAVINGS



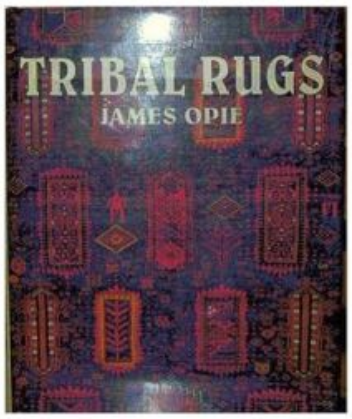
1988, 144 p., 124 color illus., 30.5 x 22.5 cm.

Eagleton, W. AN INTRODUCTION TO KURDISH RUGS AND OTHER WEAVINGS. 1988, 144 P., 124 color illus., 30.5 x 22.5 cm.

The author's first hand experience is mostly with Iraqi Kurds; sections on Kurdish history, tribal groups, and weavings from Iraq, Iran, & Turkey; an excellent, detailed book on this group. Hard.

Tribal textiles, not just Persian

Opie, J.
TRIBAL RUGS



1992, 328 p., 356 illus.,
291 in color, 12 maps,
31 x 24 cm.

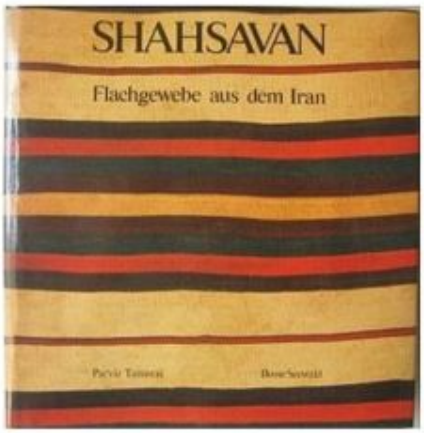
Opie, J. TRIBAL RUGS. 1992, 328 p., 356 illus., 291 in color, 12 maps, 31 x 24 cm.

A big section on tribal life, tribal art, and the history of motifs; then sections on tribes & their weavings: Lur, Bakhtiyari, Kurd, Qashqa'i, Khamseh, Afshar, Baluch, Shahsavan, Turkish, Caucasian, Turkmen.

The text reflects personal experience in the Middle East and extensive reading. Hard.

Shahsavan, although mostly on flatweaves

Tanavoli, P.
SHAHSAVAN



1985, 435 p., 495 illus., 96 in color, 26.5 x 25.5 cm.

Tanavoli, P. SHAHSAVAN. 1985, 435 p., 495 illus., 96 in color, 26.5 x 25.5 cm.

The Shahsavan seem to have woven only flat-weaves until the Iranian carpet boom of the 20th century and this book is on flat-woven products, all collected in the Shahsavan area.

The text emphasizes designs & details of construction, so there is diagram after diagram of twining & wrapping types; also sections on history of the Shahsavan & types of textiles.

The textiles are mostly late 19th century/ early 20th century and have technical descriptions. All types are described: gelim, soffreh, jajim, verneh and a variety of bags: storage bags (mafrash), saddle bags (khorjim and chanteh), salt bags, small bags for odds and ends, and also a few tent bags.

A monumental book on this area, much beloved, we understand, by unscrupulous dealers faking older examples. Hard.

Floral design rugs

Sameyeh, Sh.
ERLESENE ORIENTALISCHE TEPPICHE / EXCEPTIONAL ORIENTAL CARPETS

1982, 408 p., 296 color pl., 31 x 22 cm.

Sameyeh, Sh. ERLESENE ORIENTALISCHE TEPPICHE / EXCEPTIONAL ORIENTAL CARPETS. 1982, 408 p., 296 color pl., 31 x 22 cm.

This Hamburg dealer's massive and glossy catalogue; rugs are from 1850 to 1950 with most of the being second quarter of the 20th century. 250 are Persian, many of them very ornate, floral-design rugs; the other 50 are Turkmen, Caucasian & Chinese.

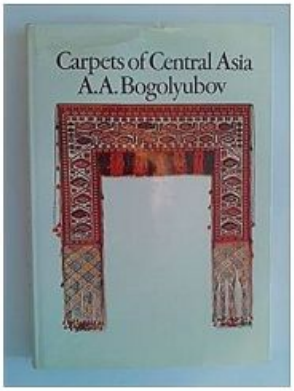
Critical comments and descriptions of the rugs; plates are sometimes too small to do justice to the complexity of the designs. The rugs were picked from Sameyeh's stock by Samuel Wennek of the London branch of Rippon Boswell, and the comments on the rugs were written by Iain Scott Stewart of Rippon Boswell and Siawosch Azadi, of Galerie Azadi in Hamburg.

The most extensive comments, by Azadi, are on a 6 x 4 meter silk Kashan made in Taffazolli's workshop with a poem in cartouches along the border; the poem is given in Farsi and translated in both English and German.

Sameyeh was one of the largest importers in Hamburg in the 1970's and 1980's; as the market declined, he moved to Singapore, where he published his second catalogue. German/English. New.

Central Asia

Bogolyubov, A.A.
CARPETS OF CENTRAL ASIA

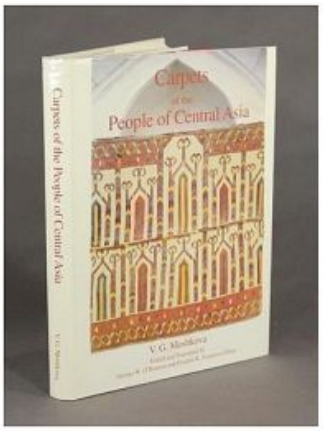


1973, Crosby Press, 124 p., 59 illus., 36 in color, 34 x 24 cm.

Turkman Bogolyubov, A.A. CARPETS OF CENTRAL ASIA. 1973, Crosby Press, 124 p., 59 illus., 36 in color, 34 x 24 cm.

One of the classics on Turkoman rugs, with examples collected before 1908, when the original edition was published. Additional comments by Thompson in this edition. Hard.

Moshkova, V.G.
CARPETS OF THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL ASIA



1996, translated & edited by G. O'Bannon & O. Amanova-Olsen, 400 p., 140 color illus., 23 x 30.5 cm.

Moshkova, V.G. CARPETS OF THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL ASIA. 1996, translated & edited by G. O'Bannon & O. Amanova-Olsen, 400 p., 140 color illus., 23 x 30.5 cm. A new English translation of the major book on Central Asian rugs, with updates & critical comments on the original text; the illustrations are new, and include rugs from Uzbek & Turkestan museums not previously published in color. Hard. One of 950 numbered copies.

Tsareva, E.
TURKMEN CARPETS. MASTERPIECES OF STEPPE ART, FROM THE 16TH TO 19TH CENTURIES. THE HOFFMEISTER COLLECTION

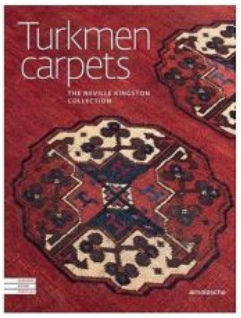
2011, 192 p., 185 color illus., 31 x 24.5 cm.

Tsareva, E. TURKMEN CARPETS. MASTERPIECES OF STEPPE ART, FROM THE 16TH TO 19TH CENTURIES. THE HOFFMEISTER COLLECTION. 2011, 192 p., 185 color illus., 31 x 24.5 cm. 168 main carpets, bag faces, ensi, tent bands and other trappings; the book is mostly photographs. Two-thirds have not been illustrated elsewhere.

One of the strengths of the book is numerous examples of the same tribe, showing the same general design but then showing some of the variations that are possible.

There are technical analyses, and essays on the history of the Turkmen, and then specific rug types: Chodor, Salor, Saryk, Tekke, eagle group, Yomut, Arabachi, middle Amu Darya, and on tent bands and flatweaves and embroidery. Some, according to radiocarbon dates, are 16th century. In English and German. Hardcover.

Tsareva, E.
TURKMEN CARPETS. THE
NEVILLE KINGSTON COLLECTION



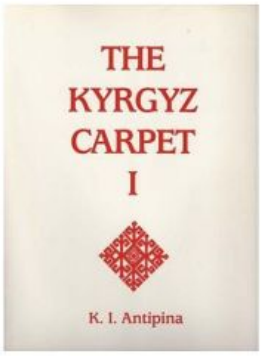
2016, 240 p., 320 color
illus., 32.5 x 24.5 cm.

Tsareva, E. TURKMEN CARPETS. THE NEVILLE KINGSTON COLLECTION. 2016, 240 p., 320 color illus., 32.5 x 24.5 cm. The collection was assembled by frequently county auction in Britain as well as trips to Turkey and Central Asia.

The 119 rugs are Salor, Saryk, Tekke, Yomud, Chodro, Isdyr, Shih, Arabachi, and Middle Amu Darya and include main carpets, prayer rugs, bag faces, tent bands, kapunuk, and asmalyk. Nearly all are 19th century; some may be 18th.

Technical descriptions. The text is extensive. Tsareva uses the rugs to discuss the history of Turkmen tribal groups, with detailed comments on patterns and on details of weaving. Hardcover.

O'Bannon, G. and Omanova, A., ed.
THE KYRGYZ CARPET



2000, George O'Bannon,
two volumes; volume I:
119 p., 97 illus., 89 in
color.; vol. II: 83 p., 49
color illus., 30.5 x 23 cm.

O'Bannon, G. and Omanova, A.., ed. THE KYRGYZ CARPET. 2000, George O'Bannon.

Note: There are two volumes; volume I: 119 p., 97 illus., 89 in color.; vol. II: 83 p., 49 color illus., 30.5 x 23 cm.

This is O'Bannon' s last work. It consists of a translation of the three most important works on the Kirghiz: two by Antipina (Characteristics of the Material Culture and Applied Art of the Southern Kyrgyz; The Decorative Arts of the Kyrgyz) and one by Beresneva (The Kyrgyz Carpet Collection in the State Museum of Oriental Art, Moscow), plus O'Bannon's annotations and three short essays on Kyrgyz weavings.

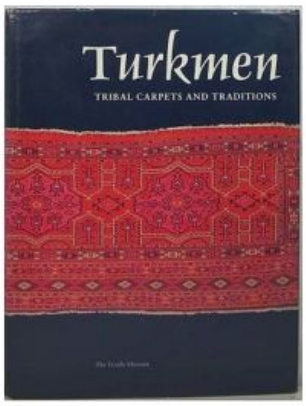
Antipina's articles provide the basic information about Kyrgyz weaving, on which everyone else relies; Beresneva's article describes one of the largest collections of Kyrgyz textiles in the former USSR.

Both were originally in Russian and hard to find, so this major work summarizes the most important information about Kyrgyz textiles. The illustrations are new, in good color, of rugs from Russian and private collections.

This is an essential book for collectors interested in Kyrgyz textiles. Paper.

The next book was also cited above with Howe's comment. Below is Kreiss' description.

Mackie, L.M. & Thompson, J.
TURKMEN TRIBAL CARPETS
AND TRADITIONS



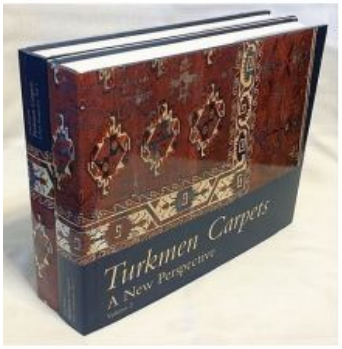
1980, 239 p., 95 color pl., 31 x 23 cm.

Mackie, L.M. & Thompson, J. TURKMEN TRIBAL CARPETS AND TRADITIONS. 1980, 239 p., 95 color pl., 31 x 23 cm.

A glossy exhibition catalogue with scholarly essays on history, ethnography, the Turkmen tent, classification of the Ersari, dyes. Technical analyses of the illustrated items.

Well up to the standard of other books from the Textile Museum.

Rageth, J., Sienknecht, H. C., Wouters, J.
and Vanden Berghe, I.
TURKMEN CARPETS. A NEW
PERSPECTIVE.



2016. 2 volumes, 888 pages, 128 color plates, 1500 black and white illustrations, 30 x 23 cm.

Rageth, J., Sienknecht, H. C., Wouters, J. and Vanden Berghe, I. TURKMEN CARPETS. A NEW PERSPECTIVE. 2 volumes, 888 pages, 128 color plates, 1500 black and white illustrations, 30 x 23 cm.

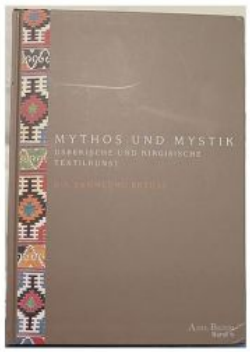
An interdisciplinary study of Turkmen carpets, including radiocarbon dating, dye and mordant tests, and technical analyses as well as historical and art historical sources.

Detailed discussions of the origins and development of Turkmen carpet designs from the 2nd millenium B.C. to the 17th Century A. D.

There are 5 maps, 16 tables with the results of 130 radiocarbon datings, 230 dye tests, and 60 mordant tests.

English translation by DeWitt Mallary. There is a German edition also. Print run: 200 copies in German, 300 copies in English.

Besim, Adil.
MYTHOS UND MYSTIK. USBEKISCHE UND KIRGISISCHE TEXTILKUNST. DIE SAMMLUNG BREUSS.



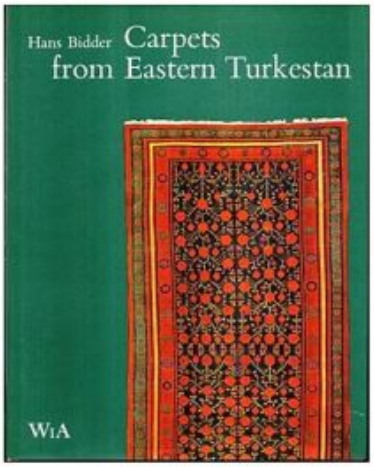
2011, 143 p., 183 illus.
30.5 x 21. 5 cm.

Besim, Adil. MYTHOS UND MYSTIK. USBEKISCHE UND KIRGISISCHE TEXTILKUNST. DIE SAMMLUNG BREUSS. 2011, 143 p., 183 illus. 30.5 x 21. 5 cm.

64 Uzbek, Kirghiz and a couple of Tadjik rugs, bag faces, bags, flatweaves, costumes and embroideries. Colors are good. In German. Hardcover.

East Turkestan

Bidder, H.
CARPETS FROM EASTERN TURKESTAN



1979 reprint of 1964 ed., 73 p., 30 color illus., 25 x 19 cm.

Bidder, H. CARPETS FROM EASTERN TURKESTAN. 1979 reprint of 1964 ed., 73 p., 30 color illus., 25 x 19 cm.

This is the standard source on this specialized area: Khotan, Kansu & Samarkand rugs. Hard.

Sabahi, T.
SAMARKANDA

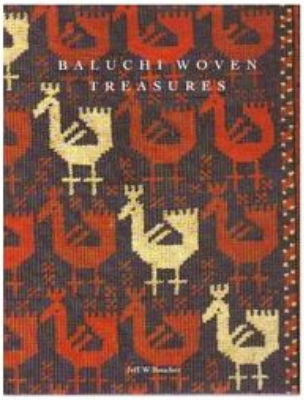
1995, 136 p., 42 color illus., 72 illus., 64 in color., 30.5 x 24.5 cm.

Sabahi, T. SAMARKANDA. 1995, 136 p., 42 color illus., 72 illus., 64 in color., 30.5 x 24.5 cm.

Exhibition catalogue of East Turkestan rugs, mostly early 20th century, drawn from a number of Italian dealers; essays on the geography & history of the area, and on Sinkiang textile production and history. In English/ Italian. Hard.

Baluch

Boucher, J.W.
BALUCHI WOVEN TREASURES



1996, 2nd ed. (or first edition also), 152 p., 63 color illus., 28.5 x 22.5 cm. 10 pages of text.

Boucher, J.W. BALUCHI WOVEN TREASURES. 1996, 2nd ed., 152 p., 63 color illus., 28.5 x 22.5 cm. 10 pages of text, including prefaces, with tantalizing information; most of the book, however, consists of plates, in good color, of good Baluch & related rugs & bags. Technical analyses; bibliography.

The difference between this and the first edition is that the introduction by Bennett in the first edition has been replaced by one by Opie. Hard.

Baluch for pictures

Homer, J.P.J.
EXCLUSIVELY BELOUCH

1986, 46 p., 40 color pl.,
21 x 15 cm.

Homer, J.P.J. EXCLUSIVELY BELOUCH. 1986, 46 p., 40 color pl., 21 x 15 cm.

Dealer's catalogue of 19th century Belouch rugs, mostly collected from the British countryside; the rugs are an interesting selection of Belouch designs; colors are good; brief descriptions of each rug. Prices. Paper.

(No photo)

Diehr, F.M. ed. TREASURED BALUCH PIECES. 1997, c. 120 p., 64 color pl., 32 x 23 cm.

75 or so Baluch rugs from private collections; this demonstrates the range of Baluch rugs which can be fairly easily be found; includes a reprint of Spooner: "Who are the Baluch?" and an interview with Dr. D.H.G. Wegner. Hard.

China

Rostov, C.I., & Jia, G.
CHINESE CARPETS

1983, 224 p., 160 illus., 120 in color, 30 x 23 cm.

Rostov, C.I., & Jia, G. CHINESE CARPETS. 1983, 224 p., 160 illus., 120 in color, 30 x 23 cm.

A good book on Chinese rugs, with much information on current production; chapters on history, symbols, weaving methods, materials, identification & dating; the presence of both an American & a Chinese author helps give a broad perspective. Hard.

Lorentz, H.A.
A VIEW OF CHINESE RUGS FROM THE 17th TO THE 20th CENTURIES

1972, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 194 p., 155 illus., 95 in color, 28.5 x 22 cm.

Lorentz, H.A. A VIEW OF CHINESE RUGS FROM THE 17th TO THE 20th CENTURIES. 1972, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 194 p., 155 illus., 95 in color, 28.5 x 22 cm.

The author lived in China between 1929 and 1949 and the book reflects first hand knowledge and is one of the best books on Chinese rugs.

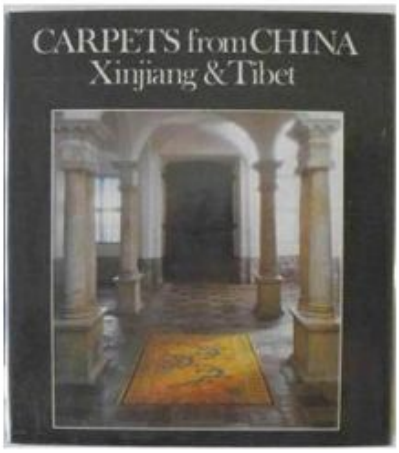
The text covers patterns and symbolism; history of rug production and its development in the 17th – 20th centuries; uses and sizes of rugs, including pillar rugs and saddle rugs; centers of production. There are also sections on East Turkestan rugs and Tibetan rugs.

(no photo)

Hyman, V.D. & Hu, W.C.C. CARPETS OF CHINA AND ITS BORDER REGIONS. 1982, 290 p., 50 tipped-in color pl., 45 in color, 22.5 x 28.5 cm.

Sections on the history of China and evidence for early Chinese rugs, dyes, symbolism, rug shapes and use; little coverage of modern Chinese rugs. This will supplement the book by Rostov & Jia.

Larsson, L.
CARPETS FROM CHINA,
XINJIANG AND TIBET

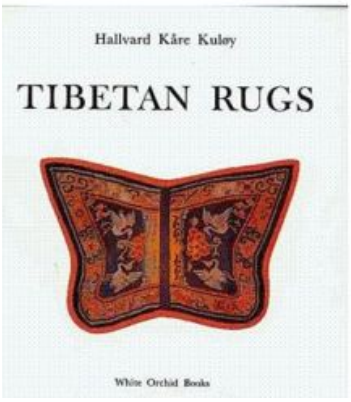


1988, 141 p., 176 illus., most in color, 26.5 x 23.5 cm.

Larsson, L. RUGS FROM CHINA, XINJIANG AND TIBET. 1988, 141 p., 176 illus., most in color, 26.5 x 23.5 cm. A general guide to Chinese and related carpets, with examples of 19th & 20th century rugs from a variety of Scandinavian & other museum & private collections. Bibliography. The rugs look good. Hard

T I B E T

Kuloy, H.K.
TIBETAN RUGS

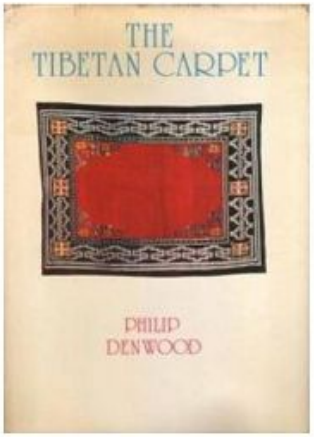


1982, 236 p., 258 color illus., 21 x 19 cm.

Kuløy, H.K. TIBETAN RUGS. 1982, 236 p., 258 color illus., 21 x 19 cm. The illustrations tend to be small, but they depict large numbers of old (that is, pre-l959) Tibetan rugs, and the text is informative. Paperback. Also 1988 hardcover edition.

*

Denwood, P.
THE TIBETAN CARPET

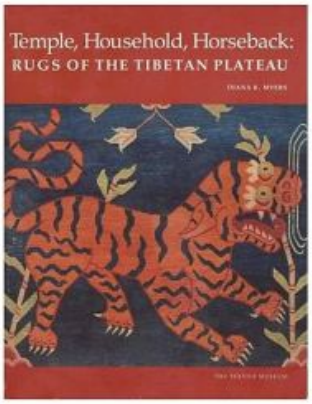


1974., 101 p., 108 illus., 25 in color, 30 x 21 cm.

Denwood, P. THE TIBETAN CARPET. 1974., 101 p., 108 illus., 25 in color, 30 x 21 cm.

This, with Myers and Kuloy, were the major early sources on Tibetan carpets; about half the book is on their construction and use; about half on carpet types & designs, both before and after 1959. Hard.

Myers, D.K.
TEMPLE, HOUSEHOLD, HORSEBACK:
RUGS OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU

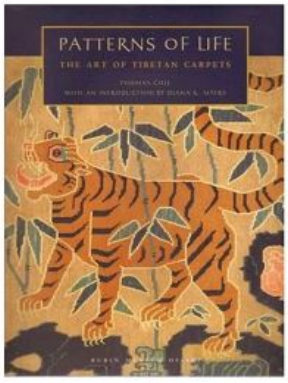


1984, 111 p., 70 illus.,
6 in color, 28 x 21.5 cm.

Myers, D.K. TEMPLE, HOUSEHOLD, HORSEBACK: RUGS OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU. 1984, 111 p., 70 illus., 6 in color, 28 x 21.5 cm.

A scholarly catalogue from the Textile Museum; chapters on archeologic & historic origins of Tibetan rugs, weaving techniques, symbols, designs & uses. Paper.

Cole, T.
PATTERNS OF LIFE. THE ART
OF TIBETAN CARPETS



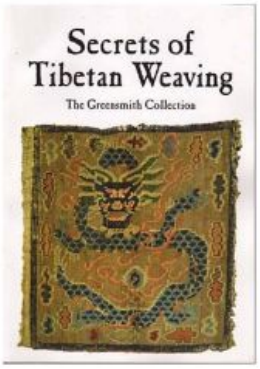
2010, 104 p., 6 0 color
illus., 28.5 x 26 cm.

Cole, T. PATTERNS OF LIFE. THE ART OF TIBETAN CARPETS. 2010, 104 p., 6 0 color illus., 28.5 x 26 cm.

The book focuses on Tibetan rugs belonging to Bob and Lois Baylis. The rugs show the wide range of Tibetan designs: more or less realistic representations of real – tigers, etc. – and mythical – dragons – animals as well as abstract floral designs and strict geometric checkerboards. Examples include sitting and sleeping carpets, mats used in monasteries, and horse trappings. The rugs also illustrate the huge variety of border designs.

Cole's comments are knowledgeable and detailed. Hardcover.

Darchen, Karma Trinley & The Greensmith Collection.
SECRETS OF TIBETAN WEAVING.
THE GREENSMITH COLLECTION.

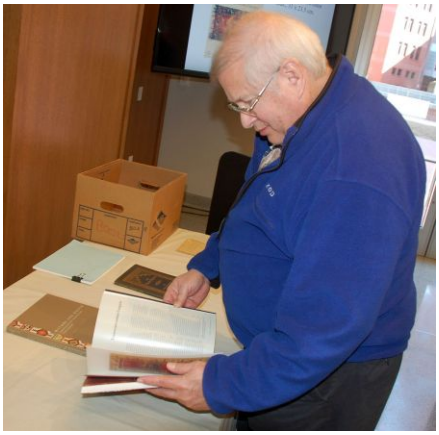


2012, 3rd edition, 2013,
128 p., 164 illus., 159 in
color, 29.5 x 21 cm.

Darchen, Karma Trinley & The Greensmith Collection. SECRETS OF TIBETAN WEAVING. THE GREENSMITH COLLECTION. 2012, 3rd edition, 2013, 128 p., 164 illus., 159 in color, 29.5 x 21 cm..

Chapters on the origin of Tibetan rugs, looms and technique, the making of Tibetan rugs, chequer rugs, cushions, Gampa Dzong rugs, Gyantse carpets, horse trappings, Wangdon monastic carpets and a suggested reading list. The text reflects a fair amount of first hand observation and extensive reading. Textiles are 19th and 20th century. Paperback. This was the last book in Paul's presentation. He took questions and ended his session.

The migration to the front of the room to examine some of these books began.



I want to thank Paul for coming to share some rug and textile books and his considerable knowledge of them.

Thanks, too, to Paul's wife for her Powerpoint contribution.

Last, my gratitude for Paul's help in editing this virtual version.

I hope you have enjoyed this short walk through the world of rug and other textiles books and literature.

Regards,

R. John Howe[9]

[9] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/03/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for May, 2017

Remembering Ralph Yohe

Posted in Uncategorized on May 16, 2017 by rjohn

(If you click on most images in this post, you will get a larger version.)

Ralph Sandlin Yohe, was an important U.S. collector of oriental rugs and textiles during the approximate period from 1945 to his death in 1994. He is one of those who is gradually disappearing from historical view and this program is an effort both to make his work visible and to lay down a documenting marker about it.

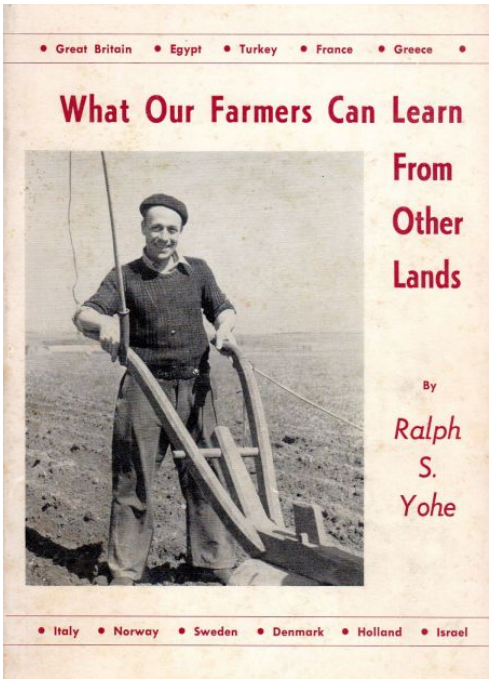
In 1965, Yohe was an early member of the International Hajji Baba Society, in Washington, D.C. He was also a member of the NYC Hajji Baba Society, co-founder of the New York Rug Society (1970), and of the Moroccan Rug and Textile Society (1991). In 1989, he received the Joseph V. McMullan Award for Scholarship and Stewardship in Islamic textiles. In 1994, he was honored as a Life Member by the Chicago Rug Society. He was a long-time Trustee of the Textile Museum. At the time of his death, he was President of the Near Eastern Art Research Center and a Trustee Emeritus of the Textile Museum.

Yohe was born in 1920 and reared on a family farm, near Mount Erie, Illinois.

He graduated from the University of Illinois, School of Agriculture, in 1943. He then served three years as a naval officer in the Mediterranean.

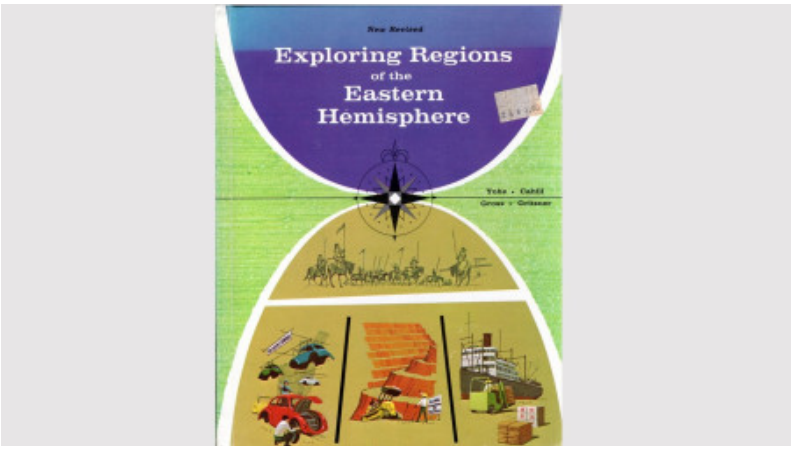
Yohe established a career reporting on agriculture. In 1946, he became the executive secretary of the Illinois Poultry Improvement Association. In 1948, he joined the staff of the Prairie Farmer, as science editor. For a number of years he was Editor of the Wisconsin Agriculturalist.

Yohe took jobs, but may not have needed one much. He had independent means that enabled him to work, as he seems, often to have done, as a free-lance reporter, traveling internationally, and writing, largely, as he pleased.



In 1953, Y0he published a book, "What Our Farmers Can Learn from Other Lands." The dust jacket says that "in 1949-50 he traveled through 15 European and Middle Eastern countries. He returned to Europe for five months, in 1952, a trip that took him to the Arctic Circle. Over a period of three years, Yohe traveled more than 40,000 miles abroad gathering material.

Yohe had a crisp, clear, journalist style, easy to read, and he wrote in areas beyond agriculture.



I found a geography-sociology-history textbook,"Exploring Regions of the Eastern Hemisphere," that he wrote, seemingly, as the lead author, with three associates, sometime after 1965. It treats the countries of the eastern hemisphere, broadly defined. Great Britain, France, Germany and some countries of Eastern Europe, are included.

Interestingly, there are sections of this book that treat northern Africa, so Yohe had some familiarity, then, with Morocco. As many readers will know, Yohe, Pickering and Pickering's daughter, Brooke, subsequently, did seminal work on Moroccan rugs and textiles that resulted in two important books.

Pickering reports that Yohe's interest in oriental rugs began in 1948. One day, Yohe noticed a Persian rug, over the bar, at the famous Shepeard's Hotel in Cairo.

(The Persian rug may have been "over the bar," in 1948, but apparently, nowadays, one is on the floor.)

Jerry Franke, an important figure, himself, in the Chicago area club, says that Yohe's initial interests were in more "classic" rugs.

Yohe must have been collecting seriously in the 50s and the 60s because he is one of ten businessmen-collectors featured in a Fortune magazine article, May, 1968.

Mike Tschebull, looking at this picture, could identify many of the rugs in it and even the plaques on the wall at the back left. Mike sees only one "city" rug in this array: a solitary Saruk, so Yohe must have before 1968 broadened his collecting interests well beyond "city" rugs in the direction of more "tribal" varieties

That same year he and McCoy Jones of Washington, D.C ,curated an exhibition of Turkish Rugs at The Textile Museum here.

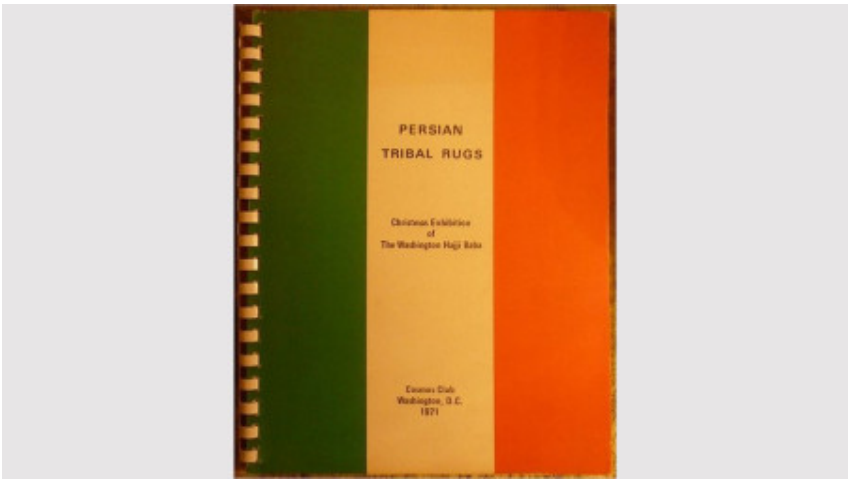
They also published a catalog for this exhibition under Textile Museum aegis.

This catalog, mostly in black and white images featured material from the TM collection, but also that from a number of noted collectors. Yohe owned two of the rugs in this exhibition and one of them (on the right above) was one of only three selected for treatment with a color image.

In 1969, Russell Pickering and Anthony Landreau curated and wrote the catalog for the ground-breaking exhibition "From the Bosporus to Samarkand," the first effort to treat flat-woven textiles seriously.

Four of Yohe's pieces were selected for this traveling exhibition, none of them in color, but here, above, is one with good graphics.

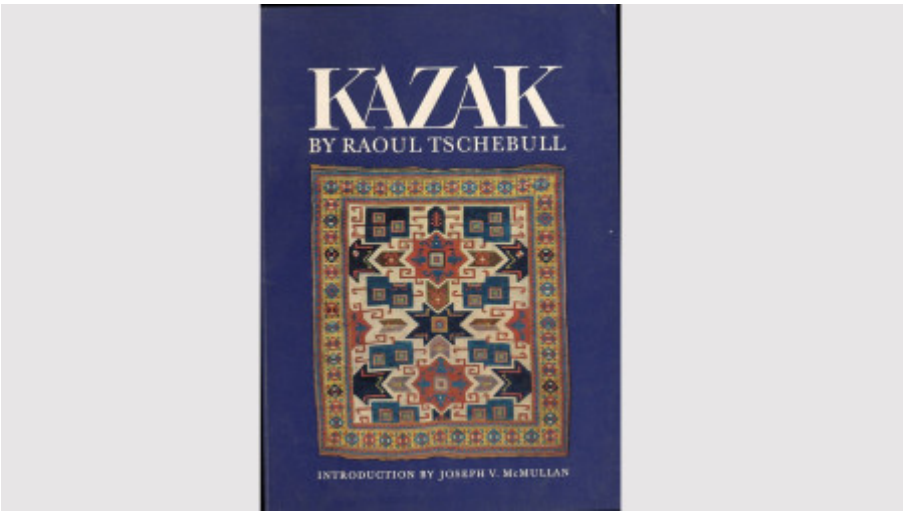
And here is another, an Anatolian kilim with some complexity. Woven in two pieces.



In 1971, Yohe and McCoy Jones were joined by Jeff Boucher to curate another Washington Hajji, Christmas exhibition, at the TM, this time on "Persian Tribal Rugs." A catalog was published entirely in black and white.

Yohe contributed eight pieces to this exhibition.

Here, on the left is an Afshar rug with a "tulip" design that Yohe contributed. The image on the right is of a very similar piece in color that lets you see its richness.



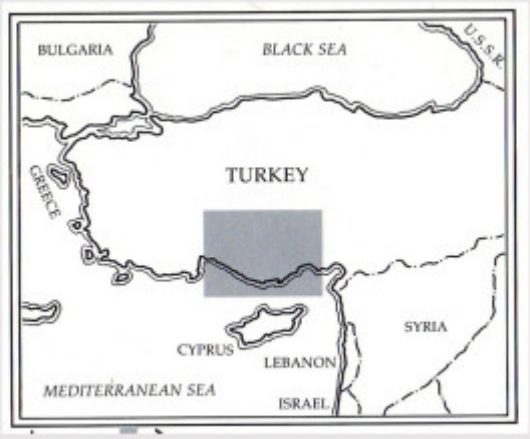
In 1971, Mike Tschebull published his still admired and useful catalog, "Kazak." Mike says that Yohe was one of a group of collectors who "knew much more than I did."(Joe McMullan wrote the Introduction for "Kazak")

Tschebull says that Yohe was very helpful as Mike prepared this first ever study, strictly focused on Kazak rugs. He was impressed with Yohe's interest in and knowledge of textile structures and with the "anthropological" perspective he took on textiles. He was interested not just in the weavings, but in who the weavers were and how they lived.

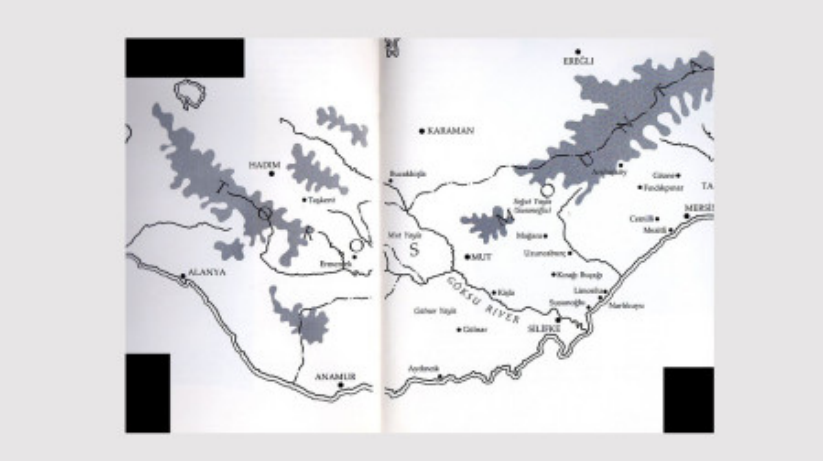
Yohe contributed two rugs to "Kazak."

This is one of them. Tschebull says that it is precisely drawn, has wonderful color and is entirely unworn.

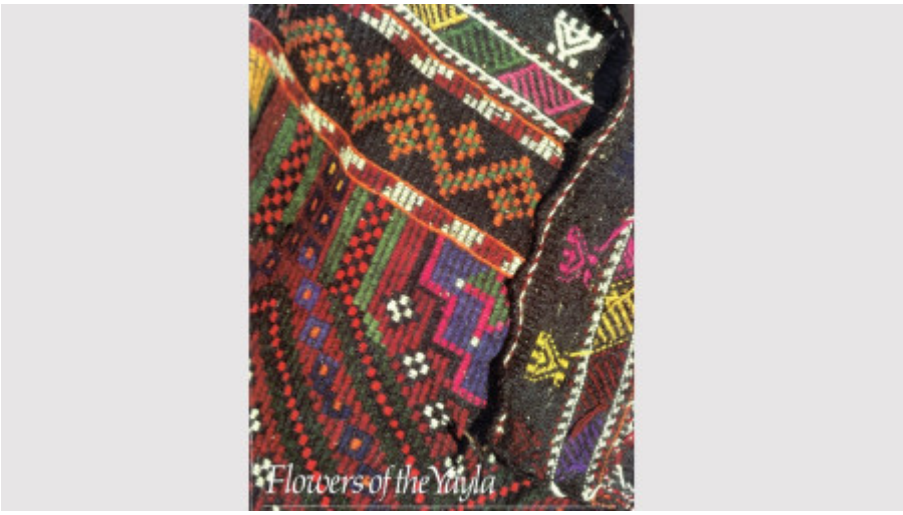
Beginning in 1973, Yohe joined Anthony Landreau, a curator at the TM (who would eventually be acting TM Director) and Landreau's family to conduct field research in Turkey.



They were studying a particular group of Yoruks in coastal, south central Turkey.



The group of Yoruks they were studying lived in coastal areas during the winter and migrated north into the mountains during their summer yaylas.



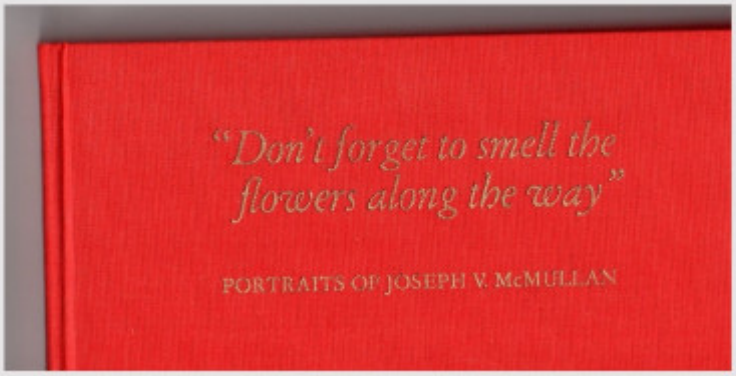
This Landreau-Yohe field work continued for a number of years, with several more trips, culminating in their curating the traveling TM exhibition "Flowers of the Yayla."

They also wrote the catalog for this exhibition.

I'd like to delay saying more about their effort, until we get to 1984 in the chronology, but it is important to note here that both Yohe and Landreau were among the last collectors and TM curators who did actual field research. I mean that they did not just travel to weaving areas, and observe weavers, but that they conducted systematic, structured, field research during their stays.

Russell Pickering reports that in 1976, he and Yohe took the first of many collecting trips to Morocco. Russell's daughter, Brooke, joined them in a number of subsequent trips. These trips would, eventually, produce two or three collections and two important books.

I want to defer treatment of these books on Moroccan weaving until we get to the dates on which they were published. The first, "From the Far West," came out in 1980.



In 1977, Pickering published his remembrance of Joe McMullan, entitled "Don't Forget to Smell the Flowers Along the Way." This volume contained a series of "portraits" of McMullan by people who knew him. Yohe wrote a wonderful Introduction, so good I want to include it here.

(If you click on each of the two images below you will get an image with legible size type.)

Here is the first page.

The Second Day of Ramadan

At my back a fountain splashes in a small pool edged with bright spangles of mosaic tile. I sit writing under a dim light in a garden of towering date palms in this ancient city of Marrakesh. Overhead the new crescent moon is set in the soft blue of a Moroccan night. For it is the second day of the sacred month of Ramadan. Beyond the silver gray olive trees of the garden, beyond the high walls plastered with red mud, a cannon shot has already announced the end of fasting for today.

I summon back the earlier hours of the day. Russ Pickering and I wander through the *souk* (market) of the medina, the old walled city, past the snake charmers, the story tellers, the dispersers of Berber charms, and the old women reading fortunes. The narrow, crooked streets are shaded by trellis covered with grape vines. Here are the shops of brass and copper and ironware; the vendors of melons, oranges, and a myriad of fruits and vegetables; the sellers of glazed pottery, clay pots, and bolts of bright colored cloth, some glowing with threads of silver and gold.

The air is pungent with the smell of herbs and burning charcoal, of leather and honeyed pastries. Hawkers call out their wares. Porters demand right-of-way through the crowds. Merchants plead to tourists to visit their shops, "not to buy but for the pleasure of the eye." And now and then a braying donkey complains of his load. But most important to us is the *Rue des Tapis* (Street of the Carpets).

We catch ourselves thinking almost at the same time, wouldn't it be great if at the next bend of the narrow street we could meet Joe McMullan? For this is the kind of place where Joe would love to have been, and it would have been his delight to join a couple of rug hunters searching through piles of rugs in hopes of making that rare discovery. And in the evening, sitting in this same garden, we would have relived each hour of the hunt.

This book is the story of Joseph V. McMullan. It is a collection of taped conversations conducted by Russell Pickering, first with Joe himself, and then with those who knew him as a friend, a fellow collector, an art scholar, a family member, an astute salesman, a business associate, a Scottish clansman. But these interviews are more than just a chronological biography. Throughout you will find the individuals searching, almost struggling, not only to find words that might sum up Joe's life but words to explain what Joe meant to them personally.

There is a saying: "To those who believe, no explanation of miracles is necessary. To those who disbelieve, no explanation is possible."

And here is the second.

I cannot help but feel the same about this introduction. To those who knew Joe, no introduction – no "explanation" – to this book is necessary. But to those who did not know him perhaps no adequate introduction – no "explanation" – is possible.

Yet even if you never knew Joe, as you read the conversations I think you will begin to understand that these people are talking about a very unusual and remarkable man with a great breadth of knowledge and interests. Little wonder that his love of Islamic rugs spread to the entire field of Islamic art, or that his accomplishments were many, were important and covered a wide range of fields.

These interviews are candid, utterly frank, and surprisingly free of rhetorical praise. And this is as it should be. For no one disliked or could spot sham and meaningless talk more than Joe. As you read on you will discover that nearly every person is trying to tell how deeply Joe McMullan touched his or her own life. For Joe was a very personable man with a genuine interest and appreciation of people, from cab drivers to students of art, from presidents of large corporations to local plumbers – everyone he met. In his latter days he shared his scholarly interest and infectious enthusiasm with those of us new to the world of Islamic carpets.

Woven through these pages you will find the story of not only a very successful and remarkable individual but of a most warm and very human man – the great and loved friend you would like to have met as you turned the corner in the rug bazaar on this, the second day of Ramadan.

Ralph S. Yohe
At Marrakesh, August 18, 1976

There's a story that goes with this Introduction.

In 1976, Yohe and Pickering stayed in the MaMounia Hotel in Marrakesh. This was during their first trip to Morocco – the only time Brooke was not able to come with them – as she did for the next 12 years.

Russell says: "On the second evening, we met a charming and attractive lady from Paris in the cocktail lounge and invited her for drinks in our suite." He says this suite was quite something, with a balcony overlooking the hotel's larger garden, and a view, beyond, onto the High Atlas Mountains.

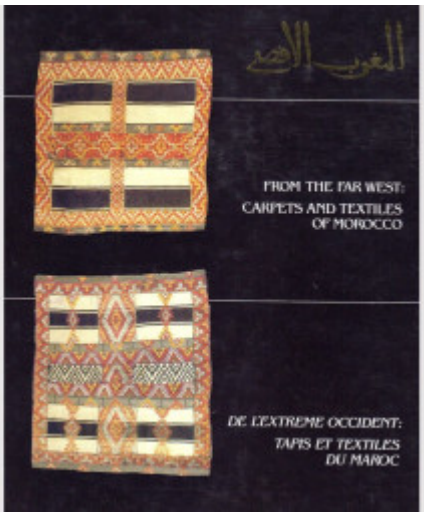
En route to the suite, Russell says he is thinking "How do I get rid of Yohe so I can take the lady on a moon-lit carriage ride around Marrakesh?" Russell was making the drinks and admits he may have "loaded" Yohe's.

After dinner, Yohe decided that he would write his introduction for their book on Joe McMullan's life (Russell said that he'd been pressing Yohe to do this). So Yohe headed for the garden and Russell and the lady had the carriage ride (Russell says that this carriage ride is a must for anyone who goes to Marrakesh.)

After the carriage ride and back in the lobby, the lady turned and said in her attractive French accent, "Roosell, I sinck you are very attractive, but my boyfriend arrives from Paris tomorrow morning and I do not think he would like to see you around. Good night!" and she disappeared into the elevator. So much for Romeo Russell.

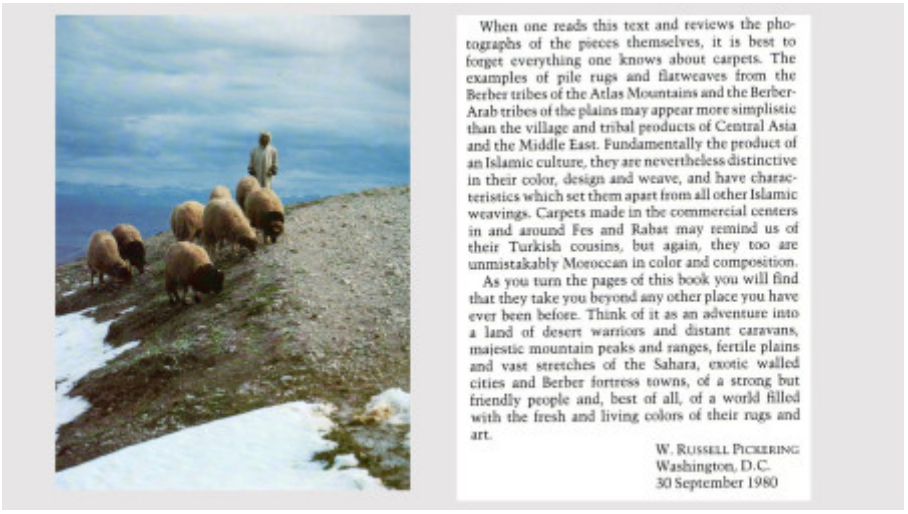
Upon his return to the suite, Russell found Yohe asleep on the couch with the draft of the Introduction: "The Second Day of Ramadan." As you have seen, it begins "At my back a fountain splashes in a small pool, edged with bright spangles of mosaic tile…" It goes on in that vein for a page and a half. Russell says often that he thinks it is the best piece of writing he has ever seen in a rug and textile book.

So while "Romeo Russell" struck out, the "Flowers" Editor in Chief, Russell, struck gold.



In 1980 (a year full of important rug books), the first 20th century book on Moroccan weaving, "From the Far West: Carpets and Textiles of Morocco," was published.

It was edited by Patricia Fiske, a curator at the TM, and by Pickering and Yohe. There were, also, important contributions by a number of other students of Moroccan weaving.



When one reads this text and reviews the photographs of the pieces themselves, it is best to forget everything one knows about carpets. The examples of pile rugs and flatweaves from the Berber tribes of the Atlas Mountains and the Berber-Arab tribes of the plains may appear more simplistic than the village and tribal products of Central Asia and the Middle East. Fundamentally the product of an Islamic culture, they are nevertheless distinctive in their color, design and weave, and have characteristics which set them apart from all other Islamic weavings. Carpets made in the commercial centers in and around Fes and Rabat may remind us of their Turkish cousins, but again, they too are unmistakably Moroccan in color and composition.

As you turn the pages of this book you will find that they take you beyond any other place you have ever been before. Think of it as an adventure into a land of desert warriors and distant caravans, majestic mountain peaks and ranges, fertile plains and vast stretches of the Sahara, exotic walled cities and Berber fortress towns, of a strong but friendly people and, best of all, of a world filled with the fresh and living colors of their rugs and art.

W. Russell Pickering
Washington, D.C.
30 September 1980

Pickering wrote the introduction, saying in part that "this book is the most definitive work on Moroccan carpets in over half a century." He also said that it was the result of "interest, travel and study by representatives of The Textile Museum over the last ten years."

Yohe wrote a 10-page contribution, entitled "*Al Maghrib Al Aqsa:* Islam's Far West.

He said, in part, that Morocco is "further west than Spain or Portugal, or even Ireland." His writing is concise and accessible, even elegant, and a bit poetic, in places. It is another instance in which he has demonstrated that he can write.

A number of Yohe's pieces are included in this volume in color. Here are three.

On the left is an older High Atlas pile rug, Ouaouzguite.

On the right is its back. The structure of this rug is such that the bright colors used for the wefts show only on the back.

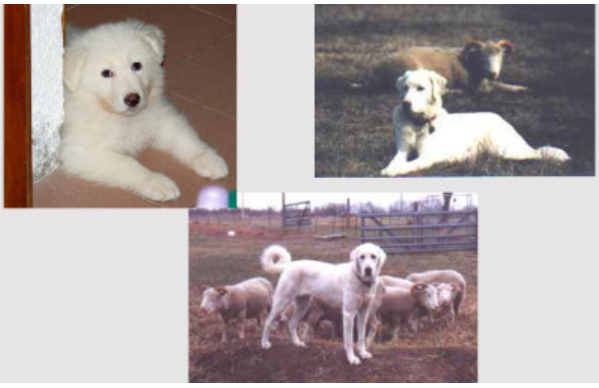
Oulad Bou Sbba
Pile carpet

Above is an Oulad Bou Sbba pile carpet. A 4-1-4 plus 2 array of diamond devices with small human figures.

Rehamna carpet

Multiple rows of weft between rows of pile

A third carpet is wonderfully abstract. Its design resembles those of some paintings, such as the work of Mondrian (we'll see this rug again).



In 1980, Yohe became an active breeder and promoter of the Turkish Akbash dogs, a large white breed that lives with and protects livestock (not a herding breed). These dogs are familiar with their owners, but wary of, and alarming to strangers.

Jerry Franke tells of visiting Yohe at his "farm" with some other rug collectors. Yohe told them, "When you arrive, stay in the car. I'll come get you." Yohe had a number of these dogs and continued to work with them until his death in 1994.

Now let's return to the 1983 exhibition and catalog, the result of Landreau's and Yohe's field work with Yoruks, in the south central Turkish coast and the mountains immediately to the north.

There are a number of pieces in this catalog, presented in color, but there is no ownership indicated for any of them. They seem to be older Yoruk material.

Here are two of them.

Early Yoruk from
Icel Province

Strong graphics.

Rug patterned
with typical weft
float brocading
(cul) and arrow
designs common
in Icel Province

Yohe, of course, contributed a number of pieces to this catalog. They are all in black and white.

The Landeau-Yohe field work also illustrates how difficult it is to do this, unless one is a near member of the group being studied. "Outsider" field researcher, especially males without the language of the studied group, are, unavoidably, and seriously, dependent on others to facilitate their research.

Landeau and Yohe openly state that a primary facilitator of their research was an Anatolian dealer. They say in their beginning Acknowledgements that this dealer "…traveled with us, along many dusty roads and frequently treacherous miles, through the the "yayla," and on roads clinging to the sides of the mountains. He introduced us to the people in the Yoruk villages and camps; he acted as friend, guide, adviser and activator."

Now every field researcher needs such a facilitating resource, but there are signs that those on whom Landreau and Yohe were dependent had objectives distinctive from those at which they aimed in their field work.

Some familiar with Turkey and this research effort say that the folks helping Landreau and Yohe took them to ostensible "Yoruk" villages in which there was no longer active weaving, and may have sometimes "seeded" them with possible "Yoruk" weavings to be bought (Landreau and Yohe acknowledge that some of the "yayla" locations they visited had no looms set up).

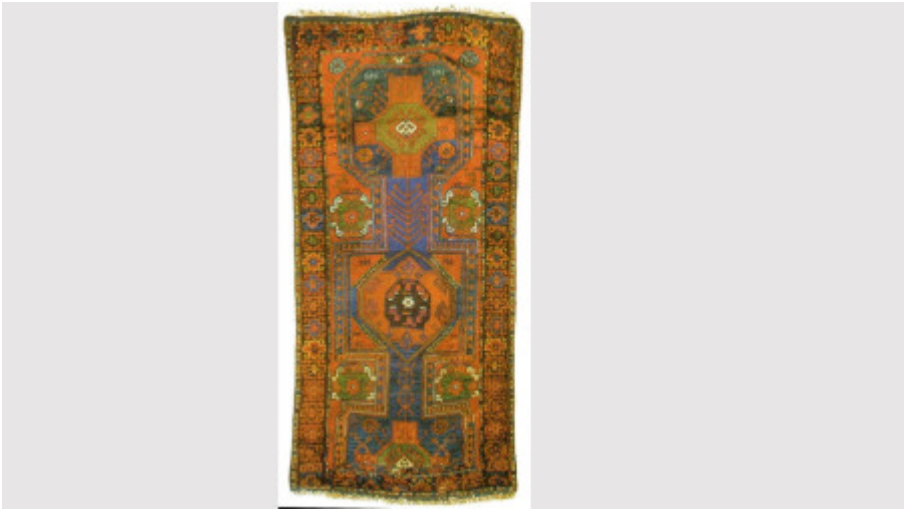
On the other hand, Landreau and Yohe show several women, held to be Yoruks, spinning and weaving. Here is one example. This woman is said to be weaving at Narhkuyu on the Mediterranian coast, using a vertical frame loom (as we have said, some Yoruks lived on the coast part of the year, but migrated to the cooler mountains during the summer).

Above is another piece woven in the area that Landreau and Yohe visited. Good color. (From their article on their Yoruk field work in Hali, Vol.3, Issue 3, p 184)

Fig. 18. Yörük rug from the Kozan-Niğde area formed of three narrow strips sewn together. Woven in plain design of red and blue wool and white cotton with wool tufts knotted in a regular pattern all over the rug. 1.93m × 1.34m (76" × 54") Emir Aygar Köye

Now about Landreau and Yohe being dependent on their Yoruk hosts, here is a seemingly, telling example. The catalog caption for this piece says that it's a Yoruk weaving from the Kozan-Digne area. Digne is in eastern Anatolia due east of Konya.

Now one needs to remember how relatively little was known about textiles, even in the early 1980s, but this piece would now be firmly attributed to the Fars area of Iran. It is not "Yoruk." It is not even Anatolian. It is the kind of thing that indicates how dependent field researchers are on their cultural facilitators.

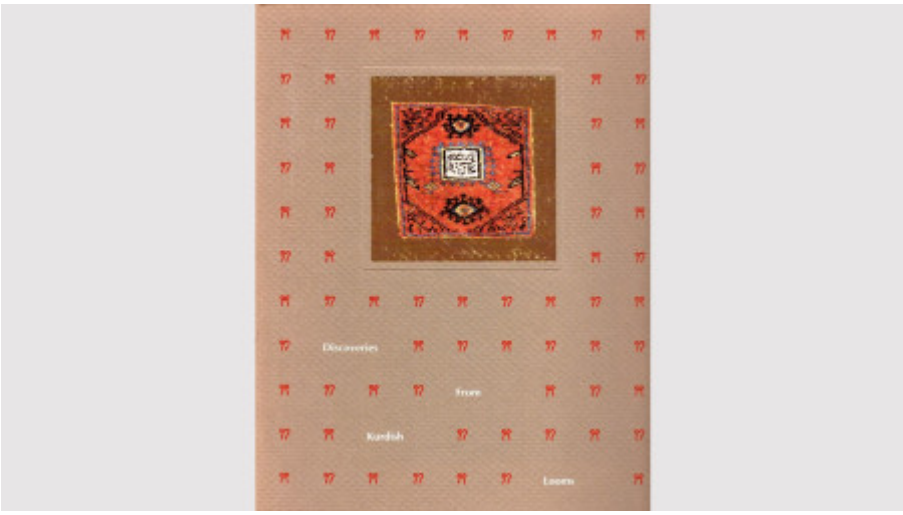


There is also some of Yohe's "Yoruk' material visible in Walter Denny's Hali review (32, 49-51) of a 1986 exhibition curated by Jerry Franke and displayed at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee gallery.

Denny described the piece, above, as a Yoruk "keyhole" rug from east central Anatolia. He said that it has some age.

Denny described this Yoruk rug as one with a "sensationally sober, multiple-gul field from the Malatya area." He praised its colors and said that, despite its late age, it was "one of the most evocative and beautiful pieces on exhibition."

We need to back up a little to see something else that Yohe was participating in in 1983.



The Mary Block Gallery at Northwestern University, in Evanston, Illinois, in conjunction with the Chicago Rug Society, staged an exhibition entitled "Discoveries from Kurdish Looms." A catalog was published, edited by Robert D. Biggs. Yohe contributed seven pieces to this exhibition. Here are two of them.

First, is this interesting Kordi bag shown in a black and white photo.

Second, is this Kurdish kilim woven in the Malatya area of eastern Turkey.

In 1987, Jerry Franke curated an exhibition in Chicago, at the Nahigian Bros. Gallery, and two of Yohe's rugs appeared in it.

The first of these (above) is a Yuncu kilim from western Turkey.

The second of these is a crisply drawn, spacious, niche-design kilim from the Sivrihisar area of Turkey. Note the pale green ground.

We talked to a number of people who knew Yohe. (Some of what we report below, from these conversations, will echo a bit what we've said above.)

Mike Tschebull was one of these. Here are the questions we asked and the answers he gave.

When did you first meet Yohe?

A younger Mike Tschebull on the left;
Pickering on the right

Through Russ, probably in 1969, when we lived on the Upper West Side in Manhattan. We had a blowout rug collectors' party around then with Joe McMullan and Ralph included. A lot of gin was drunk (it doesn't stain rugs when spilled). At that formative event, I got a polite bit of feedback that what I thought was good in the rug world really wasn't.

What was Yohe collecting then?

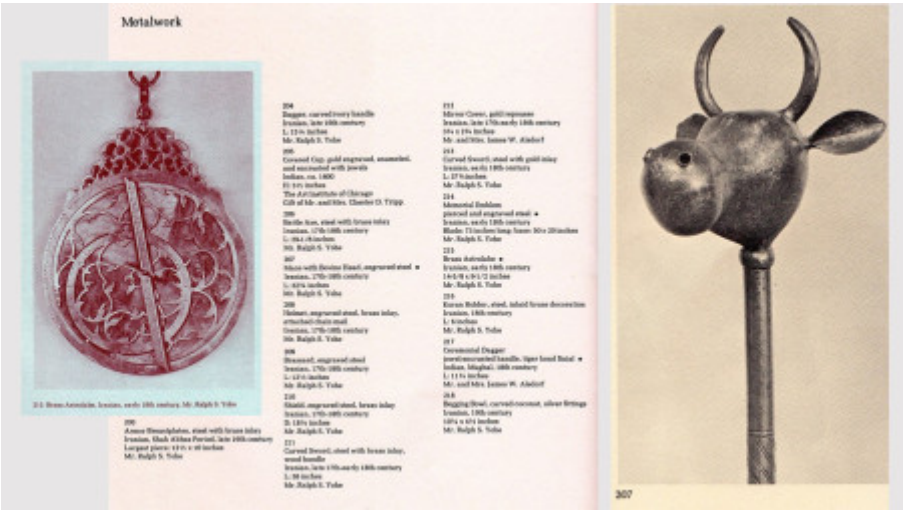
Ralph was on an eclectic collector. He had great Remington bronzes, and all sorts of other applied art.

Howe: Let me stop here a moment at the beginning of my interview with Mike to show you something of Yohe's eclectism. Mike has already said that there were Remington bronzes, but there was much more.

Joe Fell, another close friend of Yohe's, pointed me to the catalog for an exhibition put on by the The Art Institute of Chicago, but that drew on items from a number of collectors, including Yohe. This exhibition included textiles, paintings, ceramics and metalwork.

Yohe had 20 pieces in this exhibition. Some textiles from Yohe's collection were included.

But a number of the metalwork items were also his.



The piece on the left, above was the back cover of the catalog.

On this page, alone, 14 of the metal objects included in this exhibit were Ralph's.

Back to my interview with Mike Tschebull. (This is Mike talking, again.)

Yohe had at least two world class Caucasian rugs and lots of early Turkish pile pieces, bags and kilims from all over.

91a. Persian Saddle Bag, probably from Baseri tribe (bought in Shiraz). Complementary weft-float weave, weft-faced, front and back; knotted tufts in spots throughout the design; square braided loops twined into fabric; binding stitches at seams. Wool warp and weft. 4′3″:2′6″. Ralph S. Yohe Collection.

Yohe had been in Iran before "*Bosporus"* exhibition and catalog (1969) was put together.

He had a set of attributions for a class of Fars nomad bags, from the Bassiris in Shiraz, that may still be the be the most accurate available, because it was gotten way before these things were popular and people formed unfounded opinions. The type of bag in question is #91a in *Bosporus (see above)*. Yohe owned this piece.

I still use his attribution indicators for these "complementary weft" (Marla Mallett's recommended term) bags, even though names coming out of Iran for these have changed.

What kind of person was Yohe?

He was a valuable look-over-the shoulder editor for the Kazak catalogue. Lent several pieces, including a drop-dead gorgeous, large rug with Memling gulls. He seemed diffident to me, but there was an age and experience gap between us. He helped me a lot.

Yohe loved gin. It made him make sniffing sounds.

What is your evaluation of Ralph's collection?

We had a collectors' weekend in Racine in 1972 and we got to see everything in his apartment. Pretty, pretty good.

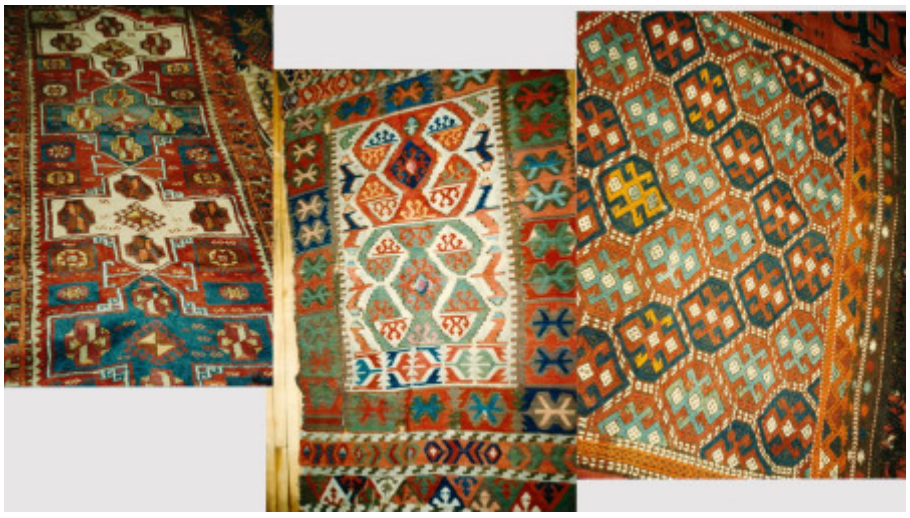
What are some other things you can remember about Yohe, about which I should ask you?

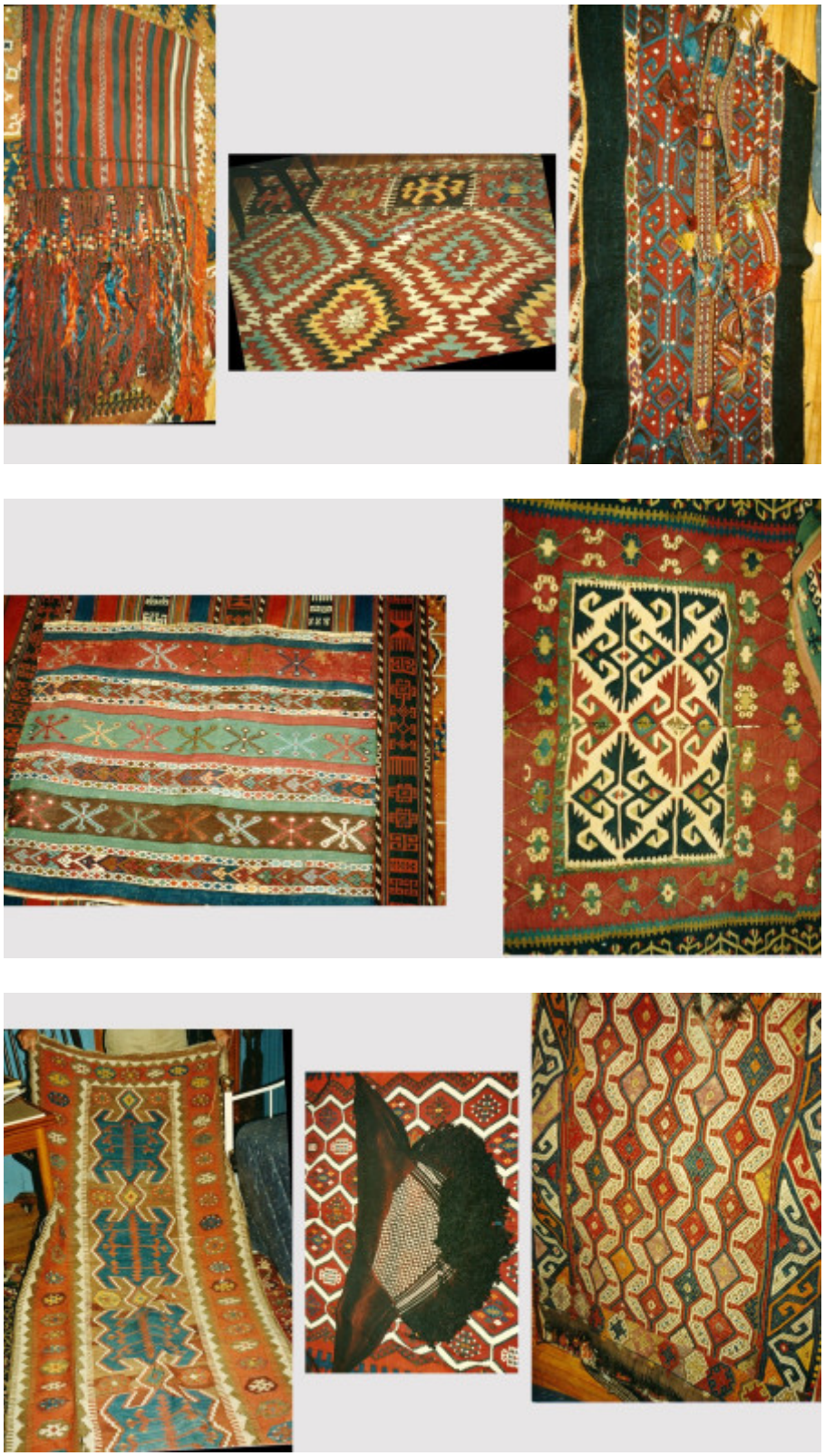
Early on, he put up a multimedia presentation entitled "People of the Horse." He had video, stills, and a tape recording: horses running – hoof beats, snorts, etc. – all in coordination. It was a fabulous, way ahead of its time, experience.

Howe: a number of people remember this program, but no one seems to have the materials.

Jerry Franke, shared a number of images of pieces that Yohe owned.

The next few slides feature shots that were taken to select pieces for an exhibition and are often not full “all edges” photos. But they give a further sense of what Yohe collected.





Howe: I have been asking what the textile in the center above is, but have not yet found anyone who can tell me. I'd be curious to know.

I think it not inaccurate to suggest that the acme of Yohe's career as a collector and student of oriental rugs is marked by his work with Russell Pickering on Moroccan weaving.

The publication of "The Far West…" volume was an important step into this world, but its culmination is unavoidably, the publication, with Brooke and Russell Pickering, of "Moroccan Carpets"

Here, in turn, are Brooke's, and then, Russell's remembrances of Yohe, and of their time with him.

Brooke’s remembrances:

I knew Ralph from early childhood, and from those years remember him as one of the many beloved rug-world characters who came through our apartment.

I really got to know him, though, as a teenager and later in my twenties on our trips to Morocco.

The typical routine after a day of pouring over rugs in the medina, was for Dad and Ralph to settle into the hotel room's balcony at drinks time with a bottle of scotch and some olives and nuts, with their latest purchase draped on the nearest chair or laid out on the floor of the room.

As the daylight downshifted in that special Marrakesh way, they'd review the events of the afternoon while admiring the latest great buy.

This object would, of course, always grow more fabulous and beautiful as the evening went on.

Ralph had such a spirit of camaraderie – he made these evenings a celebration of our *collective* eye and of the fact *we* hadn't let a "great" one get away.

What strikes me looking back on those times is not just his joy, but also the fact that, even when I was just a teenager, and still called him "Uncle Ralph", he always wanted to hear my opinion and treated me as a full, equal member of the crew. He really seemed to enjoy the idea of our team of three.

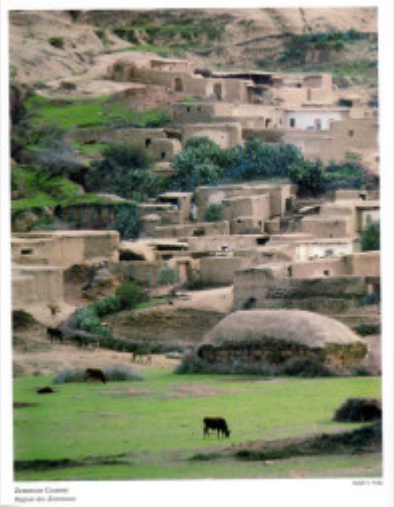
Traveling with Ralph was much more than an education in rugs.

His knowledge of agriculture and rural life was deep, and for me, born and raised in the city, it was hugely helpful to hear Ralph explain what we were seeing as we drove through the Atlas Mountains.

What were they growing/doing/selling over there in the field or by the side of the road?

Ralph almost always knew the answer. And because of this, he was able to connect the art with the people who made it and with the way they actually lived. We gained so much from his perspective. He often related things back to his travels in Turkey. And so we learned about Turkish rugs and Turkish people too.

He always wore a no-nonsense button down the front, usually short sleeved shirt (white or blue) – very mainstream 70's – with at least two big cameras around his neck.



We frequently had to stop the car, at a moment's notice, usually at a perilous curve in the road, on the side of a cliff, so that he could take pictures.

I don't know how much attention my father and I were paying to these photography sessions – we were probably thinking about lunch or dealing with the army of little kids that would inevitably come running towards Ralph (he was, interestingly, kind of a little kid magnet).

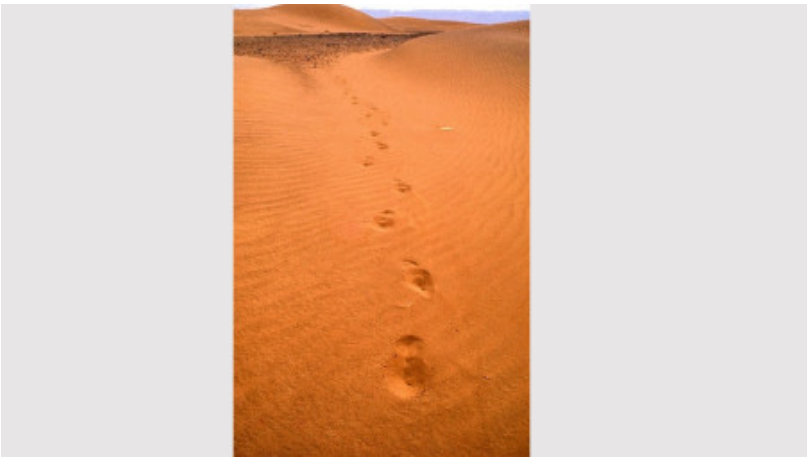
In the early nineties, when I started giving talks on Moroccan textiles, in typical Ralph style, he gave me an enormous box of his slides of trips to Morocco.

Well, with that I started paying attention!

There were photos of animals on hillsides, shepherds in the fields, women at looms, donkeys, children, craftmen, misty mountainsides, women, people selling jugs, loads of produce….

Ralph had the eye of a poet, and of a person who appreciates, not just physical beauty, but the soul behind it.

Here are some photos Ralph took during our Moroccan trips that I put in this poetic category.



This is a tannery in Fes.

And here are four more that I like.

This is the road to Chichaoua.

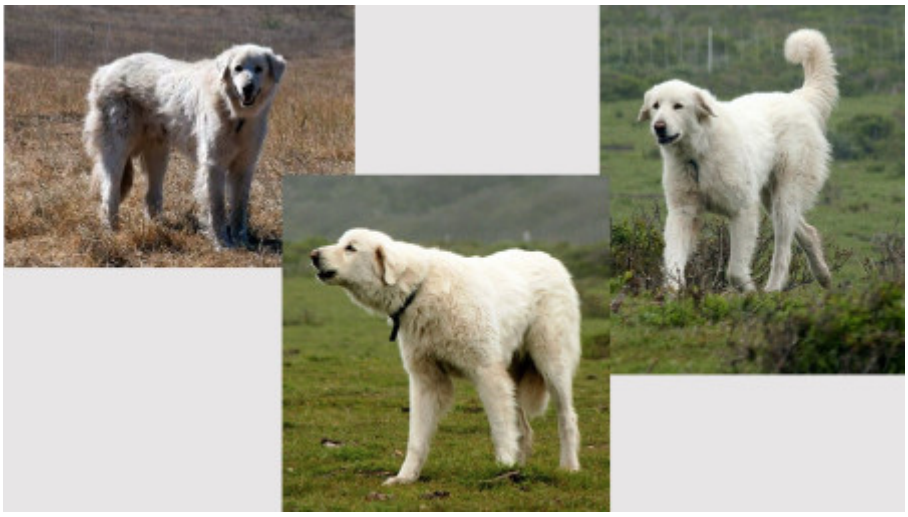
A view of Fes.

This is a man clipping the pile of a finished rug with scissors.

It's funny about this photo, because I can't see it objectively. That's because I was there for it.

It was very early in the morning (1977) and we were driving in the Atlas Mountains outside of Marrakesh. We came around a curve in the road and saw this girl and her donkey in silhouette against the clouds. It looked as though she was walking along the edge of heaven.

When I see this picture I see my full memory of the scene and I have no idea what it looks like to someone who wasn't there!



I used to love hearing Ralph talk about his dogs, which he did often, as he missed them greatly, when he was on the road.

I remember him becoming teary one night, talking about one of the dogs he trained as service dog for a woman in a wheelchair. I loved that about him.

I think along with Ralph's understated Midwestern straightforwardness, came an open minded and artistic free spirit. In fact, this combination may be what made him a great rug collector.

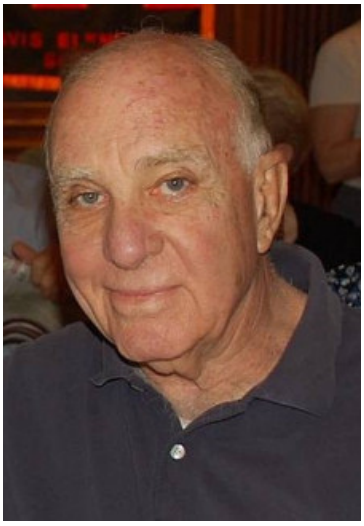
He loved the good traditional pieces.

(Plate #75 *From the Far West: Carpets and Textiles of Morocco, TM*).

But he was also charmed by the playfulness of animal motifs (Plate #82).

And then there is plate #87. This one just about says it all.

Russell:



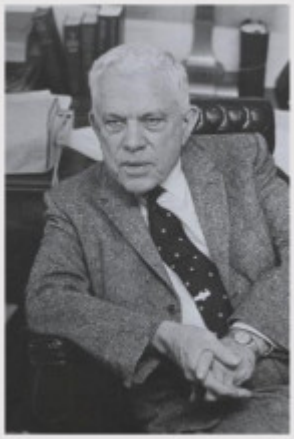
When I bought my first oriental rugs (like many collectors) I was just trying to decorate my NYC apartment.

But I happened onto a group of folks, who, it turned out, were helping U.S. rug collecting and scholarship get to its initial "feet."

We often didn't quite know what we were doing, but some of it turned to be pretty important, and we had fun – as Mike has pointed out, it was good that we were usually drinking gin, because it didn't stain the rugs.

There were some members of this group that were particularly important to me.

I've, long ago, now made my tribute to Joe McMullan, in my remembrance "Don't Forget to Smell the Flowers Along the Way."



And with the able help of the then TM Librarian, Lydia Fraser, we've, recently, tried to make sure that the contributions of Arthur Jenkins are not forgotten.

Ralph Yohe was another of these people.

He had done a lot of work in the world of collecting, before we first met, and since he was a journalist, he could flat out write.

And, like me, he was particularly interested in new things – textiles that had not been collected or treated much in the literature.

He contributed importantly to the Textile Museum exhibition and catalog "From the Bosporus to Samarkand, Flat Woven Rugs, that drew attention to flat weaves and made it legitimate to collect them.

He was, as we have said, one of the few collectors, who (with the then Acting-TM Director, Anthony Landreau, left above) did real field research on Yoruk weaving in Turkey's Toros mountains.

And when I happened onto Moroccan rugs and textiles as the result of a chance family vacation there in 1971, Ralph joined me (and subsequently Brooke and me) in a number of trips to Morocco, during which we assembled one of the first serious collections of Moroccan rugs.

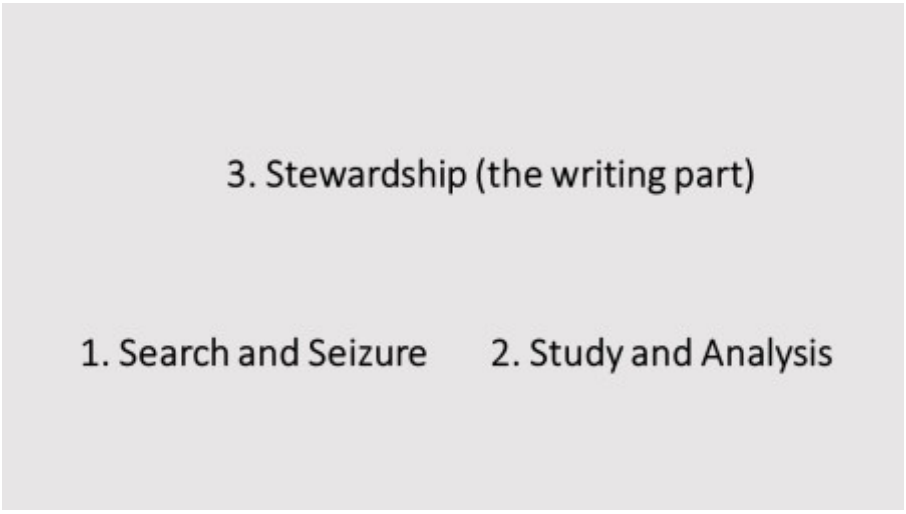
This work also resulted in an exhibition and two books: "From the Far West" and "Moroccan Carpets."

I first met Ralph in 1967 at a New York Hajji meeting. We almost immediately became fast friends, which continued until his death in 1994.

As I said, one of the reasons that we began to work together is that we were both interested in new things: textiles that hadn't been treated much.

Secondly, he was one of the practitioners of a kind of collecting creed that I've tried to recommend to other collectors.

I have argued that it's not sufficient to assemble an array of interesting, even noteworthy textiles. One should also examine them closely, record your findings, compare them with those in the literature, and even write about your collection, if only for yourself. This credo underpins the McMullan Award.



I see it as a triangle, moving counter-clockwise from the lower left. First Search and Seizure. Then across to Study and Analysis, before moving to the acme of Stewardship.

As Brooke has said, Ralph was a real and generous human being. He had real skills and ability.

He traveled widely and had seen a lot of the world and its cultures. He was curious and open to new things. And he had a record of accomplishment.

But he was also truly interested in people. He liked working in a team. As Brooke testifies, even when she was young, he treated her and her opinions seriously. You can see why he was a "kid magnet."

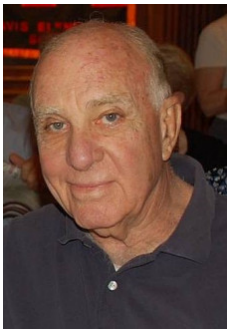
He genuinely cared about his fellow creatures. Not just his big, white dogs, but also the lady in the wheel chair that he was training one of them to help.

And he was fun, especially, when the gin made him make sniffing sounds.

Yohe was one of the best people I have known and I'm still daily grateful for our experiences together and our great friendship.

In 1994, the year in which Yohe died, we published the "Moroccan Carpets" book, based on material Yohe and Brooke and I had collected over nearly 20 years.

It is a fitting epitaph.



John Howe[10]:

Brooke Pickering wrote me, the afternoon before I was to give this presentation at the Textile Museum, saying that her dad had passed away early that morning.

Russell was the driving force behind this remembrance of Yohe.

I gave it to him repeatedly, in practice, and know that he was pleased with the result.

His last phone message (probably the day before Russell died) said that he was not well and apologized for not being able to be there.

[10] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/17 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/05/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for November, 2017

Tim and Penny Hays on Kilims of The Former European Territories of the Ottoman Empire

Posted in Uncategorized on November 7, 2017 by rjohn

On October 14, 2017, Tim and Penny Hays, who are collectors here in the Washington, D.C. area, gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program here at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C.

Tim and Penny have focused their collection primarily on Balkan kilims. but have broadened their interests somewhat. As the title says in this program, and as Wendel Swan said in his introduction, they presented and talked about kilims in their collection woven in former European territories of the Ottoman Empire. They have traveled extensively in these countries and have assiduously explored the history, records of border and ethnic group movements, and other related aspects of the literature, sometimes arranging translation.

The map below presents the countries near the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

The map below crops out the "countries" in which the kilims, Tim and Penny treated, were variously woven.

Tim made these introductory remarks:

"Penny and I appreciate those attending today's presentation. Balkan kilims are not well known in North America and, in our view, under appreciated. We hope to remedy that a bit today. But we also want to take this opportunity to show how our collecting interests evolved over time. The first misconception we wanted to address is the common perception of the Balkans as a cultural and political hinterland. This is far from a correct view. The Balkans, especially what today are the nation states of Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, and Serbia, were a key part of the Ottoman polity, and the breadbasket of the Empire. This remained true until the mid-19th Century, when everything began to change. Perhaps the perception of the Balkans as a hinterland comes from our shared Western and Central European cultural heritage."

Now Tim and Penny moved to treat the kilims for the first country.

The first piece was this monumental constructed saf.

This is a *re*-constructed Ciprovtsy (NW Bulgaria) saf from the 18th Century. Its a piece we assembled over a period of five years from a group of fragments of varying sizes.

We know there are only five or six Ciprovtsy safs in existence from the 18th Century period. Although these fragments have not been dated individually, it is possible they may date from the 17th Century. This particular design and color scheme is among the earliest known for the West Bulgarian weaving group. This group is often attributed as Sarkoy or Manastir in the rug trade. This is not correct. Bulgarian textile art historians characterize such example as of the Constructionist period (late 17th Century to about 1820). Penny and I have had these fragments conserved and mounted as we believe they might have appeared when new.

Safs usually comprise three, five, or seven niches in two or more tiers. Because this example is fragmentary, we had it reconstructed as a single-tier. Very careful examination suggests some of the smaller fragments may be from a different original. All the fragments in this piece were obtained from a family of Bulgarian muhajir (returnees to Turkey) whose mutual ancestor was an imam or hoja in Northern Bulgaria.

The detailed images below demonstrate the color scheme common to all the known examples of this class of weaving. They all have brown, indigo blue, green (from overdyed yellow and blue), ochre tones; and in this example, gold in the triangle forms. The weaving is very fine and its likely its was woven for the Ottoman or Rumelian market as a prestige textile.

Its unknown if the original weavers were Orthodox Christians or Bulgarian Muslims, or both.

We are pleased with the way this reconstruction and conservation looks. Our Turkish repairmen did a good job.

Details.

A second piece was a departure: the only woven pile piece they showed.

This rug, in prayer format, is a later example of the Manastir rug group.

Early pieces of this group were produced in Macedonia and used by Macedonian Turkish families in their homes. When these Macedonian muhajir returned to Turkey, they seem to have retained this particular pile weaving tradition.

We believe this piece is an example produced in Turkey as it has white wool warps.

But there are characteristics that align with Balkan originals; including multiple weft shots, typical Manastir rug design format, and the eight-lobed blossom motif The brocaded strips are also common in this group. The pale pistachio green is unusual and suggests a Balkan affinity.

We believe this piece can be dated to the late-19th Century or very early 20th Century. Pile is long and the handle is floppy. Details.

Here is the back.

The next piece was difficult to display and to photograph. (Color differences are due to lighting and the operation of three different cameras.)

*

This is a large fragment from a Pirot (West Bulgarian Group) kilim of the mid-late 19th Century.

The field design is that of multiple trees of life with typical Pirot floral and vegetal motifs. The colors are consistent with the wine red, greens and blues seen in such (Sarkoy) kilims. Although the town of Pirot is now in SE Serbia until 1868 it was part of the Ottoman province of Bulgaria.

Again the weave in this large fragment is fine (almost like shirt cloth). We estimate the original kilim was probably 3.5 M X 3.0 M.

Pirot produced kilims in many sizes from doilies to large floor coverings or wall hangings. Pirot production was based in workshops or 'factories'. Initially the weavers were a mix of Christian and Muslim women, but by the late 1860's weaving was a Christian occupation. Production was market driven. Pieces as large as 10.5 X 6.5 meters have been produced.

A late example of such a weaving is currently being offered on the Istanbul market. It appears to be a later Yugoslavian era piece previously used in a public venue.

More details.

The next piece was below.

German and Austrian travelers in the Balkans in the mid-19th Century (Kannitz among others) documented a booming trade in Pirot kilims to both Ottoman territory and to Europe. He reported Pirot kilims were so popular that other weaving towns and villages in West Bulgaria produced their own versions of the ever popular Pirot prayer kilim. These were traded by the bale at the annual Pirot trade fair known as the *panajir.*

This group of weavings were known as Pirotsko or Pirotskoi . This example may be one of those weavings. In any case, its a nice example of the West Bulgarian weaving genre with period natural dyes and a rather appealing design. It has a rustic in-your-face prayer kilim composition. Probably Decorative Period ca 1850-1860. The wine color ground is striking. Origin likely Ottoman province of Bulgaria (Rumelia) or SE Serbia. As the images below show, this kilim has some interesting details- especially at the top of the prayer arch. Details.

This piece is an example of a rare group of Romanian kilims from the region of Moldavia (NE Romania on the west bank of the Dniester River).

Although today's Romania was not an Ottoman province, the three Principalities (Wallachia, Transylvania, and Moldavia) were Ottoman vassal states with Phanariot Greek Princes appointed by Istanbul. As the Principalities had relatively few Turkish residents and we believe these kilims were woven by Christians.

The sparse motifs are skeletal floral designs (especially tulips).

These weavings are borderless and were meant to be used as wall hangings and viewed on the horizontal.

These pieces are late 19th Century with something of an Art Deco feel. We have not seen other examples of this group outside museums in Romania. *Thanks to Stefano Ionesco for his assistance in identifying and properly attributing this kilim.* Details.

This is an early example (18th Century) of a West Bulgarian Chiprovtsy prayer kilim of the Bakamsky/Garabalda design.

This is one of the earliest type of Balkan kilims known. Along TP1, it is an example of weavings of the Constructionist Period.

The Bakamsky kilims were produced in large numbers in NW Bulgaria with similar designs and two color schemes indigo blue, green, ochre and brown and indigo blue green, brown and red. This piece is an example of the latter. It has interesting zig-zag panels at the top and bottom of the central field, such elaborations can be an indicator of early examples of the genre. This particular piece has old repairs and reweaving in a pale brown tone.

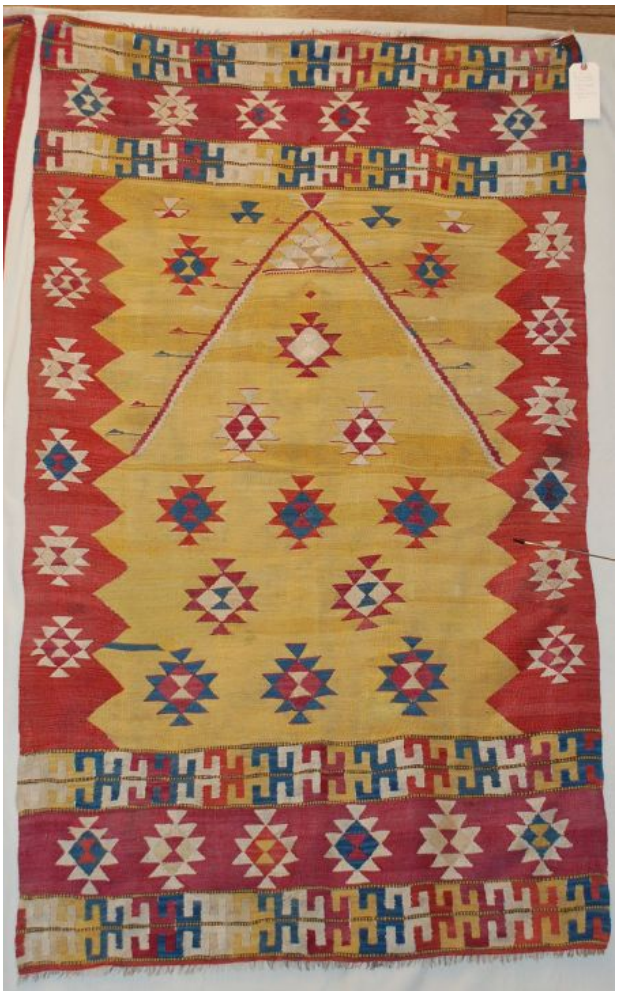
Typical of most West Bulgarian weavings the kilim is finely woven of wool from Zackel sheep from the Stara Planina Mountains.

The double-headed arrows in the central green field are known as *popuks* (butterflies) by local weavers; or as Sarkoy arrows or whirling dervishes by European collectors. The double headed arrows

are also seen on Central and South Anatolian kilims. But this kilim, and others like it, were woven by Orthodox Christians for he Ottoman market.

The Bakamsky design was widely used in the 18th Century as far afield as the Principality of Walachia.

Details.



This is a probably our favorite Manastir prayer kilim. This classic type has either red, yellow or rarely blue, grounds. From Eastern Bulgaria, this piece is slightly larger than normal with a red ground and rich yellow central field.

With five rows of Anatolian like borders at the top and bottom, and decorated with rows of hacilar amulets in the central field and borders. The slender prayer arch has tendrils sprouting from its sides and a red inverted triangle at top.

Note the few stray blue threads on the lower left side of the field. We believe the blue here is derived from the indigo of the woad plant, and the yellow from Dyers Weld. This kilim probably dates to the third quarter of the 19th Century.

When collectors think of Manastir prayer kilims, they probably envision pieces like this.

Details.

This is an excellent example of a medium size West Bulgarian kilim. We are not 100% certain of its full attribution, but believe it to be a Pirot or Samokov weaving of the third quarter 19th Century, or earlier.

Wonderful bright colors and fine weave. T he use of green in this piece leads me to think it was Bulgarian in origin. Samokov is in Southwest Bulgaria near the famous Rila Monastery. Reference works on Pirot and West Bulgarian kilims indicate weavings from these two locations are nearly indistinguishable. Such is the case here.

Certainly woven by Orthodox Christians this kilim maintains the 2-1-2 design so common in Islamic weaving. In prayer format, the Bulgarian and Serbian weavers refer to the niche motifs as mirrors. The tops of all the niches/mirrors have hooks on the upper edges and rams horn elaborations at the apex. the figures in the interior of the kilim are particularly attractive and the color combination is pleasing.

Produced in SW Bulgaria or SE Serbia. Again Zackel sheep wool from the Stara Planina Mountains was used is this attractive kilim.

Details.

This is a Manastir kilim from the Deliorman Region of eastern Bulgaria. It was collected there in the town of Shumen in about 1990.

Although it is in prayer kilim format, visually it is pure landscape with the rows of triangles forming an array of mountain ranges.

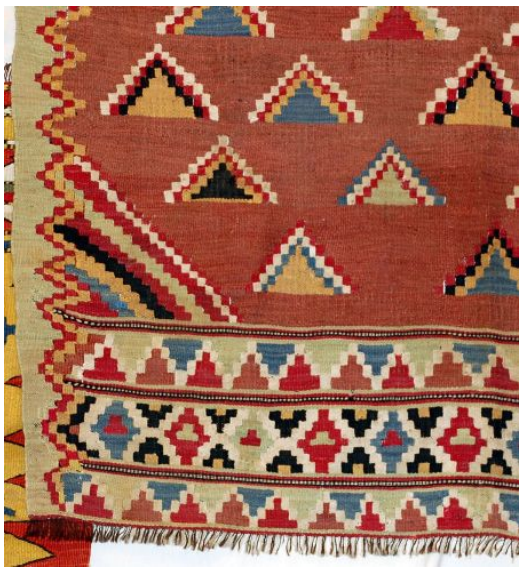
The general impression of the piece is rather Anatolian, replete with spandrels at each corner of the central field. The three border strips on either end are reminiscent of pieces we have seen from the Nigde area in Anatolia. Multiple prayer arch figures at the top of the field continue the mountain theme.

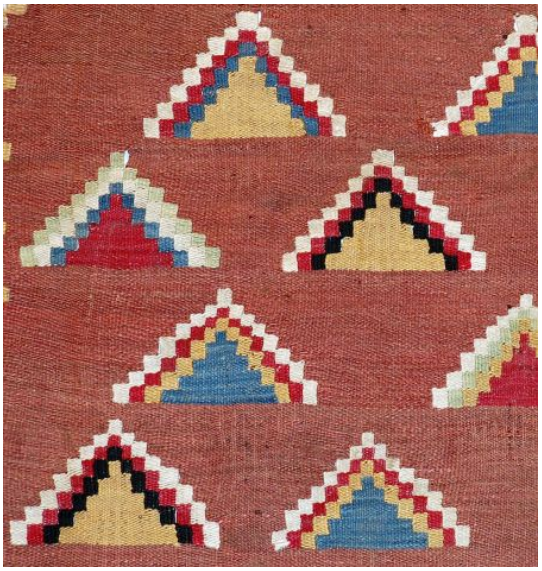
Seven colors are used: two reds, white, yellow, blue, black, and green. The green used here is in a tone we particularly associate with Balkan weaving. (*previously published as Plate 25 in Stoebe and*

Mizrahi, Manastir Kilims:In Search of a Trail) One of the reds used is an attractive rose tone we see frequently in South Balkan kilims.

The kilim dates from the 19th Century.

Details.





This is an example of a Manastir prayer kilim with its red ground and yellow field.

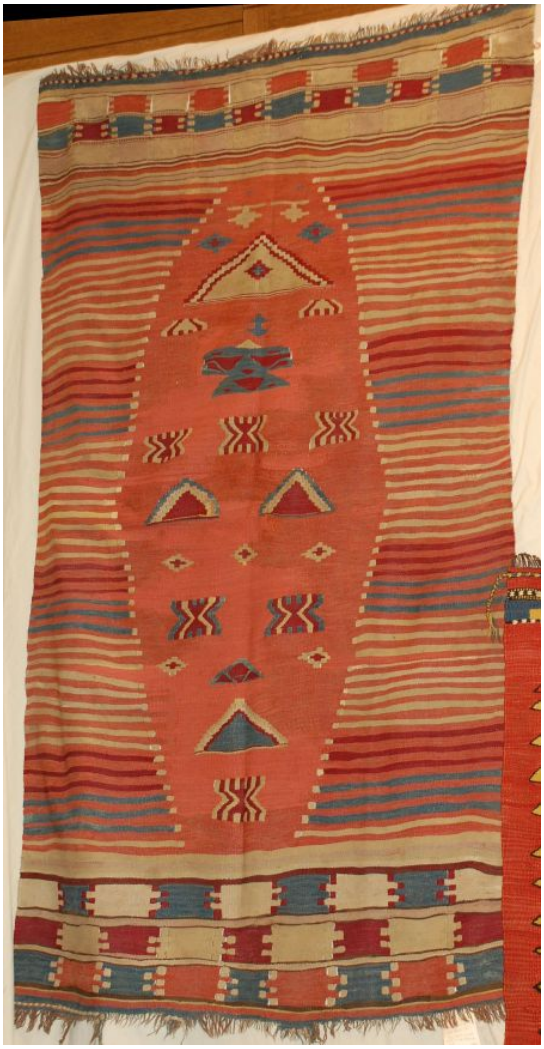
The top and bottom borders are constructed in an unusual manner. There are four inner border strips which only run the width of the inner field, then a brocade stripe, another full width border strip, and the another brocade stripe. The entire assembly of borders are outlined with a continuous run of dark thread. This may be a characteristic of a particular weaver or village.

We know Manastir prayer kilims were woven for personal use by Muslim women in Eastern Bulgaria, either for devotional use in the home (used to indicate the proper direction for prayer like the qibla in a mosque). or for use by their menfolk when conscripted into the military. Ottoman soldiers were required to have a prayer kilim in their bedroll on campaign.

There are probably only about 150-200 Manastir kilims of all types known to exist-this format is the most common.

The kilim has the normal layout of prayer arch and protective amulets.

Details.



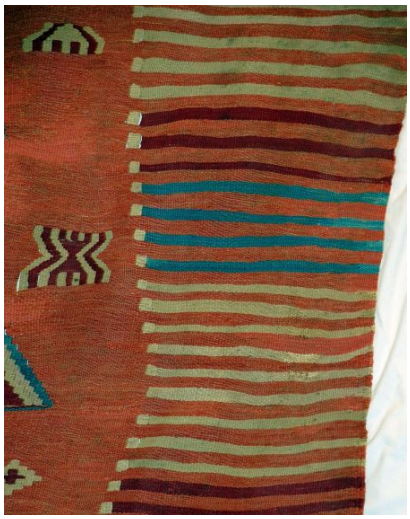
This is a Manastir kilim collected in the Deliorman Region of Eastern Bulgaria in 1991. It was previously published as Plate 13 in Stoebe and Mizrahi, Manastir Kilims: In Search of a Trail.

It is one of a small sub-group of Manastir kilims with finger stripes and an elongated oval shaped open field. All the members of this group of Manastir kilims incorporate narrow stripes of varying colors framing a central field which is open or decorated with amulets. Each of the finger stripes terminates at the central field with a fingernail-like cap.

The previous owners of this kilim read the design to represent a woman's fingers protectively shielding a womb-like space. Given that Manastir kilims were made by Muslim women for personal use, or for use within the confines of the home, we believe this is a reasonable, if romantic, interpretation of this fascinating design. This example has a central field with rose color tones and with an exuberant scattering of colorful amulets.The finger stripes themselves are pale yellow green, red, brown, and blue.

There are triple end borders comprised of interlocking crenelated blocks of complementary colors. This 19th Century piece is in a traditional Manastir prayer kilim size of about 1.8 meter X 1.0 meter. A graphically powerful piece with its own sense of wonder.

As with many of the Manastir kilims in our collection this piece has had a significant amount of repair. When the pieces came from Bulgaria they frequently were stained and worn. Details.



This is related to the previous piece in both design and color scheme.

The most interesting aspect of this kilim is its size (100 X 60 cm). Its the only example we know of a true Manastir prayer kilim in a reduced size (about 40% the size of a traditional example).

The colors and wool used are consistent with normal size examples. Rose ground, finger stripes enclosing an oblong central field with amulets and triangular stacked stylized prayer arches. The blue dye used may be indigo from woad. The warps are tightly spun dark brown wool.

This was a recent acquisition and shocked both of us when we first saw it. Although we were originally suspicious of this piece due to possibility of faking, upon careful inspection it seems legitimate. When we handled this kilim the first time, we noted the wear at the base of the central field. Could this be an indication that it was used as a prayer mat? For a child or small woman?

From the Deliorman Region of eastern Bulgaria, second half 19th Century. Finding this piece was a collecting highlight for 2017 and an exciting addition to our understanding of the Manastir weaving tradition. Details.

This is a Pilot kilim of the West Bulgarian Group (Sarkoy).

This is a piece from the Decorative Period (1830-1875) with wonderful colors and a fine weave. The size is about 2.5.M X 2.2 M. In this case we believe this kilim is Serbian production.

The composition is with a squarish central field with a vegetal tree of life pattern with an out compartment of multiple trees of life. The outer border contains multiple niches (or mirrors or houses) which have sprouting branches. The interior of each niche has a floral or vegetal occupant. Inner borders and the narrow outer border are typical for the West Bulgarian weavings and have comb and figures with three stacked triangles. The overall impression is of a compartmented kilim with well executed construction and design, and saturated colors.

This is obviously the workshop production of skilled weavers. The use of yellow in this kilim suggests it was produced by Orthodox weavers in Serbia rather than Bulgaria.

This kilim was acquired in Austria directly from a local collector who purchased it in the mid-1990's from a prominent dealer in Vienna. We enjoy seeing this kilim everyday hanging in our home. We hope you like seeing it here.

Details.

This is a Vojvodina kilim from the Serbian Banat. Formerly part of the Kingdom of Hungary (until 1918) and before that an Ottoman possession, as the Banat of Temesvar (Banat indicates the territory was governed by a military officer). The region is now divided between Romania and Serbia.

This kilim was produced in the northern Serbian portion before 1920. The population of this entire is quite diverse and the Serbians living there originated from Kosovo, from whence they fled in the 17th Century. Being part of the Kingdom of Hungary and linked to the Austro-Hungarian Empire since the 18th Century, the Serbs living here were very much influenced by European culture, fashion, and arts. The Vojvodina Serbians were also very conscious of European political ideas and nationalist thinking, this made them leaders in the Serbian independence movement. The mix of European and turkic Albanian influences is reflected in Banat weaving. It is far more European in design and style, and reflects European vernacular weaving trends of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

This piece is a garden design which was very popular at the turn of the last century. Kilims such as this were woven in two strips and then sewn together. They were made as part of a young Serbian woman's dowry, either by the woman and her female relatives, or by a woman working as a kilim weaving specialist for hire. The general layout of this kilim is consistent with other South Balkan kilims.

The dyes are a mix of natural and synthetics and the pieces use, wool, cotton, flax, or hemp which are grown extensively in the region. This piece, like several others in our collection, was purchased in the Vienna flea market. This example seem to have been used as a bed or table cover, with the lappets attached separately.

This weaving came with a pair of matching chair back covers (anti-macassars) also with lappets. The weavings from both sides of the Serbian and Romanian border have distinctive features which would make a detailed study and documentation worthwhile. They all reflect a mix of European and Turkish elements.

Details.

Were it not for the plain yellow striped kilim ends we would be inclined to ascribe the kilim sbove (203 X 132 cm) to Central Anatolia.

The rich red central field on a golden yellow ground definitely incorporates Anatolian influences. However, the yellow stripes on the kilim ends associate this piece with East Bulgaria and the Manastir weaving culture.

The recumbent S or dollar sign figures at the top of the red field are also an Anatolian feature. Were they placed in that position to provide directionality for its use in religious settings? The overall impression of this piece is that it emerged from a rustic setting made by less experienced or less skilled weavers. We believe it was used as a wall hanging, or perhaps a sofreh.

It was collected in the Deliorman Region in 1991. It has been published previously as Plate 17 in Stoebe and Mizrahi. The previous owners visualized this kilim as a flowing river of lava.

We know of no other Manastir kilims with this design.

Details.

This is a Romanian kilim from the Oltenia region of the former Principality of Wallachia (SW Romania).

The piece is very finely woven and crammed with people, birds and other animals, flowers, and folk motifs. It is truly the work of a master weaver, as the kilim is the size of a dish towel.

We have other Oltenian kilims in our collection with these same motifs and figures, but those pieces are about 2 M X 2 M in size. We believe this example is 19th Century and could have been used as a small table cover or a sampler-like wall hanging.

And although it has suffered somewhat from fading and wear, it remains a weaving tour-de-force (as shown in the detail images). This small beauty teems with life and joy. We have not seen another like it.

Oltenia is just north of the Danube from northern and western Bulgaria and there are obvious borrowings of West Bulgarian (Sarkoy) weaving motifs and formats. The weavers on both sides of this border are Christian (either Orthodox or R0man Catholic).

Details.

The pieces which follow are definitely not Balkan. In fact they are respectively Syrian and Anatolian. But they demonstrate how collector's interests can shift or expand into subjects somewhat far afield from the original.

The next three pieces are examples of Syrian weaving workshop production from the late 19th or early 20th Centuries. Our interest in Syrian textiles was initiated during a 2010 tour of Syria led by Stefano Ionesco.

On that tour my classical archaeologist wife and I became familiar with the Arabic, Crusader, Roman, Ottoman, and Hittite culture and history of this part of the Levant. I was able to indulge my long standing interest in learning how the Ottoman and Arab cultures interacted. Of course, I started my exploration in the textile domain.

Replacing the wool weaving culture of the Balkans and Anatolia with with the silk, cotton, and metallic thread culture of the Arab Levant. This is an example of a so-called Aleppo silk, cotton and metallic thread weaving which originally comprised two portieres or draperies; which were repurposed as a bed/table cover or wall hanging.

Although called Aleppo, these silk weavings were likely woven in Hama or Homs Syria from silk threads produced in Lebanon by Armenians. The market has always called these pieces Aleppo as they came to it in that great ancient city. But they were produced elsewhere. Alas Aleppo has now been largely destroyed in the Syrian civil war.

It has a metallic gold colored ground with inwoven floral or vegetal motifs typical of the Levant. The piece has a faint outline of a prayer arch, so the original intended use may have been as a devotional wall handing.

We believe this weaving probably dates 1880-1920.

Details.

This piece is another so-called Aleppo weaving with metallic gold silk and cotton thread. The motifs in this example are stylized vegetal designs which resemble ears of wheat. Greens and reds predominate in the figures.

The size and shape of this weaving suggests it originally was intended for use as an inlaid table cover. We suggest this piece dates from the first quarter of the 20th century.

The glittering metallic thread of this piece and the previous appeal to he Arab aesthetic of the Levant, but would also have attractive to the European market during period when Eastern and Orientalist designs were in fashion. Details.

This is a silk and cotton short-sleeve robe (aba) with a kufic inscription reading ‘Masallah’ . The exact meaning of MASHALLAH is “what ALLAH wanted has happened”; and it is used to indicate something good has happened (past tense).

The robe has blue and reddish gold vertical stripes. Our collection includes only a few pieces of costume, mostly Bulgarian and Macedonian embroideries. However we are very fond of these silk

and cotton textiles usually attributed to Aleppo, likely woven in Hama and Homs, and tailored in Damascus, Aleppo, or Gaziantep.

This piece with its subdued colors and kufic inscription is very attractive and representative of Syrian folk costume.

Details.

This is further demonstration of how collecting interests and taste evolve over time.

We became interested in Central and Western Anatolia kilims after collecting Balkan kilims for several years. The weaving aesthetic, the colors, and the motifs drew us to these textiles because of their obvious connections to Balkan kilims, Manastir kilims in particular. Clearly, the ethnically Turkish residents of the Balkans retained their social and cultural links to Anatolia for over 500 years.

It is a Central Anatolian kilim half with color and design links to Balkan weavings. The kilim dates from the 2nd half of the 1oth Century. It has hacilars, amulets, and double headed arrow motifs all used extensively in Manastir kilims and in kilims from Kosovo, Albania, and Bosnia.

These pieces all are the products of domestic production, not workshop weaving for the market. The animating force behind their design in that of the weaver herself, focused on her particular outlook and needs.

The rich colors used in Anatolia informed the dyeing of Balkan textiles, but there is not complete continuity. Many Balkan weavings incorporate locally available natural dyes instead of those used in Anatolia-particularly the use of yellow from Dyers Weld, the creation of unique green shades from Balkan plants, the use of indigo from woad, and more limited use of madder. Details.

Comments: Even individual collectors can make contributions to our understanding of historical weaving cultures.

Since we began collecting and researching Balkan textiles in 2007, we have wondered about the lack of horse trappings from the region. In the 10 years we have devoted to this genre of weavings we visited dozens of ethnographic museums and ethnography collections in national museums in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania. Museum curators informed us the horse trappings such as the ubiquitous khorjin (double saddlebag) were not woven in these areas.

We did acquire ‘shepherd’s bags’, or shoulder bags, in both Bulgaria and Serbia, but these were produced using fabric woven on a draw loom. Kilim woven bags in any format were unknown in collections or literature.

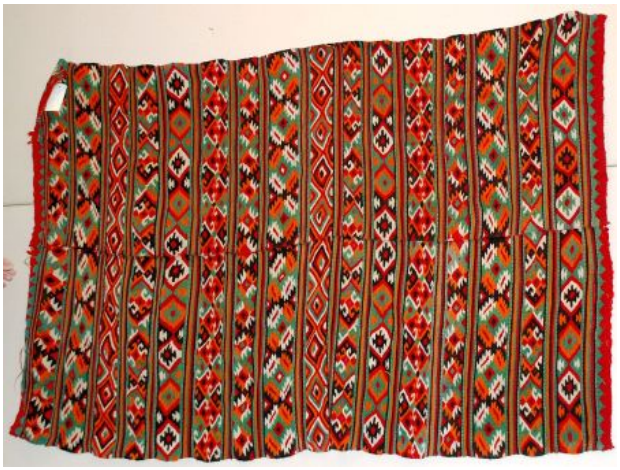
That is until 2015, when one of our Bulgarian contacts, traveling companion, and translator, gifted us this piece which she had found in her Mother’s home in south eastern Bulgaria.

This is a double saddle bag, of standard dimensions, woven entirely of natural color goat hair. This bag had belonged to her Grandfather who lived in a village of mixed ethnicity. Goat hair production and weaving was practiced on a commercial scale in southern Bulgaria until the 1960’s.

It is now the first documented example of a woven saddlebag in the region. The construction is natural white and brown goat hair woven in a twill-like format. The bag dates to the first quarter of the 20th Century.

Recent literature research has also revealed the evidence of the weaving of saddle covers in several areas in southwestern and southern Bulgaria. Such covers were produced for ceremonial purposes or for bridal ceremonies. *Our most sincere thanks to Ms. Zhecka Dimitrova for enabling us to expand our understanding of Bulgarian weaving culture. Her assistance is invaluable.*

Details.



This is a late example of Albanian kilim weaving from either Kosovo or Albania proper. This small kilim with its bright synthetic colors and Anatolian derived design shows vernacular weaving from the western Balkans in the second half of the 2oth Century. Synthetic dyes have replaced natural ones throughout the Balkans today, and we still await a natural dye revival such as occurred in Turkey.

As with many of our later examples of Balkan weaving. this piece was found in a flea market in Vienna. Most tourist kilim production in Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia, and Romania is of this quality, even though better quality weaving is available. Details.

This is Pirot prayer kilim from the end of the Decorative Period (probably around 1900). May well include a mix of natural and synthetic dyes. The weaving is typically fine, but it is not as skillfully woven as earlier examples. The weaving of the outer border is a bit stiff and crowded. The central field is stepped niche format with a tree-of-life with floral motifs.

The most interesting element of this kilim are the two confronting fish in the bottom panel. This is a rare, but not unknown decorative element in Pirot kilims. The first Balkan kilim we purchased at the Dealer's Fair at the 2007 ICOC in Istanbul, had such a pair of fish. The bottom panel had the same confronting fish and elaborated diamond shape as this later example. Perhaps the fish are placed on the kilim to symbolize a wish for plenty? The green in the field is a typical Balkan feature. Details.

The last piece of the day was this one.

Comments: Collectors always have a favorite piece or type of piece.

We are especially fond of open field kilims from western and north western Anatolia, like this Balikesir example. We don't know if it was produced by Yuncu, Karakecili, or some other tribal group in the area between Balikesir and Bergama. But we find it very appealing.

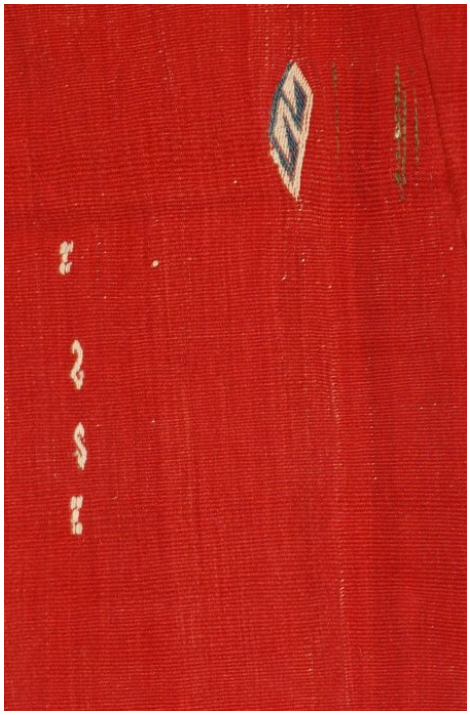
The rich red, spacious open field with a scatter of cicim 's' or double hook shapes and the brocaded stripes ay either end draws us in with a powerful visual impact. This utilitarian kilim was likely used around the weavers house or tent, as a utilitarian cover or for wrapping goods for storage. The intense red of the central field and the narrow blue stripes provide the necessary visual contrast.

The visual effect of this West Anatolian weaving probably explains why we are drawn so powerfully to the equivalent visual aspect of the yellow, red, and blue open fields of Manastir and other Balkan weavings.

We hope you enjoyed our brief survey of Balkan and other kilims from the Ottoman domain.

Tim and Penny Hays

Details.



Penny and Tim took questions and brought their session to a close.

Thanks to Tim and Penny for preparing this interesting and authoritative program and for their considerable help in fashioning this virtual version of it.

Thanks also to Aija Blitte and Michael Kaplan who took and provided some of the photos here.

We do not thank, frequently enough, volunteers who assist in these programs. For this one there were three.

Marthaa Strikland (above left) and Margaret Hardy (above right). Paul Durn (below).

I hope you have enjoyed this virtual version of a sound program on textiles from an area a rather neglected until recently.

R. John Howe[11]

[11] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/11/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

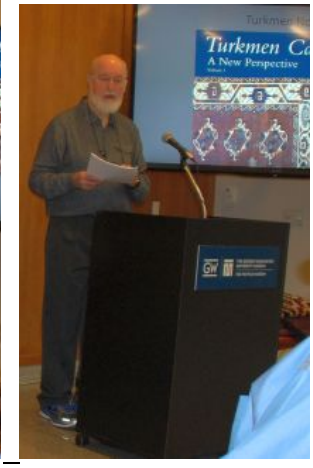
Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for November, 2017

Turkman Now, Part 1, The Lecture

Posted in Uncategorized on November 22, 2017 by rjohn

On April 22, 2017, Bob Emry and John Howe gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning, reviewing research, since about 1980, on Turkmen weaving.



This program was inspired, mostly, by the publication in 2016 of the long-awaited "Turkmen Carpets: A New Perspective," by Jurg Rageth.

The program began with a survey by Howe of Turkmen research, since about 1980, excepting the two Rageth volumes.

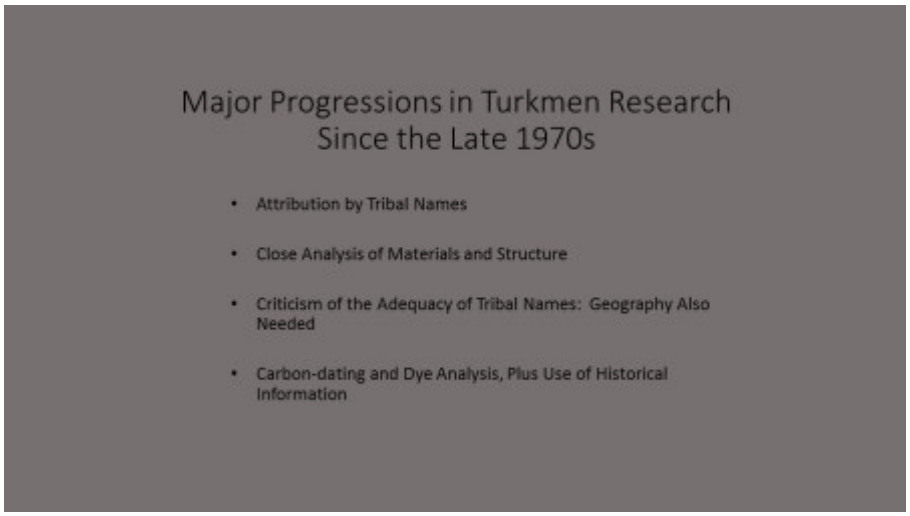
Slide 1: Serious study of Turkmen weaving has been going on since the first of the 20th century and with some visible exceptions, before.

But our central purpose in this session is to focus, mostly, on Turkmen research from approximately 1980 to the present.

(You can see larger versions of each of the slides below by clicking on them three times. The resulting image will have a blue ground.)

Slide 2: Above is an informal listing of the literature before and near 1980.

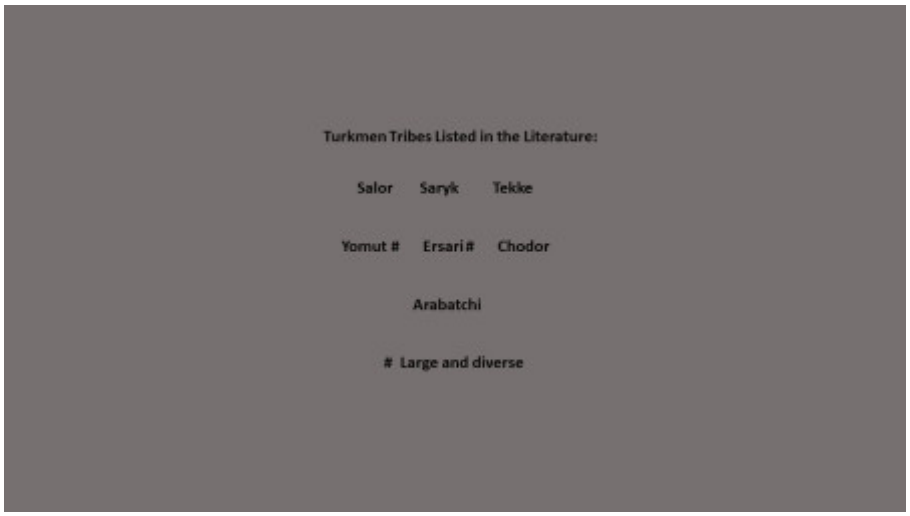
Slide 3: Since the late 1970s and especially intensifying after 1980, we see the following four broad progressions:



Slide 4: The first important progression, we see, was the move away from such descriptive terms as "Bukara," (a marketing center for a variety of Turkmen and other Central Asian weavings) or pointing at particular Turkmen pieces with dealer usages like, "Royal Bukara" or "Princess Bukara."

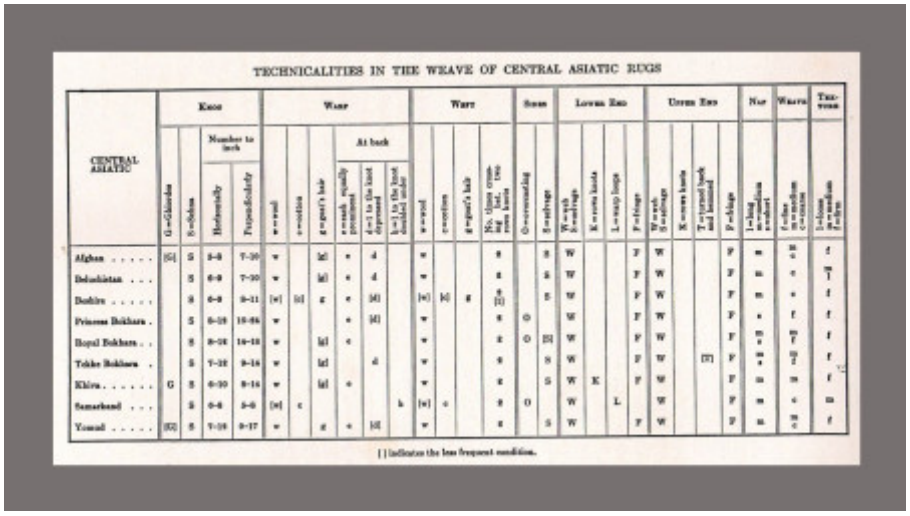
Instead, it was argued, tribal designations were more appropriate, although some debate has continued about instances in which geographic rather than tribal designations might be more accurate.

The tribes usually listed in the literature were: Salor, Saryk, Tekke, Yomut, Ersari, Chodor, Arabatchi (although Wood, in a serious Turkmen ethno-history, in 1990, listed 12).



The research of this period also brought to attention a number of Central Asian non-Turkmen tribal groups (e.g. Uzbeks and Kyrgyz) that are not our concern here.

Slide 5: Another facet of more recent Turkmen research has been the systematic use of differences in textile structure as an aid to attribution.



TECHNICALITIES IN THE WEAVE OF CENTRAL ASIATIC RUGS

CENTRAL ASIATIC	Knot				Warp						Weft				Sides		Lower End				Upper End				Nap	Weave	Texture
	G=Ghiordes	S=Sehna	Number to inch: Horizontally	Number to inch: Perpendicularly	w=wool	c=cotton	g=goat's hair	At back: s=sash equally prominent	d=1 to the knot depressed	h=1 to the knot doubled under	w=wool	c=cotton	g=goat's hair	No. times cross-ing bet. two rows knots	O=overcasting	S=selvage	W=wrap S=selvage	K=extra knots	L=warp loops	F=fringe	W=wrap S=selvage	K=extra knots	T=turned back and hammed	F=fringe	l=long m=medium s=short	f=fine m=medium c=coarse	l=loose m=medium f=tight
Afghan	[G]	S	5-8	7-10	w		[g]	e	d		w			g		S	W			F	W			F	m	m c	f
Beluchistan		S	6-9	7-10	w		[g]	e	d		w			g		S	W			F	W			F	m	c	m l
Bushire		S	6-9	9-11	[w]	[c]	g	e	[d]		[w]	[c]	g	g [1]		S	W			F	W			F	m	e	f
Princess Bokhara		S	8-12	10-14	w			e	[d]		w			g	O		W			F	W			F	e	f	f
Royal Bokhara		S	8-12	10-12	w		[g]	e			w			g	O	[S]	W			F	W			F	m e	m f	f
Tekke Bokhara		S	7-12	9-14	w		[g]		d		w			g		S	W			F	W		[T]	F	m e	m f	f
Khiva	G	S	6-10	9-14	w		[g]	e			w			g		S	W	K		F	W			F	m	m	f
Samarkand		S	6-8	5-8	[w]	c				h	[w]	c		g	O		W		L		W			F	m	c	m
Yomud	[G]	S	7-10	9-17	w		g	e	[d]		w			g		S	W			F	W			F	m	m c	f

[ ] indicates the less frequent condition.

Walter Hawley used the tribal designations Tekke and Yomut and had presented systematic information on structure in Central Asian rugs, as early as 1913.

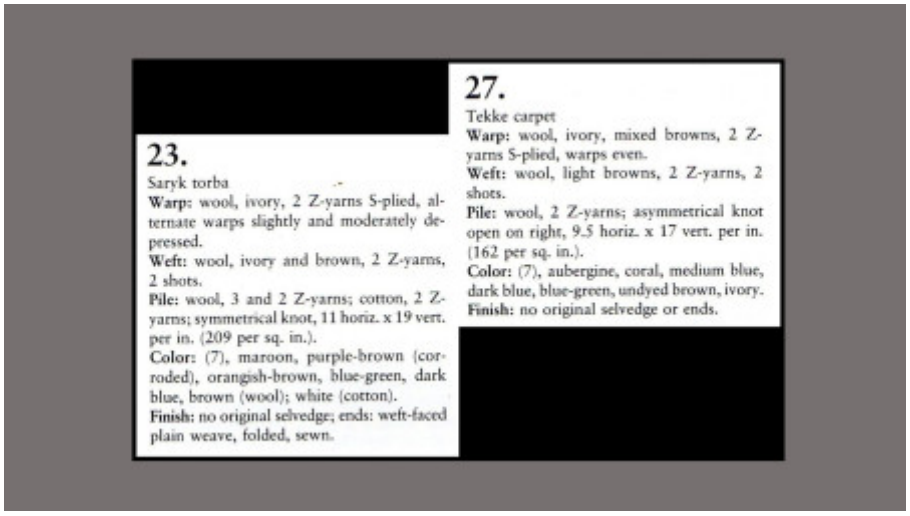
But beginning in the late 1970s, and especially after 1980, technical analysis was done at new levels of detail and sophistication and in terms of tribal designations.

Several Turkmen books were published in 1980.

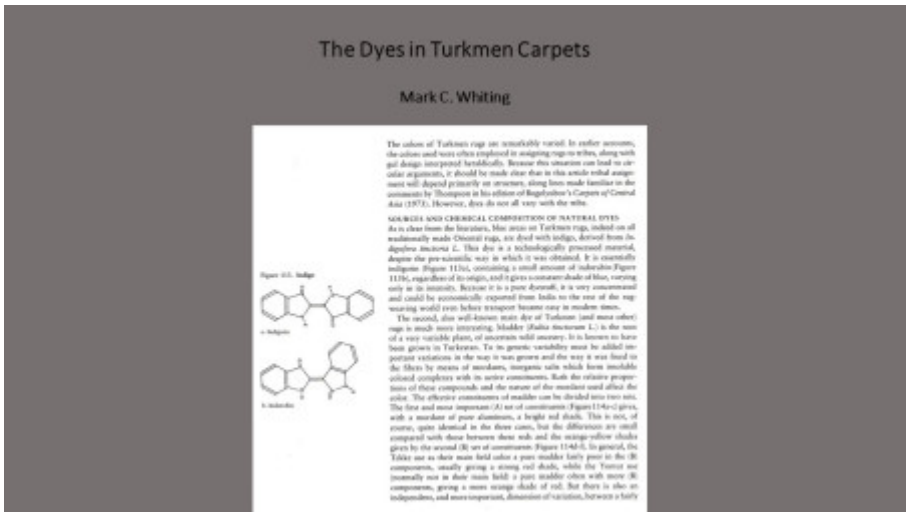
Slide 6: The most important exhibition of Turkmen pile weavings of that time, *Turkmen,* was held at The Textile Museum and the catalog written for it, by Louise Mackie and Jon Thompson, and also

published by The Textile Museum, became seen by many as the standard Turkmen pile textile treatment.

Slide 7: Below is what Louise Mackie's technical analyses of the pieces in the *Turkmen* catalog looked like. Note that she described materials, weaving structure and colors used.



Slide 8: Dyes were not talked about much yet, in scientific terms, but, Mark Whiting, foreshadowing things that were to come, included an article on them, at the end of the *Turkman* catalog.

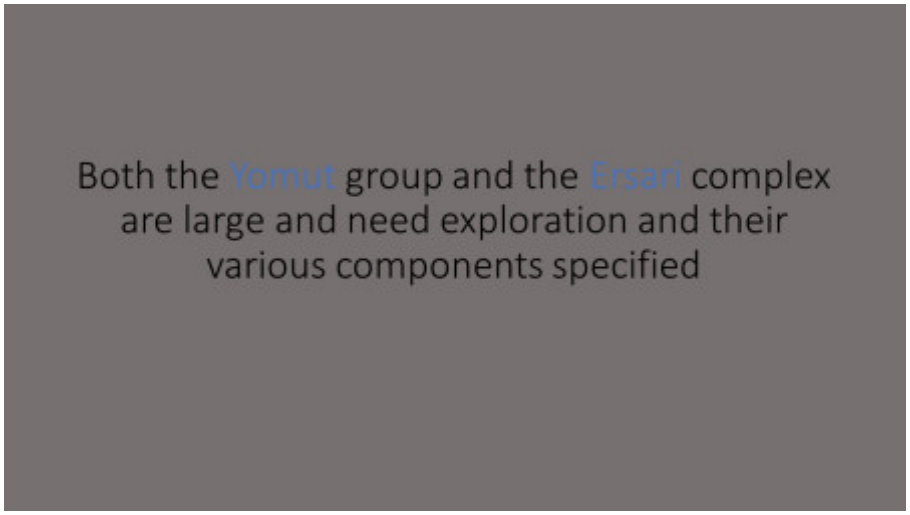


Whiting even talked, briefly and generally, about what the presence of given dyes can tell us about the age of a given textile. But the tests, then, for the presence of particular dyes in pile textiles were expensive and destructive and so not really within reach for students of Turkmen weaving.

Slide 9: In 1990, Paul Mushak analyzed the dyes and mordants used in six Turkman pieces.

He was interested in whether the dyes were natural or synthetic and what the various dyes and mordants were.

(Incidentally, Mushak once worked with Ananda Barodofsky to create a kit that would let one determine whether there were synthetic dyes in a given piece. It could be marketed for less than $200, but they found that neither the dealers nor the collectors were interested in determining for sure whether their pieces had synthetic dyes in them.)

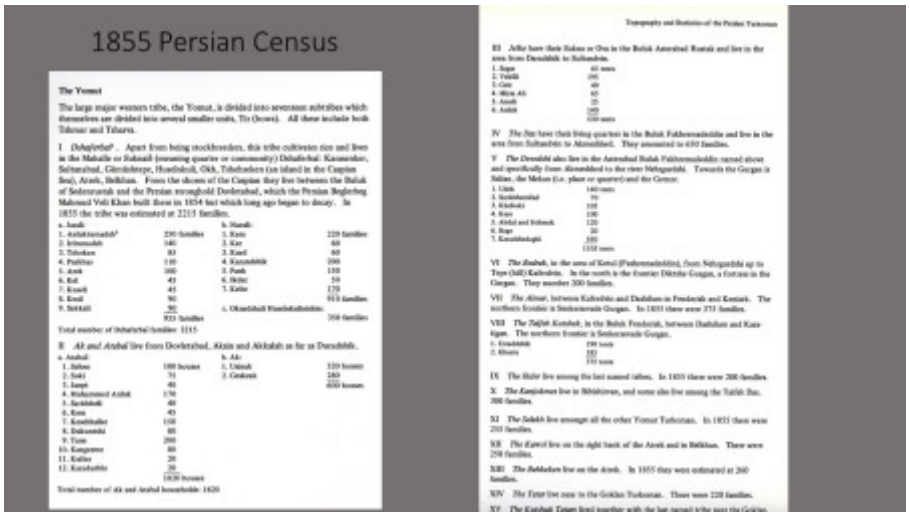


Slide 10: The Yomut and the Ersari tribal groups were seen to be large and diverse. So a next task was to attempt to define their components.

Slide 11: Let's look, first, at the efforts to specify more closely the sub-parts of the Yomut family group.

Both Chodor and Arabatchi had been acknowledged as outside the Yomut family.

Slide 12: The need for further specification was indicated by an 1855 Persian census of Turkmen tribes living under their authority.



You can see that the information about Yomut subgroups reported in this census is very detailed. It does not include, of course, any indication about which subgroups wove which rugs.

Slide 13: Igdyr, Abdal, Karadashli, and Goklan were some early names proposed either as possible Yomut subgroups or separate Turkmen tribes that could be related to specific weavings.

The bases for these attributions is not always clear and some of these varieties have since been absorbed into other later formulations like the "eagle group," described below.

But you can still find Turkmen rugs being offered for sale under these names.

Slide 14: Thompson, in the 1980 *Turkmen* catalog, made, and then immediately withdrew, a claim that the "Imreli" could be recognized as a separate tribe, not part of the Yomut group.

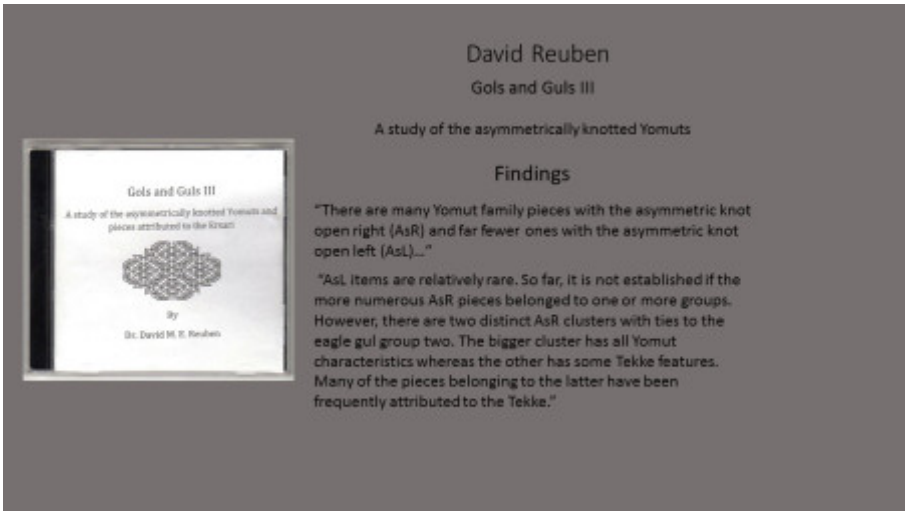
There were folks who called themselves "Imreli," and they wove pile rugs. But Thompson was not able to establish either what rugs they wove or that the pieces he named "Imreli" had been woven by them.

Slide 15: A more successful effort to delineate one aspect of the Yomut complex was undertaken by Rautgenstengel and Azadi (1990) who identified an "eagle gol/ fine brown Yomut group" mostly on the basis of structure and materials.

You can see in these high knot counts the reason for the "fine brown" designation.

Notice that this is a group of seeming Yomut textiles, defined mostly by structure and materials, but there is no further tribal or sub-tribal label offered for them (although Azadi did say that he thought that Group I and III had been woven by the Goklan). So while this was an important breakout, it was also less than satisfying, and some still describe it as "provisional."

Slide 16: Beginning in 1998, the late David Reuben, an English collector of Turkman weavings published three volumes *Gols and Guls I, II and III.*



Because most Yomut pile pieces have symmetric knots, he decided in the third of these volumes, to look closely at Yomut pile chuvals with asymmetric knots, seeking to determine whether they were a Yomut sub-group on other grounds as well. (He focused on this bag format because he felt that it was more likely that they would have been made for use than would Turkmen rugs and so would exhibit traditional features more accurately.)

He says that he set out to identify and examine all the Yomut chuvals with asymmetric knots that he could find.

He found and analyzed more of them than he could include in his published report: *Gols and Guls III.*

In his report, he provides color photos and technical analyses of 46 Yomut pile chuvals with asymmetric knots (he includes two "eagle group" pieces).

His findings are modest.

There is a considerable number of Yomut chuvals that have asymmetric knots open to the right. These pieces sometimes also have other features similar to Tekke weavings (e.g., major chuval guls are often identical).

Yomut pieces with an asymmetric knot open to the left are quite rare.

And if members of eagle groups with this knot (I and III) are removed, they are rarer still.

But no further Yomut sub-groups were identified.

Slide 17: Actually, this kind of thing had been done before. In his translation of and commentary on Moskova, O'Bannon reports on a comparison he made on the presence of asymmetric knots in Yomut weavings.

Use of Asymmetric Knot In Yomut Pieces

Reported in O'Bannon Translation of and Commentary on Moshkova

1995

	Moshkova	Survey	Troost
Total Symmetric Knots:	54%	74%	45%
Total Asymmetric Knots:	46%	26%	55%
Floor Carpets, Asymmetric Knot:	65%	16%	34%
Small Items, Symmetric Knot:	65%	70%	42%

He did a survey of 407 published pieces and compared the results with those reported by both Moshkova and a German Turkmen scholar, Troost. A wide variety of formats was included. No effort was made to distinguish open right from open left asymmetric knots. Both the Moshkova and Troost analyses were based on material estimated to be younger.

A majority of Yomut pieces in all three groups use the symmetric knot. The asymmetric knot seems to be used more frequently on pieces estimated to be younger. Asymmetric knots were used much less frequently on floor carpets estimated to be older.

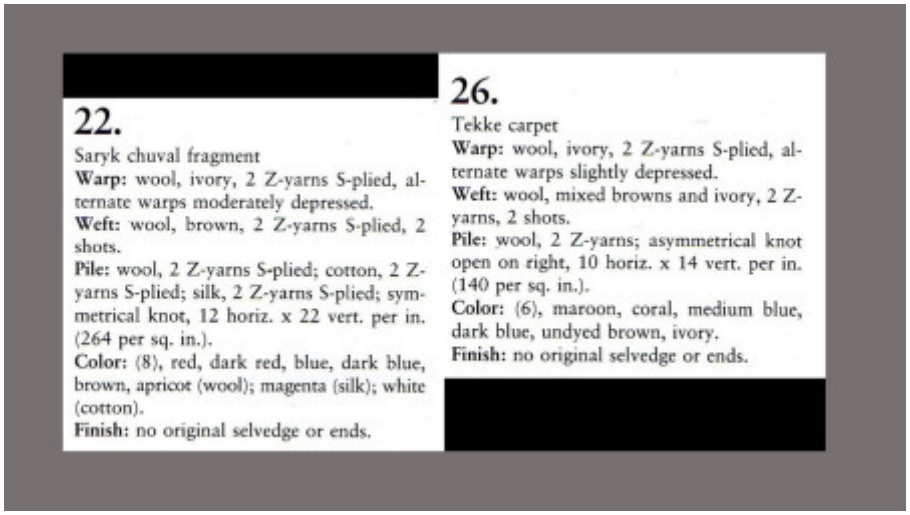
Again, no Yomut sub-groups identified.

Slide 18: Elena Tsareva, the current leading Russian Turkmen authority is, for our purposes here, a transitional figure.

Elena Tsareva

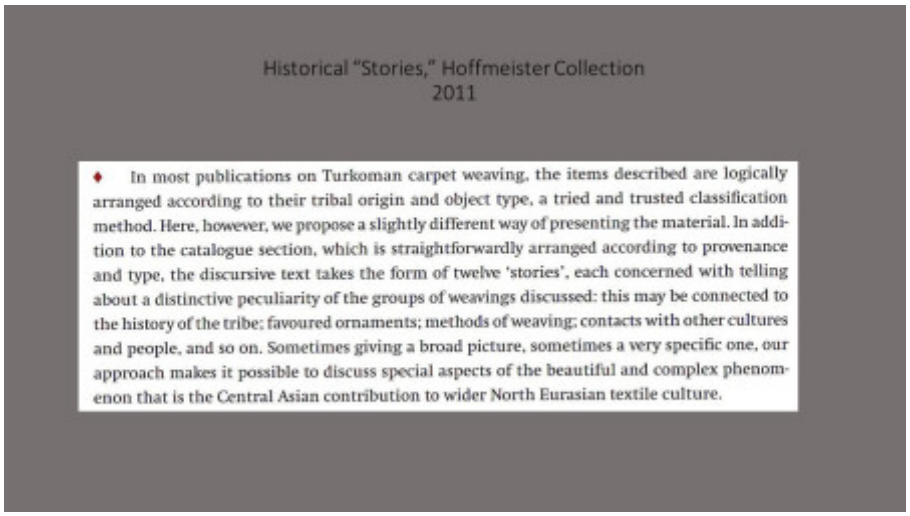
She has always paid close attention to technical features like materials, structure, dyes and colors.

Slide: 19: Here is an example of her work in this area in her most recent book on a large English Turkmen collection.

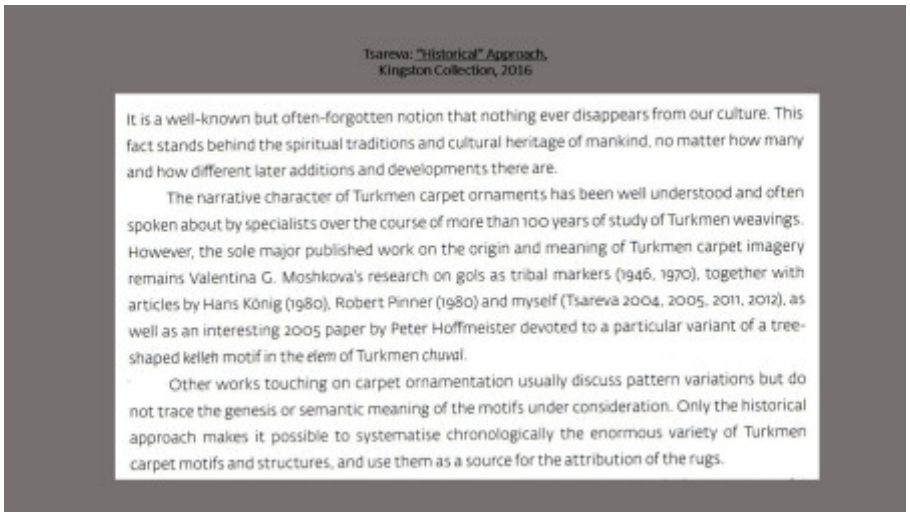


Slide 20: But Tsareva, a disciple of Moshkova, has begun to recommend that a strong "historical" component be included in Turkmen textile research.

Slide 21: Here is a statement she made about this approach in her study of the Hoffmeister Collection in 2011.



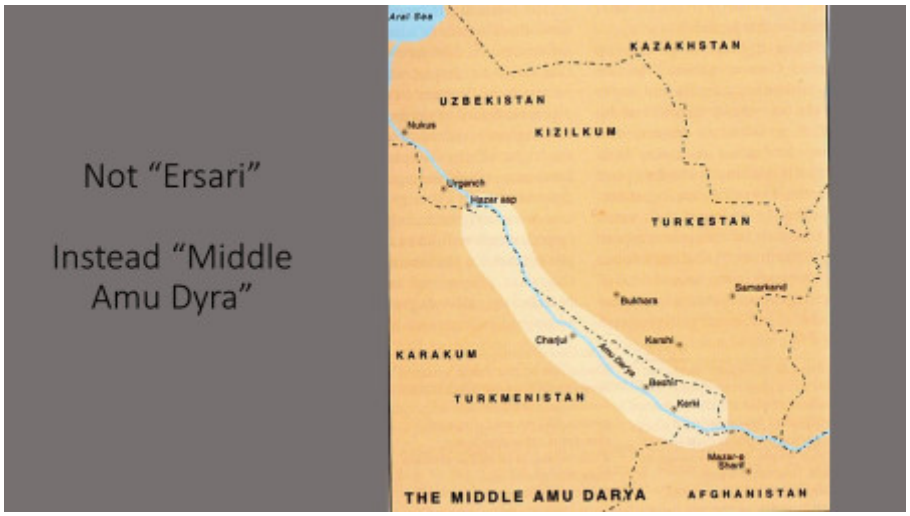
Slide 22: She characterizes this historical approach, again, in 2016 in her book on the Kingston collection.



She thinks that too exclusive a focus on things like structure becomes sterile, detached from the lives, culture and history of the weavers.

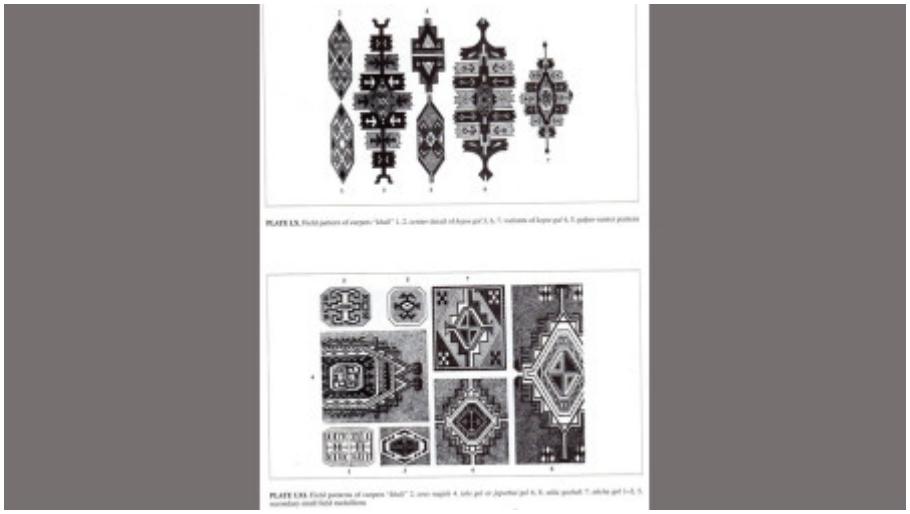
She writes that "…nothing ever disappears from our culture" and argues that a close study of Turkmen history gives us access to information that makes it possible to say where and by whom given Turkmen pieces were woven and to say something about the origins and meanings of Turkmen design devices.

Part of this approach was an accenting on the importance of geography: which Turkmen tribal groups were where, when.



Slide 23: As we shall see there was a general shift away from terms like "Ersari" in the direction of a "Middle Amu Dyra" designation.

Slide 24: She also says that Moshkova is one of the few to investigate seriously the meanings and origins of Turkmen designs. She is pointing here to the assiduous way that Moshkova documented Turkmen designs,



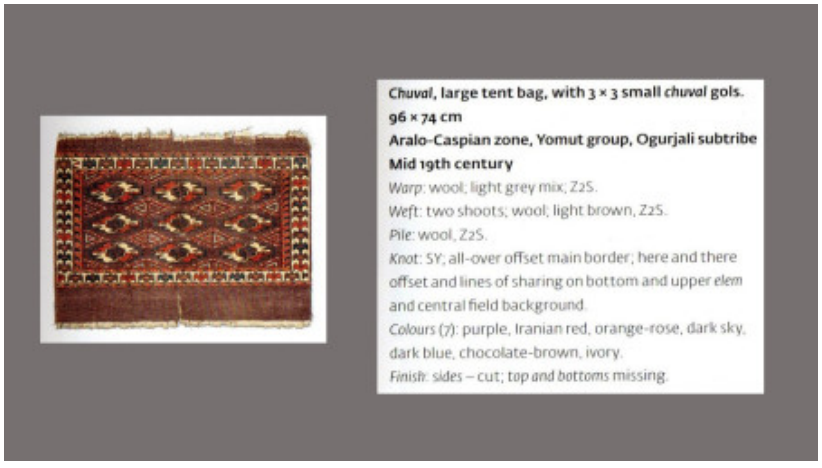
but also to Moshkova's controversial claim that some main carpet gul-forms ("gols") are "owned" by particular Turkmen tribes. So much so that weavers in conquered Turkmen tribes are reputed, sometimes, to have been required to weave the "gol" of the conqueror rather than their own.

She says that few students of Turkmen textiles have focused their attention on this aspect of Turkmen research, but lists Robert Pinner as one who has.

Slide 25: Pinner's lengthy article in *Turkoman Studies 1*, 1980, on the "animal tree" device is a virtuoso performance, drilling deep and comprehensively.

Tsareva argues such an approach lets us draw on historical information about the origins and meanings of Turkmen design devices and lets us determine which tribes were in what geographic locations, when. The latter sometimes lets us explain such things as color differences, since particular natural dyes sources vary by geography (she says she always lists specific color descriptions in her technical analyses). Both of these areas of historical research, she says, can be an aid to attribution.

Slide 26: In her emphasis on the importance of history, Tsareva has not moved away from technical analysis. Here is an example of her technical analysis of a particular Turkmen piece in 2016.

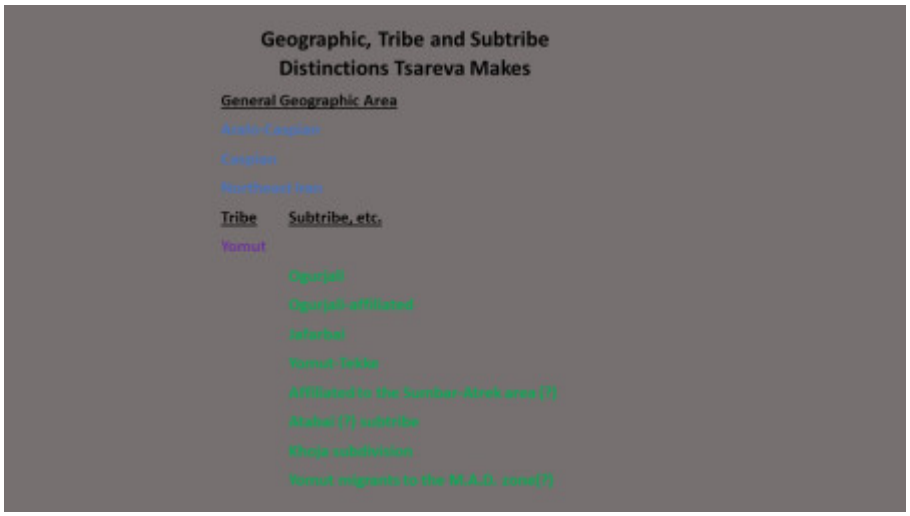


As I just indicated, she argues that her careful listing of colors can be combined with historical information about which tribes lived where and when and that about what the water and dyes sources were like in a given area can aid attribution.

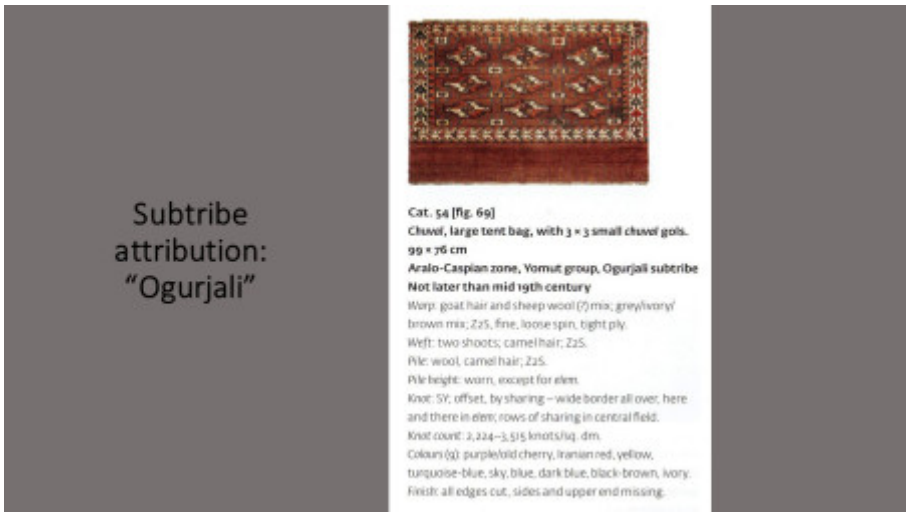
In this 2016 catalog on the Kingston Turkmen collection, Elena demonstrates how she currently uses geography, design, dyes, structure, and especially history, to sort out the Yomut group. Not just where a given piece was woven, but what its designs mean.

As we shall see, Tsareva is not alone in this new emphasis on history.

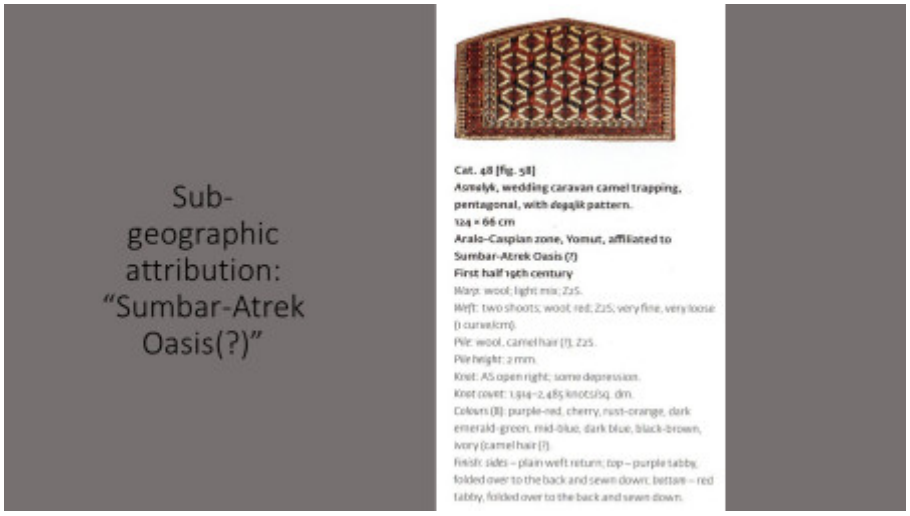
Slide 27: But to continue describing Tsareva's current work with Yomut sub-group attribution, here is a summary of her geographic and subgroup attributions for the Yomut pieces she examined in the Kingston collection.



Slide 28: She places most of them in what she calls the "Aralo-Caspian" area, and then, usually offers either a subtribe attribution, or

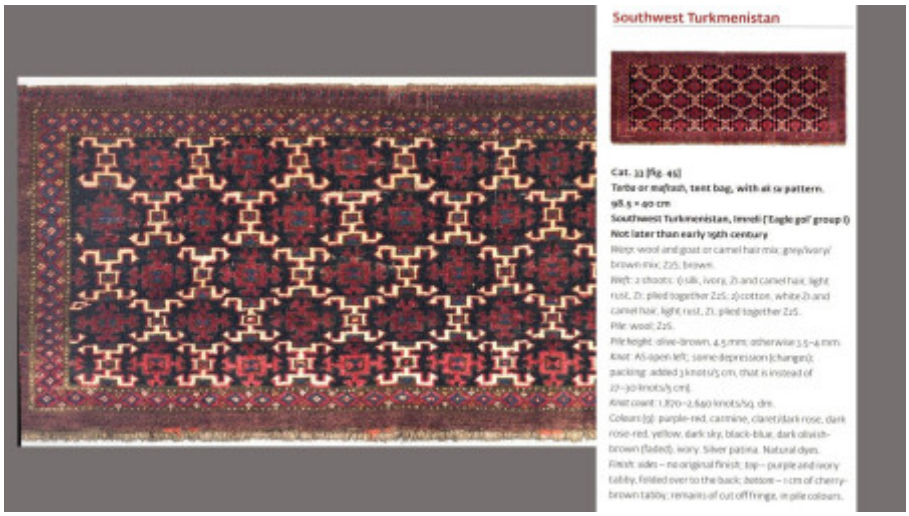


Slide 30: a sub-geographic one.



Slide 31: In one instance, she has revived the Imreli attribution (2011 and 2016, p.74, Fig. 45) and, in her treatment and argument for it, you can see this historical approach full-faced.

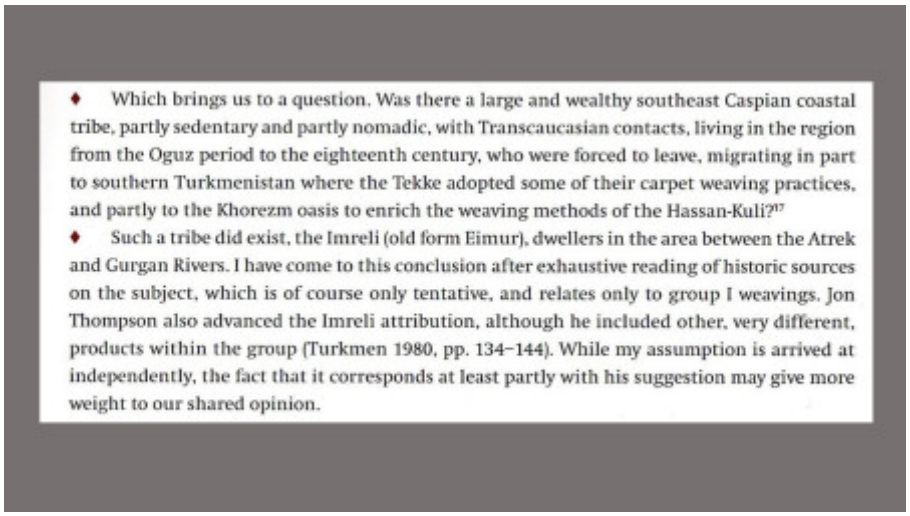
The piece below is the one she calls "Imreli" in the Kingston collection.



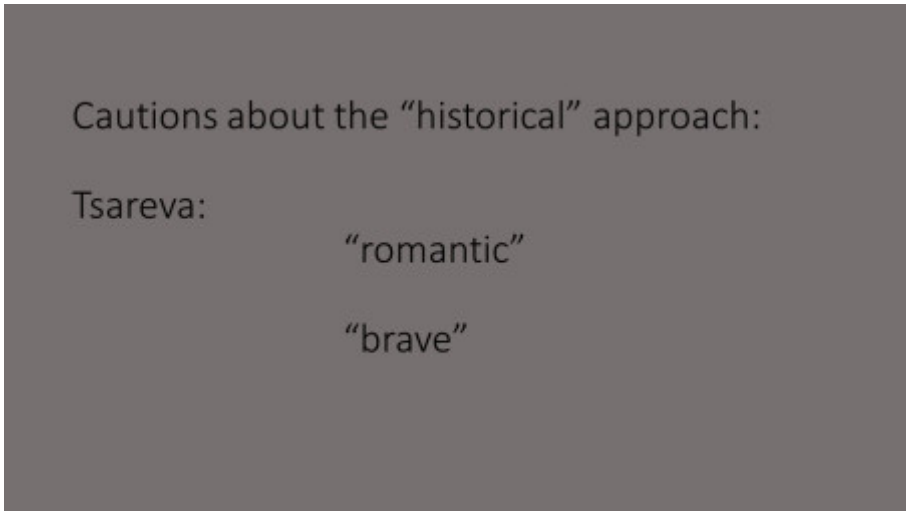
Slide 32: Toward the end of her treatment of the Tekke pieces in the Kingston collection Tsareva cites the following indicators on which she bases her assertion that pile textiles in the "eagle group I" were likely woven by the Imreli.

- Color palette indicates weavers were on the southeastern Caspian coast close to and sometimes over the border with what is now Iran.
- Structure of the weavings indicate that the weavers were settled people.
- But ornaments point to an "archaic tribal" genesis.
- Variability of designs suggest that some of these weavings were "commercial craft."
- Some design features of Turkman "eagle" group carpets are similar to those of the Transcaucasian "eagle" carpets, likely woven on the opposite Caspian Sea shore. Seems not a coincidence.
- Weavers not only partly sedentary but also wealthy, strong and a large group.
- All rugs in the "eagle group I" are estimated to have been woven in the 18th century.
- The weavers disappeared from the historical stage in about that time.

Slide 33: She then asks the question below and gives her answer.



She admits that it is a reasoned assumption and applies only to textiles in "eagle group I), but when I questioned her about it she said "We must be brave" (Azadi has claimed that eagle groups 1 and III were woven by the Goklan).



If one surveys all of the writing on rugs in the 20th century, one will find that design evolution and the meanings of designs are its centers of gravity.

But with the rise of interest of structure and the increasing ability to analyze technical features of weaving and the character of dyes, and to use carbon-dating in some instances, one would think that this traditional interest in history and design development and meanings (which is often very erudite, but also often seems speculative) would recede.

And it did to some extent. But a "historical" perspective and approach is being revived by some of the leading Turkmen scholars now.

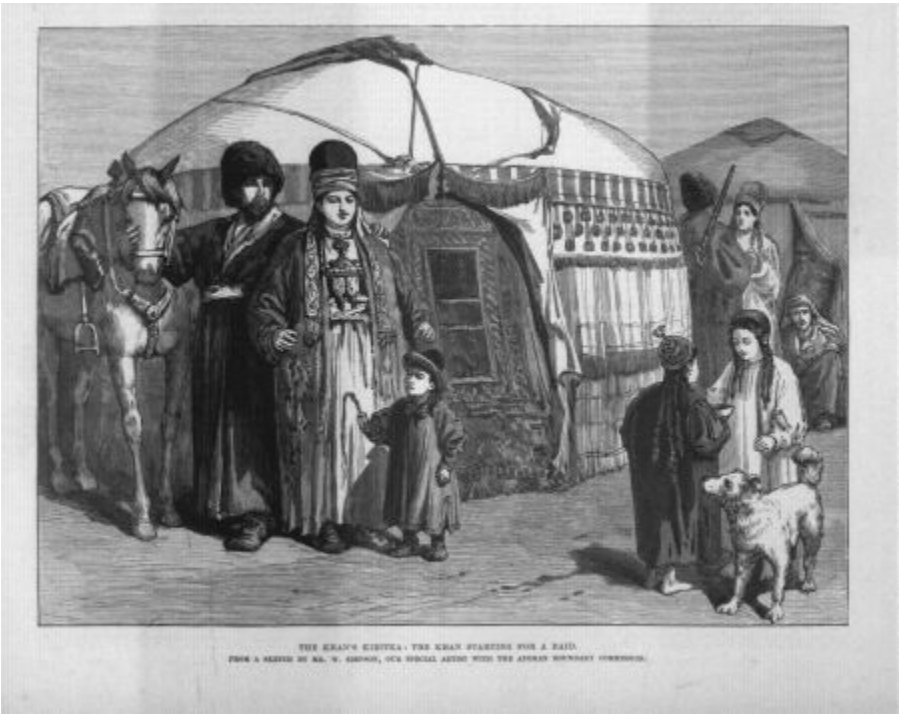
I am not a Turkmen textiles scholar and not able, at all, really, to offer any real critique of this new historical approach. But there are aspects of it that make me uneasy, in a "déjà vu" sort of way.

Tsareva has even argued for the advantage of what she calls a "romantic" approach to textile scholarship.

The image below is not one Tsareva recommends, but is a possible example of where a romantic approach to Turkmen research can lead.

We have one picture, a drawing of a Saryk engsi in use on the door opening of a trellis tent, made near Pende, in 1885, by a known artist for *The London Illustrated News* who was covering the Afghan Boundary Commission.

For a long time, this image was seen as the only one we had of a Turkmen engsi in use on a trellis tent door.



This is a drawing, not a photo and is in some respects an instance of "orientalism" in that the scene is acknowledged by the artist to be to some extent "composed" of human images seen elsewhere, but the picture is seen by rug scholars as authentic in its depiction of the engsi "in use"on a Saryk tent door opening.

We now have some actual photos of Turkmen engsis in use, but this example suggests where a romantic approach can take us when we lack actual photographic evidence.

Slide 34: The desire to connect to the weaver's culture is something to be praised, and Tsareva's presentation and use of historical information seems careful and is impressive, but a "romantic" approach seems to me likely to take things in wrong directions: analysis and findings too dependent on the, sometimes, uncertain information contained in historical sources, may lead to conclusions that draw importantly on assertion and speculation rather than evidence.

"Bravery" driven by a tendency toward the romantic, seems, often, likely to lead one away from an evidentiary basis for knowledge.

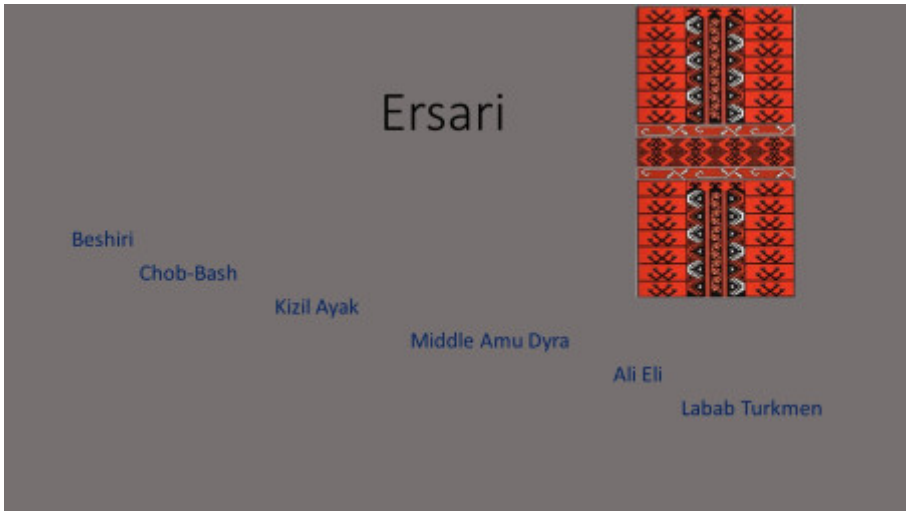
Tsareva argues, as if it is an agreed point, that "nothing is ever lost from our culture."

We have the textiles and sometimes, if we look closely enough, we have a surprising amount of history…but one wonders whether we can use them together to, accurately, "see" what is there.

I think it important to remember that the cultures we want to observe and study, and the people we want to talk to, have been gone, in most cases, for 200 years or more.

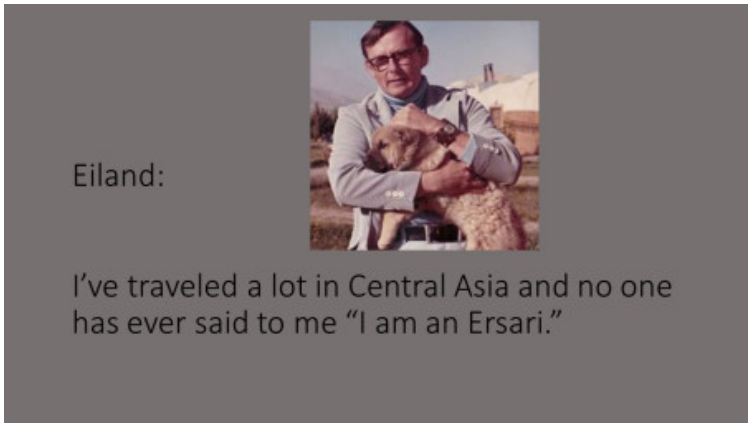
Jurg Rageth, the Swiss textile scholar has also adopted and emphasized a "historical perspective." We'll see what Bob's evaluation of this aspect of his effort is.

Slide 35: Now let's move to look at the efforts to break out the very large Ersari group.



A great many sub-group names have been proposed and used.

Slide 36: Murray Eiland wrote long ago:



This suggests that the people who wove the textiles we call "Ersari" have tribal identities at some sub-Ersari level. This is not always true in other instances.

The Rabaris in western India are an ethnically diverse group, some migratory and some settled, but they all retain a strong Rabari tribal identity.

If you ask any of them what tribe they belong to, they will unfailingly say "I am Rabari," often, with a visible pride.

Slide 37: I had an experience that counters Eiland's report about no self-identifying Ersaris.

I was doing some lectures for Chris Walters in a Smithsonian Folklife Festival demonstration tent for his Ersari project.

I was starting each lecture with the word "Ersari." One day, after one of my lectures, a tall lady with auburn hair and blue eyes, came up to me on the platform and asked "Do you know what "Ersari" means?" I said that I did not.

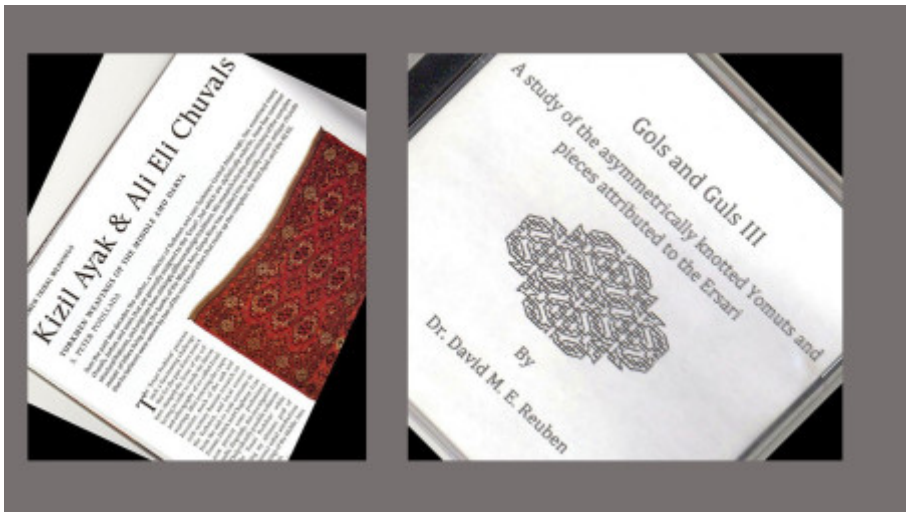
She said it means "yellow husband" and "do you know the source of that usage? " Again, I confessed my ignorance.

Slide 38: "Alexander the Great," she said.

He conquered Afghanistan, as part of his movement east, and established and left Macedonian villages. "A great many Ersaris, like me," she said, "are tall, and have blonde or red hair and blue eyes."

My God! I thought. Kipling wasn't entirely making things up in his stories about colonial, Indian, England's forays into Afghanistan. He reports battles in which they were fighting blond, Afghan "giants." Clearly, they were facing Ersaris.

Slide 39: There have been at least two serious visible efforts to examine the contents of the Ersari pile textile complex.



The first is a Hali article published in 2006 by Peter Poullada, who had analyzed and researched chuvals attributed to the Ersaris and claims to have defined two new Turkmen tribes in the Middle Amu Dyra area.

The second of these is by David Reuben, whose work building a data base of Yomut pieces with asymmetric knots, we've already talked about. He did the same thing with pieces having an Ersari attribution.

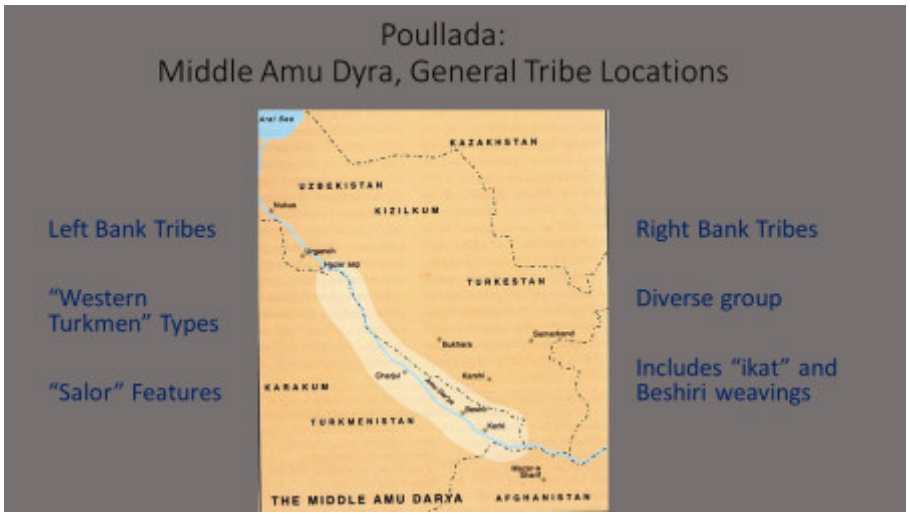
Slide 40: Poullada has made what seems the most determined effort to break apart the "Ersari" complex, but I think he would disagree with that description.

It's useful to follow the focus and sequence of his thinking and work. What follows draws heavily on Poullada's article in 2006 (Hali 148, pp. 66-73). He says that it summarizes his findings of twenty years of research.

He starts with indications in the literature that strongly suggest that the "Ersari" complex has for some time been seen to include two distinctive groups of weavings. One that he calls a "western Turkmen or Salor tradition." The other groups usually also called Ersari is much more diverse. There are pieces with an "ikat" style and another group described as "Beshiri."

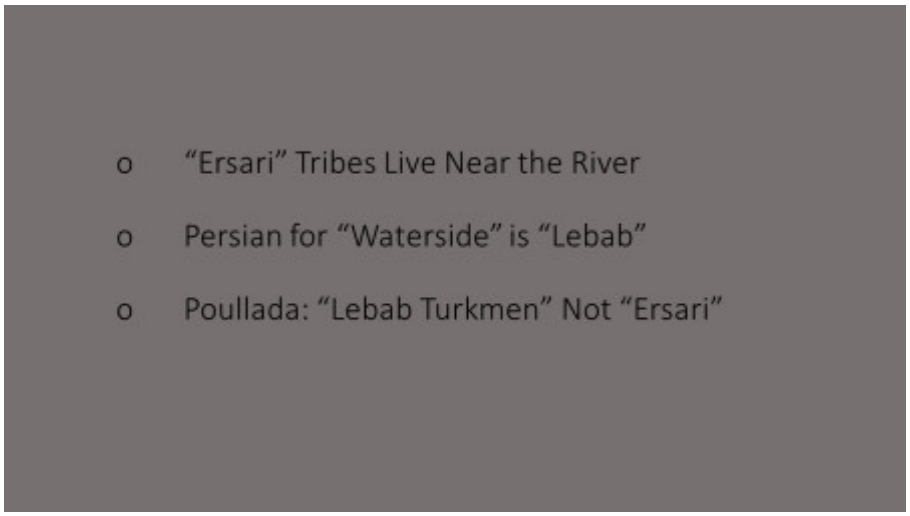
He says that a useful way to examine the Ersari complex is to give up at the general level, the broad tribal term, and to move to indicate where most of these people lived.

With Moshka and more recently Tsareva and the Soviet ethnographic scholar, A. N. Pirkulieva, Poullada notes that most of the folks called "Ersari" live on or near the banks of the Amu Dyra River. It flows to the northwest to the Aral Sea.



The "western Turkmen" lived on the left bank and the more diverse "ikat" group lived on the right bank.

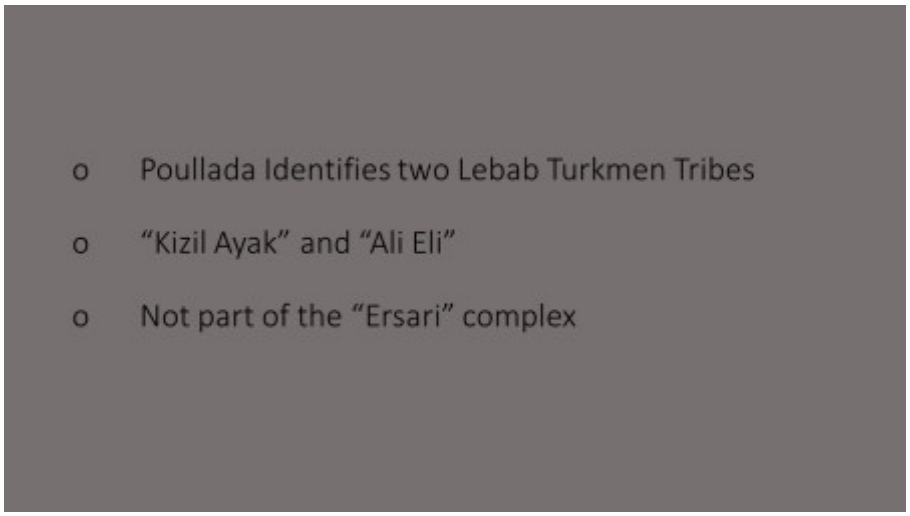
Slide 41: Following a local Persian term "lebab" that means "waterside," Poullada recommends that we should move to the term "Lebab Turkmen," and away from the traditional broad "Ersari" usage.



Poullada next draws on the ethnic mapping of Pirkulieva, who found that there were 35 ethnic groups in the "Lebab Turkmen" complex and that only four of these sub-tribal groups: the Kara, the Bek-Aul, the Ulugh-Tepe and the Gunsesh are main Ersari tribal sub-divisions. (I had personally never seen these four "Ersari" sub-tribal names until I read Poullada's article.)

Now Poullada decides to pursue his researches focusing on chuvals and other bag formats.

As a result of his researches he says that he has:



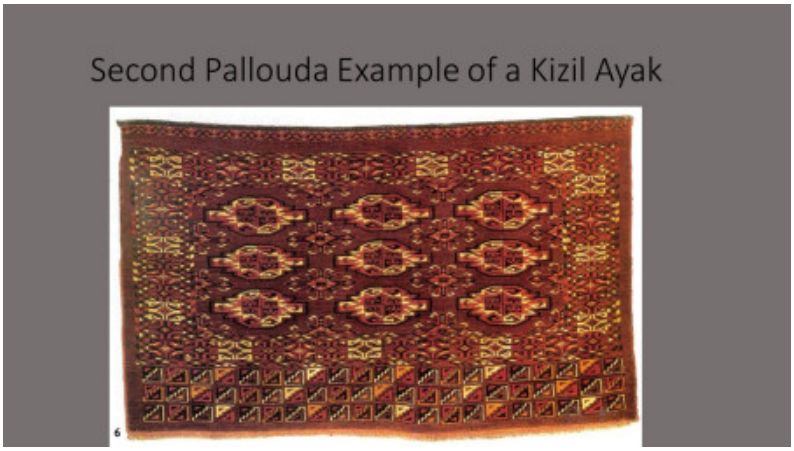
Slide 43: Here are Poullada's indicators for a Kizil Ayak attribution.

(click on the image below to get a readable font size.)

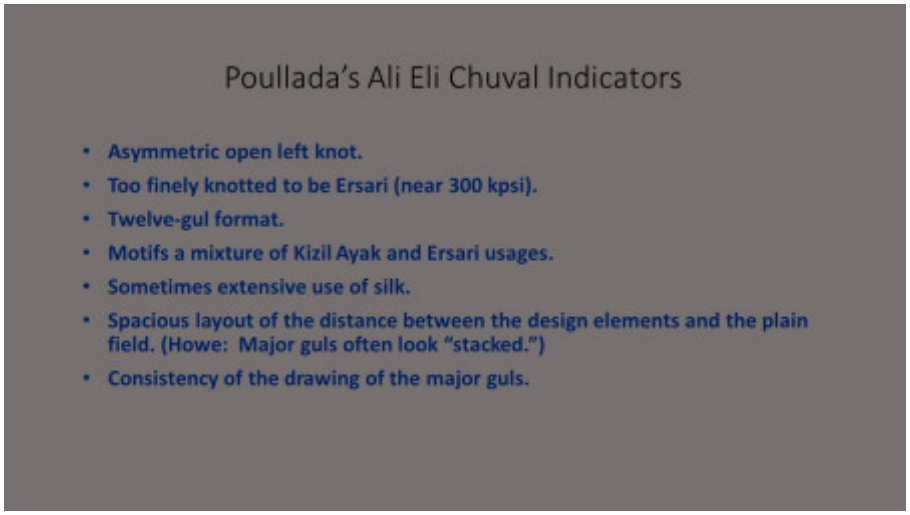
Note especially that Kizil Ayaks have an asymmetric knot, open right, and a knot count of about 95 to 150 kpsi. Their "evenly spaced vertical rows" and the "perfectly square shape of their knot nodes," contribute to "uniform knotting" and "crisp, clear designs."

Slide 44: Here is a closer look at his classic Kizil Ayak example above.

Slide 45: Below is a second Poullada Kizil Ayak example.



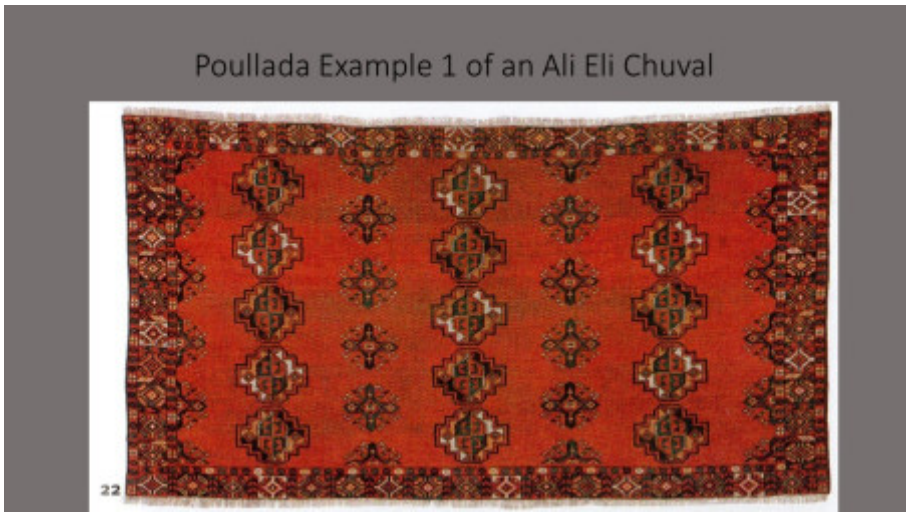
Slide 46: Poullada's second non-Ersari Turkmen tribe is the "Ali Eli." Below are his attribution indicators for it.



Note that the Ali Eli have an asymmetric knot open left. In addition, at 300 kpsi, the Ali Eli pieces have about twice the knot density of Kizil Ayak pieces. If the silk in an Ali Eli piece includes some in its foundation, this group resembles some "eagle group" types.

On the basis of these two sets of indicators, the Kizil Ayak and the Ali Eli are readily distinguished

Slide 47: And here are two Ali Eli examples Poullada provides.

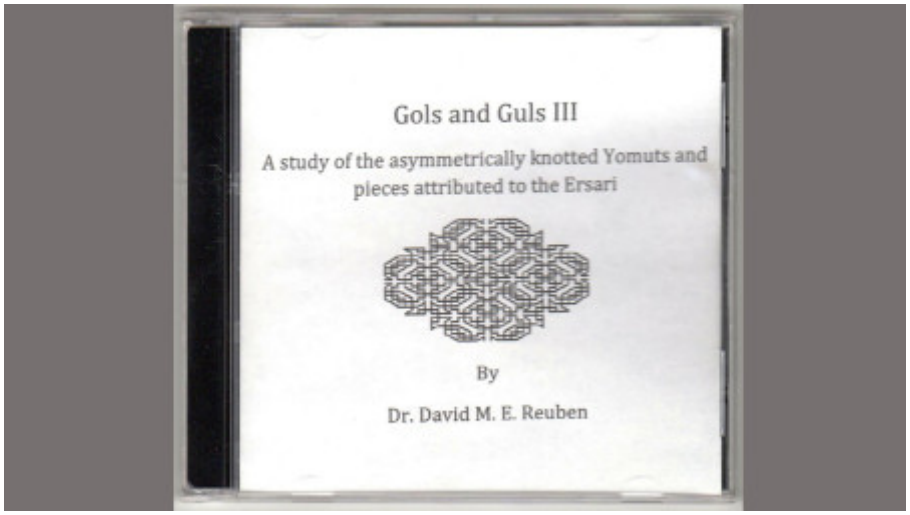


This first one a "stacked" guls and spacious field arrangement that do not occur in the Kizil Ayak examples Poullada includes. The major guls in this first Ali Eli piece are about as tall as they are wide. Notice also the density of the minor-major-minor border complex that reads as a single element.

Slide 48: This second Ali Eli example has the wider, shallower major chuval guls that we see in many of the chuval guls of Kizil Ayak, Tekke and Yomut pieces.

So neither the squarish gul shape nor the "stacked gul," spacious field arrangement, seems to be a reliable Ali Eli indicator.

Slide 49: I'm not sure when Reuben's Gols and Guls III CD, in which he analyzed a number of "Ersari" pile weavings with asymmetric knots, was published,

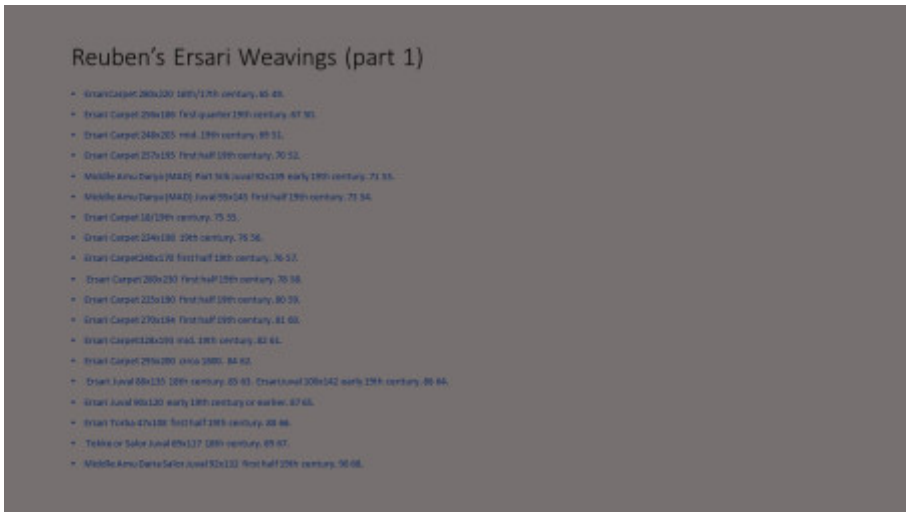


but he cites Poullada's article in some of his comments on the attributions he is making, so he clearly had access to Poullada's work.

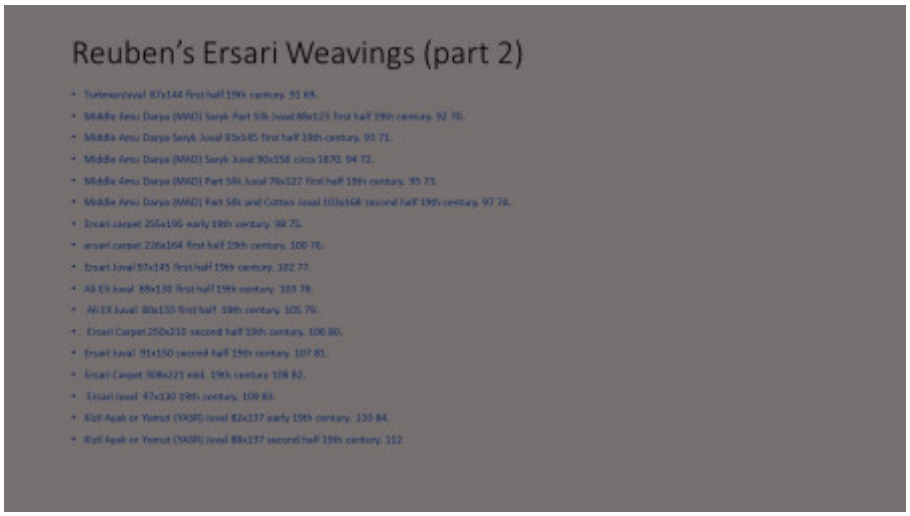
And Reuben does use the terms "Middle Amu Dyra, "Kizil Ayak," and "Ali Eli" in his descriptions, so he was aware of these distinctions, but he also uses "Ersari" in an unselfconscious way.

Slide 50: Reuben includes 36 "Ersari" pile pieces in his Gols and Guls III, CD. He presents data on 16 carpets and a variety of other Ersari pile pieces mostly in juval or other bag formats, but he also includes some engsis, asmalyks, wedding rugs, even one okbash.

This is the first page of a descriptive listing of these pieces.



Slide 51: And here is a second.



It's important to remember that Reuben is primarily building a data base of available information on "Ersari" pile weavings.

His method is one sometimes characterized as "barefoot empiricism," that is collecting data on various aspects of something and then looking at it and doing sorts on particular factors, looking for correlations without any particular guidance by theory or hypothesis.

This leads to some unexpected ways in which he organizes his reporting on the pieces he treats. He says:

Slide 52: To repeat what the slide above says:

The pieces (ed. "carpets") attributed to the Ersari were listed according to the colours of the gol quarters.

Other properties such as the knot, knot count and structure are possibly more important. However, these properties are usually not listed in many publications especially auction catalogues.

There are 3 main colour schemes as well as 2 others to be mentioned later. The first scheme uses orange alternating with blue and or green. The second uses orange alternating with white as used by the other tribes. The third is likely to be a transition between the other two and uses orange and blue alternating with orange and white.

Reuben goes on in this passage relating such color schemes to major gul types and sometimes adds knot type and density indications.

These are unusual sorts and I don't think they go anywhere in particular.

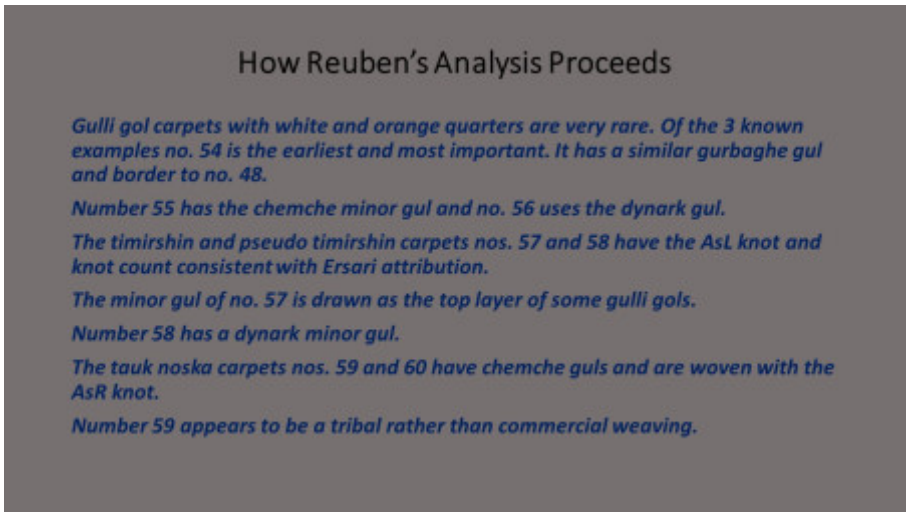
While saying this, I should also acknowledge that some others see Reuben's distinctions as worth citing.

The Tekke torba below is included in the New England Rug Society's on-line bag exhibition "To Have and to Hold."

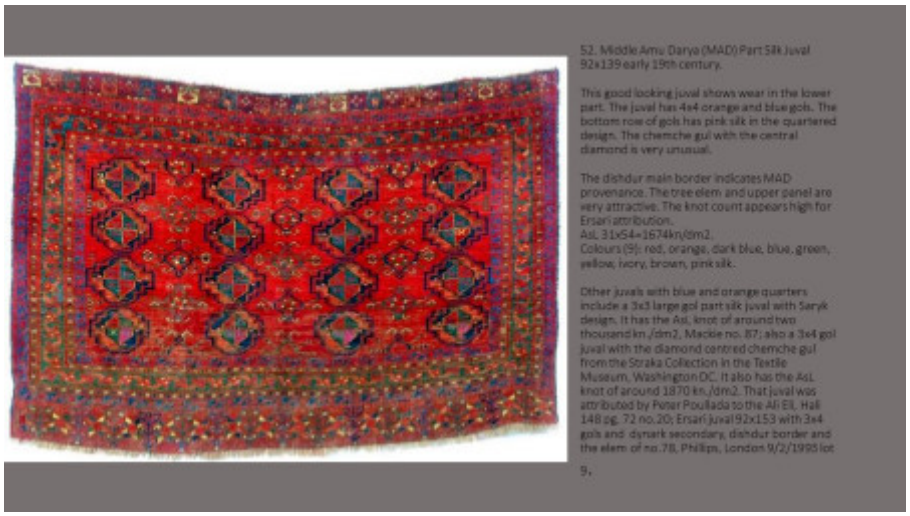
They draw on Reuben in their comment on this piece.

According to David Reuben[1], there are three design families for 6-Gul Tekke torbas. The first has elongated centers, with a small rectangle at the very center. The second has rosettes at the gul centers. And the third family, to which this piece belongs, is the most variable. This particular torba illustrates some of the many design variations that occur. The center of the gul has an eight-pointed star, not found in other examples. Other aspects of the major gul are very unusual, with a parallelogram in each quarter of the major gul – most other examples have a square, or possibly multiple small shapes.

Slide 53: Here's another passage that lets you see how Reuben's analysis proceeds and what he says his findings are.



Slide 54: Below is a chuval from Reuben's data base with the information he provides about it. A nearly unbelievable knot count, for a Turkmen piece, of over 500 kpsi, even if it is mostly silk.

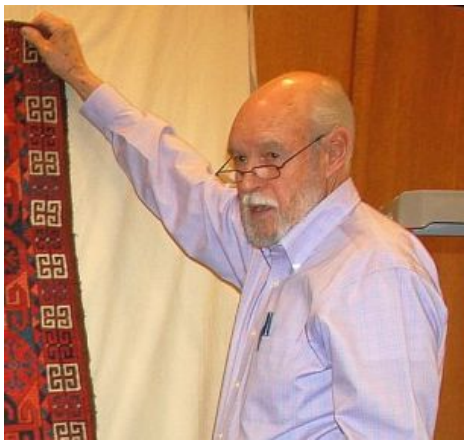


Slide 55: Below is another chuval with a different look. He estimates it to the 18th century and unselfconsciously attributes it to Ersari weavers. Again, 279 kpsi is a very high knot count.

Slide 56: Reuben has collected a lot of weavings attributed to the Yomut and the "Ersari," and has done a lot of analysis, primarily of design and related color features, but does not help us much in breaking apart these two large groups.

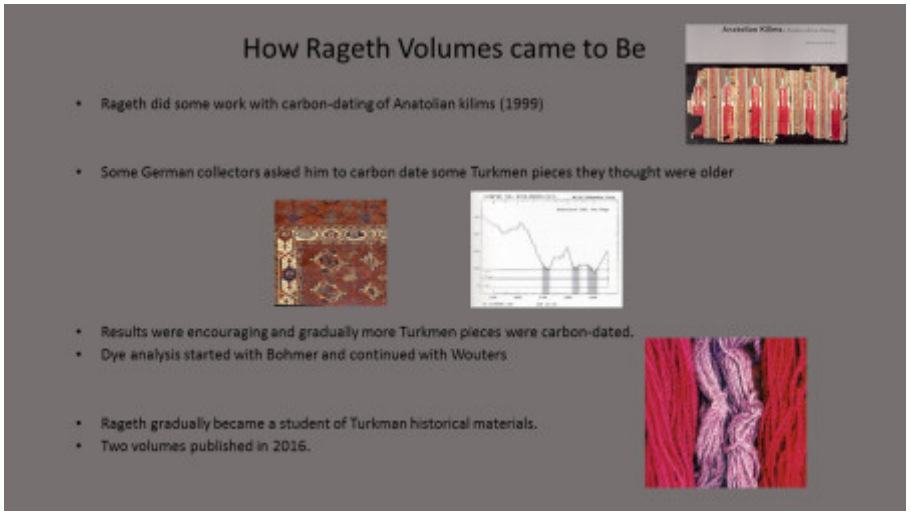
Reuben's collection and examination of pile weavings attributed to the Ersari, recognizes Poullada's work, but reaches no further conclusions that identify either new Turkmen tribes or "Ersari" sub-groups.

Slide 57: We have one further recent effort to press Turkmen pile scholarship and Bob is going to describe and examine it now.



It is the two-volume "Turkmen Carpets: A New Perspective," published in 2016 by Jurg Rageth.

This work was a long time in its making and it might be useful to say how it came to be.



Slide 56

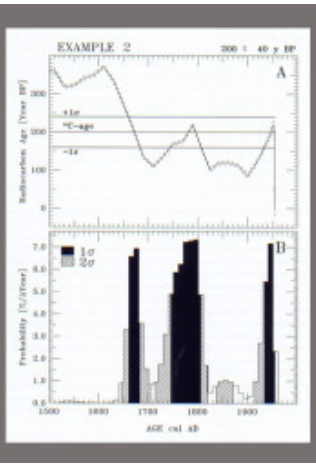
The "New Perspective" consists of combining three principal approaches: Radiocarbon dating, Dye analysis, Historical and Art Historical information. The two scientific/technological approaches (carb0n dates and dye analysis) both greatly expand our understanding of the history of Turkmen weaving, and also serve to debunk some of the assumptions that have become entrenched in the rug lore (I'll try to mention some of these as we go along).

SUMMARY OF ^{14}C DATING

- ^{14}C DATING IS A PROVEN METHOD FOR DATING TURKMEN RUGS, ACCURATELY IF NOT ALWAYS VERY PRECISELY.
- OF 123 WEAVINGS DATED WITH ^{14}C, 18 WERE DATED CONFIDENTLY TO BEFORE 1650, WITH SOME DATES POTENTIALLY AS EARLY AS 1500. MANY OTHER WEAVINGS WERE DATED TO THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES.
- THE DATES OBTAINED ALLOW TIME-LINE COMPARISONS TO WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT CULTURAL AND ART-CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE REGION, WHICH GIVES INSIGHTS INTO THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF TURKMEN MOTIFS AND DESIGNS.

Slide 57 The slide below was used to help explain why some carbon dates have two or three ranges of dates with differing probabilties.

CALIBRATION CURVE FOR ^{14}C, AD 1500-AD 1900



The next series of images show a number of the weaving published by Rageth, along with the dates obtained, and also show the range of weaving formats that were dated.

Slide 58

Slide 59

Slide 60

Slide 61

Slide 62

Slide 63

Slide 64

Slide 65

CATALOG NO. 84
QARADASHLI CARPET

AD 1482-1657—100%

Slide 66

CATALOG NO. 86
QARADASHLI CARPET

AD 1659-1693—17.9%
1726-1813—62%
1850-1863—1.3%
1918-1949—18.8%

Slide 67

CATALOG NO. 102
YOMUT CARPET
TEXTILE MUSEUM
COLLECTIONS
AD 1517-1605—15.1%
1620-1699—37.9%
1731-1818—36.2%
1924-1961—10.8%

Slide 67

Slide 68 The Tekke carpet shown below is one that would seem to debunk an often-promulgated article of rug lore, which holds that in earlier Tekke rugs, the octagons that are the principal border motif lack the "rays" extending from their perimeters, that these "rays" were a later introduction, and became longer through the 19th century. The rug below is missing its side borders, and has a seam down the center where one column of guls has been removed. The end borders remain however, and these show rather prominent rays around them. Clearly this is an old rug, with greater than 70% probability of having been made before 1826, and this probability becomes even more compelling once we realize that the 19.7% probability of it having been made between 1918-1960 cannot seriously be considered.

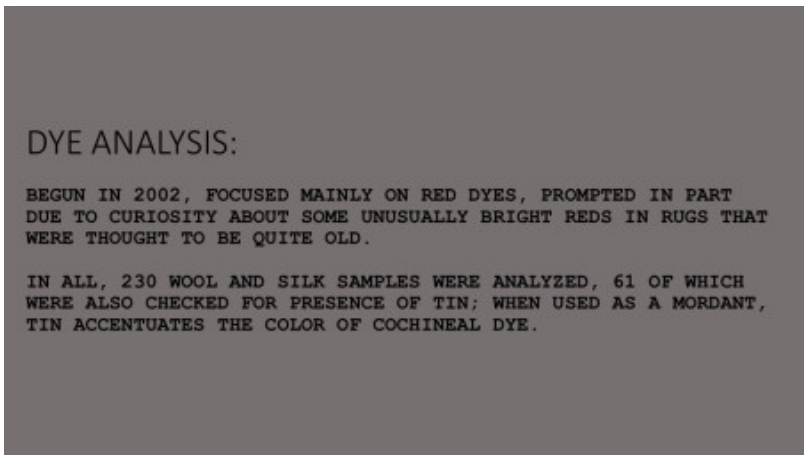
The results reported in these volumes show beyond a reasonable doubt that many existing Turkmen weavings were made before 1800, and some of these are even 200 years older, predating 1600.

It also shows that those who have experience in collecting and/or studying Turkmen weavings can reliably recognize the older pieces. Many who have looked at and handled lots of old Turkmen rugs could order them into a series representing oldest to youngest, and most often another collector would put the same rugs into the same order.

But these progressions would be a chronology without a scale. Rageth's studies add some numbers to such a chronology, and also confirm that collectors really can reliably recognize the older rugs.

The samples that were dated were not randomly drawn from the whole universe of Turkmen weavings–they were selected as rugs thought to be very old, and the results show that many of them were indeed 18th century or older, and some are among the older Turkmen rugs known to still exist. None of the pieces clearly predated AD 1450, but 18 of them dated before 1650 (12 of these 18 are carpets, the others tent bands, bagfaces and other smaller items). Many others dated to the later 17th century through the 18th century.

Slide 69



Slide 70

MADDER:
DYE OBTAINED FROM MADDER ROOT GIVES A WIDE RANGE OF RED COLORS AND WAS USED IN VIRTUALLY EVERY TURKMAN WEAVING.

INSECT DYES:
POLISH COCHINEAL: NOT FOUND IN TURKMEN WEAVINGS. A RED DYE WITH THE SAME COMPOSITION AS POLISH COCHINEAL OCCURS IN THE PAZYRIK CARPET, FOUND IN A PERMANENTLY FROZEN BURIAL MOUND (KURGAN) IN SOUTHERN SIBERIA, AND ^{14}C DATED TO 383-200 BC

INDIAN LAC:
DEEP RED DYE OBTAINED FROM THE LARVAE AND FEMALE ADULTS OF THE SAME SCALE INSECT THAT PRODUCES SHELLAC. LONG HISTORY OF USE IN INDIA AND MUCH OF ASIA, AND IS FOUND IN NEARLY EVERY SALOR WEAVING, BUT RARELY IN WEAVINGS OF OTHER TURKMEN GROUPS

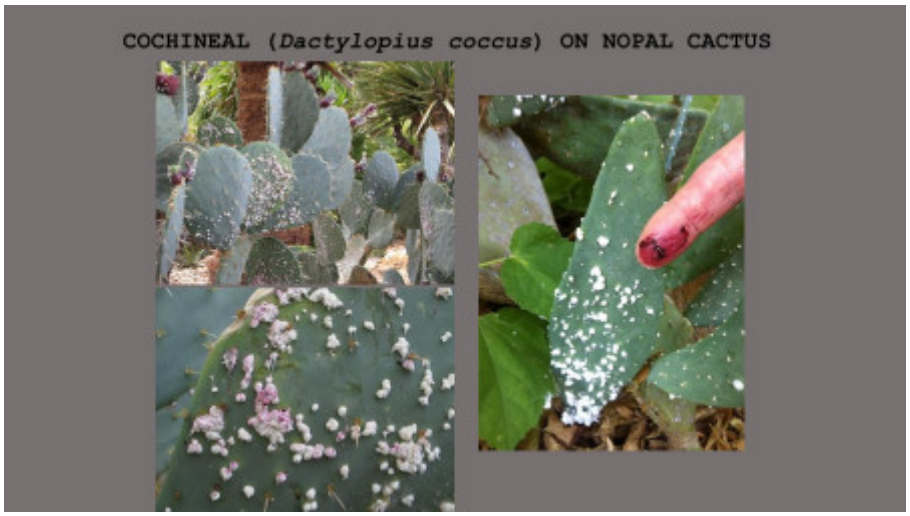
Slide 71

ARMENIAN COCHINEAL/ ARARAT COCHINEAL:
NOT DEFINITIVELY DETECTED IN TURKMEN WEAVINGS

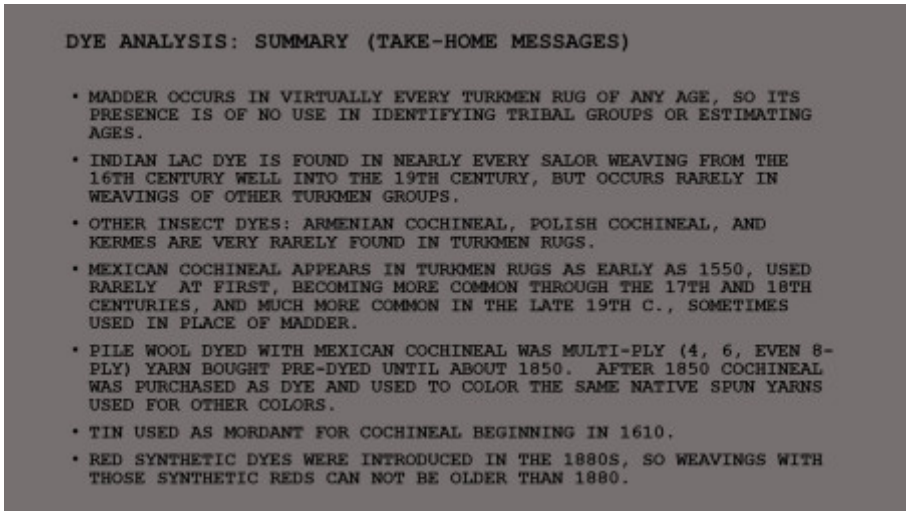
KERMES:
SCALE INSECT DYE; USED AS PIGMENT AND DYE IN CLASSICAL GREEK AND ROMAN TEXTILES, INTO MEDIEVAL TIMES IN EUROPE, ESPECIALLY ON SILKS.

MEXICAN COCHINEAL:
MOST COMMON INSECT DYE IN TURKMEN WEAVINGS. IMPORTED FROM TO EUROPE BY SPANISH IN EARLY 16TH CENTURY (1500S), AND USED BY TURKMEN AS EARLY AS MIDDLE OF 16TH C. INITIALLY VERY EXPENSIVE, THUS USED SPARINGLY, BUT BY MIDDLE 19TH C BECAME LESS EXPENSIVE AND MORE OFTEN USED. HAS 10 TO 30 TIMES THE CONCENTRATION OF DYE COMPOUNDS FOUND IN EUROPEAN INSECT DYES, SO ESSENTIALLY REPLACED THEM AS SOON AS INTRODUCED.

Slide 72 The following image is something of a non sequitur—-I remembered that when I visited San Antonio, Texas, a few years ago I noticed cochineal insects on the nopal cactus growing at The Alamo. A finger pressed against one of those white blobs shows how concentrated the dye compound is.



Slide 73

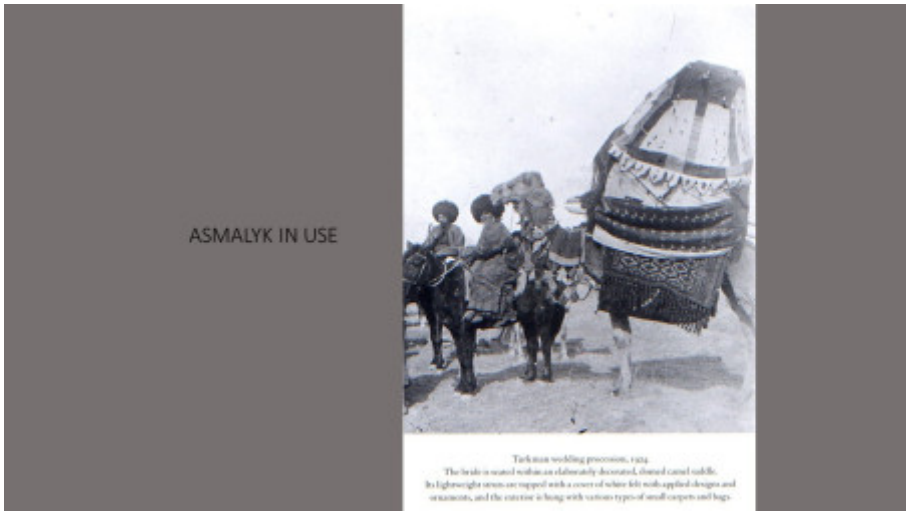


Slide 74 The next slide is of a Yomut asmalyk (camel bridal trapping). At first glance there is nothing special about it. It has the most common field design seen in asmalyks, and is not an especially noteworthy piece, except that it does show how the results of dye analysis can be used.

I acquired it after seeing it listed in an internet auction, and the images posted with the listing were good enough to show that it has cotton wefts. These can be seen here in the third image below, which might be good enough to show, at the fraying edge, that rows of knots are separated by alternating shoots of cotton and camel hair. Cotton wefts also show in the mage of the back.

After acquiring it, I also noticed that it has small pile elements of insect dyed wool.

Slide 75



Slide 76 The two images below show the of insect dyed pile wool. They are small elements, consisting of six knots each, toward the right and left ends of each "gul" center, and also some of the small parallelograms in the lattice.

After reading Rageth's book, I looked at these small elements with magnification, and found that this pile wool is multi-ply, at least 4 plies.

Rageth concluded that until about 1850 cochineal-dyed pile wool was purchased in small amounts as commercially spun and dyed wool. After about 1850 cochineal dye was sufficiently inexpensive that it was purchased as dye and applied to the same native, hand-spun, 2-ply wool used for other pile colors.

So by that criterion, this asmalyk is likely to be older than 1850, which is consistent with its cotton wefting indicating an older piece.

Slide 77 The detail below might be good enough to see that the insect dyed knots are multi-ply. If the plies can't be made out, the smoother surface texture of these knots also suggests more plies.

Slide 78 The small Tekke rug shown in the following three slides is another piece that has small pile elements dyed with an insect dye, most probably cochineal.

I have long known that the insect-dyed pile wool is multi-ply, and assumed that it was commercially spun and dyed yarn that was purchased for the highlights in this rug. But before Rageth's work I hadn't realized that this indicates a date before 1850.

This rug also has many small elements of cochineal-dyed silk, most obvious in some of the small triangles in the hexagonal gul centers. The format of this rug is very rare. One was offered at the Thompson sale at Sotheby's in 1993, and Jon Thompson, in his description in the sale catalog, noted its rarity while also noting, and citing, a few other examples that exist.

This rug must have been made for some special person or some special occasion.

Slide 79 Insect-dyed pile wool occurs in small amounts elsewhere in this rug, but is best seen where it occurs as the ground color of some small octagonal elements in the elem, arranged diagonally by color (upper left to lower right in the following mage).

Slide 80 The image below shows these insect-dyed elements from the back. Magnification is probably insufficient to show the multiple plies, but the smoother surface texture of these knot-loops is evident.

Slide 81 After mentioning these examples to John Howe, we then inspected John's Beshir (or MAD) chuval fragment that has lots of insect-dyed silk, and also insect-dyed wool.

Slide 82 Not surprisingly, the insect-dyed wool in this piece is also multi-ply. It is the diagonal, lobed, element (brighter red in this image) arranged upper left-lower right in the following image. It's probably not possible to make out the multiple plies, but it clearly differs from the 2-ply madder-dyed wool at upper right, and the blues elsewhere. Pink silk is at lower left.

Slide 83 The evolution of the Kepse gul is one design progression that can be followed in Turkmen weavings, and the carbon dates now available show that this progression correlates quite reliably with time.

Slide 84 Some have postulated that Safavid Persian carpets might have been prototypes, or models, for some early Turkmen carpets. The following slide compares a very old Safavid Persian carpet (left) to an early Turkmen rug (right), of the genre referred to as multi-gul Turkmen carpets.

At first glance the similarities might not be so obvious. But notice that both rugs have bilateral symmetry, or reflection symmetry–the left half of each rug is a mirror reflection of the right half, and neither has colors organized into diagonal patterns.

The main elements of the Safavid carpet are floral, some being "rosettes" (open flower viewed straight-on) and others "palmettes" (flowers in lateral view). The Turkmen carpet can also be seen as having stylized rosettes and palmettes; those individual elements that are themselves bilaterally symmetrical (eg., the "C" guls) are rosettes. Others are not bilaterally symmetrical about a vertical axis, but are symmetrical (more or less) around a horizontal axis; these are palmettes.

These could represent the beginning stage of the kepse gul.

Slide 85 This map shows the extent of the Safavid Persian Empire. Notice that at the time these early multi-gul Turkmen carpets were being made, Safavid Persia overlapped what is today Turkmenistan.

Slide 86 The following slide shows another early Turkmen multi-gul carpet (left); note that it also has reflection symmetry around its vertical axis, and no overall diagonal color pattern, except that here some of the individual motifs are not themselves symmetrical (eg., some palmettes have alternate colored elements on their right and left halves).

The right hand half of the slide shows details of individual palmettes. The left-hand column of individual palmettes are details from the Safavid Persian carpet. The palmette at upper right is in the

elem of a Qaradashli Turkmen carpet shown as No. 88 of Rageth's books. Mid right is from the multi-gul carpet shown above, and bottom right is a detail from the carpet shown at left.

Slide 87 The slide below shows what can be considered a further step in kepse gul development.

The fields of both these carpets are filled with "C" guls and what are now easily recognizable Kepse guls. The carpet at left might still be labeled a multi-gul carpet, as it has, near the top, one row of guls that are neither "C" guls nor kepse guls.

Notice that the kepse guls in both are not symmetrical about a vertical axis, but are symmetrical about a horizontal axis. And notice also that the field also has reflection symmetry, with color all organized (reflected) horizontally, except that lower elem of the carpet at right has some obvious diagonal color arrangement.

Slide 88 The slide below shows further progression.

The carpet at left has only "C" guls and kepse guls, and has bilateral or reflection symmetry about its vertical axis. The kepse guls, with prominent white elements, are organized into the beginning of a 2-1-2-1 pattern (from top to bottom) that persists into later carpets with only kepse guls. Its kepse guls have become symmetrical about their vertical axes, but still lack the central vertical bar typical of later kepse guls.

The center rug below has only "C" guls, larger ones as the primary guls and smaller ones as secondaries. Notice that the "C" guls with white centers are arranged into the 2-1-2-1 pattern, which can also be read as a diagonal pattern. Here the overall design lacks reflection symmetry (the minor "C" guls (smaller ones) alternate colors from the left to the right side of the rug, and the elems show distinct diagonal color patterning.

At right is a carpet with only Kepse guls and they have acquired the central longer vertical bar that becomes standard in later carpets. The guls with prominent white elements are arranged into the 2-1-2-1 pattern, whereas the colors of the remaining guls are arranged into diagonal (lower left to upper right) color patterning (some exceptions at the sides).

Slide 89 The carpets shown below could be seen as further progression.

The one at left has only kepse guls, and the color patterning has become rigidly diagonal, upper left to lower right, both in the field and in the elems.

The "C" gul carpet at right has guls all of one size, and like the kepse gul carpet at left, color is arranged strictly diagonally, upper left to lower right, in the field and elems.

Continuing through the 19th century this rigid diagonal color patterning persisted in Kepse gul rugs (though the diagonal color patterning can also be lower left to upper right). Through the 19th century the kepse guls become more crowded, with less intervening space, so that in some late 19th century kepse gul carpets the kepse guls virtually lose their identity as separate elements, and the field appears as an over-all pattern.

Slide 90 I show the carpet in the next three images because it is one that I once owned (regrettably no longer do), and it clearly fits somewhere into the progression followed above. It has the look and feel of a very old carpet.

Its border isn't quite unique, but is very uncommon. Its large kepse guls have small "C" gul centers. The guls with white elements are staggered, but are not in the strict 2-1-2-1 pattern. However, the color patterning can be read diagonally, upper left to lower right. The diagonal rows alternate as follows: a row having all guls of the same color pattern, followed by a row having guls of two different color patterns alternating, one of which has white elements, and then repeat.

I can imagine this carpet as an intermediate between those with the strict 2-1-2-1 pattern and those later ones with all guls arranged diagonally by color.

Slide 91

Slide 92

What this whole discussion of kepse guls (and incidentally also "C" guls) and color patterns shows is that graphic changes in design elements and the arrangement of their colors can be organized into series or progressions that make sense logically, and that these changing patterns can now be constrained by carbon dates that allow them to be interpreted also as chronological sequences.

This is the end of the Lecture by Bob And John.

They had brought in a number of pieces and to see their treatment of those, you need to go to Part 2 using this link:

https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/11/22/turkman-now-part-2-the-pieces-brought-in/

Regards,

R. John Howe[12]

[12] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/11/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

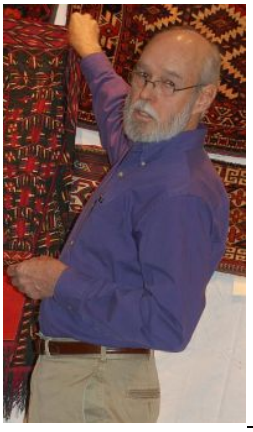
Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

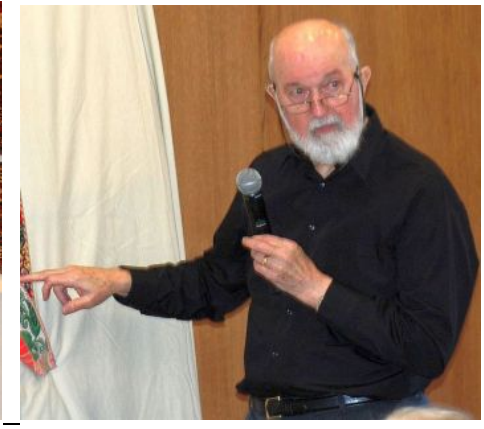
Archive for November, 2017

Turkman Now, Part 2, The Pieces Brought In

Posted in Uncategorized on November 22, 2017 by rjohn

This is Part 2 of a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program that Bob Emry and John Howe gave on Turkmen research, since about 1980, at The Textile Museum on April 22, 2017.





Part 1 was a lecture that you can view at this link: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/11/22/turkman-now-part-1-the-lecture/

We will show and describe the pieces Bob and John brought into this session, sometimes relating them to aspects of the lecture.

Comment:

Bob: I brought two mixed technique tent band fragments because the Rageth book had dated some tent bands of this type. I brought these to show anyone who might not be familiar with such tent bands what they are like. This piece is, I believe, Saryk. It has some elements in magenta silk–for example two triangles in the lower eight-pointed star shown in the detail images.

Details:

Bob: The second mixed technique tentband fragment, T23, is, I think, Yomut, though it might be Tekke.

I say "Yomut" because most bands I've found illustrated with animal images are called Yomut.

This one also has many small silk elements—the rows of little rectangles, for example, in the image above, and the vertical stripe in the "asmalyk" on the larger camel in the image immediately below.

This is a Tekke pile rug of a size like those that the Turkmen used as "wedding rugs." They were just big enough for the couple to stand on.

There were Turkmen wedding rugs, but we don't know which of the rugs like this were actually used in Turkmen weddings.

This piece is full-pile with what looks likely older traditional Tekke weaving. The only hesitation about it is that some say that the narrow white borders at the top and bottom are nearly signature indications of Soviet era weaving.

Here are some detail images.

We have asked about this narrow white border in the image below and have been told that the Soviet era border has a "bow tie" shape and is different from this one. We're still not sure how to treat the presence of this one.

Comment: This is a fragment of a Yomud chuval (no lower elem). Good range of natural color.

Detail images:

The major gul has a squared outside perimenter.

On one upper corner of the back, there is a sewn-on tag that reads: "Bokara, Dec. 3, 1910," and an indication that it was purchased, then, for $15. If we see this tag as made by a first purchaser, this is likely a 19th century piece.

This is a Middle Amu Dyra chuval fragment with a great deal of silk.

Details.

As Bob said in the lecture, his examination of the area with the orangish shade in the image above suggests that this are was wool dyed with cochineal. The wool in these areas has more plies than does that in others. This is an age indicator, likely before 1850.

The opulent use of silk in this piece makes one wonder who would dare to cut it up, but, of course, we know that this happened frequently.

This is a full-pile Yomut mafrash face with very soft wool. Its owner says that it is the only Yomut piece he has seen, with an asymmetric knot open left, that has no other "eagle group features (Troost is said to have published some others). David Reuben's study of Yomut weavings with asymmetric knots suggests that this is a rare piece. Damaged hanging cords still attached.

Details.

This is one face of a Middle Amu Dyra saddle bag (khorjin). The Turkmen wove many chuvals, torbas, and even a number of small mafrash bags, but not many saddle bags.

This piece has a deceptively simple design. One sees new features in it as one continues to look.

Details.

This is a nine-gul Amu Dyra chuval face. It is a classic instance of what Poullada calls "Kizil Ayak." Both Pinner and Azadi have, with it in hand, estimated it before 1850. Details.

Notice in the major gul, in the image above, that the Xs are serifed. This is the kind of feature likely to be dropped as designs become conventionalized. Noticing these serifs is the kind of thing that make others call some of us "Turkomainiacs."

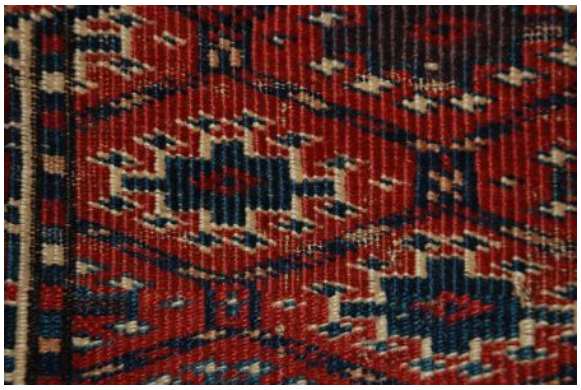
This is a fragment of a Tekke chuval. Someone cut this piece to use it as the seat cover for a chair (note the notches for the chair's legs). The current owner found it no longer part of a chair, put a back on it, and has used it as the cover for a bed-side table. Details.

The weaving is fine and of a high quality. The drawing is precise. The owner thinks it has some age.

Here are two looks at its back.

This is a Yomut saddle cover (the type that would be placed on top of the saddle, with the pommel (horn) sticking through the slit at the bottom. Details.

It has a dark purple and a blue shading toward green.



This is a large, seriously fragmented Middle Amu Dyra chuval with an "ikat" field design. It is professionally mounted on a blue backing cloth.

The ground red is in places of the "glows from within" type, but there is also a band of ground red in the top of the field that is a different, faded shade.

Here are some details.

The owner thinks that the spacious, drawing of the major gul (below) seems an archaic usage. The use of blue in the center is also effective. The character and crisp drawing of the borders, in the image above, also seem possibly older.

The cluster of "minor" guls (below) has graphic punch.

We think this piece is older, but can't point to anything excepting, perhaps, the gul and border drawing, to support that estimate.

This is a large fragment of an Middle Amu Dyra main carpet. We think this piece is older, in part, because of its narrow borders. It owner says that he has only seen two other similar examples. It has been published.

Notice that the ground color within the compartmentalized areas seems almost random, except for a diagonal sequence (left to right) of dark ground compartments and a right to left sequence of white

ground compartments. These diagonals cross in the approximate middle of this rug. Bob noted that the red-ground squares are also in diagonal lines (lower left to upper right) and that the white also forms lines lower left to upper right—i.e., the white forms diagonal lines in both directions.

Details.

*

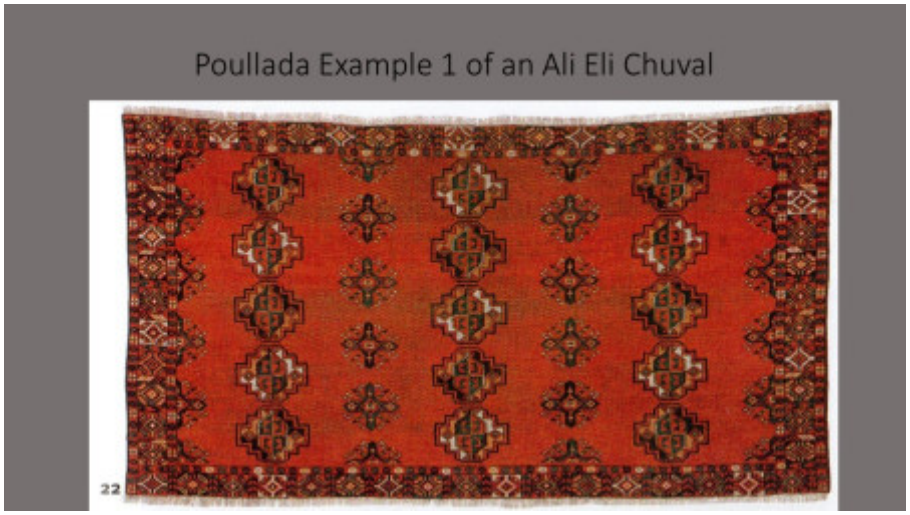
Notice in the image below that this piece has very bright orange wefts.

Notice the “tuning fork” border that separate all of the compartments.

The pile on this fragment is very worn down and the bright orange wefts show through on the front in some areas of the white ground compartments.

This piece was purchased already sewn onto a tan backing and there is clear transfer of red to this backing in a number of places. We think this piece is old, but don’t have a ready explanation about why, what would need to be a natural red, transfers to this backing.

This is an fragment of a Middle Amu Dyra chuval. Its major guls are about as tall and they are wide and are "stacked" on a pretty spacious field. Looks similar to one Eli Ali Poullada example (below) that we saw in the lecture.



But a quick look at structure disabuses us of that possibility. It has an asymmetric open right knot and a kpsi far below 300, at about 60, a frequent "Ersari" count. Looks can be deceiving.

Details.

Notice the plastic side selvedges.

This is a Yomut main carpet with major “tauk naska” guls and a white ground meander border.

Below is another overall photo that is a little closer and maybe better

Here are two details.

Notice, especially in the photo below, that the drawing of the "tauk naska" devices retain the "combs" on the heads. This is the kind of detail that would likely be left out in later conventionalized drawing and may be a sign of age,

This piece was mentioned in Part 1. It is one of very few rugs known in this long narrow format. It might have been made for some special occasion, or for a special person. It has lots of small silk highlights (see the small triangles in the hexagonal gul centers). The main reason for mentioning it in the talk was that it also has multi-ply pile wool dyed with an insect dye (probably Mexican cochineal). Details.

The third picture (below) shows this wool (ground color of the octagons in the diagonal row between the arrows). One of the conclusions in the Rageth book was that pile-wool dyed with cochineal was multi-ply (seemingly commercially spun and dyed wool obtained in small amounts by the weaver), up to about 1850. After that, cochineal dyed pile wool was the same two-ply, homespun wool used for other colors. By the mid 19th century, cochineal had become readily available, and sufficiently inexpensive, that weavers could buy the dye and dye their own two-ply wool. In this rug, the cochineal-dyed wool is multi ply (at least 4-ply, probably more), suggesting that the rug is pre-1850. The insect dye here is mildly corrosive, so that these elements have shorter pile.

This is a torba with unusually good colors. It is also unusual in having only five of the vertical bars (with anchor motifs) in each kepse gul. Seven is the usual number of vertical bars, although in a few rugs each gul has nine.

Detail.

This torba also shows that the weaver was indecisive about which border design to use.

These two pieces below are Tekke torbas.

The main point is just to show the two main types of Tekke chuval-gul torbas: 12-gul in 3 x 4 format, and 6-gul in 2 x 3 format.

Another point worth mentioning is that in the 6-gul torba, the animal heads (near the right and left ends of each gul), have two "horns" in most instances, instead of the single one most commonly seen.

This one was also on the board but didn't get mentioned during the talk. It is a small torba or mafrash with nine chuval-guls, but the main point of interest is that the minor guls are composed of two back-to-back "C" motifs (the motif seen in the "c" gul carpets). Easier to see in the detail below. Detail.

Bob: I've never been sure of the tribal assignment of the chuval above. The design has staggered rows of chuval guls, with no secondary elements. Most of the guls have silk elements in the hexagonal centers. It has some characteristics of Salor—i.e., borders, especially the connected "S" minor borders, and the knot it asymmetrical open left. If it is not Salor, then it is a mystery.

John: Is it fine enough (about 300 kpsi) to be Ali Eli?

Bob: No, it isn't especially fine–I haven't counted knots, but it is probably no more than 150 kpsi.

Detail.

The fragment above is an example of an old Tekke carpet. It is missing probably 3 rows of guls (the lower border is reattached), so is a fragment.

I think this rug dates from before 1800. It has the old esthetic, and a prominent German collector who saw it agreed that it was most likely 18th century. The border octagons have short "rays" surrounding them. At about 30 centimeters wide, the tekke guls here are among the largest you could expect to see.

Here is another, likely better, image, this one in direct sunlight.

Bob: This is a chuval from the Yomut family. A collector with a keener sense of observation and a greater level of self-assurance might make a more specific assignment — perhaps Karadashli. I think it has good age: at least early 19th century.

Detail.

As I said, during the talk, this is not an exceptional asmalyk, and it has the design most-commonly seen seen in asmalyks.

I bought it on eBay years ago, because the images posted with the auction listing were sufficiently good to show that it had some cotton in the wefts, and I had just been reading that Yomut carpets with cotton wefting seem to be older than those with all wool wefts.

The reason I brought it to the talk is that I discovered that it does have small elements of insect-dyed wool knots (probably cochineal), and that this wool is multi-ply. In the detail above the three red elements with six knots each, are dyed with cochineal, and are multi ply.

One of Rageth's conclusions is that cochineal dyed wool used in pile is multi-ply up until around 1850 (presumably commercially spun and dyed wool purchased in small amounts by the weaver), and after that time, cochineal-dyed wool is the same two-ply, home-spun wool as that used for the other pile colors.

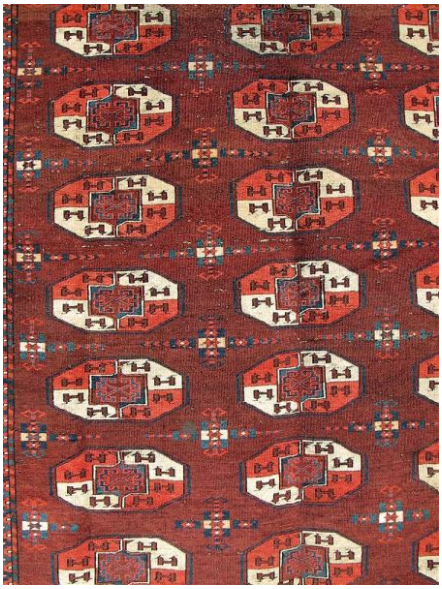
In this asmalyk, the cochineal-dyed wool is very limited—just to the six small diamonds elements in most of the gul centers—indicated by the arrow in the image below, and a few other small elements mainly in the striped lattice.

The cotton wefting is also obvious in this same image.

*

This shows a carpet that I would have called a Yomut "family" rug with the open spacing characteristic of older rugs.

Then this last spring I saw the catalog of the Austria Auction Company, Fine Antique Oriental Rugs VII (Auction of April 22, 2017). Lot 11 of that auction is a carpet labeled Karadashli, and is so similar to this one that one might believe that they were made by the same weavers, in the same place at the same time. If you go to this web page http://www.austriaauction.com/index.php?id=222&L=1 and then go to lot 11, you can see the similarity. Both rugs. have features, especially details of the border and minor guls, that I have not seen in other rugs.



I thought the secondary guls in my rug were unique until I saw the catalog, where they are the same, except that the catalog rug has some extra rectangles interposed between the secondary guls and the main guls.

The complicated curled leaf borders are the same, even to having the little "tauk nosca" animals in spaces between the curled leaves.

End borders are also the same in both rugs.

The main tauk nosca guls in both rugs have "rotational" symmetry—that is, if you were to put a pin through the center of the gul and rotate the gul 180 degrees on the pin, it would look identical. If color is taken into account, there is no reflection symmetry.

This is possible only because these rugs have one of the rarer kinds of tauk nosca guls, wherein the tauk nosca animals in the lower half of the gul are upside down, and those in the upper half of the gul are right-side up.

It is much more common to see tauk nosca guls in which all of the animals are right side up, and rotational symmetry is not possible. The major guls above (repeated here) are of this latter sort.

In these more-common rugs, even reflection symmetry is not possible if color is considered.

Bob treated the “kepse” gul seriously in his lecture and we ended with one.

Comment: In the evolution of kepse gul carpets mentioned in the talk, this would fit with the earlier ones with only kepse guls. Here the guls with white elements are organized into the 2-1-2-1 format. The overall arrangement is diagonal in the following pattern: a diagonal row (upper left to lower right) of guls that are all alike (same color and pattern), followed by a row having guls that alternate, ones with white and other all of the same color and pattern, then repeat. There is some minor confusion of this pattern at the beginning (bottom) of the field. Details.

Bob and John took questions and brought their program to a close.

I want to thank Bob for working with me both to fashion and give both the actual session at the Textile Museum and subsequently these two virtual version posts.

We hope that you have found some useful things in this brief picture of where we see Turkmen research now.

Here at the end we want to recognize the work of Jurg Rageth (here with his wife Ester),

who has produced two monumental volumes that we think, most will agree, will be the standard treatment of Turkmen pile weaving for the foreseeable future.

These volumes were produced in very limited numbers in German and English and we think are sold out.

Most will know that Jurg died, recently, at a young age. In a last act of generosity to the textile world he made an electronic copy of these two volumes available worldwide without cost.

You can find them here:

http://www.turkmencarpets.ch/

Regards,

R. John Howe[13]

[13] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2017/11/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for February, 2018

John Wertime on Small and Miniature Weavings from Central and Southern Iran

Posted in Uncategorized on February 14, 2018 by rjohn

On June 24, 2017, John Wertime, who, most readers will know is a long-time, close student of textiles, gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program here at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. John is, also, an author and one-time dealer.

John was, in this session, speaking to an array of "Small and Miniature Weavings from Central and Southern Iran."

John prefaced his examination of these weavings by saying they interest him, in part, because they show the skill of their weavers as they composed designs and used color (even sometimes texture) in sharply restricted space.

He cautioned that accurate attribution of these small pieces is unlikely, and that many of them could have been woven by different weavers in various locations in central and southern Iran. He said that he would treat these pieces in groups with similar structures

He moved to treat the pieces themselves.

1

Note: John has couched his comments in capitals.

(We have provided measurements when we have them.

27 x 20½ inches (68 x 51 cm)

Comment on 1: BEDDING BAG SIDE PANEL(?); POSSIBLY BAKHTIYARI; SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE: AN OLD & RARE WEAVING WITH LOVELY COLORS AND DESIGN THAT REMIND ME OF BAKHTIYARI WORK.

2 (face only)

40 x 38 inches (102 x 95 cm)

Comment on 2: SMALL KILIM OR SOFREH; QASHQA'I; SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE: A COLORFUL AND SOPHISTICATED TAPESTRY IN UNUSUAL DIMENSIONS.

3 (face only)

21 x 17 inches (54 x 45 cm)

Comment on 3: VERY SMALL KILIM USED AS A SOFREH OR SOME KIND OF PRAYER CLOTH; QASHQA'I; SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE, RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE STRIPES; A MINIATURE MASTERPIECE!

4 (face only)

22½ x 19 inches (57 x 49 cm)

Comment on 4:

VERY SMALL KILIM USED AS A SOFREH OR SOME KIND OF PRAYER CLOTH; QASHQA'I; SLIT TAPESTRY & DOVETAILED TAPESTRY WEAVE, RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE STRIPES; A MINIATURE MASTERPIECE!

5 (face only)

37 x 28 inches (94 x 70 cm)

6

Detail of the back of 5 showing the kind of tapestry used that permits long vertical color changes without slits.

Comment on 5 and 6: SMALL, MULTIPURPOSE KILIM KNOWN AS SHUSHTARI; WEAVER PROBABLY BAKHTIYARI IN ORIGIN; DOUBLE INTER-LOCKED TAPESTRY WEAVE; A LOVELY EXAMPLE OF A DISTINCTIVE TYPE OF KILIM WEAVING, DONE IN THE SHUSHTAR AREA OF KHUZESTAN IN SW IRAN.

7 & 8: 8 x 9 inches (20 x 23 cm)

Comment on 7 and 8:

MULTIPURPOSE CHANTEH (SMALL SINGLE BAG); VARAMIN AREA; FRONT: WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE WITH WEFT SUBSTITUTION; BACK: STRIPES IN PLAIN WEAVE & WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE WITH WEFT SUBSTITUTION: STRIKING DESIGN OF POSITIVE & NEGATIVE SPACES.

9 & 10 (back of 9)

Comment on 9 and 10:

MULTIPURPOSE CHANTEH WITH LONG BRAIDS AND TASSELS; QASHQA'I; WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE WITH WEFT SUBSTITUTION; BACK: SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE WITH STRIPE IN WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE WITH STRIPE IN WEFT-FACE PLAIN WEAVE WITH WEFT SUBSTITUTION; ONE OF MANY QASHQA'I BACKS WITH STRIKING MINIMALIST DECORATION.

11 (face only)

10½ x 10 inches (28 x 26 cm)

Comment on 11: MULTIPURPOSE CHANTEH WITH LONG BRAIDS AND TASSELS; QASHQA'I; WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE WITH WEFT SUBSTITUTION.

12 (face only)

6 x 6½ inches (14 x 17 cm)

Comment on 12: MULTIPURPOSE CHANTEH; QASHQA'I; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND PATTERNED BY WEFT FLOAT BROCADING; STYLIZED BOTEHS.

13 & 14 (back of 13)

42 x 23 inches (106 x 58 cm)

Comment on 13 and 14:

FRONT: SADDLEBAG (KHORJIN); QASHQA'I; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND PATTERNED BY WEFT FLOAT BROCADING; STYLIZED BOTEHS IN DIAGONAL ALIGNMENT CREATE A DYNAMIC EFFECT ON A BAG MADE OF SUPERB WOOL; BACK; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND PATTERNED BY WEFT FLOAT BROCADING

15. 16½ x 13 inches (42 x 33 cm)

Comment on 15:

MULTIPURPOSE CHANTEH; PROBABLY QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE & PLAIN WEAVE GROUND PATTERNED BY WEFT FLOAT BROCADING.

16 & 17 (Back of 16)

4½ x 4½ inches (12 x 12 cm)

Comments 16 and 17: TINY MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG; QASHQA'I; WARP-FACED ALTERNATING FLOAT WEAVE ON FRONT AND BACK; ONE OF THE SMALLEST EXAMPLES OF A COMMON TYPE OF CONTAINER IN TWO COLORS MADE BY THE QASHQA'IS.

18 & 19 (back of 18)

6 x 6 inches (15 x 15 cm)

Comments on 18 and 19: TINY MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG; QASHQA'I; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND WITH PATTERNING IN SUMAK (EXTRA WEFT WRAPPING) ON FRONT & BACK; A CHARMING RENDITION OF THE PEACOCK MOTIF MAKES THIS A MINIATURE MASTERPIECE!

20 & 21 (back of 20)

8 x 9 inches (20 x 22 cm)

Comments on 20 and 21:

TINY MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG; QASHQA'I; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND WITH PATTERNING IN SUMAK (EXTRA WEFT WRAPPING) ON FRONT & BACK; A CHARMING RENDITION OF A COMMONLY SEEN ANIMAL MOTIF ON A COTTON GROUND WITH A SKILLFULLY DESIGNED BACK MAKES THIS A RARE PIECE.

22

22 x 10 inches (52 x 25 cm)

Comment on 22: *Howe: A particular thing to notice about the next two pieces that they are south Persian bags made by folding over a weaving along a vertical or horizontal axis. Such pieces are sometimes be suspected of being "constructed" (that is cut down from a larger textile). But in these two cases they were originally made in this folded way.*

Here is John Wertime's comment on 22:

MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG FOLDED OVER ALONG THE VERTICAL AXIS AND BOUND ON ALL SIDES WITH GOAT HAIR; BAKHTIYARI; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND WITH PATTERNING IN SUMAK ON FRONT & BACK; GOAT HAIR BINDING ON THREE SIDES.

23 (face only)

Comment on 23: MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG FOLDED OVER ALONG THE HORIZONTAL AXIS AND BOUND ON THE SIDES WITH GOAT HAIR; LORI/BAKHTIYARI; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND WITH PATTERNING IN SUMAK ON FRONT & BACK WITH A STRIP OF SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE A THE BOTTOM; THE PILE STRIP AT THE BOTTOM IS A VERY COMMON FEATURE OF CONTAINERS MADE BY THE LORS AND BAKHTIYARIS; OVERCASTING IN GOAT HAIR.

24

15½/22½ x 7 ½ /19 inches (40/57 x 19/49 cm)

Comment on 24: MULTIPURPOSE CONTAINER FOR SALT & OTHER MATERIALS; LORI/BAKHTIYARI; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND WITH PATTERNING IN SUMAK WITH A STRIP OF SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE A THE BOTTOM; PROMINENT USE OF COTTON; OVERCASTING IN GOAT HAIR.

25 & 26 (back of 25)

Comment on 25 and 26:

MULTIPURPOSE BAG WITH LONG BRAIDS AND TASSELS; QASHQA'I; PLAIN WEAVE GROUND WITH PATTERNING IN SUMAK ON FRONT & BACK; PEACOCKS AND OTHER ANIMALS DECORATE THE FRONT & ANIMALS THE BACK IN A MOST CHARMING WORK OF NOMAD ART.

27 & 28 (back of 27)

19 x 8½ inches (49 x 21 cm)

Comments on 27 and 28:

SMALL KHORJIN; SHAHSEVAN OF THE BIJAR AREA; WARP-FACED PLAIN WEAVE PATTERNED BY REVERSE SUMAK; BAGS LIKE THIS ARE FAIRLY RARE.

29

176 x 3 inches (448 x 8 cm)

Across the top of the front board and coming down its sides was a luxurious tent band in seeming perfect condition.

Here is a closer, comprehensive view of 29. (color differences are due to different cameras and lighting)

And here are some further details of 29.

Comments on 29:

DECORATIVE BAND; QASHQA'I; WARP-FACED PLAIN WEAVE. PATTERNED BY SYMMETRICAL PILE; A MASTERPIECE OF NOMAD ART IN COLOR, MATERIAL, AND DESIGN, THIS BAND DEPICTS THE WOMEN OF THE TRIBE, THE WEAVERS AND PRINCIPAL SUSTAINERS OF NOMADIC LIFE, AND VARIOUS MOTIFS THAT DECORATE THEIR WOVEN ART IN RELIEF AGAINST A GORGEOUS DARK BLUE GROUND KNOWN AS "SORME'I" IN PERSIAN.

30

5½ x 5 inches (14 x 13 cm)

Comments on 30: TINY MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG; QASHQA'I; SUMAK WITH STRIPES OF RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE AT TOP & BOTTOM.

31 & 32 (back of 31)

8½ x 9 inches (22 x 23 cm)

Comment on 31 and 32:

TINY MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG; QASHQA'I; SUMAK WITH STRIPES OF RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE AT TOP; BACK: SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE; THESE SMALL BAGS FEATURING THE STAR MOTIF ARE SELDOM FOUND AND ARE TREASURED BY COLLECTORS.

33

11½ x 11 inches (30 x 28 cm)

Comment on W33:

SMALL MULTIPURPOSE CHANTEH; QASHQA'I; SUMAK WITH A STRIPE OF RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE AT TOP; UNDYED COTTON MAKES A DRAMATIC GROUND FOR THE UNDULATING BORDER WITH ANIMAL HEAD MOTIFS.

34 (back of 34)

5 x 6 inches (12 x 15 cm)

Comment on 34: TINY MULTIPURPOSE SINGLE BAG; QASHQA'I; FRONT: SUMAK; BACK: SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE.

35 & 36 (back of 35)

17/24 x 6½/20 inches (43/60 x 17/50 cm)

Comments on 35 and 36: SALT BAG; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SUMAK ON FRONT & BACK; A COMMONLY SEEN DESIGN IN AFSHAR BAGS THAT FEATURES A DYNAMIC INTERPLAY OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

37 & 38 (back of 37)

19/27 x 9½/26½ inches (50/69 x 24/68 cm)

39 (detail of 37)

Comment on 37, 38 and 39 detail:

LARGE SALT BAG; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SUMAK ON THE FRONT AND WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE ON THE BACK; CAREFULLY WORKED SUMAK TO RECREATE A COMMON COMPOSITION IN PILE BAGS IN SOUTHERN IRAN; THE OVERCASTING OF THE SIDES AND THE CLOSURE PANEL AT THE MOUTH ARE DONE IN THE BEST AFSHAR FASHION; A RARE PIECE, INDEED!

40

18/26 x 9½/20½ inches (46/66 x 25/53 cm)

Comment on 40: SALT BAG; BAKHTIYARI; SUMAK; THIS BEAUTIFUL COMPOSITION OF TULIPS IN A GARDEN-LIKE SETTING IS AMONG THE MOST APPEALING OF ALL BAKHTIYARI CREATIONS AMONG SUMAK BAGS!

41

Comment on W41: SALT BAG; BAKHTIYARI; SUMAK WITH PILE AT THE BOTTOM.

42 (face only)

25 x 17½ inches (64 x 45 cm)

Comment on W42:

SMALL MAT; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SUMAK; A DYNAMIC DESIGN IN A SELDOM SEEN VERTICAL COMPOSITION MAKES THIS A RARE AND EXCEPTIONAL WORK OF NOMAD ART.

43 (face only)

45 x 35 inches (113 x 88 cm)

*

Comment on 43:

MAT; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SUMAK WITH PANELS OF WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE AT THE TOP AND BOTTOM; ANOTHER EXCEPTIONAL AFSHAR SUMAK WEAVING!

44 & 45 (back of 44)

19½ x 13 inches (50 x 33 cm)

Comment on 44 and 45:

MULTIPURPOSE BAG; QASHQA'I; SUMAK ON THE FRONT AND RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE ON THE BACK; A VERY TIGHT WEAVE AND HIGHLY GLOSSY WOOL WITH A DYNAMIC REPEATING "TWO-HEADED BIRD" DESIGN, IN THIS RARE QASHQA'I WEAVING, CREATE A HIGHLY COLLECTIBLE TEXTILE.

46

(face only)

1’3” x 1’5”

Comment on 46:

SMALL BAG FACE; QASHQA’I; REVERSE SUMAK; THIS MASTERPIECE OF QASHQA’I WEAVING SHOWS THE CONNECTION OF THE TURKIC TRIBES OF SOUTH PERSIA WITH THOSE OF THE NORTHWEST WHO WERE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TRANSCAUCASIAN WAVING CULTURE.

47 & 48 (back of 47)

4′ x 2′2″

Comment on 47 and 48:

SADDLEBAG; QASHQA'I; REVERSE SUMAK ON THE FRONT AND WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE ON THE BACK; THIS MASTERPIECE WAS INCLUDED IN THE SEMINAL CATALOGUE "FROM THE BOSPORUS TO SAMARKAND" PUBLISHED BY THE TEXTILE MUSEUM IN 1969. IT IS PERHAPS THE MOST OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF THE TYPE TO SURFACE TO DATE. THE BEAUTIFUL CLOSURE PANEL IN RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE IS A SIGN OF THE CARE AND IMPORTANCE SUCH WEAVINGS HAD FOR THEIR CREATORS & USERS; THE PLAIN ABASHED BACK IS BEAUTIFUL IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

The next piece was a band-trapping.

49

24½ x 5 inches (60 x 13 cm)

Comment on 49:

ANIMAL TRAPPING; VARAMIN AREA (?); SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE WITH LONG BRAIDS AND TASSELS; THIS AND NO. 50, BELOW, MAY HAVE BEEN USED AS A DECORATION AROUND THE NECK OF A PACK ANIMAL

50

(another band)

Comment on 50:

ANIMAL TRAPPING; VARAMIN AREA (?); SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE.

51 (face only)

19 x 16 inches (47 x 40 cm)

Comment on 51: SAMPLER; QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; SAMPLERS WERE WOVEN TO HELP GUIDE WEAVERS, EITHER LEARNING THE CRAFT, OR AS A WAY TO HELP PROSPECTIVE BUYERS.

52

8 x 8½ inches (21 x 22 cm)

Comment on W52: CHANTEH; SOUTHERN IRAN, POSSIBLY QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE.

53 & (back of 53)

11 x 10 inches (28 x 25 cm)

Comment on 53:

CHANTEH; SOUTHERN IRAN, POSSIBLY QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE ON FRONT & WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE ON THE BACK.

54 (face only)

23 ½ x 23 inches (60 x 58 cm)

*

Comment on 54: BAG FACE; QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE MOST COMMON COMPOSITION AMONG THOSE WHO WOVE IN THE QASHQA'I TRADITION.

55

12 x 13 inches (31 x 33 cm)

Comment on 55: CHANTEH; QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; A FINELY WOVEN OLD EXAMPLE OF QASHQA'I WEAVING.

56

19 x 10 inches (48 x 25 cm)

Comments on 56:

SMALL KHORJIN; SOUTH PERSIA; SYMMETRICAL PILE.

57 (face only)

9 x 10 inches (22 x 26 cm)

Comment on 57:

SMALL CHANTEH FACE; SOUTH PERSIA; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; FINELY WOVEN WITH SOFT LUSTROUS WOOL AND SATURATED COLOR.

58

13 x 8 inches (33 x 20 cm)

Comment on 58:

SMALL CHANTEH OPENED UP; SOUTH PERSIA; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE AND WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE BACK; FINELY WOVEN WITH SOFT LUSTROUS WOOL AND SATURATED COLOR.

59 & 60 (back of 59)

10½ x 10 inches (26 x 25 cm)

Comment on 59 and 60:

CHANTEH; QASHQA'I, SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE ON THE FRONT, AND WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE & A STRIPE OF RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE ON THE BEAUTIFULLY STRIPED & FINELY WOVEN BACK; THE VERTICAL DESIGN CALLED "MOHARRAMATI" IS SEEN IN A NUMBER OF PILE WEAVINGS OF VARIOUS SIZES AMONG THE QASHQA'I.

61

11½ x 11 inches (29 x 28 cm)

Comment on 61:

CHANTEH; QASHQA’I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE.

62

22 x 11 inches (56 x 28 cm)

Comment on 62:

CHANTEH OPENED UP; QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE IN THE FRONT & SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE WITH STRIPES OF RECIPROCAL WEFT WEAVE ON THE MINIMALIST BACK, A TYPICAL & BEAUTIFUL WAY THE QASHQA'I WEAVERS FINISHED THE BACKS OF MANY OF THEIR BAGS.

63

12½ x 13½ inches (31 x 34 cm)

Comment on 63:

CHANTEH; QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; A NICE RENDITION OF A POPULAR MOTIF AMONG QASHQA'I WEAVERS.

64 & 65 (back of 64)

17 x 7½ inches (43 x 18 cm)

Comments on 64 and 65:

SMALL KHORJIN, QASHQA'I; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE ON THE FRONT AND SLIT TAPESTRY WEAVE ON THE BACK; IT IS RARE TO FIND ENTIRELY DIFFERENT DESIGNS ON THE TWO HALVES OF A KHORJIN, AS SEEN HERE.

66

8 x 9½ inches (20 x 24 cm)

Comments on 66:

TINY BAG; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE WITH BRAIDS AND TASSELS ATTACHED; THE BOTEH SEEN HERE IS IDENTICAL TO THOSE IN THE KHORJIN OF NO. 67 BELOW.

Comment on 67:

KHORJIN; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE.

68

11½ x 10 inches (29 x 26 cm)

Comment on 68: CHANTEH; SOUTH PERSIA; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; LONG PILE THAT CONTRASTS WITH THE USUAL SHORT PILE FOUND IN MOST CHANTEHS.

69 (face only)

Comment on 69: SALT BAG FACE; ARABS OF FARS; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; THE CHICKEN MOTIF SEEN HERE WAS WIDELY USED IN SOUTH PERSIAN NOMAD AND VILLAGE WEAVINGS; ITS OCCURRENCE IN A SALT BAG IS RARE

70

32 x 12 inches (82 x 32 cm)

*

Comment on 70:

SMALL KHORJIN; AFSHAR, KERMAN; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED DPILE WITH SLIT TAPESTRY BRIDGE; THE DYNAMIC FLAT-WOVEN BRIDGE MAKES THIS PIECE!

71 (face only)\

Comment on 71:

BAGFACE; AFSHAR? SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; A RARE AND UNUSUAL WEAVING THAT IS BORDER DOMINATED!

72

25 x 9 inches (64 x 23 cm)

Comment on 72:

SMALL KHORJIN; KURDISH, SOUTH TO WESTERN CENTRAL PERSIA? SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; A DESIGN SEEN IN A NUMBER OF WEAVING CULTURES IN IRAN, IT DOMINATES THE FIELD IN A RATHER LONG PILE.

73

19½ x 23 inches (50 x 58 cm)

Comment on 73:

KHORJIN HALF; AFSHAR , KERMAN; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; A MASTERFUL WEAVING WITH GREAT WOOL AND CLARITY OF DESIGN THAT IS OFTEN FOUND IN AFSHAR PILE RUGS AND BAGS;

ITS CLOSURE PANEL AT THE TOP IS A TOUR DE FORCE IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

74

17 x 21½ inches (44 x 55 cm)

Comment on 74:

KHORJIN HALF; AFSHAR , KERMAN; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; ANOTHER MASTERFUL WEAVING WITH GREAT WOOL AND DESIGN THAT IS OFTEN FOUND IN AFSHAR PILE RUGS AND BAGS;

AS WITH 73, 74’s CLOSURE PANEL, AT THE TOP, IS A TOUR DE FORCE IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

75 Back of 75.

13½ x 11½ inches (35 x 29 cm)

Comment on 75: CHANTEH; SOUTH PERSIA?; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; THE LONG FORMAT IS SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL.

76 & 77 (back of 76)

12½/19 x 10/17 inches (32/48 x 25/43 cm)

Comment on 76 and 77: SALT BAG; KURDISH, WESTERN CENTRAL PERSIA?; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE ON THE FRONT & WEFT-FACED PLAIN WEAVE ON THE BACK

78 (face only)

Comment on 78:

CHANTEH; BAKHTIYARI?; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE.

79

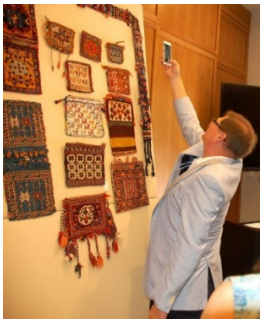
37 x 49 inches (95 x 124 cm)

Comment on 79:

SMALL RUG; BAKHTIYARI; SYMMETRICALLY KNOTTED PILE; THE FORMAT OF THIS UNUSUALLY SHAPED RUG, THE WONDERFUL COLOR, INCLUDING A CLEAR PURPLE, & BOLD DESIGN, MAKE THIS A MOST ATTRACTIVE & COMPELLING WORK OF TEXTILE ART.

John answered questions, and brought his program to a close.

People began to move forward to get closer looks at these small pieces. Conversations started up.



Our two volunteer helpers Tom Kluwin and Nancy Wynn. Our thanks.

I want to thank John Wertime for giving the program and for his considerable contribution to the constructing of this virtual version of it.

Thanks too, to the two collectors (who wish to be anonymous) from whose collection a large majority of this material was drawn. They also contributed, importantly, to this post.

Wertime, Marsha Swiss, Ron Costell, Bruce Baganz, Aija Blitte, Jim Henderson, Michael Kaplan and Wendel Swan took and contributed images.

I hope you have enjoyed this extensive look at some middle and southern Persian bags constructed on a smaller scale.

Regards,

R. John Howe[14]

[14] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2018/02/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for March, 2018

Sumru Krody on Turkish Kilims from the Megalli Collection

Posted in Uncategorized on March 20, 2018 by rjohn

On January 6, 2018, Sumru Krody, Senior Eastern Hemisphere Curator, at The Textile Museum, here in Washington, DC, gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning Program on "Turkish Kilims in the Megalli Collection." This program anticipated an upcoming TM exhibition on this material.

A Nomad's Art: Kilims of Anatolia

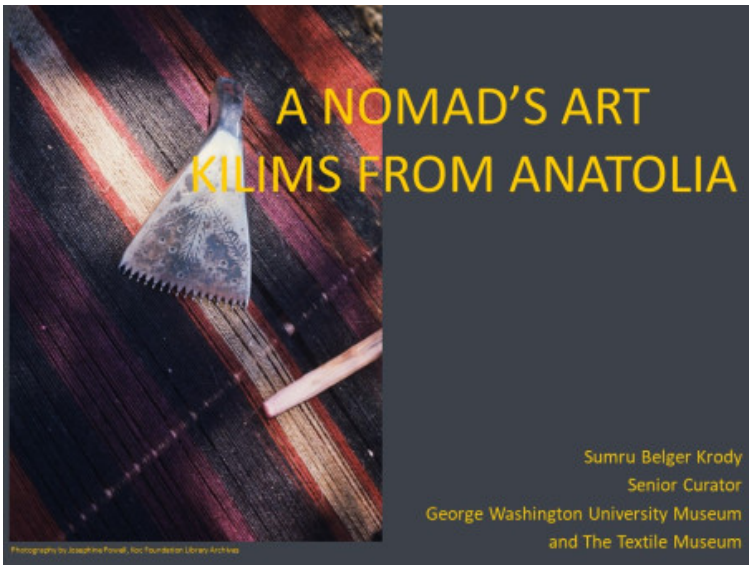
Kilim (detail), Turkey, central Anatolia, late 18th century. The Textile Museum 2013.2.1. The Megalli Collection.

September 1–December 30, 2018

Woven by women to adorn tents and camel caravans, kilims are enduring records of life in Turkey's nomadic communities, as well as stunning examples of abstract art. This exhibition marks the public debut of treasures from the museum's Murad Megalli Collection of Anatolian Kilims, dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Howe: Sumru, most readers will know, is a long-time curator at The Textile Museum and has been involved in and/or produced a large number of exhibitions and publications, which I will not enumerate here.

The Myers Room was full.



Sumru began:

"Kilim" is a general name, given in Anatolia and its surrounding areas in West Asia, to a group of sturdy, utilitarian textiles, woven in slit tapestry-weave technique.

These works of art are multifaceted objects and obviously played an important role in the artistic history of Anatolia.

The highly-developed designs and the fine execution, seen on the surviving eighteenth- and nineteenth-century kilims I will share with you during the next 45-minutes or so, suggest that the Anatolian kilim tradition had been well-established by the time the seventeenth century came to a close.

Note: About the images in this post. Initially, in each case, you will see an image of a given piece, like the one below. Please click on the initial images and you will get a larger one. There is also a third image, one turned 90 degrees to the right that lets you see this piece most closely

Kilim, Central Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.59, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 417 X 95 cm (164 X 37 inches)

Turned image:

Sumru: Formed with wool fibers and tapestry weave technique, Anatolian kilims represent a distinct weaving tradition, while conforming to the mechanics of tapestry weaving practiced in many parts of the world.

Kilim, Western Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning, weft-faced plain weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.6, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 308 X 75 cm (121 X 29.5 inches)

Sumru: Many consider the kilims of Anatolia to be great contemplative and minimalist works of art.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, c. 1800, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.44, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 313 X 67 cm (123 X 26 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, very small amount of vertical color change. The Textile Museum 2013.2.73, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 394 X 84 cm (155 X 33 inches)

Sumru:

They were created by women who had a great eye for design, and an awesome sense of color.

They are prized for the harmony and purity of their color, the integrity of their powerful overall design, their masterfully controlled tapestry weave structure, and their fine texture.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning,\supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.90, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 367 X 88.5 cm (144.5 X 34.5 inches)

Sumru:

The visually stunning and colorful Anatolian kilims communicate the aesthetic choices of the nomadic and village women who created them. Yet, while invested with such artistry, Anatolian kilims first and foremost were utilitarian objects initially employed by nomadic families for a host of uses, primarily but not exclusively for covering household items and furnishingthe interior sides of tents.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.72, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 343 X 158 cm (135 X 62 inches)

Sumru: Since 2015, I have been documenting a private collection of 96 Anatolian flatweaves donated to The Textile Museum .

I have been engaged in analytical study of these textiles in order to contribute to our understanding of the Anatolian kilim weaving tradition.

91 of these 96 flatweaves are kilims, 43 are attributed to Central and South Anatolia,

Kilim, Northwestern Anatolia, 18th century to early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.81, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 147 X 79 cm (57.5 X 31 inches)

Kilim, Western Anatolia, c. 1800, wool, slit tapestry weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.68, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 401 X 86 cm (157.5 X 33.5 inches)

Sumru:

38 to western and northwestern Anatolia,

*

Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly east-central, mid-19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, eccentric weft, lazy lines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.19, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 444.5 X 69 cm (175 X 27 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft, weft-faced plain weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.31,The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 137 X 387 cm (54 X 152.5 inches)

Sumru:

What I am about to present to you today is where I am in my investigation.

This being still an on-going research, there is room for improvement, and I appreciate hearing your questions and comments.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, c. 1800, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.14, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 292 X 160 cm (115 X 63 inches)

Sumru:

I started, like any research project should, with questions that, I hope, will help me to better understand these textiles and their creators, and answer the fundamental question of:

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, cotton, slit tapestry weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.7, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 181.5 X 138 cm (71.5 X 54 inches)

Sumru: What is there to see when you look at a work of art, such as an Anatolian kilim?

I also wanted to know:

- What is an Anatolian kilim?
- Who were the artists who created these weavings?
- How did their lifestyle affect their artistic creation?
- How do artistic form and function come together in Anatolian kilim?
- How do materials influence what an artist makes in the context of Anatolian kilims?
- How does this artistic tradition change over time?
- How does a kilim's design affect the way it is seen?

Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly west-central, early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.30, The Megalli Collections.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 428.5 X 67 cm (168.5 X 26 inches)

Sumru:

But the most elusive questions and the most important, at least for me, are:

- What did Anatolian nomads value in the kilims?
- What criteria did they use to judge these items?
- Were they the same as ours? Or different? And, if different, how different?

Sumru:

Kilim, a type of textile, is often referred to as flatweave in the western literature because it does not have any pile or tufts, as carpets do.

The tapestry-weave technique is very old—archaeological examples go back well over two millennia—and very geographically widespread.

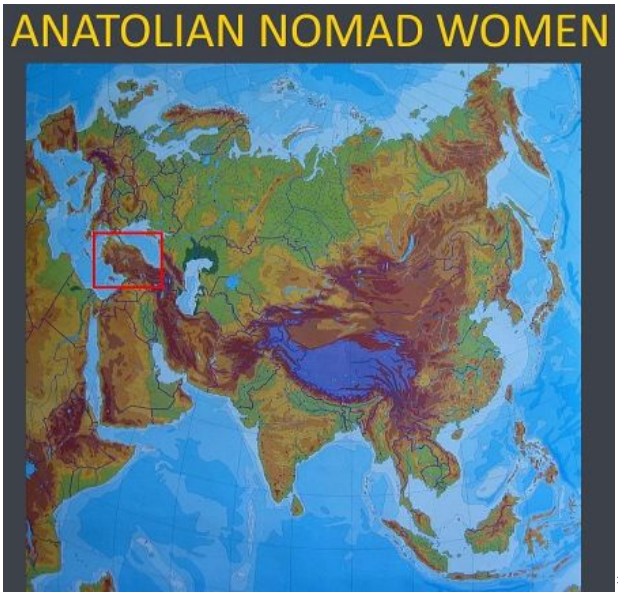
Textiles with tapestry weave are created in traditional Islamic carpet-weaving societies from Morocco to Central Asia, and more broadly, from the pre-Columbian Americas to ancient China, as well as to the European Medieval and Baroque tapestries.

Sumru:

In slit-tapestry weave technique, as used in the Anatolian kilims, the design is created by colored horizontal weft yarns, interlaced in an over and under sequence, through the vertical warp yarns and completely obscure them.

Like any tapestry-woven textile, Anatolian kilims have weft-faced plain weave structure, but the real essence of Anatolian kilim is its slit-tapestry structure. The design is built up of small areas of solid color, each of which is woven with its individual weft yarn, and that between two such adjacent areas the respective weft yarns never interlock or intermingle.

The different colored weft yarns turn back, using adjacent warp yarns. The result is a vertical slit. In this manner, the artistic expression of the kilim and its technique are inextricably bound together.



*

Sumru:

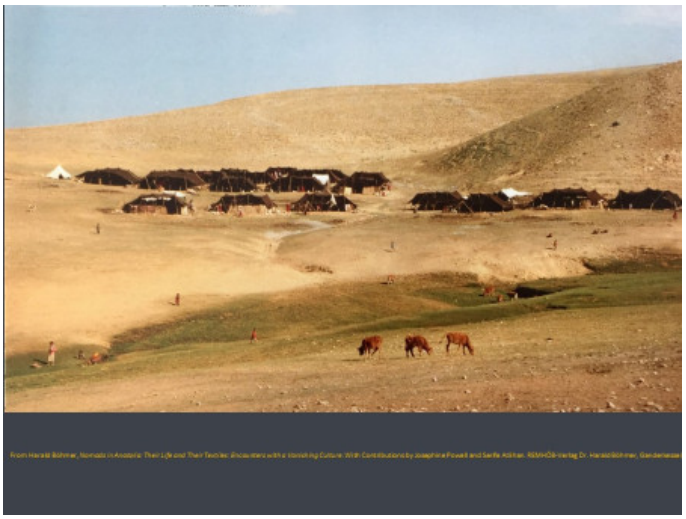
Anatolia was a crucial transitional point between the weaving regions of Europe, Asia, and Egypt. Its history is one of ancient, continuous interactions between the culturally diverse people.

Sumru:

Weavers of kilims were descendants of Turkmen nomads and their settled kin.

Turkmen—ethnic Turkish nomads—began to arrive into Anatolia in about the 10th century, adding further diversity to already ethnically diverse area.

The lands they passed through on their way from further east, via Central Asia to Anatolia, were occupied by two different religions, Islam and Eastern Orthodox Christianity, and two distinct cultures, Persian and Byzantine/Greek.



Sumru:

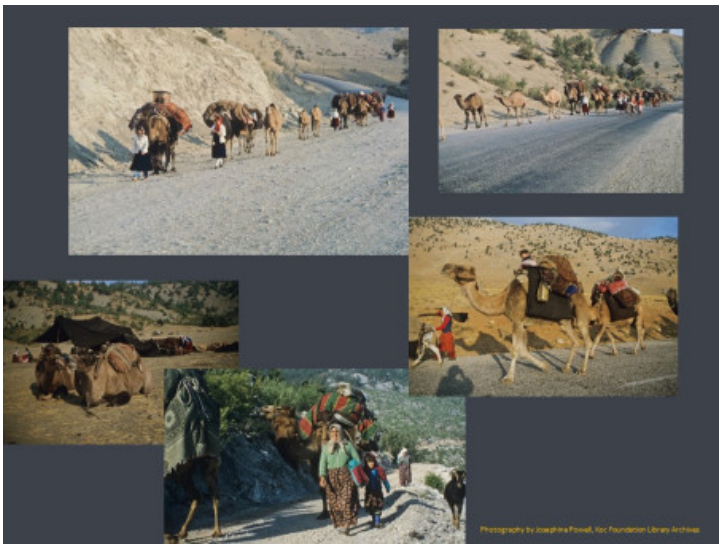
Nomadism, is a style of life, in which groups of people, mostly close family members, move from one region to another to exploit the resources, like grass.

Anatolian nomads' living and economic units were predominantly groups of families (kabile) or of extended families (aile).

They were generally herders and depend on their large flocks for their livelihood. Some nomadic groups, such as those in Anatolia, are pastoral nomads, or semi-nomadic, meaning they move between two pastures, one for winter and one for summer.

Nomadism is a lifestyle and separate from tribalism

Remember to click, sometimes more than once, on smaller images like the one below to get a larger version.



Sumru:

Two major, but distinct, activities dominated the life of the Turkmen nomads:

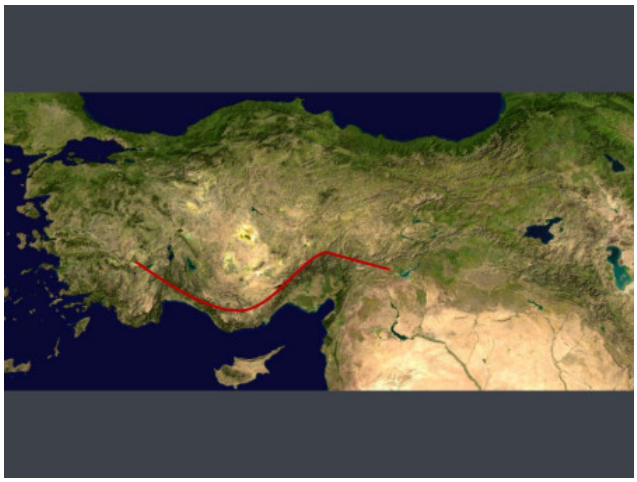
1.Migration to winter pasture, called *kisla,* and to summer pasture, called *yayla.*

Kisla = low elevation, in the valleys, that are warmer in the winter

Yayla= higher elevation, on the mountains, that are cooler in the summer

2. Pastoral life or life in pasture

There are very few if any nomads left in the Anatolia today. If there is any migration today, so-called nomads live in brick and mortal houses by the coast during winter and move up to mountains in the summer, pitching tents in yayla.



Sumru:

The last remaining nomads were, in the mid-20th century, congregating in the Taurus Mountains, which parallel the north Mediterranean coast of Anatolia.

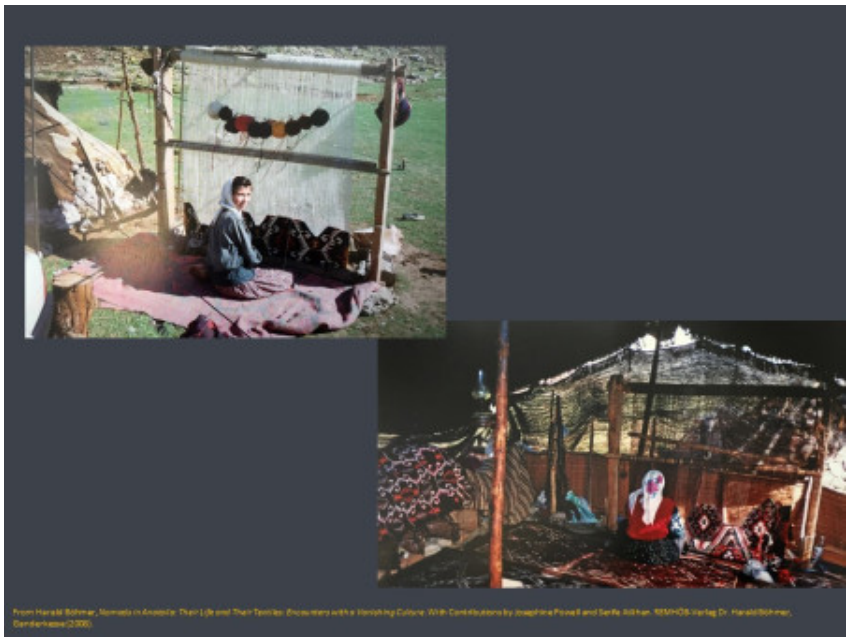
Sumru:

During the twice-yearly movements, camels carried family's belongings including the tent, while the family, except the youngest ones, walked alongside the camels.

During the migration, women could display their weaving skills, through the display of kilims thrown over the camel loads, to everyone they encountered on the road.

Sumru:

When they arrived at the destination, the most pressing issue was to establish a shelter/home for the family.



Sumru: Once settled in yayla or kisla, nomadic women could have time to devote themselves to weaving.

Remember to click, sometimes more than once, on smaller images like the one below to get a larger version.

Sumru: Although utilitarian, the textiles were carefully woven and intricately decorated.

We can speculate that the reason for this care was that textiles had artistic, social, and religious importance, for the nomads, in addition to their pure functionality.

Photography by Josephine Powell, KOC Foundation Archives

Sumru: Unfortunately for us, we are so removed from these societies, today, that it is hard for us to perceive the specifics of these aspects, and especially not through examining these objects.

Sumru:

We do not know how a nomad family organized their tent, in the 17th or 18th or even early 19th century. We are inferring the way they lived then, by analogy, with how their decedents were living in the mid 20th century.

We are grateful the research done by Harald Bohmer, Josephine Powell and many others in 1970s, 80s and even some in 90s to preserve the 20th century way of nomad life.

But, we should always remember that we do not have direct access to the earlier kilim weavers. We are gathering our information among the great great grandchildren of nomads who wove the kilims in our collections, and we are relying on the notion that they have been living in very conservative, little changing environment, which is not true.

Sumru:

Textiles were prominently displayed when the family reached the pastureland and set up tent.

Each tent formed a single open space with a wooden post in the middle.

The large transportation bags, that carried family's belongings during the migration, were turned into storage bags and placed in various parts of the tent.

And were covered with long kilims, that were previously used as covers during migration.
Occasionally, these long kilims served as wall hangings.

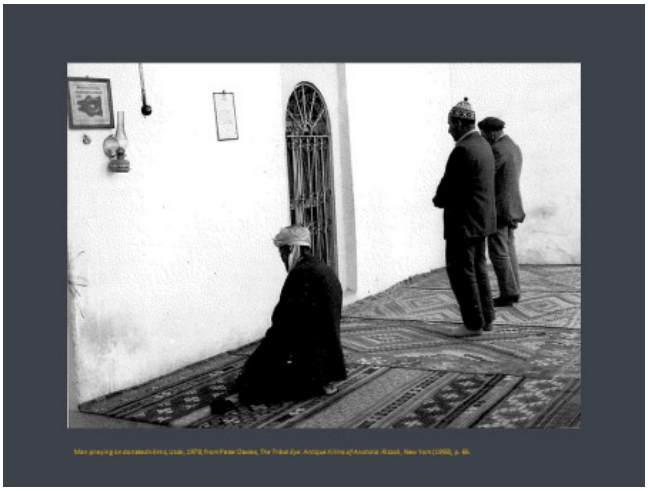
In short, by rearranging kilims and other textiles, women defined the single tent space for different functions.

Sumru:

The practice of using textiles, to delineate living spaces, continued when nomads permanently settled in villages.

Once nomadic, now-settled women continued weaving their kilims and bags for couple of generations, though storage bags and other textiles gradually disappeared from their weaving repertoires. Only the kilim weaving appeared to be continued.

On reason for that might have been that kilims were flat rectangular textiles that could serve multiple functions as wall hangings, bedding covers, and even floor covers. And in 20th century, they brought income to the family through their sales.



Sumru:

Kilims also were used to honor the deceased. When a member of the family died, the body would be wrapped in a kilim and carried to the gravesite.

The kilim was not buried; however. It would be washed and presented to the mosque, at *mevlut* ceremonies, gatherings to honor the deceased and held forty days after their burial.

Kilim, Central or Western Anatolia, c.1800, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.94, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 381.5 X 70 cm (150 X 27.5 inches)

Sumru: The creation of Anatolian kilim was, from start to finish, the work of a single weaver or family group.

The same group of people completed the full production cycle of creation.

Sumru:

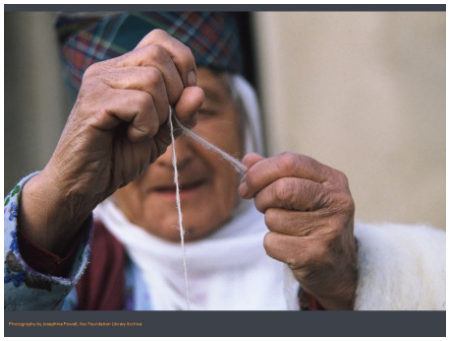
They sheared the sheep, chose the wool, turned loose fibers to yarn dyed the yarns, set up the loom, and, as the weavers say “dressed the loom.”

Photography by Josephine Powell, Kec Foundation Library Archives

Photography by Josephine Powell, Kec Foundation Library Archives

Photography by Josephine Powell, Kec Foundation Library Archives

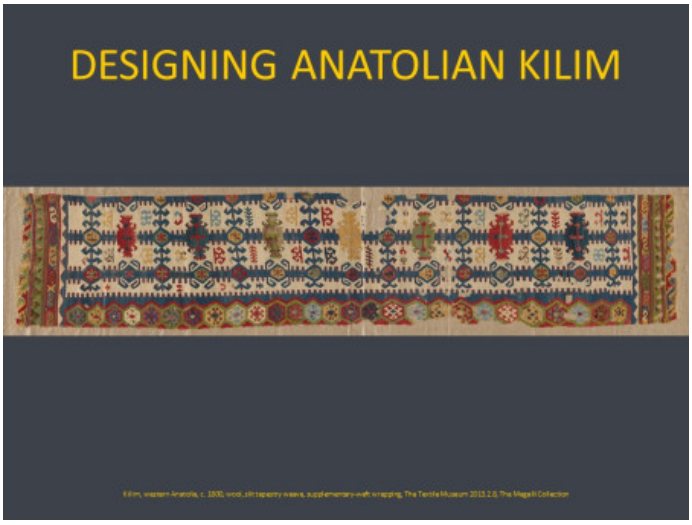
Sumru: Then, they decided on design and wove the textiles.



Sumru: The weavers had total control over the selection of their raw material.

The weavers' involvement from the beginning in choosing, cleaning, and combing the wool to make it ready for spinning was an important factor in achieving the high weaving quality seen in the kilims.

Kilim designs that are clear and precise, and colors that are luminous and bright, are almost always made with high quality wool.



Kilim, Western Anatolia, c. 1800, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.8, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 388 X 77.5 cm (152.5 X 30.5 inches)

Sumru:

The total involvement and control of raw material and preparation of the yarn did not translate to total freedom of design, however. Anatolian women designed their kilims, but they chose from a rigid traditional design repertoire.

The young weaver was expected to use the motifs and design layouts that were accepted by her community as theirs—their artistic tradition.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.74, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 445 X 94 cm (175 X 37 inches)

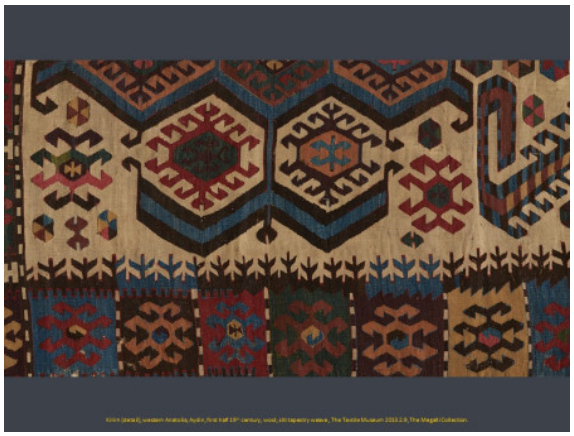
Kilim, Western Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.71,The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 364 X 90 cm (143 X 35.5 inches)

Sumru on upper and lower:

Only after a weaver had assimilated and internalized these motifs, and the mechanics of weaving them to such a degree that she became a skilled master, did she become comfortable with introducing variations and minor innovations to the traditional design.

Even the skilled and experienced weaver could do so only if she maintained, and did not displace, the accepted form.



Kilim (detail) western Anatolia, Aydin, first half of the 19th century, wool, slit-tapestry weave, The Textile Museum, 2013.2.9 The Megalli Collection.

Sumru:

So an Anatolian kilim could not be considered the overt self-expression of one individual, but rather an expression of the collective, the tradition.

Conversely, each kilim was different from the others. Even in this restricted environment, the individualism was manifested in minor details, as long as the weaver followed the expected traditional forms

Upper

Kilim, Central Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.32, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 357 X 115.5 cm (140.5 X 45.5 inches)

middle

Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly west-central, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.48, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 312.4 X 110.5 (123 X 43.5 inches)

Lower

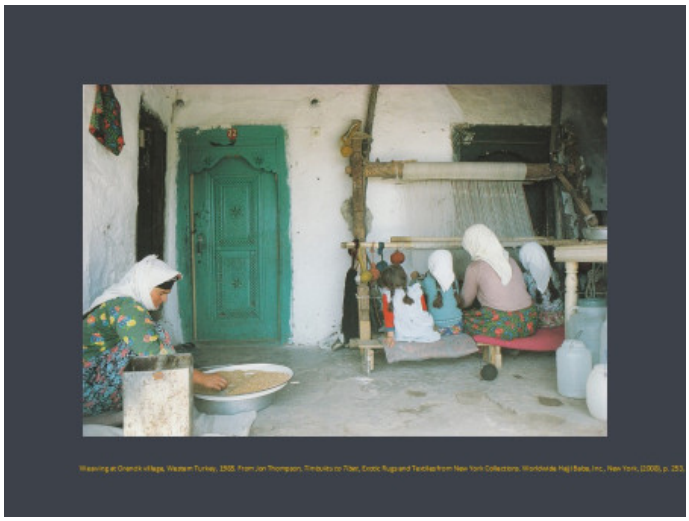
Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly west-central, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.64, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 371 X 76 cm (146 X 30 inches)

Sumru on upper, middle and lower:

Many factors influence the uniqueness of each kilim. The individual personality of weaver, her nature, her understanding of colors, ability to design, weaving skills, and different levels of expertise/experience in weaving, all play a role, as did external factors.

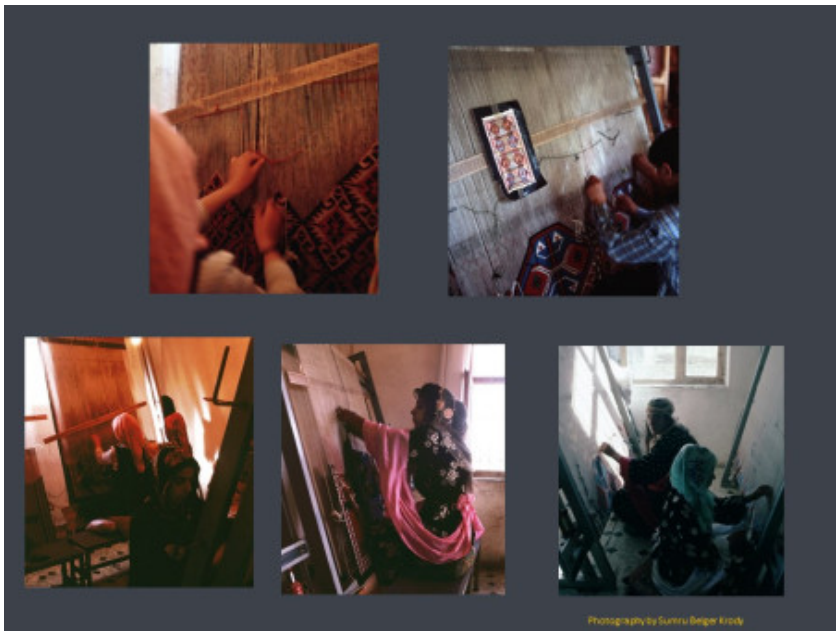
Changes in the conditions of the family group—the influx of new families into the group and marriage among individuals from different nomadic groups—brought in new ideas. Chance exposure of weavers to new motifs, during migration, or occasional visits to a mosque, allowed new motifs to be appreciated and memorized.



Sumru: The mode of learning in kilim weaving was memory, rather than the invention or creation.

This involved memorizing a small set of motifs/design elements, and the mechanics of weaving this same set of motifs.

In other words, it appears that young weavers mastered the weaving technique, and the motifs that go with it, simultaneously. The learning process was both visual and tactile memorization.



Sumru: Nowadays they use cartoons.

upper

Kilim, central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, The Textile

Museum 2013.2.27, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 310 X 93 cm (122 X 36.5 inches)

Lower

Kilim, central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, The Textile

Museum 2013.2.35, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 293 X 137.5 cm (115 X 54 inches)

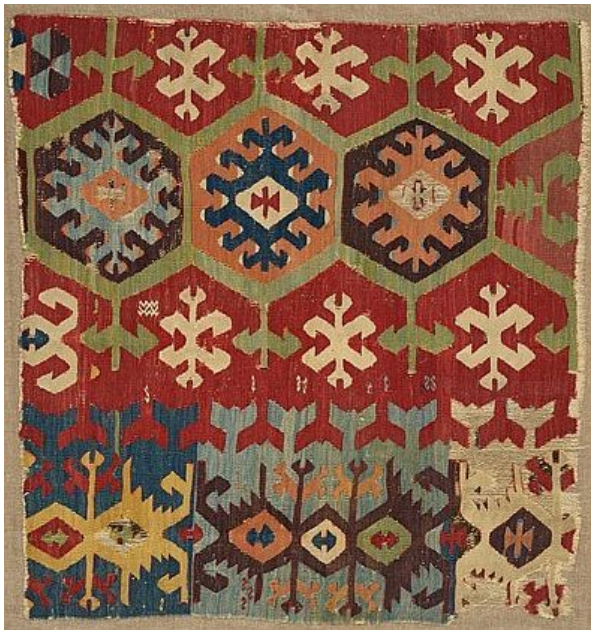
Sumru on upper and lower:

Through close examination of the kilims, we can determine some characteristics of kilims design tradition.

In creating their designs, weavers depended on repetition and variation of a relatively small number of motifs, although the motifs themselves might not be small in terms of their physical size. Just to give you a sense of the size of these kilims, the longest ones can reach up to 14-15 feet long. The ones on the screen are about 10- 11 feet long.

Weavers expanded the design repertoire through a process of elaboration or simplification.

Left



Kilim, Western Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.53, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 93 X 89 cm (36.5 X 35 inches)

Right

Kilim, western Anatolia, early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, The

Textile Museum 2013.2.10, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 268 X 88 cm (105.5 X 34 inches

Sumru on left and right:

This was done by presenting the same motifs in different sizes.

Lower (note red circled device in the border)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, late 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced

plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft.

The Textile Museum 2013.2.1, The Megalli Collection.

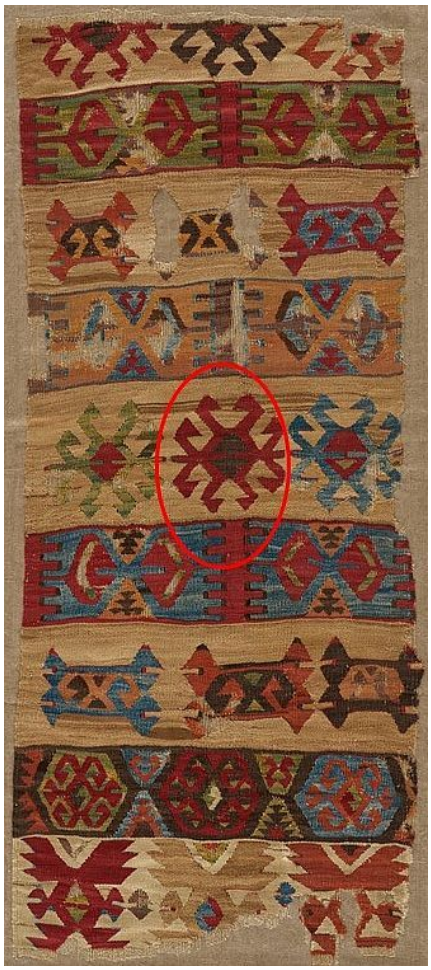
Dimensions (warp x weft): 374 X 84 cm (127 X 33 inches)

Upper (notice red circled device now in the field)

Kilim, Central or western Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.67, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 173 X 71 cm (68 X 28 inches)

(red circled device is now prominent in the field)



Sumru:

This process of elaboration or simplification was also utilized when introducing new design ideas.

The introduction of new design elements had to start by using them as minor design elements, such as border designs, and had to move slowly to be used as main design elements, which were considered the most important signifiers of tradition.

Later on, the weaver could take the same design element from a minor element status, enlarged it and, artfully, make it into a main design element that dominated the whole kilim.

Sumru:

They created layouts with design elements of equal or fluctuating emphasis, in which what was dominant and what was recessive, remains unresolved.

Left

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.56, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 267 X 183 cm (105 X 72 inches)

Right

Kilim, Central Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.78, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 157 X 107 cm (61.5 X 42 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, early 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.72, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 343 X 158 cm (135 X 62 inches)

Sumru:

The varying sizes of many reciprocal motifs, which form both negative and positive space, tease the eye. Either aspect of the composition can be the primary view, the other spaces receding into the background. This effect is known as "figure ground reversal"

Sumru: The optical effects of figure ground reversal are compounded when the these kilims were draped over textiles or hung, or draped on top of one other, creating undulated surfaces. The eye shifts from angle to angle, textile to textile. Elements of the patterns appear similar, then different.

They move in and out of view with the kilims' folds. The kilims dynamic drapery and large size obscures individual motifs. Dynamic properties and optical effects work in tandem and enhance each other.

That is why kilim weavers pay more attention to overall look than the individual designs.

Kilim (and lower detail), western Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit-tapestry weave, The Textile Museum, 2013.2.40, The Megalli Collection.

Sumru: Another characteristic of designs seen on these kilims are the way they are visible and powerful from a distance, but also are very engaging when viewed at close proximity.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.37, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 291.5 X 108 cm (117.5 X 42.5 inches)

Sumru: The optical effects of figure ground reversal are compounded when the these kilims were draped over other textiles or hung, or draped on top of one other, creating undulated surfaces. The eye shifts from angle to angle, textile to textile. Elements of the patterns appear similar, then different.

They move in and out of view with the kilims' folds. The kilims dynamic drapery and large size obscures individual motifs. Dynamic properties and optical effects work in tandem and enhance each other. That is why kilim weavers pay more attention to overall look than the individual designs.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, Konya, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave,

supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.63, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 404 X 96.5 cm (159 X 38 inches)

Sumru: In good textile design, the relationship between positive and negative spaces, created through color, is always important.

Color transforms the overall sense of a textile, besides the mechanics of how a design is created.

Based on our observations of their products, we can confidently say Anatolian kilim weavers were deeply aware of this and took advantage of it.

Until the late 19th century, they had to work within the confines of a very limited palette based on available natural dyes.

But they still were able to produce unsurpassed effects of color by exploiting to the fullest this natural palette.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.32, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 357 X 115.5 cm (140.5 X 45.5 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly west-central, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.48, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 312.4 X 110.5 (123 X 43.5 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly west-central, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.64, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 371 X 76 cm (146 X 30 inches)

Sumru: They wove the very same design with different colorways, creating kilims with entirely different feelings and looks.

Kilim, Western Anatolia, Mid-19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft substitution, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.22, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 265 X 125 cm (104 X 49 inches)

Sumru: The uncompromising and uncluttered design seen on many early Anatolian kilims leaves large areas of plain color exposed.

Weaver needs to rely on well-dyed yarns to achieve a good product and they usually did, at least the experienced ones.

This example stands out among the others, and is one of my favorites.

This carpet has a very sophisticated color palette.

It uses red, green, and blue, just like the Mamluk carpets produced in Egypt in the 15th century.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for some of the outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.47, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 395 X 75 cm (155.5 X 29.5 inches)

Kilim, Western Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.34, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 389 X 66 cm (153 X 26 inches

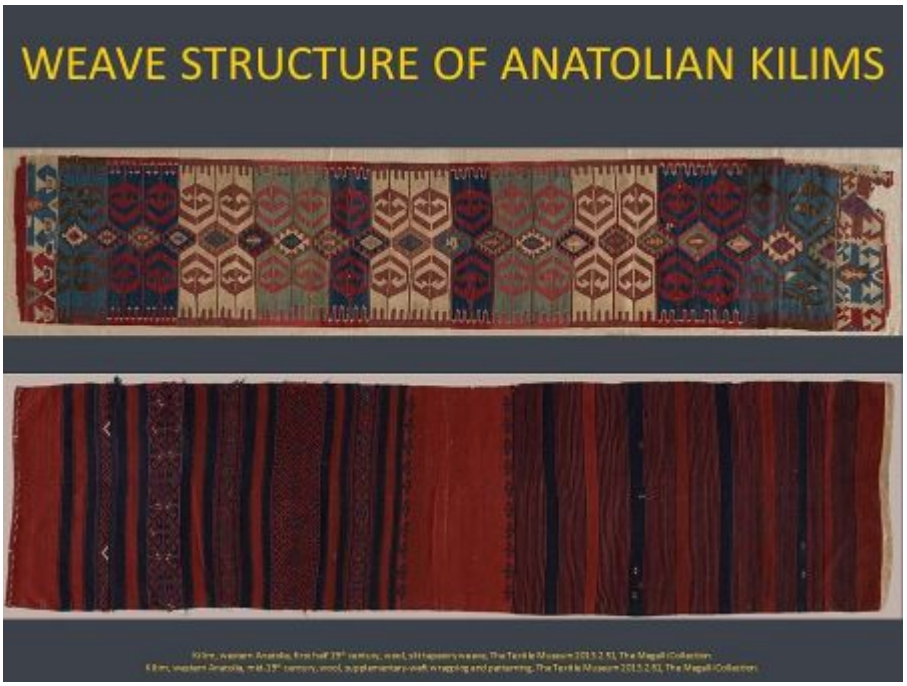
Sumru: Colors, of course, are the key to enhanced visual impact, with exploration of spatial possibilities. The relationship between positive and negative spaces, between foreground and background, have been always important in kilim weaving.

They juxtaposed colors, especially contrasting or complementing colors, to create dramatic effects.

Often we may feel that weavers pursued these effects at the expense of the legibility of motifs that so interest modern viewers, like us. We pay more attention to pattern/design.

Sumru on left and right:

The weavers was very skillful in manipulating how colors appeared through the use of thin outline of another color that is distinct from both neighboring colors, which emphasized the demarcation between two color areas; this in turn enhanced the contrast between the adjacent colors.



Kilim, Western Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.51, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 319.5 X 59.5 cm (125.5 X 23.5 inches)

Bag (unconstructed), Western Anatolia, possibly northwestern, mid-19th century, wool, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping and patterning, knotted pile. The Textile Museum 2013.2.61, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 271 X 71.5 (107 X 28 inches)

Sumru: Anatolian women were masters of two distinct weave structures for two different functionalities.

Slit tapestry weave was used exclusively for kilims.

Supplementary-weft patterning, in its various forms, was used 90 percent of the time for weaving transportation/storage bags, such as lower in the slide.

Kilim (detail), central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 2013.2.54, The Megalli Collection.

Sumru: Anatolian weavers seemed to accept the natural limitations and created the designs that fit with the structural constraints of slit tapestry weave.

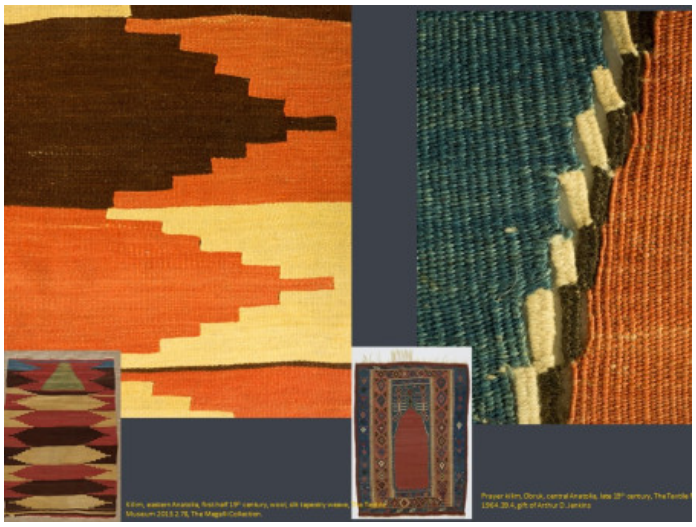
They developed a design repertoire that was essentially rectilinear, geometric and nonrepresentational or abstract, while the original inspiration for the designs most likely came from the natural world around them.

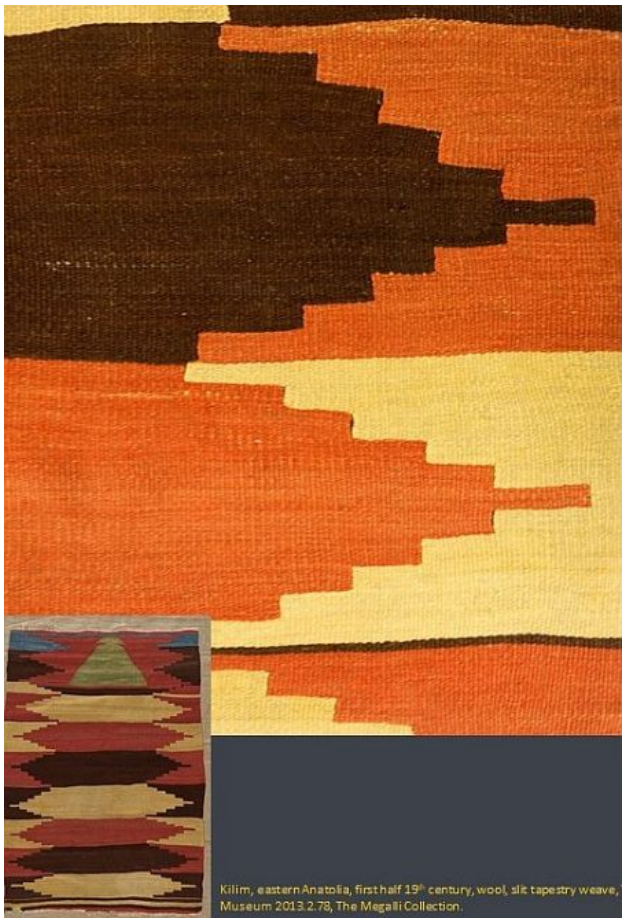
Anatolian weavers took elements of the natural world and stylized and geometricized them, absorbing them into their own rectilinear grammar.

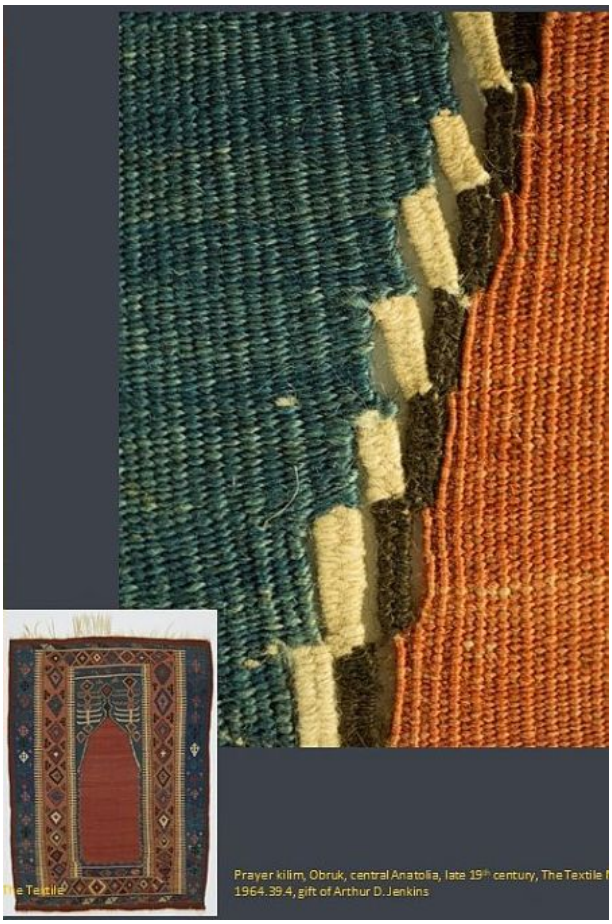
Sumru: Textile researcher Marla Mallett has mentioned that it is important to consider the critical relationships between what she calls "weave balance" and patterns seen on the textiles.

Of course we need to keep in mind that every weave structure have its own "weave balance." This relationship is a vital part of the aesthetic development in tapestry woven textiles in general and in Anatolian kilims specifically.

The size relationship between the warp and weft yarns is one of the weave balance issue; in most old kilims, the weft is less than half as thick as the warp, usually loosely spun and not plied; while the warp yarns are 2 Z spun yarns S plied. This way, weft yarns totally cover the warp yarns, creating solid color areas in pattern.







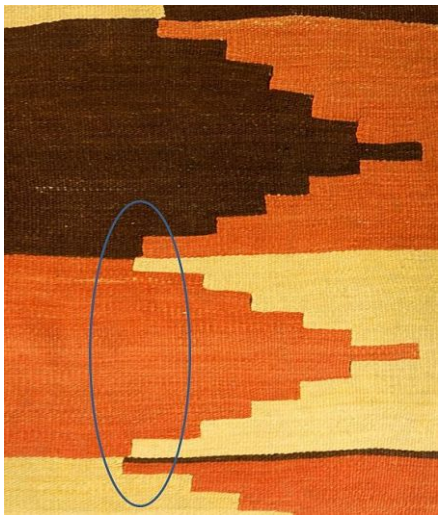
Left: *Kilim, eastern Anatolia, first half of the 19th century, wool, tapestry weave, The Textile Museum. 2013, 2.78, The Megalli Collection.*

Right: *Prayer kilim, central Anatolia, late 19th century, The Textile Museum, 1964, 39.4, gift of Arthur D. Jenkins.*

Sumru on left and right:

Another weave balance issue is the necessity for achieving a balance between using enough *slits* to create motifs and limiting the length and frequency of slitting in order to maintain structural integrity.

This of course has had a profound influence on the pattern or character of kilim designs.



Sumru: It is harder to achieve minimalist work, than a highly decorated one. A good and experienced weaver knows that.

You need to pay attention to your wool, color, tension and technique. Color change and not creating long slits forced her to do minor adjustments which can be only detected if stop looking at the design and try to figure out the technique. The reason I study textile structures is that I can that way see weaver's hand. For me it is in the structure, more than the pattern that one comes close to the weaver and her thinking.

Kilim (detail), central Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave , The Textile Museum 2013.2.3, The Megalli Collection.

Sumru: Slit tapestry weave creates crisp vertical definitions between color areas, and often weavers incorporate the slits into their overall design.

Need to respect slits!

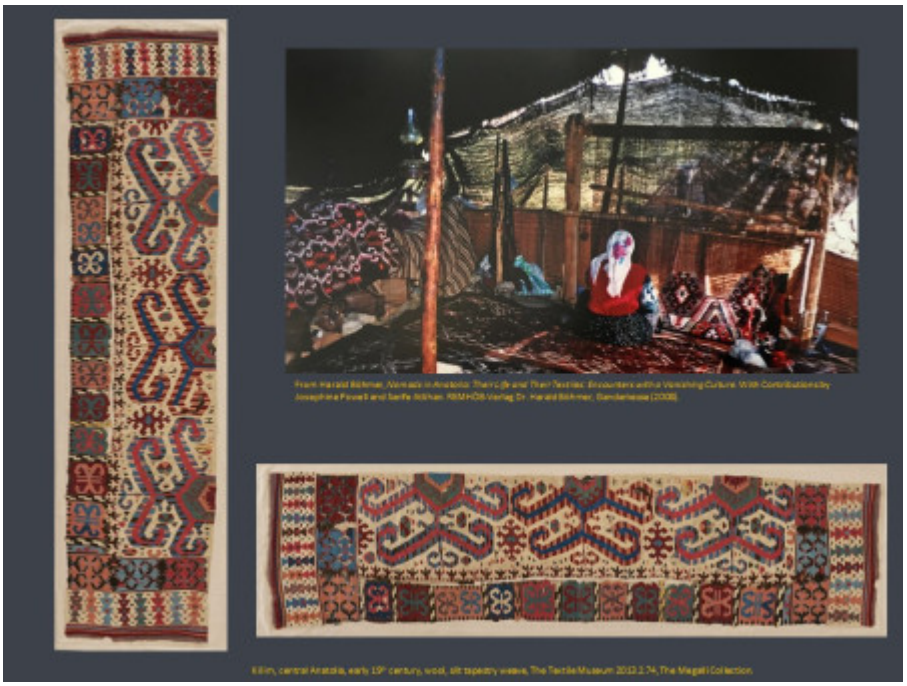
Kilim, western Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave , The Textile Museum 2013.2.38, The Megalli Collection.

Kilim, Western Anatolia, Afyon, late 19th century, wool, cotton, slit tapestry weave, weft substitution, weft float weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.5, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 228 X 115.2 cm (89.5 X 45 inches)

Sumru: Any kilim that is wider than 90 cm was woven most likely by two weavers in a wide loom or she was willing to lift herself up occasionally to move to the other side of the kilim.

The wide looms were generally built in place and not easily portable; a village home is a better set up for larger looms.



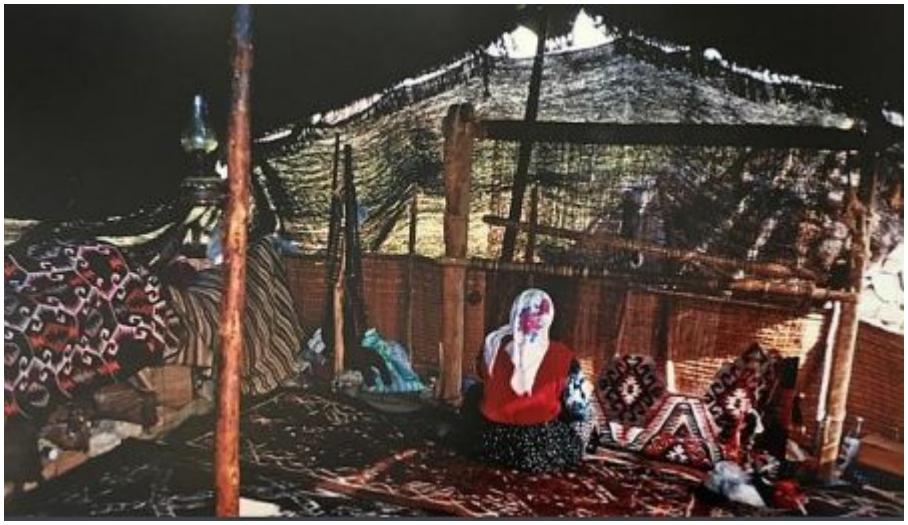
Kilim, Western Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.71,The Megalli Collection.

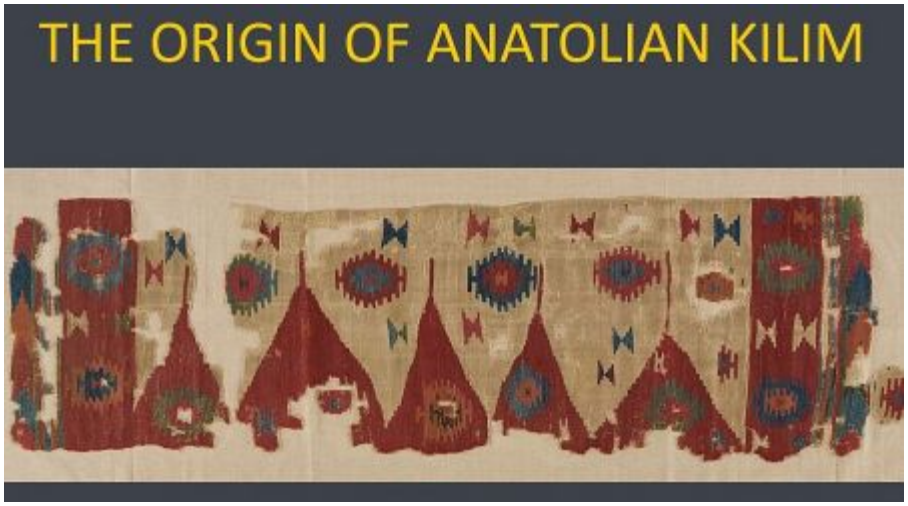
Dimensions (warp x weft): 364 X 90 cm (143 X 35.5 inches)

Sumru: Weaving orientation vs use orientation

Howe comment: Kilims are woven with the long side vertical, as in the image above. But kilims are usually used with the long side on the horizontal. Most kilim books choose to present kilims with the long side vertical. As you have seen in this virtual version of Sumru's talk, we have honored both of these usages. We have initially presented each piece with the long side horizontal and then have a second image turned to let you see it with the long side vertical. This has the further advantage of letting you see a larger image of each piece.

Photo shows kilim being woven with long side vertical, while kilim in use ,on the left, has its long side horizontal.





Kilim, Central Anatolia, early 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.82, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 271 X 77 cm (106.5 X 30 inches)

Sumru: The two big questions that occupy Anatolian kilim studies are when and where kilim weaving began in Anatolia? and when and where Turkmen started weaving kilims?

At the beginning of the 13th century, when Anatolia was under the control of Selcuk Sultanate of Rum, Geographer, historian, and poet Ibn Sa'id al_Maghribi (d. 1274 or 1286?) gave an account of Yörüks. He mentions that Yörüks wove for their own purposes as well as to sell. There were about 200,000

Türkmen tents near Denizli in western Anatolia and they traded kilims, slaves and lumber. Between Ankara and Kastamonu, there were about 100,000 Türkmen tents. Caution is necessary to interpret what Ibn Sa'id might have meant when he used the term 'kilims'. He might be referring to knotted-pile carpets.

If we accept Ibn_Said that kilims were being woven in Anatolia in the 13th century, when and where did they first appear in the region?

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.13, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 314 X 102 cm (123.5 X 40 inches)

Sumru: There are two theories about the origin of the kilim weaving in Anatolia. One is the Turkmen theory. This theory argues that kilim weaving and its designs were brought with Turkish migration from further east.

Anatolian kilim tradition was an outgrowth of a cultural continuum centered around the culture of Turkic people, while it might have also included other influences,

Sumru:

The second theory is the goddess theory, which argues that kilim weaving and its designs were native, and predate Turkish migration.

Adherents to this theory believe that despite all of the cultural transformations through which Anatolia passed over the millennia, the kilim weaving tradition indicates the survival of indigenous populations who preserved the old beliefs and ways.

Howe:

Immediately below, are separate images. The first is the lower image from the slide above and is the complete piece with its caption

Kilim, Western Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, dovetailing. The Textile Museum 2013.2.70, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 388 X 147 cm (152.5 X 57.5 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning (removed). The Textile Museum 2013.2.45, The Megalli Collection

Dimensions (warp x weft): 323 X 140 cm (127.5 X 55 inches)

Sumru: There are still myriad questions that need to be answered before one of these theories can be proven correct.

Many of these questions surround the Turkmen migration to Anatolia and the origin of kilim weaving:

Exactly what kind of weaving technology, technique, and design tradition did Anatolia have by the time of the great Turkmen migrations?

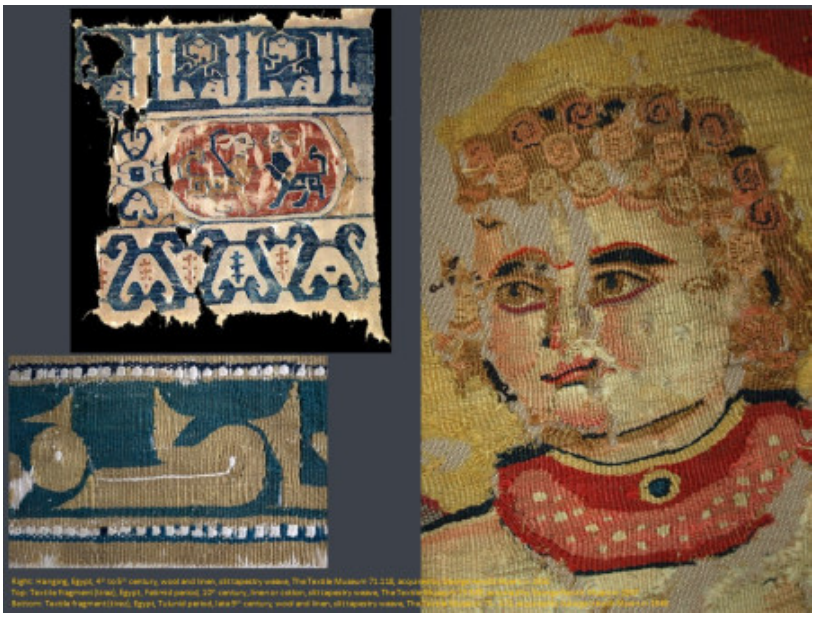
What kind of weaving tradition did the Turkmen carry with them when they migrated?

Sumru:

Although concrete evidence is still scarce, several scholars has begun slowly investigating the history of the region pre- and post-Turkish arrival with revived interest in the pre-Mongol history of art of Seljuk Anatolia. We know very little about the Turkic nomads that migrated into Anatolia. Their histories, if written at all, were primarily written by others—mostly Persian and Arab bureaucrats and scholars—and the elite urban literati did not have any interest in the social or artistic output of the nomad groups moving through Iran and settling in Anatolia.

Was there in either or both populations a kilim tradition that could be regarded as the ancestor of what has become known as the Anatolian kilim?

How did these two traditions interact in Anatolia once the various nomadic groups began their long process of assimilation and coexistence?



Right: Hanging, Egypt, 4th to 5th century, wool and linen, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 71.118, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1950

Upper left: Textile fragment (tiraz), Egypt, Fatimid period, 10th century, linen or cotton, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 73.549, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1947

Lower left: Textile fragment (tiraz), Egypt, Tulunid period, late 9thcentury, wool and linen, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 73.572, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1948

Sumru:

In terms of tapestry weaving, there is clear evidence that it was carried out in West Asia, long before the Turkish nomads arrived. This evidence includes early Islamic textiles as well as much earlier late Roman and Byzantine textiles.

Although the technique was not foreign to the region, when the Turkish nomads arrived, there is no surviving example with designs that could be considered clearly precursors of Anatolian kilim designs.

There also is no surviving evidence informative enough about the types of designs and weaving techniques used by the Turkic nomad weavers, and what they brought into Anatolia in the 10th century.

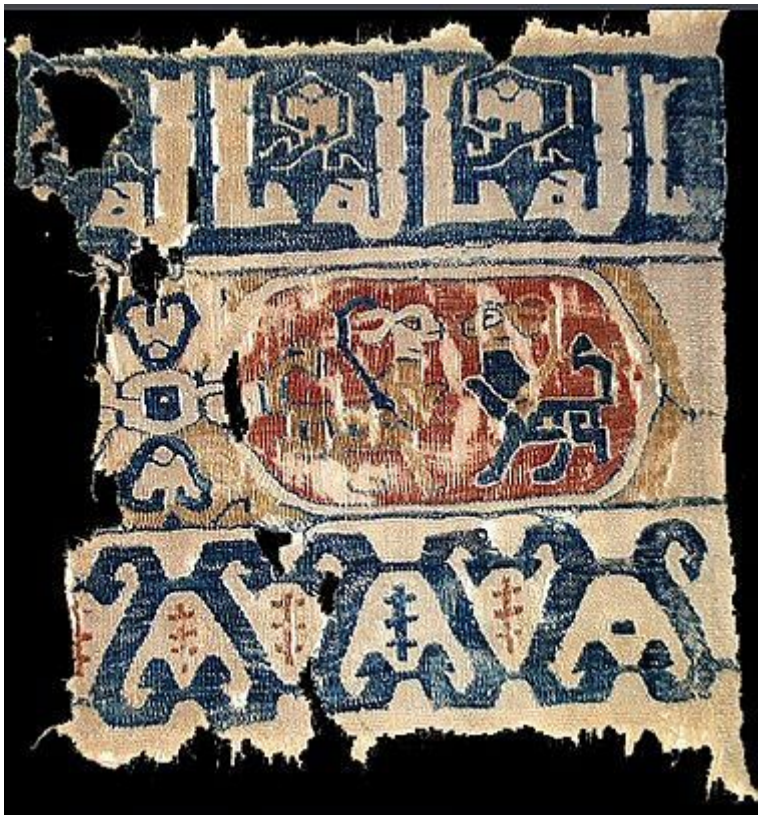
Howe: Below are larger versions of the parts of 70 sequenced from the oldest to the youngest. To repeat the indications in the captions, all three were done in slit tapestry weaves. But the designs are all different from those we see in Anatolian kilims.

Right: Hanging, Egypt, 4th to 5th century, wool and linen, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 71.118, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1950

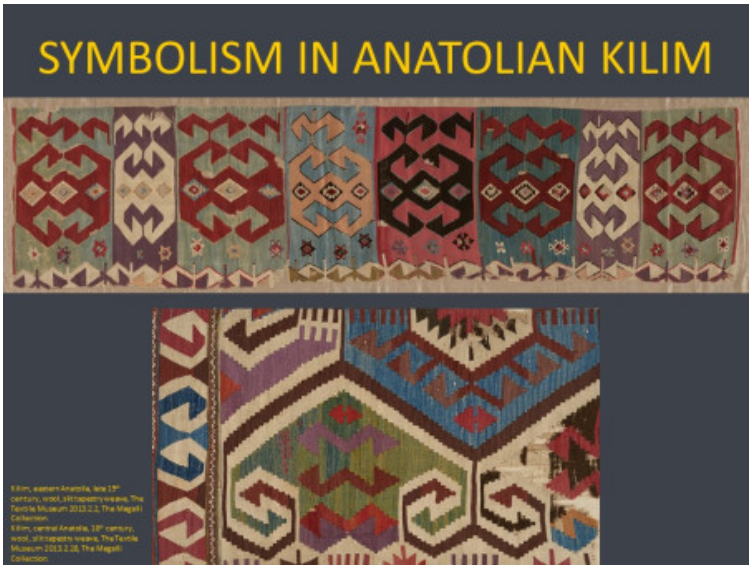
Howe: This piece is from the informally-called "Coptic" period: 3rd to the 7th century. Copts were Christians. Coptic Eygpt was ruled by a Mandarin-like group of Central Asians, kidnapped as children, and then raised and trained for that purpose. Islam invaded Eygpt in the 8th century.

Lower left: Textile fragment (tiraz), Egypt, Tulunid period, late 9thcentury, wool and linen, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 73.572, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1948

The Tulunid dynasty: Turkic in origin, was the first independent dynasty to rule Egypt and Syria, 868-905.



Upper left: Textile fragment (tiraz), Egypt, Fatimid period, 10th century, linen or cotton, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 73.549, acquired by George Hewitt Myers in 1947



Sumru: One issue always comes up in kilim studies is the symbolism.

We can posit that the designs on long kilims were expressions of weavers' personal histories.

A textile can function as a document of weaver's memory, a host of symbolic reminders of her family and friends, an abstract portrayal of social affinities she developed during the creative process of weaving, and only know to her and close kin.

Since the associational meanings died with the weaver and her family, it is impossible to rebuild the personal meanings invested in a given kilim.

Howe: Large versions, with captions, of the pieces.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, late 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave. The Textile Museum 2013.2.2, The MegallI Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 328 X 79 cm (129 X 31 inches)

Kilim, central Anatolia, 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum 2013.2.28, The Megalli Collection

Sumru:

Frequent use of certain design layouts and motifs might point to the fact that those layouts and motifs were special to the society in which the weaver lived

Then the question is how to identify motifs remotely indicative of self-expression in kilim's design. The only likely elements in the kilim design, which were not prescribed by the culture or tradition,

Sumru continues:

were randomly appearing motifs that were woven with supplementary-weft yarns or small tufts of colorful wool or human hair that were knotted. These motifs might be the only candidates to be considered as weaver's self-expression.

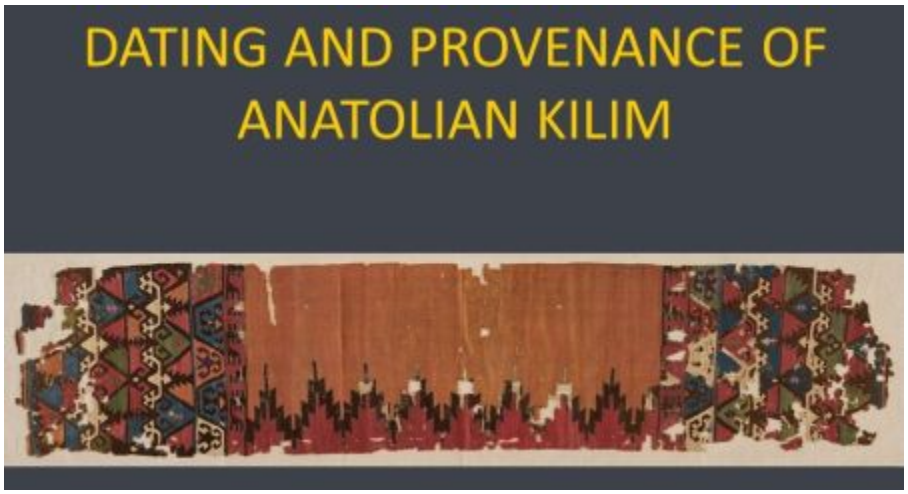
They were never woven to be a logical part of the overall design, or had any clear and continuing relationship with design layout, or even with other motifs. Their presence did not support the large coherent statement kilim weavers expected to make.

This leaves only one option open and that is that weavers incorporated these motifs as reminders or memory aids for the events occurring around them and they wanted to remember. What those events were, however, may never be known.

Larger versions of the images.

Kilim, Western Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.38, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 338 X 82 cm (133 X 32 inches)



Kilim, Eastern Anatolia, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.77, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 383 X 84 cm (150.5 X 33 inches)

Sumru: It is extremely hard to date and provenance Anatolian kilims, especially ones predating the 1870s.

They were:

#1 created by very conservative nomadic societies, and

#2 used in very harsh environments, preventing large survival rates.

Anatolian kilim weaving is a traditional weaving, which meant that it was highly conservative in its use of the same designs over multiple generations.

The relative isolation of nomadic groups from mainstream cultural and aesthetic events of the Ottoman Empire was another important reason for this conservatism. Change in glacier terms. What does this refer to?

Kilim, Southern Anatolia, early 18th century – early 19th century, wool, cotton, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.57, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 385.5 X 155 (151.5 X 61 inches)

Sumru: Many surviving kilims, in known collections, date to the period from the late 17th century, to the early 20th century.

The relatively late date of surviving kilims makes them not very eligible for conducting accurate radiocarbon dating, although there are attempts to do that in Europe especially by Jurg Rageth.

Carbon 14 dating for 75, above, indicates that it was 54.1% likely that it was produced between 1712 and 1821., And 1661-1708 (18.6%) and AD 1835-1880 (8.2%) likely. Overall calibrated age has 95% confidence limit.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, c. 1900, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, supplementary-weft patterning, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.92, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 400 X 177 cm (157.5 X 70 inches)

Sumru:

The reasons for the small survival rate of this material are threefold.

Kilims, compared to carpets, were used more heavily and in an environment that is harsh to the textiles.

Thirdly, slit tapestry weave creates a lighter fabric that can be carried around easily, but it does not create a sturdy textile that can stand continuous heavy use.

Remember to click, sometimes more than once, on smaller images like the ones below to get a larger version.

Sumru:

In terms of giving provenance to these textiles, the difficulty arises from the way nomads live. They move continuously, sometimes splitting into smaller groups and sometimes reconnecting. There are few nomadic groups in Anatolia whose centuries-long movements were accurately documented. The Aydinli nomadic group is a good case study to illustrate this fact.

Let’s look, first at these two kilims.

Kilim, Western Anatolia, probably Aydin, first half 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave,

supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.9, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 362 X 78.5 cm (142.5 X 31 inches)

Kilim, Western Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.71, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 364 X 90 cm (143 X 35.5 inches)

Sumru: Now about the Aydinli nomadic group who wove these two kilims. Look at the map below and locate the small red dot in its lower left.

Sumru:

This where a group of nomads, who considered themselves part of Aydinli nomads, lived in southeastern Anatolia in the late 20th century. Ottoman officials first recorded them in the western Anatolia, in the environs of Aydin in 17th century.

Over the next two to three centuries, they moved eastward for various reasons. They first moved to central Anatolia and then to their current location in southeastern Anatolia (see larger red mark in the map below).

Along this two-century long move, some members of the group broke off and settled. Others continued their migrations into different parts of Anatolia. Of these, some settled, some did not, until the 20th century.

Because of this movement, we can identify various communities across Anatolia weaving very similar designs, that are considered part of the Aydinli design repertoire. But it very hard to say, accurately, what the provenance of this group's kilims are, when they are collected out of context.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, late 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.11, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 347.5 X 76.5 cm (136.5 X 30 inches)

Sumru: The way of life in nomadic communities in Anatolia has changed dramatically, especially during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Only the kilims are left as enduring records of that life.

Their history spans at least five centuries, and they present wide stylistic variety. In addition to that, they were created by societies where oral tradition is the norm compared to the literary tradition of urban societies. All these facts make analyses of kilims, and the weaving tradition associated with them, far more complex.

Sumru on the pieces:

Still, there is hope! We know that kilims are a potent expression of the nomadic and peasant culture in Anatolia as well as a highly personal expression of rural women.

But, they also were molded by a profusion of powerful aesthetic influences, originating from the many ethnic groups that make up the Anatolian culture.

In addition to that, the influence of the high Ottoman culture is evident on many kilim designs, although this influence might have not been very direct.

Here is an image of the complete, with caption.

Kilim, western Anatolia, late 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, The Textile Museum, 2013.2.87, The Megalli Collection

Kilim, Western Anatolia, late 18th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, supplementary weft wrapping for outlines, supplementary-weft patterning. The Textile Museum 2013.2.87, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 131 X 106 cm (51.5 X 41.5 inches)

Kilim, Central Anatolia, second half 18th century, wool, cotton, slit tapestry weave, weft-faced plain weave, eccentric weft. The Textile Museum 2013.2.3, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 342 X 137 cm (134.5 X 54 inches)

Sumru:

During my long examination sessions of these kilims, I became aware that while 20th-century collectors and scholars shaped the knowledge about Anatolian kilim around decorative motifs, nomads who produced and used these appear to highly valued the material and technical characteristics of kilims.

Decorative motifs were significant to nomads, but not necessarily more significant than other factors.

Many of the decorative motifs are also brought about directly from material and technical characteristics of kilims. In short, we can posit that because nomads were so intimately connected with the weaving process, their value system contain elements that aremore central to the process, and as a result different than contemporary view that values primacy of pattern and motif.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly west-central, 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines, eccentric weft.The Textile Museum 2013.2.17, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 336 X 171 cm (132 X 67 inches)

Sumru:

Since no contemporary aesthetic treatise on Anatolian kilim is known, proof of this assertion can only come from thorough analysis of the textiles themselves.

By tracking the most commonly emphasized features of kilims, it is possible to ascertain which material and technical characteristics were most valued by their weavers and users.

Field research conducted by scholars in the twentieth century among the few nomads left, help us today piece to gather some of the ways these old kilims might have been used, but again I am cautions about using them as the final word.

Kilim, Central Anatolia, 19th century, wool, slit tapestry weave, supplementary-weft patterning, supplementary-weft wrapping for outlines. The Textile Museum 2013.2.90, The Megalli Collection.

Dimensions (warp x weft): 367 X 88.5 cm (144.5 X 34.5 inches)

Although work on deciphering of Anatolian kilims is ongoing, there is no denying that Anatolian kilims, with their bold but simple coloration, large scale, and skillfully balanced designs have a very strong visual power for contemporary eyes who value pattern.

The beauty and mystery that surround their origin, history, and design, serve to amplify this aesthetic power.

We need to always remember that there is more to kilims than theeye sees.

Sumru took questions and brought her session to a close.

My thanks to Sumru for this fine session and for her considerable work, after, helping me fashion this post.

We sometimes feel, a bit selfishly, that curators do not give RTAM presentations as frequently as we would like. But Sumru has not only done so, she has, without embarrassment, let us look over her shoulder as she works with material that will be presented in final form in an October exhibition.

As you have seen in her remarks above, she invited thoughts that folks in the audience might have, that might be useful to her. Although we're close to opening of this exhibition, if you have some, as the result of reading this post, write me with them and I'll send them to Sumru.

I hope you have enjoyed this advance look at Sumru's work with beautiful, Anatolian kilims from The Megalli Collection.

Regards,

R. John Howe[15]

[15] Retrieved by the Arthur D Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2018/03/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for December, 2018

"Kilims from Your Collection" with Walter Denny, Sumru Krody and Michael Seidman

Posted in Uncategorized on December 4, 2018 by rjohn

On October 27, 2018 a program entitled "Kilims from Your Collection" was held here at the Textile Museum. It was not, strictly speaking, a Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning program, but it was a show and tell held in the usual RTAM day/time slot and so resembled them.

This program was held in conjunction with the current exhibition on Anatolian kilims.

A Nomad's Art: Kilims of Anatolia

Kilim (detail), Turkey, central Anatolia, late 18th century. The Textile Museum 2013.2.1. The Megalli Collection.

September 1–December 30, 2018

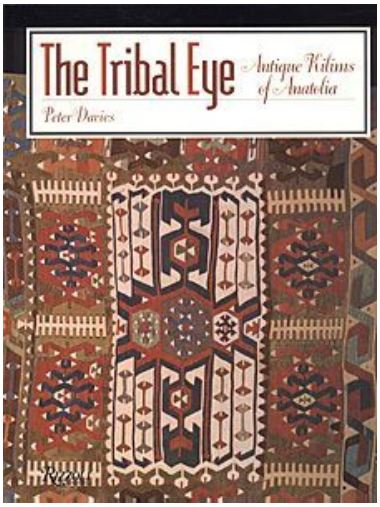
Originally, the speaker/facilitator of this session was to be Peter Davies, the well-known NYC kilim dealer and author.

Davies died unexpectedly, on September 12, and the decision was made to go on with the program he would have led.

Michael Seidman organized and facilitated the program, and Walter Denny and Sumru Krody were the primary describers of the pieces.

Bruce Baganz spoke to the pieces he had brought.

We gave Davies' first edition of his book, "The Tribal Eye: Antique Kilims of Anatolia," as a door prize, and Walter said a few words about Davies.



He said that Davies had started life with a horrendous, disadvantaged, childhood, but had bootstrapped his way to an education, interesting work in Turkey, and became a prominent textile dealer in NYC. He was one of those, who, in 80s and 90s, drew attention to the importance of flat-woven textiles, and in his case, Anatolian kilims. Walter also pointed to a remarkable obit on Peter, that his partner, Mark Scherzer has written, and that I have included, at the end of this post.

We moved to treat the considerable material that had been brought in.

The word "kilim" is used and heard ambiguously and some thought the topic, and the material to be brought to the session, included flatweaves other than slit tapestry. And also pieces not woven in Anatolia.

We started with a few such off-topic pieces.

(Please note that you can click on most of the images in this post to see a larger version.)

Comments: Denny said that this is trans-Caucasian kilim in slit tapestry. The lack of borders is an indicator. Likely by a Turkic weaver. A well-done piece, not particularly old, and with signs of the possible use of synthetic dyes.

Detail below:

Comment: This piece was described as "Karabagh." It is brocaded. Brown wool warps. Not seen as old. Likely Kurdish.

Details below:

*

Description: Owner said it was bought over 40 years ago in Bagdad. Sumac. Kurdish. Likely made in the northern part of Iraq. This piece and K4, below, were said to be parts of an unmatched pair.

Details below:

Comment: This is the second, although much larger, part of the "pair" described in K3 above.

Details:

Comments on the piece above: With this piece we began to treat the slit tapestry, Anatolian kilims of our topic.

A general geographic sequence was followed, beginning with things estimated to have been woven in eastern Anatolia, and then, in turn, to pieces seen to be sourced in central and then western Anatolian. But sometimes this geographic progression was not followed.

This piece was said to have been woven in southeast Anatolia, near Syria. Someone mentioned, after, that it is similar to some published pieces attributed to Ruswan/Rushwan Kurds in the east part of Central Anatolia

Lots of cochineal. The blue-green in the field was noted. White areas are cotton, despite a tan cast. Could be sunlight or, even, deliberate tea staining. Lots of slits: a delicate slit tapestry fabric. Nicely matched halves.

Details:

(Click even on detail images that seem the same size. Sometimes different large images appear."

Comments: This is an Anatolian storage bag, complete, but opened up. Its more decorated center panels are brocade and the striped red and blue panels are weft faced tapestry. The warps are parallel with the horizontal in this image. Seen as Kurdish and that likely means eastern Anatolia.

Similar bags are in "Giving Back the Colors," on the Josephine Powell Collection.

Details of this piece:

(Please, click on the image above. It's not that small underneath.)

Comments: This is a half kilim with a niche design. A saf-like design, but not an actual saf. Cochineal, and a good green. Kurd.

Details:

Comments: Bought in SE Turkey. Madder and cochineal reds. Green cast to colors. Halves nicely matched despite intricate design. About 1900. Kurd.

The attribution notes for K5, above, apply to this piece as well.

Details:

Comment: This is another complete Anatolian storage bag, similar to K6 above, but not opened. S.E. Anatolia. The tablet-woven attached strap was noticed.

Details:

The owner came forward to arrange it as it would be when in use, with the two brocade panels at front together. A handsome piece.

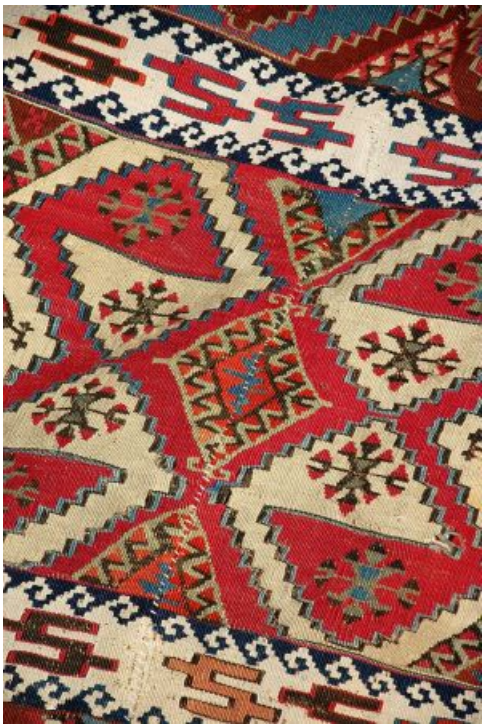
Comment: Now we're back, again, with the slit tapestry kilims that were the primary focus of this session. This is a complete, two-panel kilim from southeastern Anatolia, Yörük or Kurdish, with weft faced slit tapestry weave and some supplementary weft-wrapping for outlines and prominent use of cotton for white highlights.

It has an unusual color palate, about 12 colors, including what is likely to be cochineal (cool red) in addition to madder for warm red and orange shades, typical of eastern Anatolia. The owner pointed out a color of possible interest, asking whether the prominent light green in the center rams-horns "koç boyunuzu" motif might be indigo-sulfonic dye.

Walter noted that this first synthetic dye was used from the early 19th century (one source says 1740, but *P. Davies says indigosulfonic acid came in use in 1780 – but not attributed to a source).* It has an advantage over the usual green, created with indigo over-dyed on yellow, by being a one-step process. It was widely used in Turkey. It can fade in light and with washing processes, but the light green color in this piece is strong on both sides. I have heard that some see it as an age marker on Turkish rugs, but have not seen the evidence of when folks in Turkey stopped using it.

The owner added that this is at least late 19th century provenance, since it came from a German-Jewish friend, a second mother, who brought it from the family home at the center of Berlin where it had been since about 1900 before the family left Germany in the 1930s.

Details:



Comment: Its owner said that at first, this seems to be nearly one half of a two-part kilim, but once you get it up on a wall, you find that it is a study piece, showing what happens if a weaver does not maintain uniform warp depression.

Despite this fatal flaw, it features good color, and drawing. Chalky whites are cotton. It is usually attributed to Malatya because of all the cochineal.

Details:

The next two pieces are similar enough to justify discussing them together.

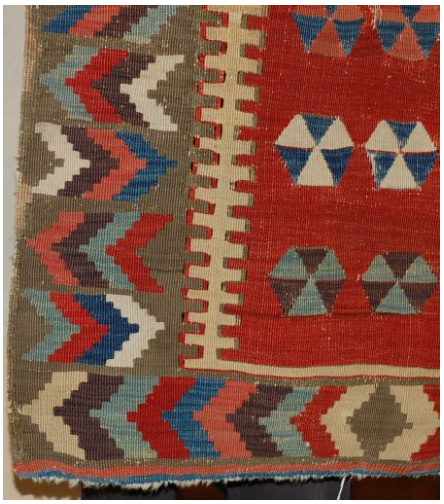
Comments: These were small, one piece, white ground slit tapestries with the same, hexagonal, field device and similar border treatments. The first has bright colors and those of the second are more subdued, including an unusual darker red in its borders. These pieces were not seen to have great age.

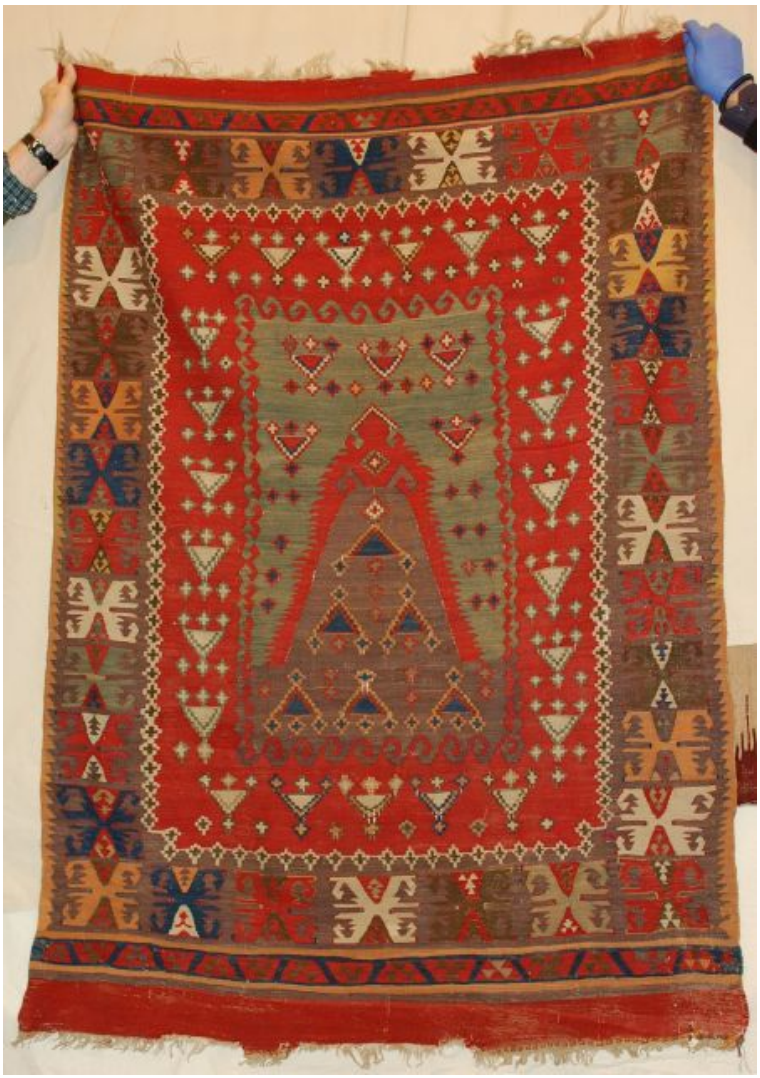
They were treated after kilims attributed to eastern Anatolia and those thought to have been woven in central Anatolia, but no firm attribution seems to have been given. The first is described in one set of notes as "central Anatolian" and in another as "Taurus mountains."

In his opening remarks, Denny had talked about how the rise of modern art had made kilim designs, including minimalism, more aesthetically worthy and used the words "minimalist" and "gorgeous,"in his description of these two pieces. It is true that minimalist designs are getting some increased attention. We saw in the ICOC 14 ending show and tell that John Wertime and Fred Mushkat are exploring minimalist pieces.

Details of these pieces in turn:

Comment: This is a small kilim with a niche-topped field and a chevron border. It is described in the notes taken for me as "central Anatolia: and "north central or east Anatolia." Good colors and a brown-green that attracts the eye. Details.





Comments: This is a large, one piece kilim with a niche field design. It was woven upside down as indicated by the the orientation of the "jewelry" motifs in it field. This weaving sequence lets the weaver get the hard stuff done first. It was said that it is likely that the weaver had never seen an "arch." Good colors, including an unusual blue-brown.

The variation on the use of scale in this piece, especially in the large devices chosen for the main borders, is effective.

Details.

Comments: This is a corner fragment of a large kilim. Its owner said that he owns this humble piece only because of all the green in it. The colors in it are subdued, likely from age. One attribution comment placed it in central or central-east Anatolia. The whites are not cotton.

Details.

Comments: Its owner said that this fragment of a large Anatolian weft-faced tapestry was given to him by Patrick Pouler, the Rugrabbit dealer. It is admittedly decrepit but has good color and that led him to have it couched onto a blue background.

He said that Marla Mallett, looking at images of it, said that this kind of weaving could have been woven anywhere in Anatolia. One comment in my notes was that this piece likely had a Turkman origin.

Denny said that you can never tell what will appear in a session like this and that he had not seen a piece like this previously.

Details. There have been some odd attempts at decoration of some stripes, maybe a crude kind of brocade.

Click on the image above for a larger version.)

I want to give you a chance to see it completely. Below is another photo of it, in an entirely different lighting and setting.

Comment: This is a half kilim, A good type. well-drawn. Some bad colors, but a possible good purple.

Its owner attributed its source as "Powell-Böhmer, and, perhaps, c.1900. Saçikara Yörük (Saçikara Izmirili Hayta, J Powell attribution). She called the main rectangle as having 'sandıklar' ('storage box' or 'trunk") elements with 'Memling guls.'"

Detail images:

Comments: This is a single piece Anatolian weaving with weft-faced tapestry and slit tapestry. Good, fresh color. No cotton. The feathering of the "borders" in the panels with lozenges is delicately done.

Details.

Comment: This is a kilim fragment, of a long half, organized in "stripes,"each containing an array of design devices. Wonderful colors. Estimated to the 18th century.

Details.

Comment: Described as: 18th century. A version, as an entire half, is pictured in Bohmer's book Nomads of Anatolia. His piece has 7 elements, this has three. Both on a camel wool ground. Warp-fringed. No white.

Details.

Note the S-plied, brown and white warps.

Comment: This is a single-piece fragment. Beautiful. 18th century. Central Anatolia, Sumru saw a relationship to plate 38 in the Megalli catalogue. The jagged "sun burst" elements were her connection.

Comments: This is difficult to get into a horizontal image, but it is also a piece with a story.

In Islamic societies, inheritance eligibility is broad. So possessions often have to be divided among those eligible. This includes valuable textiles, of which this is one. The owner indicated that this kilim was divided into several parts and that he has been able to acquire them all.

So what you are looking at are matched fragments of a complete kilim.

It is in slit tapestry, has wonderful, clear colors, and is estimated to have been woven 1800 or before (sold as 18th century). Hotamis, Central Anatolia

Details.

Comment: This piece is another departure. It is a small, brocaded, Anatolian, textile, a size often used as yastiks. It is not old. Its dyes seem mostly to be synthetic, and there is some fading. the notes taken for me do not offer an attribution.

Details.

Comment: This piece was described as one half of a cover. Western Anatolia. As you will see more clearly, below, it has very dark brown warps, which have be covered in the weaving by bright wool brocade in synthetic colors. The drawing is quite good. Details.

Comments: With this half kilim, we return to our main topic.

Its owner said after:

"The book by Bandsma andBrandt – Flatweaves of Turkey – describes a few kilims which are similar – plates 14, 20, 18 – and calls them Aydinli Kilims. (Western Anatolia near Ephesus).

"This kilim half is 33 inches wide and almost 12 feet long.

"It seems to be extremely, masterfully, woven, and the geometric figures are so regular in execution that, it appears to me, that this must have been woven on a very good upright loom. The two-headed animalistic figures are fully articulated and regular.

In the main field, slits are extremely short (less than 1/4 ") while larger slits are seen only in the borders. Thus, the piece as a whole is quite dimensionally stable and strong.

The long border is typical – the crenelations are themselves crenelated.

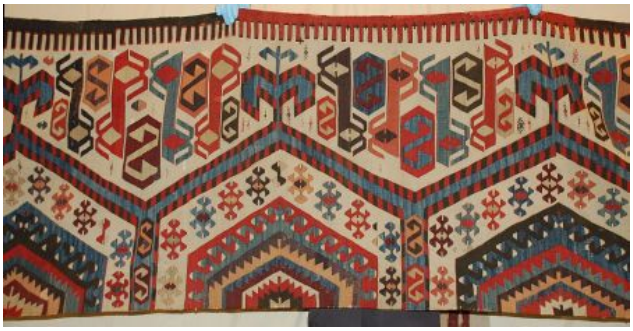
"Interestingly this piece has two different short border design arrangements. One with large octagonal motifs.

The other has four borders with smaller stepped designs. The white filed is dotted with tiny brocaded elements.

"Many of the dragons and other design elements have very narrow outlines in contrasting colors, often using extra weft wrapping. The white field is also dotted with tiny brocaded elements.

"Sumru said this is definitely 19th century. Walter said 'Wow' and noted the two-headed 'dachshunds' in the field." This was Josephine's pet word for this device.

Much of the owner's description applies also to this piece.



Some of the design devices above the blue and red meandering band were referred to as possible "dragons." I've cropped one out and turned it so that you can see it clearly.

Walter had talked about naming design devices, in an earlier lecture, this week, and said that there is nothing wrong with adopting names for given devices, so that we can refer to them accurately in conversation. We cannot claim, however, that the weavers saw them as we do, or as we name them.

Comment: This band is part of a camel trapping. Tapestry woven. Bought in Turkey in the 1980s. The band (6'10" long–plus 5" fringe at each end— by 3" wide) probably would have been used to wrap packs on a camel during migration. The ends were woven at the same time as the rest of the band.

Comments: Eastern Turkey, Vann kilim. Predominant red, but several shades. Dense drawing with lots of smaller design devices. Kurdish?

Comment: This is a grain bag from western Anatolia. Lots of tapestry but the most heavily decorated areas on this, the front, are brocade.

The backs (below) are frequently as interesting as the fronts and are said, often, to be better indicators of attribution. This back is seen by Pinkwart and Steiner to be like those of very old Bergama-Kilaz backs. The backs are mostly in weft-faced tapestry with touches of brocade.

Comment: The owner has given me a fulsome description. As we said, above, much of it applies to the piece above as well.

"This kilim is attributed by Josephine Powell to Saçikara Yörük, a group of about twenty allied nomadic tribes (Türkmen and possibly other origins) for whom there is evidence of seasonal migrations in the broad region of southern Anatolia, roughly between Hatai, Maraş and Kayserei in modern Turkey.

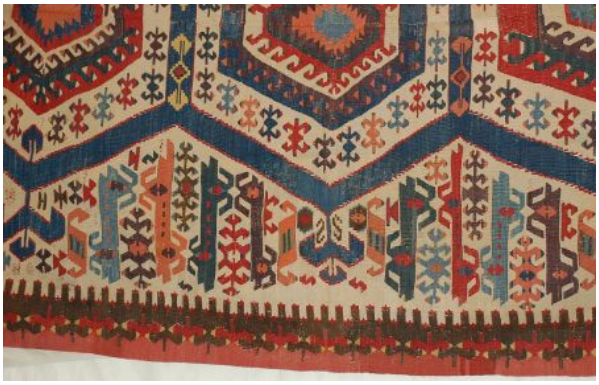
"The piece was collected by Harald Böhmer with Josephine Powell, purchased from HB and delivered by JP during a visit to our home in 2002. It is probably a 19th century piece that is related what was seen in mosques and camp sites during ethnographic fieldwork by JP in the 1970's and 1980's. The attribution and design elements are discussed with photos and drawings in her paper, "A Survey of a Group of Recent Anatolian Nomad Weavings", in OCTS V, Part 1, pages 171-178, from a presentation at the 1999 ICOC in California. She said that these groups generally migrated and diffused eastward over the recent few centuries, and by the late 19th centuries were generally near Adana to Antakya and Aleppo with summer pastures north of this region in the plateau south of Kayseri. Peter Davies

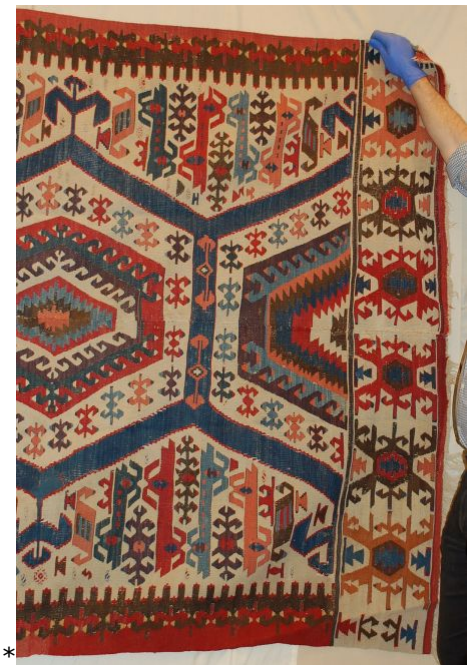
(private communication) attributed this piece to Aydinlı Yörük, Western Anatolia. Josephine suggested that '…Aydinlı … is the term used by kilim dealers to describe all kilims they believe to be woven by Anatolian nomads', her Footnote 5 of the cited paper.

"The piece is almost 10' long with warps of hand-spun light ivory which are also used for the ivory field. It is made from two well matched half panels sewn side-to-side. The main designs and colors are as in the cited paper, Plates 3 & 4, including the side borders. There are different end borders and other minor variations. The dominant central motifs are a stack of layered hexagonal motifs that are bounded by serrations and "rams horn" decorations. These are surrounded by a continuous vertical blue zig-zag line which Josephine says are "usually called *gökkol"* which means 'arm of heaven', but more commonly thought of now as 'blue arm'…" The other prominent features, between the "blue arm" and the border, are many horizontal rows of "Dragon" or "Simurg" elements. A playful label for this design (ed. as we said above) is "Dachshund", attributed to Josephine in Böhmer's "Nomads of Anatolia" (2008), p. 278 and photo details p. 232.

"There are about 9 colors, evidently all natural dyes. There are also small decorations in extra-weft embroidery (horizontal S shapes, little blossoms, etc.) sprinkled in the ivory field."

Details.





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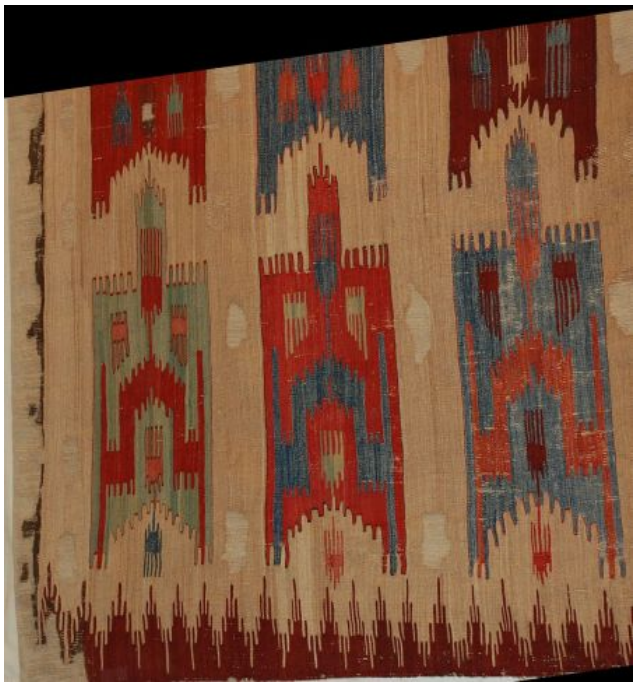
Comments: Walter says "amazing." Saf design, but not a real saf. Very complex tapestry weaving. There is a seeming "prayer gable" at the right end. Wonderful colors.

Owner said: "18th century, from Karapinar or Karaman area. Maybe on natural sheep wool ground. There is a 19th century example in Bohmer's book on Anatolian nomads. Both his and ours are photographed on their side, the warps run the length."

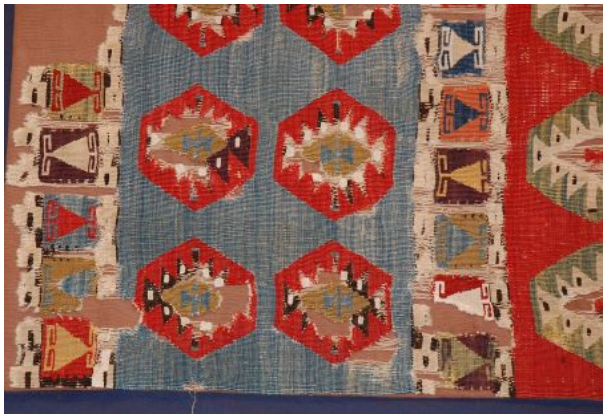
Details.



Comments: It's owner said after: "This fragment represents a little more than a third of a half. The delicate figures in the stripes that separate the major "fields" are unusual. I have not seen them on other kelims. Excellent aubergine, lots of green."

"This piece is pictured in the 100 kelims book, 18th century. Note the relationship between border elements and the similar motifs in the previous piece."

Details.



Comments: Its owner said after,

"This piece is a half of a half. There is a similar fragment in a major North American collection, pictured in Jurg Rageth's book on Anatolian kelims and carbon dated to the 17th century. This has a red described by the Istanbul dealers as consistent with the 17th century." Details.

Comments: After, the owner said,

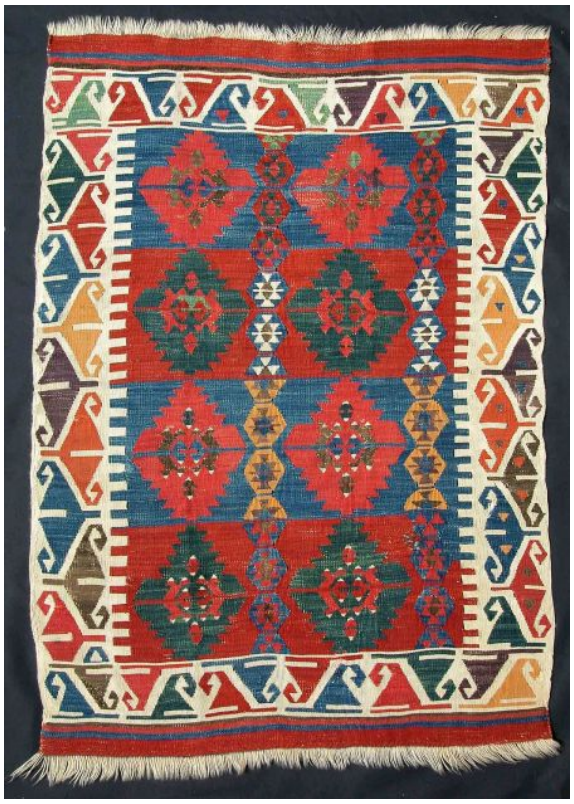
"This is a half of a half. Often described in the trade as "saf" kelim, but certainly not. 18th century."

Details.

Owner’s Photo

Owner's description: Malayta, niche kilim with amulet. Size: 47 x 58 inches. Mid-19th century. Audience: Kurdish? Details.

(owner's photo)



Owner’s comment: Hotamis small format kilim, Central Anatolia, possibly could have been used for prayer. Positive – negative effect: are these polygons superimposed on stripes, or are they bisected polygons between solid polygons? Intensely saturated color in both field and borders. Size: 35 x 50 inches. First half of the 19th century.

Audience: Konya area? Details (my camera)

(Owner's photo)

Owners Comments: Obruk, Central Anatolia niche kilim. Size: 33 x 49 inches. 3rd quarter of the 19th century.

Details (my camera)

(Owner's photo)

*Owner's comment: Adana, Southeast Anatolia niche floral form kilim. Size: 40 x 56 inches. Second half 19th century.

Details (my camera)

(Owner’s photo)

Owner’s comment: Erzurum niche kilim. Wool and metal thread. Size: 45 x 72 inches. Second half 19th centur

Details (my camera)

(Owner's photo)

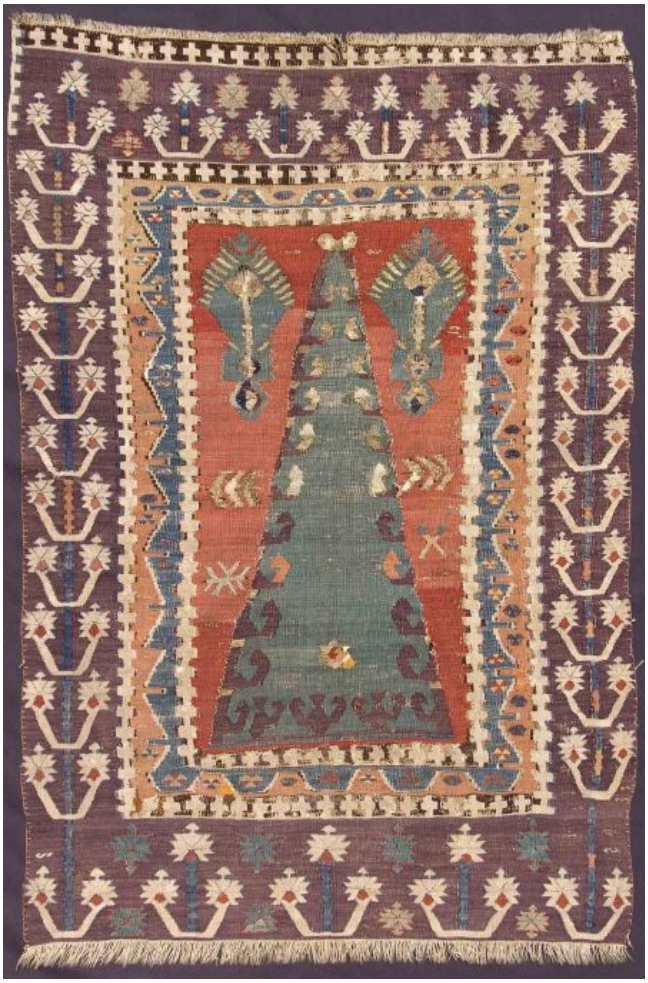
Owner's comment: Konya niche kilim, Central Anatolia. Possibly a dowry or special commissioned piece with wool, cotton, metal thread and silk. Size: 53 x 72 inches. Second half 19th century

Details (my camera).

(Owner's photo)

Owner's comment: Erzurum niche kilim with cochineal border and stylized carnations flanking the mihrab. Exhibited & published: The Sultan's Garden, Denny and Krody, 2012. Size: 45 x 44 inches. Dated 1304 (1886). Details (my camera).

(Owner’s photo)

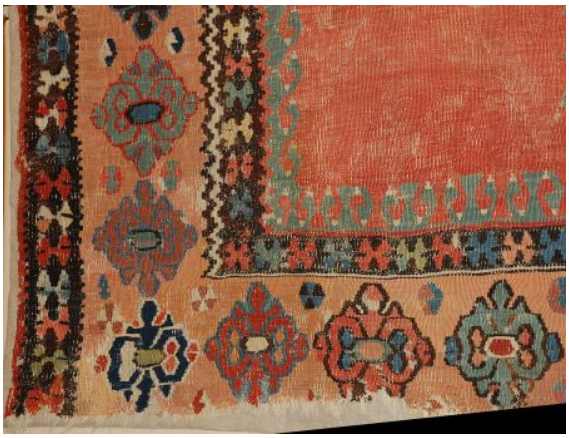


Owner’s comment on K43: Bayburt niche kilim with elongated blue mihrab and aubergine & carnation border. Exhibited & published: The Sultan’s Garden, Denny and Krody, 2012. Size: 38 x 55 inches. 18th century. Details (my camera).

(Owner’s photo)

Owner’s comment: Sivas niche kilim with red mihrab on blue-green field and apricot border. Size: 144 x 184 cms. 18th century.

Details (my camera)



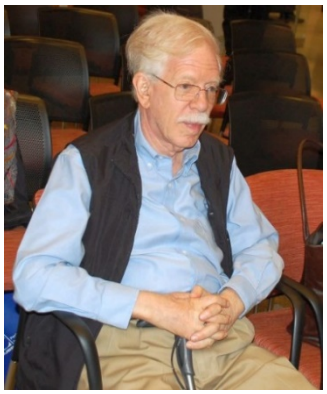
The last piece of the day was the one below.

(Owner's photo)

Owner comment: Hotamis, Central Anatolia niche kilim with complex side reciprocal border on oriented red field. Size: 48" x 76 inches. Circa 1800. Details (my camera).

Sometimes in these posts, I provide a look at the audience after. The way things went in this session required that I do a "before" audience sequence.

Here it is:



It was raining outside.

Helpers are important in these sessions.

*

Almost ready. You can go back to the beginning and see it all again.

Thanks to Amy Rispin, Jim Henderson, Michael Seidman and Bruce Baganz, all of whom gave special assistance in fashioning this virtual version.

Hope you enjoyed it.

R. John Howe[16]

[16] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2018/12/

Here's the wonderful obit on Peter Davies:

A Life Well Lived

by Mark Scherzer (posted by Mark Scherzer)

Peter Davies, 1937-2018

Peter Davies, of New York City and Germantown, NY, died September 12, 2018. He is survived by two sisters in Wales, daughters Jessica Davies and Heather Cox, in Florida, son Perry Davies in California, and me, his partner of 40 years, Mark Scherzer.

The cause of Peter's death was acute respiratory distress syndrome, brought on by bleeding he suffered when he lacerated his kidney in a fall a week earlier. It was a painful and ugly end to a remarkable and beauty-infused life.

Born December 5, 1937, in Cardiff, Wales, Peter was the first of three children of the extramarital relationship of Joan Breckon and Richard Davies. Though she had three children, Joan was a woman who fully enjoyed her freedoms, and Peter was raised to a significant degree by his grandmother. Living in Cardiff through World War II, Peter's most vivid early memories included navigating the bombings of the Nazi Blitz.

After the war, his mother married an American GI, Hank Seesemann. Peter's sisters were put out for adoption in Wales, but Peter, already apparently quite a handful and not so easy to give away, was moved with his mother to Hinsdale, Illinois, where the tone of his relationship with his new family was set by his step-father's regular alcohol-fueled beatings. Intent on escaping his second class status in a dysfunctional family, Peter largely raised himself and saw to his own education. Through morning and evening paper routes he created a college fund. When his mother stole his college savings and

suggested he could be content working locally and paying rent to the family for his room, or perhaps following family tradition and joining the merchant marine, he doubled down and funded his own way through Northern Illinois University (B.A.), University of Illinois Champagne/Urbana (M.A.) and Yale University (Ph.D).

His university degrees in English Literature and Theatre History led to teaching jobs at the American College of Izmir, Turkey, Loyola of Montreal, Tulane University in New Orleans, and Simons Rock in Great Barrington. He was a great motivator of students and several devoted former students who have remained close to him will be among those most devastated by the news of his death. But the degrees and the teaching jobs do not come close to reflecting the powerhouse of intellectual curiosity and creativity Peter became. He sometimes wrote and frequently directed chamber theatre productions, establishing the Tangled Fringe theatre company in the 1970s in the Berkshires. He oversaw three historic home restorations, designed landscapes and installed gardens of great beauty, led tours focused on the history and culture of Turkey, and engaged in community and environmental activism. He was widely read, and could discuss with authority such diverse subjects as ancient Greek city plans, the plays of Samuel Beckett, early Christian theology, the birth of jazz in New Orleans, and the history of the Ottoman Sultanate.

Peter traveled intrepidly, particularly in the middle and near east. He never stopped kidding me about my fearful response when he insisted we follow a motorbike out to the edge of a small town in southern Morocco to negotiate with some Tuareg tribesmen in an abandoned caravansaray over some potential purchases. (I guarded the car.) He loved recounting how, hobbled by an ankle injury, he sought out kilims in Quetta, Pakistan, by traveling everywhere by horsedrawn cart. His peripatetic life is reflected in the birthplaces of his children: Istanbul, New Haven, and Montreal.

While living and teaching in Turkey in the early 1960s, Peter learned to speak Turkish by sitting in the bazaar talking to rug merchants. He developed a lifelong love for that country (saying he felt "half Turkish"), returning year after year for the next fifty plus years, in later years sometimes with small travel groups he assembled and with me in tow, as driver and aide. His time in the rug bazaars led him, as well, to an appreciation of Turkish flat-weavings (kilims), which he loved for the way in which they infused practical needs with an inspired, collectively developed artistic vision. After several years of financing his summer travel through bringing back and selling kilims and ethnographic artifacts, Peter in 1976 left academia and established Turkana Gallery of Old and Antique Kilims, one of the pioneer businesses introducing this form of folk art to the American market. He wrote an authoritative book about kilims, The Tribal Eye: Antique Kilims of Anatolia (Rizzoli Press 1993), which he expanded and elaborated in Antique Kilims of Anatolia (W.W. Norton 2000).

In 1984, with help from my family we bought the Ephraim Niles Byram House in Sag Harbor, New York. Peter's vision directed a restoration so complete and true that when we ultimately put the house

on the market the East Hampton Star ran an editorial suggesting we donate the house to the Sag Harbor Historical Society. Peter wrote a monograph demonstrating how the house melded Byram's idiosyncratic scientific needs and local tastes with the architectural teachings of Andrew Jackson Downing that were so influential in mid 19th century America.

Peter was a founder of the Coalition of Neighborhoods for the Preservation of Sag Harbor. He served on the Village planning board, and ran the project to expand the Sag Harbor historic district to include the African American and Native American neighborhoods and landmarks that had been excluded when the first historic district was established. He fought for wetland preservation and against over-development. One of our most entertaining projects was helping defeat the proposal by the international luxury conglomerate LVMH to take over Sag Harbor's main street for a concours d'elegance. Peter orchestrated a subversive campaign which included street theatre in front of the Louis Vuitton 57th Street store and anonymously distributing satirical flyers describing the plans of Louis Vuitton's cousin, bag lady Latrina Vachon, for a concours de flatulence.

Diverse as all Peter's interests and endeavors were, they shared certain themes. Evident in everything he did was a belief that history matters and that we live best when we understand our place in the stream of history. In the arc of history and in the present he favored the underdog. His childhood experience of abuse and neglect and the ravages of war did not make him believe that dog should eat dog, but rather that the most unfortunate among us should be respected and given dignity and help. He was not religious, but described himself as a pantheist who felt a pervasive life spirit around him.

Similarly apparent in all Peter's projects were his consistent recognition that art and artistic vision must be intertwined with practical life – a marriage of utility and creativity that was reflected in every inch of our home and even in how he cooked – most excellently – our meals. He never stinted on pleasures, joy for him is an important human value to be found everywhere. But he never in indulging in the pleasures of food or drink or travel or personal contemplation time lost sight of what he considered fair or moral or promoting of human dignity.

In 2000, when Peter was already 63 years old, he and I bought the property that is now Turkana Farms. A year later, September 11, 2001, our City world was exploded when our home next to the World Trade Center was rendered uninhabitable and his weaving inventory, to the extent it survived, was buried in ash. In the vacuum created, Peter turned his energy to developing the farm, but in a manner that again reflected his values. Practical buildings and fences also had to be aesthetically pleasing. Heritage animal breeds were chosen in part to preserve and perpetuate historic traits of value. (Peter added to the subjects on which he could authoritatively speak the history of the Ossabaw pig, American Karakul sheep, and various breeds of heritage turkey.) The values of flavor and beauty trumped commercial motives. And the hard work was always, at Peter's insistence, leavened by time to contemplate and enjoy the environment he had created.

The creation of the farm was another unlikely realization of a vision of the sort Peter had achieved, despite resistance, in such endeavors as staging controversial theatre productions or expanding the historic district in Sag Harbor. It required relentless focus and energy. He could be "difficult" and single minded in pursuing goals, but they were always carefully thought out goals reflecting his values. He had what his son, Perry, describes as a tunnel vision which nevertheless saw everything we generally overlook.

The day after Peter's death, Perry suggested we take a Circle Line cruise as a means of processing our loss at a remove from everyday life. Perry clearly inherited Peter's sense that there is nothing more invigorating than reveling in a stiff breeze on the open water. I anticipated it would be a calm, healing voyage, but had not anticipated how the excursion would call forth so many of the landmark events of Peter's life, as so often recounted by him. We passed the place in New York Harbor where a gentleman passenger on the Queen Mary in 1946 hoisted 8 year-old Peter up to see the Statue of Liberty as he arrived in America, and the place where this young boy, already conscious of his personal dignity, insisted on covering his naked body with a raincoat for the immigration doctor's inspection. We saw the Erie Lackawanna station where he departed for the Midwest in 1946, across the river from the then dark and disreputable blocks of the West Village where Peter and I first met in a bar in 1978. We passed the site of the World Trade Center, where the cataclysmic attack of September 11, 2001, set us off on a mad morning's search for one another, each fearing the other was lost, and then from the East River we saw St. Margaret's House, where later that day Peter and I eventually found each other. Ultimately, as we proceeded up the east side of Manhattan, we found ourselves opposite the window of the ICU room in New York – Presbyterian Hospital where Peter spent his last week, facing out of that window as he died. As Perry put it, these were sites of the major events from Peter's arrival in America to his departure from the world.

The sight that was most poignant for me, however, was the view just south of the Trade Center of the penthouse Peter designed and lived in on Cedar Street. In his usual manner, Peter had taken a raw space and created a remarkable environment, in the fashion of an Ottoman harem room, filled with the weavings he sold. It was his gallery, where he staged fashion shows, special exhibitions, and parties, including our gala Regatta party for the 1986 Statue of Liberty Centennial. But it was also his home, where on our third meeting he told me he could love me, and which quickly became my home as well. From the water, towered over by massive new buildings on every side, the loft looked small and inconsequential. But into that modest space he brought an entire wider world I never would have encountered on my own, and joys I never would have known how to experience without him. At that moment I was able to see in physical manifestation what I had already been feeling inside: the immensity of the loss of my teacher, mentor, lover and friend.

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

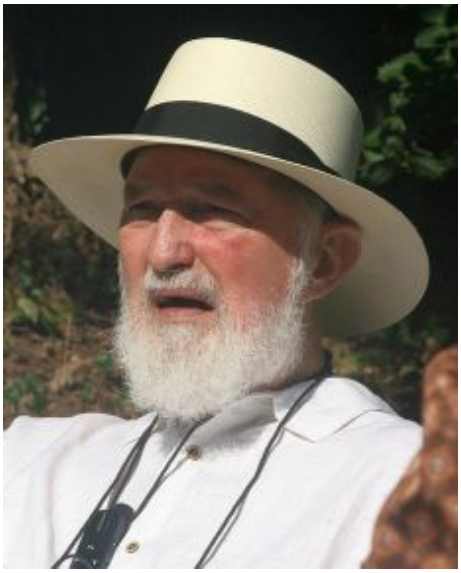
Archive for January, 2019

Mehmet Yalcin and John Howe on Central Asia Textiles and Some Others

Posted in Uncategorized on January 11, 2019 by rjohn

Dear folks –

On December 1, 2018, Mehmet Yalcin, and John Howe gave a Rug and Textile Appreciation program that centered on Central Asian textiles, but included some others.

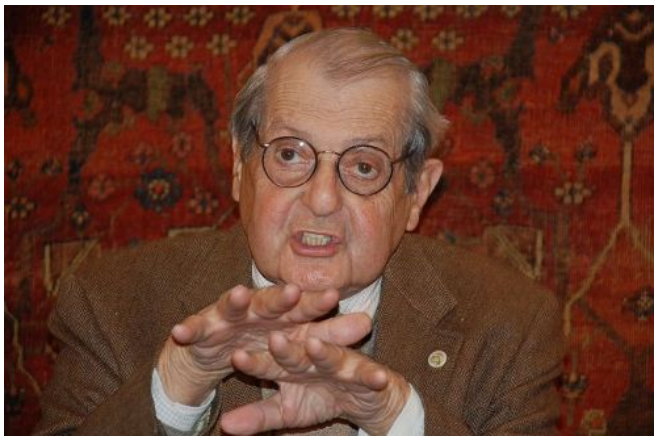


Mehmet says that he was born a Turkish nomad.

He has had an interesting life that included wide international travel, work in different international organizations, a Harvard doctorate, and his current ownership, now for 23 of years, of two textile-artifact shops, Woven History & Silk Road, here, on Capital Hill, in Washington, D.C.

John (that's me) is a long-time textile collector. I am active in the DC textile community, especially in the documentation of these Textile Museum Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning (RTAM) programs. I am very interested in textiles, and try to get things right, but would never claim to have done so. The urge to authority can get in the way of enjoyment.

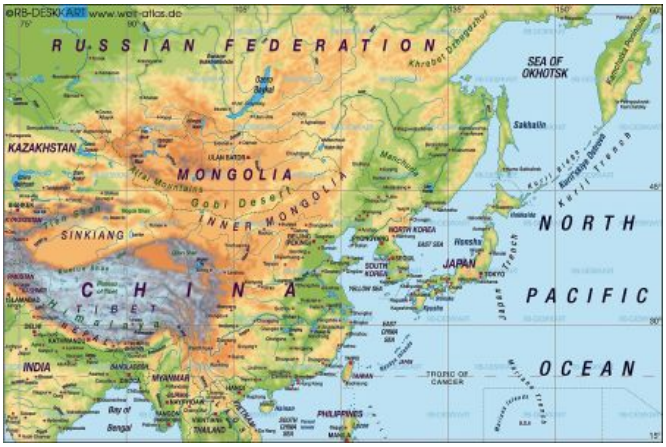
I said, at the beginning of this session, that the RTAM programs are named in honor of the late Harold Keshishian, an important DC area dealer, who may have been most important among those who founded them. RTAM programs have traditionally drawn on local textile dealers as important resources.



I approached Mehmet about giving this program with me as a continuation of this tradition of drawing on dealer resources.

Our program began with a series of "Central Asian" textiles made in western Mongolia.

In a broader map, Mongolia seems embedded in the northern part of China.



But looking at the map below, we see that a small uncolored finger of Mongolia, on the right, reaches out to the green of Kazakhstan.

And this is significant because the far western district of Mongolia, in the map below, has a population that is 80% Kazakh.

And this is where the first set of "Central Asian" pieces we treated, were and, are, made.

Mehmet made a further argument that the conventional notion of "Central Asia" is too restricted, and that a proper view of it, defensibly, includes both Mongolia on the east and the Caucasus on the west.

This first set of textiles we treated in this session is a series of hangings made by Kazakhs in western Mongolia.

(If you click on most of these images, you will get a larger version)

These hangings are hand silk embroidery on a cotton ground. They usually have a border on three sides, quilted cotton or velvet.

Here is a closer detail of the piece above.

These silk embroidered are hangings that nomadic Kazakhs hung on the walls of their yurts.

Below is a Kazakh yurt (the Mongolians say “ger”). There is still a significant number of Kazakhs who are pastoral nomads, although their numbers are declining.

Below are some Monglians erecting a Mongolian type yurt (ger) (note the steeper roof angle).

Mehmet, and a young Mongolian, employee of his, Solar, from this western district, feel that nomadism is attractive and, counter to the conventional wisdom about nomadism, in many parts of the world, they feel that the number of nomads in Mongolia may be increasing.

Solar says that he and his grandmother were nomads, with only a flock of about 100 sheep. He says that nomadic life if full of lots of spare time (in which, for example, textiles can be made) During the winter, when he moved to town to go to school, she hired herders to look after her sheep. He says that barter is a frequent form of exchange in western Mongolia, although money is now more frequent. He also estimates that someone, who undertakes nomadism in western Mongolia, will have a difficult time at first, but will be, predictably, successful in about five years.

There are signs that most folks who are "nomads" in Mongolia, are not of the "free-standing" sort we often celebrate in our descriptions, but rather herdsmen employed by rich folks who own most of the sheep and other livestock.

Still there are persistent traces of nomadism. Kazakhs, and others, have been reluctant to give up their yurts even when they settle. Yurts frequently appear between other structures in Mongolian cities. They also ring the outer edges of cities.

(Below is a Getty image and caption that gives a less optimistic view of this situation.)

ULAANBAATAR, MONGOLIA – 2012/07/26: Ulaanbaatar's ger districts are populated mostly by displaced nomads who have moved to the city in search of economic opportunities.
Mongolian pastoral herders make up one of the world's largest remaining nomadic cultures. For millennia they have lived on the steppes, grazing their livestock on the lush grasslands. But today, their traditional way of life is at risk on multiple fronts. Alongside a rapidly changing economic landscape, climate change and desertification are also threatening nomadic life, killing both herds and grazing land. Due to severe winters and poor pasture, many thousands of herders have traded in their centuries-old way of life for employment in mining towns and urban areas. The ger (yurt) camps that ring the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, house a permanent population of displaced nomads. There, they live without running water or a tangible use for the skills and crafts that were practiced on the steppes. The younger generation is no longer learning these essential aspects of their nomadic heritage. (Photo by Taylor Weidman/LightRocket via Getty Images)

But let's go back to these Kazakh tent hangings. We do think that it is likely that they were made, mostly, by Kazakh pastoral nomads. Once folks come into cities they tend to (need to) take jobs. Jobs take up the time that nomad life provided for making such textiles.

The pieces we are showing were made in the mid-20th century and some are inscribed and dated.

The "rondel" designs look Chinese and may sometimes be, but the fabric below is Central Asian, woven not embroidered. But it indicates that rondel designs have appeared in Central Asian textiles since at least the 7th-9th centuries.

4. Textile with Geometric Design

Weft-faced compound twill
Warp 17.6 cm (6¾ in.); weft 17.6 cm (6¾ in.)
Central Asia, late 7th–9th century
The Cleveland Museum of Art, John L. Severance Fund (1930.514)

The Silk Roads were a real thing and lots of things flowed back and forth along them.

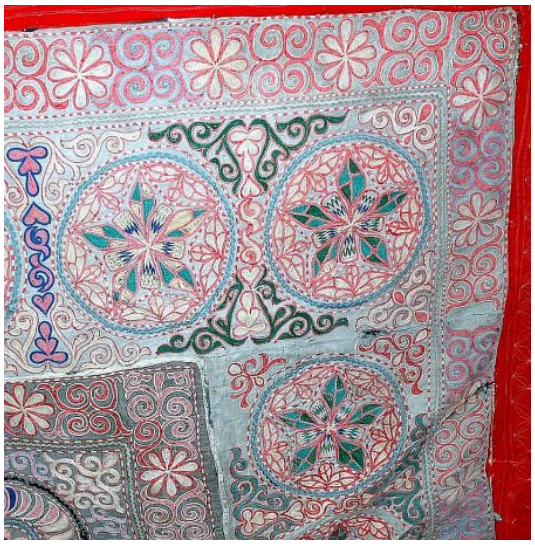
These hangings are silk hand embroidered on cotton, with a quilted edge on three sides also of cotton or velvet. The embroidery is mostly in chain stitch.

Below is a second of these hangings. Notice that these hangings have unfinished bottoms. It is said that the Kazakh makers do this for hangings made for a couple and that the unfinished bottom is to suggest that their marriage be one of unending happiness. They are often made by the bride's grandmother, or passed from mother to daughter, and even, sometimes, made by the bride herself, as part of her trousseau.

The designs in the outer areas of this one, seem similar to Kyrgyz felt designs.

The design in the center panel is very different, but we're not sure of its source.

The next hanging has a paler palette. It seems older. Its designs are elaborate.



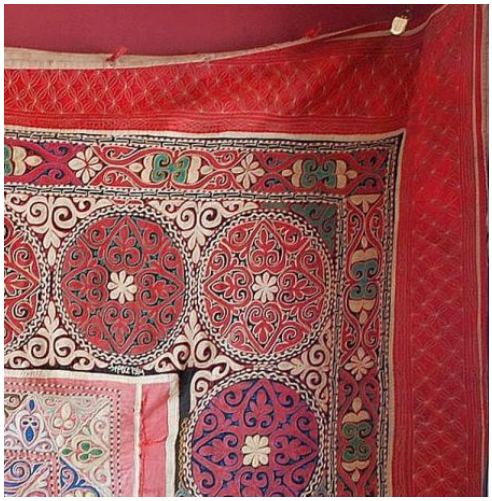
The next hanging features some of the seeming Kyrgyz, felt-sourced designs, and a centered area, the designs of which are distinctive, but of the same scale.

Details of this piece.

The next hanging has a darker palette. It hangs in a conspicuous place in Mehmet's shop. He thinks well of it.

It has a good range of color.

Next, is another Kazakh tent hanging that Mehmet displays prominently.



One of the most elaborate designs.

We move to a hanging with a five-star rondel design.

It is also a departure from the designs above in that it features birds and flower forms in it center area.

One more of these Kazakh tent hangings.

More seeming Kyrgyz felt design influence.

On last hanging image is of a fragment from one. This piece has only two rows of flower forms.

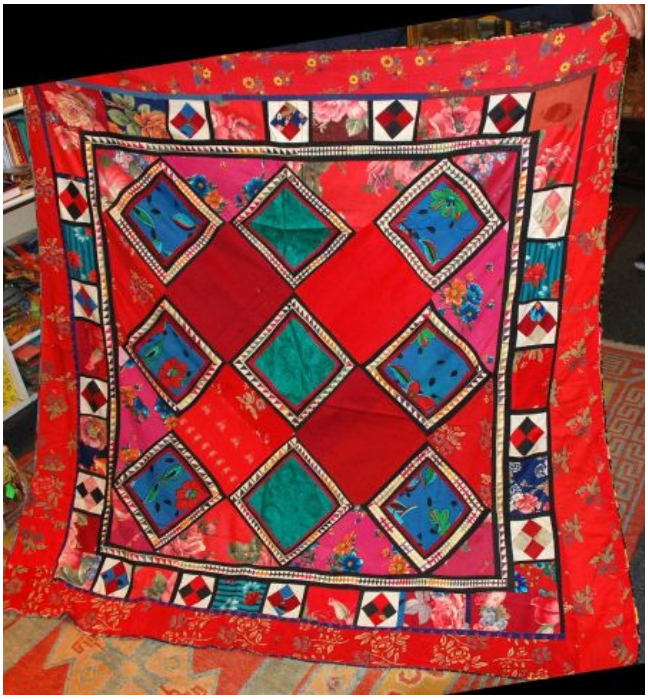
A closer look.

With we moved to what Mehamet sees as a Kyrgyz "suzani." Note the surrounding border and distinctive, flower-based rondels.

This piece is inscribed and dated 1959.

Another detail of its right side.

Another hanging, Uzbek. Applique. Some of the applique squares are Russian printed cotton.



S21 is another applique that is younger: the seeming ikat borders are printed. Needlework in the diamond applique areas. Another view.

The next piece seemed quite different.

Mehmet says that it's an Kyrgyz panel. The dark ground was woven first and then embroidered. The designs do not resemble most used by the Kyrgyz.

But below is an older Central Asian embroidery, 11th to 13th century.

50. *Animals, Birds, and Flowers*

Embroidery
37.1 × 37.8 cm (14⅝ × 14⅞ in.)
Eastern Central Asia, late 11th–early 13th century
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Rogers Fund, 1988 (1988.296)

And the Russians really liked flower designs in their printed cottons. Here is a modern version based on traditional Russian patterns.

So the piece above may be plausibly Kyrgyz.

Mehmet had several textiles he describes as "Lakai." The small piece below is, I think, the best of them.

Mehmet thinks this is not a village piece, not meant for the urban market.

Here are two details of it. It seems, also, to have been done using chain stitch.

The next piece is dramatic. Mehmet calls it a "bokche." Again embroidered.

This is an unusually elaborate bokche. Turkman bokches are envelope bags that look like this.

But Mehmet sees the piece below as a Lakai version of this kind of cover.

We often encounter this latter variety of bokche as V-shaped pieces like those below. The literature calls these V-shaped pieces "segusha."

Below is another, larger version of these V-shaped pieces.

Sometimes, the area above the V is filled in with black cloth, but in the case of S1, that area is richly embroidered.

One more comment about this latter type of bokche/segusha. It is also used to decorate the "juk" in a nomad tent. Most will know that the juk is a pile of the family's valued textiles that is placed in a place of honor opposite the tent door. The top (and widest) part of this bokche/segusha would be tucked in toward the top of the juk stack and hang down the front of it.

Mehmet next showed some other small Central Asian textiles. They are used as tent decorations or even used by women on the sides of their heads.

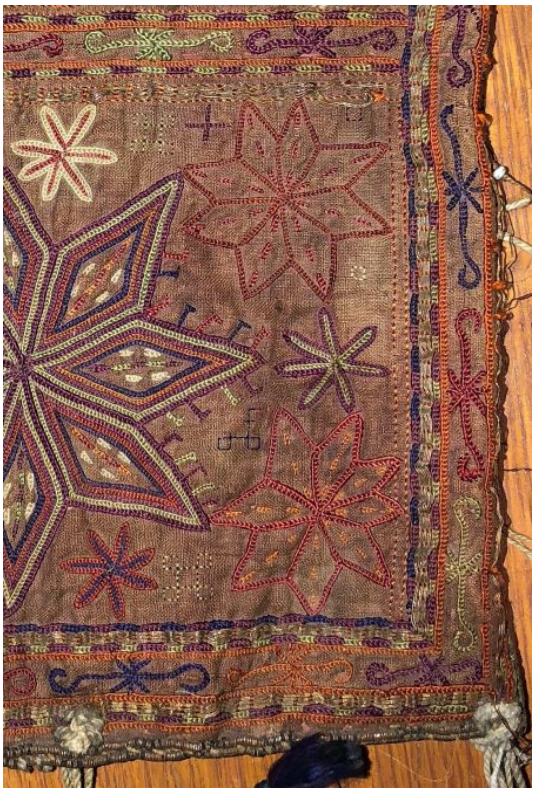
Here is one up close. There is lots of wrapping and use of tassels, including beads.

S3 is another Lakai hanging. It’s worn but is older and has good color and drawing.

The next piece was a small embroidiered cover.

An experienced person said afterward about this piece: "Embroidery is from Afghanistan, Katawaz, a Pashtun tribe. Typical example: fine work and funny colors."

The next piece was also small. Mehmet said about it "… a Uzbek girl's dowry purse, which is very finely done and it is silk. I remember picking it up in a dark, dusty, small Afghan Uzbek dealer's shop in Peshawar in 2006. I know it is old, maybe from the 1930's. It's a beautiful piece."



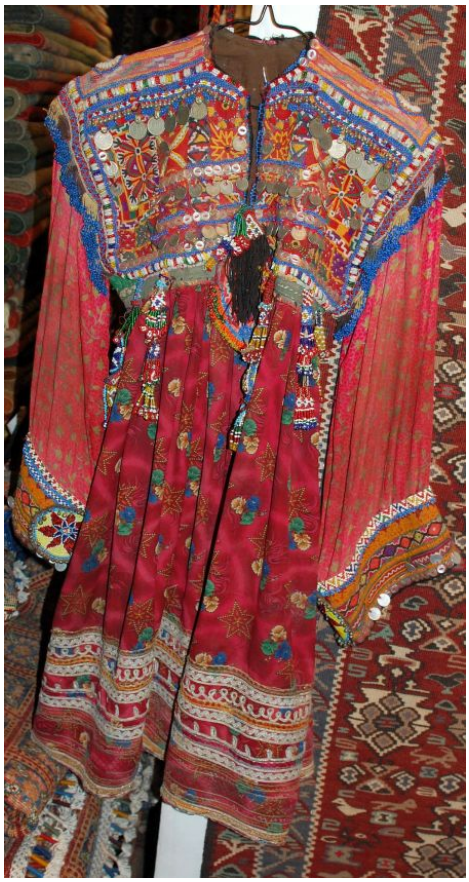
The next piece was less refined.

An experienced person said after that this piece is a "typical Kurgrat embroidery."

An experienced person said "This is Hazara, from Central Afghanistan (as opposed to the Hazara district of Pakistan that also produces embroidery). (I'm) not an expert on Hazara embroidery, but in Afghanistan, things like this were often placed on top of the tray of tea pots, cups, snacks when served to guests."

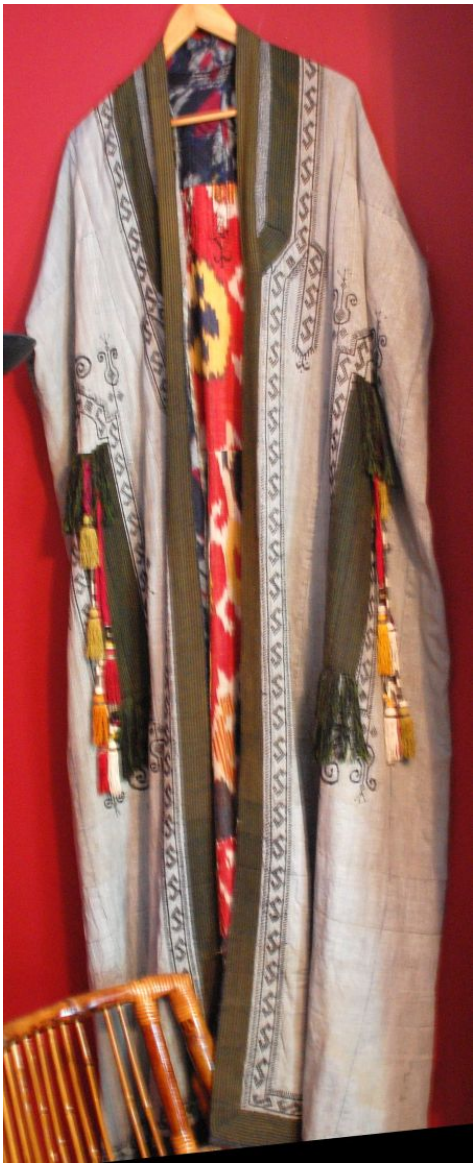
Below is another piece of Uzbek embroidery, about which we can say no more than that.

There were some dresses and coats. The first is below.



Mehmet described this dress as Afghan “gypsy.”

The next is a Turkman coat that is relatively simple on the outside, but has a gloriously colorful ikat lining.



The coat below is an embroidered Tekke Turkman chyrpy. Not a very fancy one but fully embroidered. It has a lining that seems older but that is hard to make out.

Mehmet wore a black quilted coat. He says that "It is a traditional Uzbek Chopan from Tashkent. The outside is silk, inside is Russian cotton material."

Here are two images of the inside of Mehmet's coat. Notice that the rectangular quilting is visible on the inside and that there are two kinds of printed cotton, one simulating ikat.

Closer.

John had the coat, below, in the room, but did not wear it. It was made here from material that is cotton and silk ground and contemporary Uzbek hand embroidery with an Ottoman pattern. He was not alert enough to order a Russian printed cotton lining and so the one it has a solid tan.

*

Mehmet says that this is a Turkman purse with silk embroidery.

There were some hats.

Let’s look at some of them more closely.

Mehmet says that it is a Turkman wedding hat for a man.

Mehmet says that the piece above is an Afghan "gypsy" hat. Metal, conch shell decorations.

This is an off topic hat. It's Tibetan and ends in a near scarf. Mehmet says that it is "a traditional Tibetan hat worn in Ladakh, Zanzskar and elsewhere in the eastern Himalayas in India."

The next hat was entirely beaded. Mehmet says that he "picked this hat from an Afghan Uzbek dealer in Peshawar, Pakistan in 2007. I was told it was a Turkmen wedding hat."

Mehmet had some Turkman pile pieces.

The first of these were some complete miniature Tekke khorjins. These three pieces are in perfect condition and the technical quality of the weaving is very high. Mehmet thinks they may have been

used as Koran bags. I estimate them at about 1910, on the basis of their knot ratio, which approaches 1/2. Mehmet thinks they're older.

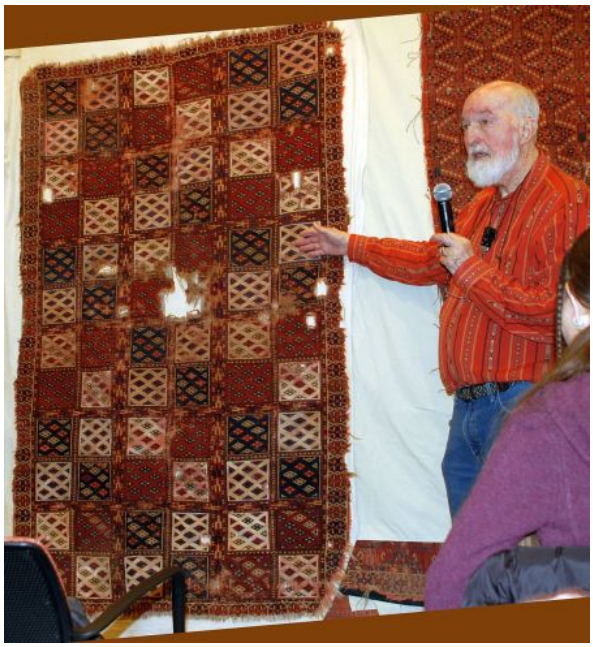
Animal forms (see the top of both pile fronts) are unusual in Turkman pile weaving.

They are nice pieces. Don't see many like them.

Comment: This is a Turkman pile torba with an ikat field design from the Middle Amu Dyra (formerly often called "Ersari"). 20th century.

The word "carpets" crept into the announced title of this session so we had to produce a few.

If you collect on a budget, as I do, your older pieces are often fragments.



The first carpet is from the Middle Amu Dyra area. We think it could be quite old. The narrow borders are one indicator and I know of only to others with this design. It has the brightest orange warps (which look natural) I have ever seen. It was published in the catalog for ICOC 10. There is one caution about a late date: this piece came to me mounted on a tan backing and there is some transfer of red to that backing that I can't explain if this piece is old.

A second carpet is this dilapidated but classic Chodor fragment.

Again, there are narrow borders.

And lots of cotton showing on the back.

And there are vertical, S-design, connecting panels between the diamond forms, the latter, composed of triangles. These S-tabs seem to be overlapping the diamonds and can be read as a 3-d effect.

I will offer this piece to the Textile Museum as a study piece.

A third carpet fragment is the Kizil Ayak piece below. Again, there are narrow borders, used both as a main border but also used to form compartments. This narrow border is the same one used in the Middle Amu Dyra main carpet fragment above.

This piece is so faint that it doesn't get much wall time. Note that there are animal forms in all the quarters of the major guls and that they, invariably, are standing upright and face one another (this is a directional rendition). And the minor guls in the center of the field are split by the main border usage that forms the compartments. I like compartmented designs and so forgive them for this aesthetic, desecration of the minor gul. Noting such features is one of the things that results in our being called "Turkomaniacs."

Another carpet fragment, I bought via the internet from a flea market in Jordan with the help of Filiberto Boncompagi, one of the technical manager on Turkotek.com It has dark warps, Caucasian-like borders, and interesting gul forms. The consensus is that it's Uzbek.

I sent it to Melissa Keshishian for mounting and she demonstrated how one can use a background color close to the field color of a rug to disguise the fact that it has two holes in it.

The next piece was, in fact, a large Middle Amu Dyra Turkman chuval, large and heavy enough to use on the floor. It is likely 19th century.

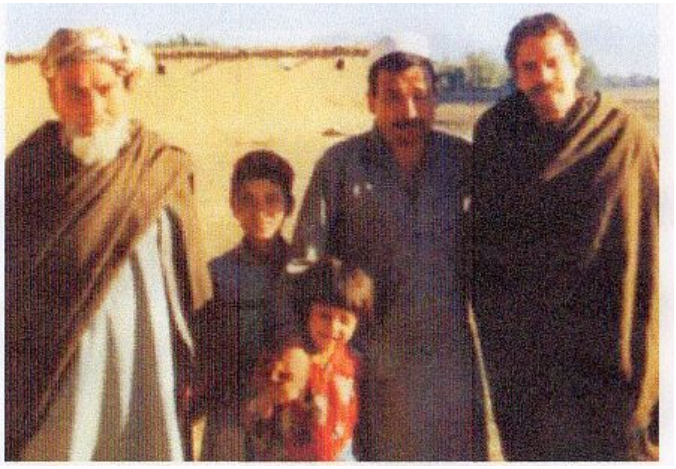
It has an ikat design similar to Mehment's torba, that you say earlier.

The piece below is a smaller Yomut chuval that I have also sometimes used as a throw rug.

It has a good green in some of its guls.

Sometimes when you're collecting on a budget, you're reduced to a mere strip of a main carpet and here is one. This is a lateral strip (not complete) from a Tekke Turkman main carpet. I feel confident that it's 19th century.

Most of the carpets I have on the floor, in our apartment, are from Chris Walter's non-profit "Ersari Project" production. Hand woven by Afghan Turkmen refugees in Pakistan.



Chris Walter (on right) and friends in Haripur Refugee Camp

Hand carded and spun. Woven with natural dyed wools. Traditional Turkman designs and colors. The weavers are paid and any additional proceeds are used to finance schools for Turkmen children. Chris and his Afghan partner have been doing this since 1988. Here is more information on this part of Chris' non-profit efforts.

https://www.yayla.com/rug/rug_page/ersari_about

The rugs I have from Chris' production are all from the Haripur refugee camp in Pakistan. Nowadays, the "Ersari" production has been moved to Afghanistan.

The scatter rug below is one of the first I bought from Chris.

When I first saw it, I thought might have been a somewhat conventionalized version of an Afghan "gul-i-gul" but found a near example in Jourdan (see 234 on page 234) attributed to the late 19th century. I like the big, blocky border that seems to me like the proportions of some early Woven Legends throw rugs.

Notice that this rug is inscribed (as many of Chris' Turkmen pieces are) in its lower right corner.

I can't read it, precisely, but I know what it says. "Turkmen Refugee Molla Ashir, Camp Haripour, 1373" (Afghan Calendar), that's 1995, 23 years old.

Sometimes I have asked Chris to make me a special order rug, often a copy of something I like. Here is one example.

A few years ago the Chicago dealer and collector. Joe Fell, gave a TM presentation and showed this Middle Amu Dyra bag face.

I took a photo of it and made an 8"x10" inch and sent it to Chris and asked him to copy it for me.

Now copying a rug is a challenging undertaking.

Think of the progressive kindergarten story where one child whispers a short story into the ear of the child next to her. She does that to another child, and that sequence goes on until a number of children have been told the story. Then we ask the last child to say out loud what the story is. Invariably, the story told by the last child does not resemble much what the first child told the second one.

Now come to the world of copying a rug. The customer gives a photo of the desired rug and says what size he wants and any color changes from the photo. The person who takes the order sends it to Pakistan. In Pakistan, a cartoon (knot for knot) of the rug in the photo is made. Then the wools to be used are selected, and the cartoon and the wool to be used, maybe even the photo, are given to the refugee family who is going to weave the custom rug. They do so and give the rug back for "finishing." The finished rug is sent back to the dealer who ordered it. You can see that there is a lot of chance for slippage. Maybe the carton is made in the wrong size or in the wrong orientation (say turned 90 degrees). Maybe the person supplying the wool doesn't have all the colors wanted. Maybe the weaver doesn't use all the colors prescribed. Etc.

It takes about a year to get a custom rug woven. When it was ready in this case, Chris shipped it to me. The image below is what is looked like. Compare it with the photo I sent.

You can see that the drawing is pretty good (these weavers can weave this rug), but that the colors used are not what were in the photo. Some colors have been left out. The copied rug is not "bad," but it has been conventionalized and is not really what I wanted. I confessed to Joe Fell that I had had his bag face copied and he asked me for a photo of the copy. When I gave it to him he, he liked it enough that he asked if I could get him another copy and I did. Footnote: The original ultimately sold at auction for $17K. Joe Fell no longer has the original, but he and I both have approximate copies.

The next rug is another of my special order Ersari Turkmen pieces, but this one has a little longer story that goes with it.

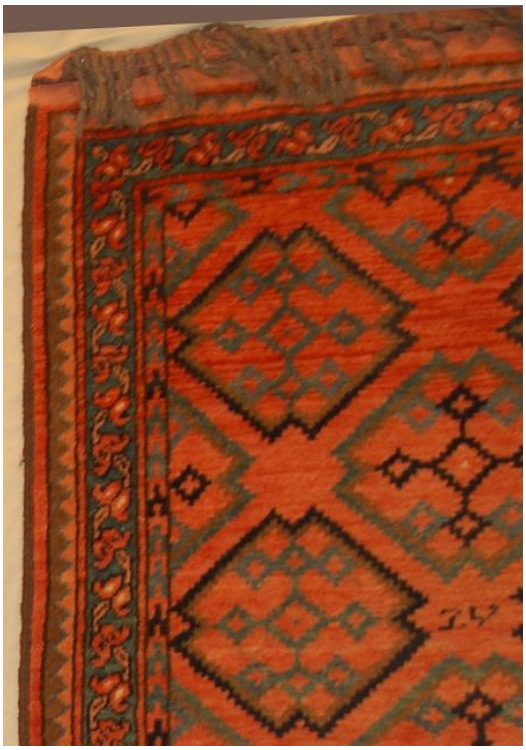
When I first began to collect and study Turkmen rugs I was given permission to work with the Textile Museum curatorial materials and encountered a design that I liked.

There was a photo of it and I had an 8” x 10” blowup made and sent it to Chris and said “Make this rug for me, about 3’ x 5’. “

Now it usually takes a year to get a special order rug made, and one day Chris called me and asked whether I could use a rug, in the design I had ordered, that was 13’ x 15’. Some serious communication problem had occurred and a hugely different size rug had been made. I said, no, I wanted a 3’ x 5’.

So another year went by and one day the rug arrived. It was more like 4’ x 6’ and looked like this.

In addition to being still a little larger than ordered, the white usage in the gul had been dropped out, BUT I had been given lots of a good green that collectors value.



I kept it. It is also inscribed in the field.

It reads: "Turkmen refugee Camp Haripour." Lower left text reads: "Turkmen." Lower right text reads "refugee." Upper left: "Haripour," and upper right: "Camp." I couldn't read the date underneath of it, but I think it is 1388. That's 13 years after 1995 and about right.

I want to be clear about these three efforts to copy a given pile piece. I mean no criticism at all of Chris' efforts. I think the difficulties are endemic to such a copying effort. I read somewhere that it usually takes three attempts to get a decorative rug, woven to order, to be what the customer wants.

The next piece I have from Chris' production is a Yomut asmalyk format and design, woven by Ersari weavers as a rug, and that's how I use it.

This is a contemporary pile copy of the face of a famous Yomut asmalyk design (a "jewelry" type). The jewelry devices are across the top.

One antique piece with this design was claimed to be on the market for $60K, in the days when the Oriental Rug Review was being published.

*

This is an Afghan Turkman pile saddle cover. Not Chris' production. Doesn't have great age, but they're not being made any more. It is included here because I use it as a throw rug. It's full pile and pretty tough. It has strong graphics that include a yellow that I think is natural.

If you collect on a budget and find yourself often with fragments, you begin to make pillows.

And I had brought some.

The pillow below is from a large fragment of a large, Afghan, Middle Amu Dyra Turkman carpet, with a gulli-gul.

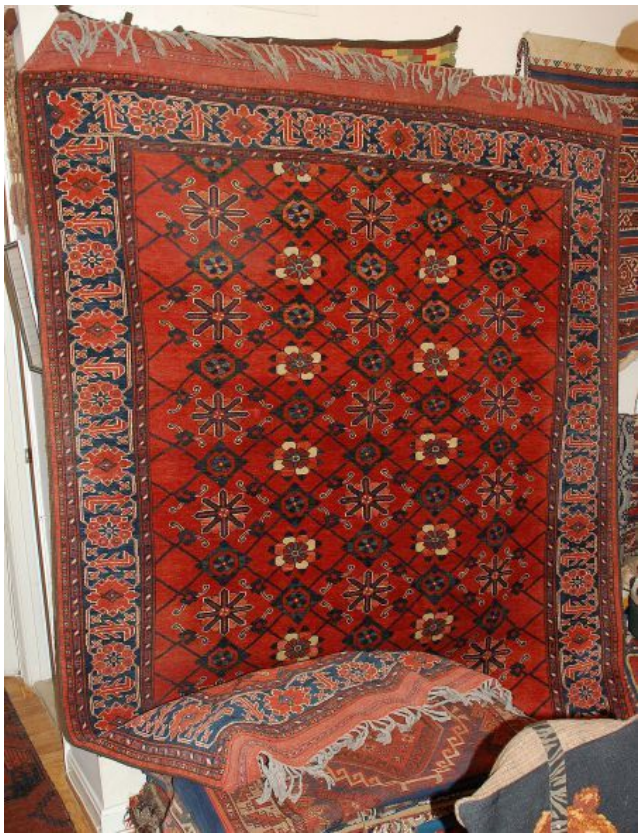
The next pillow is from the same carpet but focuses on the minor device (notice that there is also a "tertiary" device).

The pillow below is from a 19th century, Tekke main carpet, with an unusual use of green.

A final pillow is from one end of a Middle Amu Dyra rug with a mina khani design and what seems to me to be an archaic end border.

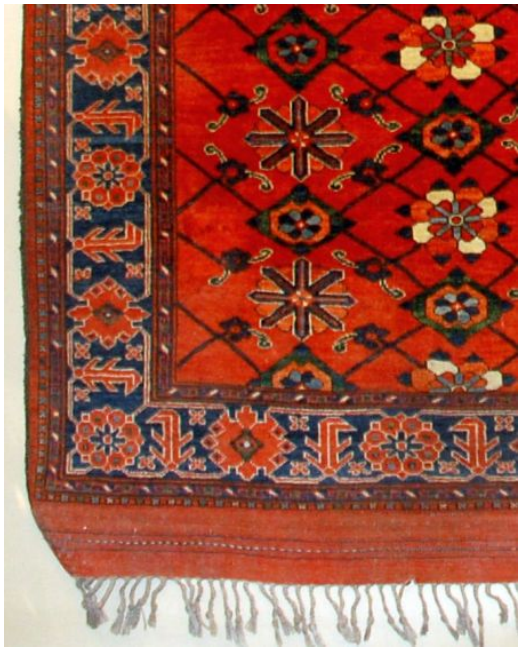
This is the end border that seems to me to be archaic, although I confess that I don't know, concretely, what that means.

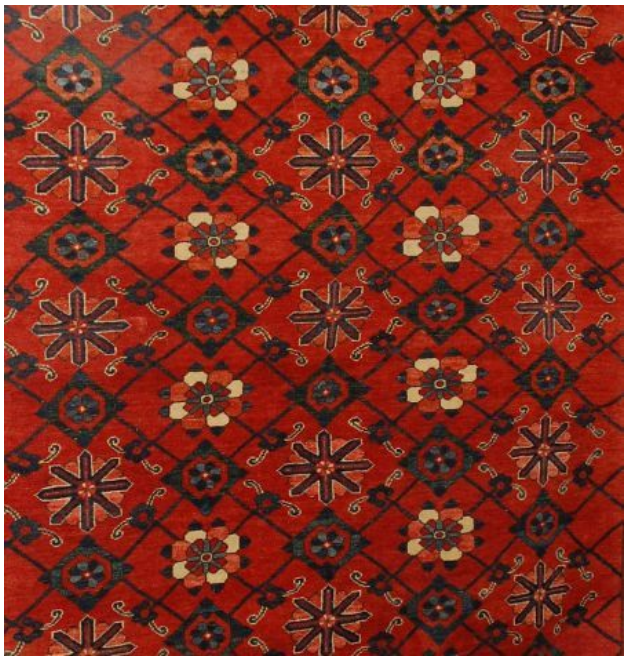
The last Turkman carpet I want to talk about is another special order from Chris Walter. This time I had seen that he was making a mina khani design and also the dark ground border in H10 below. I asked him to make me a 6'x 8' version of this rug with this dark border and the most saturated red ground in the field that he could manage. And he did it.



It is a special order rug that turned out to be precisely what I ordered and wanted. I look at it every day.

Here are some closer details of it.





Having discharge my obligation to produce some Central Asian carpets, I felt freed to show a fairly recent Central Asian purchase that is, I think, unusual.

This is a bag that is not woven. It is, instead, plaited. Marla Mallett, Andy Hale and Seref Ozen helped me with its attribution as Uzbek. Below is a closer detail of it.

I was attracted to it, in part, because for about five years, in the 70s, I was a serious knot tier.

I was told that such bags surfaced in Afghan markets, a while back, but that they were not picked up much because dealers were already having trouble selling things with a lot more color. I had not seen another before I bought this one from Marla, but, wouldn't you know it, another surfaced shortly

thereafter on rugrabbit.com.

I quite like it.

Colin England brought a piece that is another instance of copying. The piece below is from the Black Church in Transylvania. It is an instance of the famous "coupled-column" design. It is dated to the mid-17th century.

The image, below, is a copy of this rug, woven in Azerbaijan in 2018. Colin said he brought it to show modern production of "Central Asian" carpets that look a lot like Turkish carpets found in the

Balkans. (He said that he agrees with Mehmet that "Central Asia" is often too narrowly defined. He said he thinks it includes everything east of the Black Sea, except Iran.)

Designs, Colin said, travel with time. Actually, not much time is needed. A weaver can see a very old rug in a museum and often go home and weave it. Time can get telescoped.

I've talked a little too much about Chris Walter's contemporary Turkman carpet production, because I think the stories about trying to copy antique Turkman pieces are interesting.

But I want to end by highlighting Mehmet's contemporary production.

Mehmet has his own production in Turkey, Pakistan and Nepal. http://wovenhistory.com/

Here are a few pieces from this production. Mehmet says he uses only natural dyes.

First, Mehmet says are some pile rugs done in Afghanistan near Kabul. "They are woven by a Hazara tribe that we work with."

*

If you’re producing rugs for sale, it has been found that pieces that include recognizable devices from the Pazyryk carpet are popular.

A second set of pile rugs are those Mehmet says “are our Tibetan production pieces, that we produce in Nepal working with Tibetan Refugees.”

The pile rug above is one of the "folklike" type that have been produced in a number of producer settings. Woven Legends produced some early, and Afghan "war rugs" have been collected. This is a Tibetan folklife design. Note that it is inscribed and date. Such rugs are often attractive to buyers.

The pile carpet above is a contemporary one with an ancient field design, often referred to as "Chintamani." It 'is probably of Buddhist and Chinese origin," but "was widely used in Ottoman and Timurid ceramics and weavings from the 15th to the 17th centuries." (quoting Peter Stone and Mehmet).

A third sector of Mehmet's product are Anatolian, slit tapestry kilims, woven in the Konya province in Turkey.

Here is a detail of another kilim with a niche field design.

Another kilim with good color.

A detail of the kilim above.

The striped flatweave below is done, mostly, in weft-face tapestry. You can see some instances of brocade decoration and maybe even some weft twining.

With our last piece on Mehmet's contemporary production, we're back to slit tapestry.

We answered questions and brought our program to a close.

I want to thank Mehmet for working with me to give this RTAM and for his help, and Solar's, in fashioning this virtual version of it.

Thanks, too, to my wife Jo Ann, who took photos, and to Mehmet and Solar for additional photography, and other contributions, after. I had help from some experienced people, who want to be anonymous, but who also have my thanks.

I hope you enjoyed this post as we begin a New Year.

Regards,

R. John Howe[17]

[17] Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2019/01/

R. JOHN HOWE: TEXTILES AND TEXT

Virtual Versions of Textile Museum "Rug and Textile Appreciation Morning" Programs

Archive for January, 2019

"Potpourri" by David Zahirpour

Posted in Uncategorized on January 20, 2019 by rjohn

On January 12, David Zahirpour gave a "potpourri" program here at The Textile Museum, in Washington, D.C.

David is a long-time dealer and active member of the DC area textile community. He knows his rugs, and is often a Textile Museum resource on textile repair demonstrations, since his is a skilled textile and oriental rug restorer. He also has the only total immersion rug washing facility in the Washington, DC area.

David said that his own take on "potpourri" would be that all the pieces he had brought were bags or parts of one. He said that the weavers of these pieces were migrants and moved from place to place. Wool was plentiful to folks who were largely shepherds. Bags could hold things and were not breakable. He said that it seems likely that such pieces were made for the weaver's own use that that she would select the best materials and lavish her skill on them. Such things made bags interesting and, often, they could be quite beautiful.

He began with a large, mixed technique Tekke Turkmen chuval.

The skirt is pile as are narrow bands above it. This piece is very fine and the literature says that impression in the areas of narrow bands is, in part, because they have only one shoot of weft between rows of knots.

David says it is likely that the orange in this piece is from synthetic dyes but that he is not allergic to them, if they seem to be of the stable "carbon" variety, and do not, noticeably, run or fade rapidly. He estimates it 1920-30. He said that he's not sure that the blue-red ground, in the tapestry areas, is from cochineal.

Details below.

The next piece was a large, complete Bakhtiari chuval, with mixed technique

The field area of the front is sumak. The "bottom" of both halves of this chuval are done in pile. This is to permit them to tolerate abrasion and so extend the useful life of the chuval.

This piece has an unusual and interesting back.

Opie wonders why a weaver would invest this much creativity and care in the back of a textile that will not be seen much.

You can see in the image above, that the closure system is one of slits and loops. This is seen to be a Persian attribution indicator.

The next piece was a small, complete, Shahsavan khorjin. Again notice the slit and loop closure system.

The two faces of this piece are in reverse sumak. In reverse sumak, Marla Mallett says, the "normal front and back faces are reversed"…but that this term describes the front-side appearance of the structure, and does not indicate the side of the fabric from which it was worked.

Reverse sumak is very sturdy and tough. It will take a lot of wear.

Here is a detail of the plain weave, back of this small khorjin.

D4 is a complete half of a Shahsavan khorjin. Sumak. Good drawing and color. David said that although complete khorjins are found, half khorjins and khorjin faces are more usual. The white ground border frames nicely. This border is seen on some Turkmen textiles. Details below.

The next piece is a sumak side panel from a small cargo-type mafrash. A complete piece of this type would have a back panel of this same size and shape and two end panels that would be smaller and squarer. Good drawing and excellent color.

Notice that this side panel has borders all around it. Many Shahsavan mafrash bags have designs that are basically horizontal stripe arrays that continue all around on both ends and the other side panel. Mafrash side panels with borders all around are preferred by collectors. Mafrashes with a side panel with borders all around often have three other panels without designs.

Here is this panel turned to let you see a slightly larger version of it.

Details of D6.

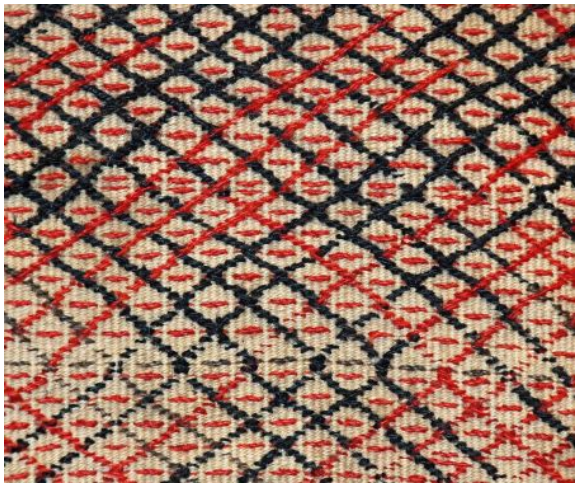
The piece below is a Bakhtiari salt bag. (This is, likely, the back. I'll show you the "front" shortly.) It is done in brocade with some twining visible.

*

David explained the the top narrower mouth the bag extended so that when salt was in it, it would flop over and down, close the opening, and preserve the salt.

Here is a large detail of the, likely, more decorated front of this salt bag. Again, mostly in brocade with some tapestry striping. David estimated it as 1920-30.

Note that there is a narrow band of pile along the lower edge of this bag, a Bakhtiari usage we saw above.



Details below.

The next piece was a complete khorjin opened up.

It was folded and held together to show what it looked like when sewn up.

Here is the front side when together. I have also turned it to give you a large image of it. The faces are done in sumak with a plain weave back and area with the slits.

Next was another complete khorjin opened up. This one was Qashqa'i with some visible synthetic dyes. The faces are pile and the backs are plain weave edged with pile.

Here is how this complete khorjin looks put together.

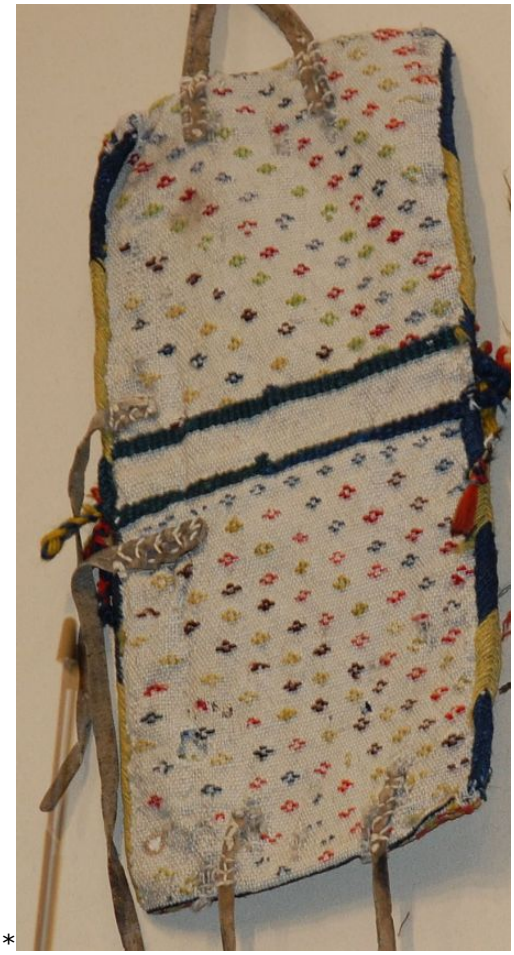
Details below.

The next piece was a Yomut Turkmen spoon bag. Pile with edge decorations. Such spoon bags are woven with the warps parallel to the short sides.

The small piece below is a complete Qashqa'i school bag. Done in tapestry decorated with brocade.

Details of D11.

The back of this piece is less interesting but has a different design.



Next was the very nice Turkmen pile piece below. (click on the image) David says it has an asymmetric knot open left and a fineness of 225 knots per square inch. It has a velvety handle.

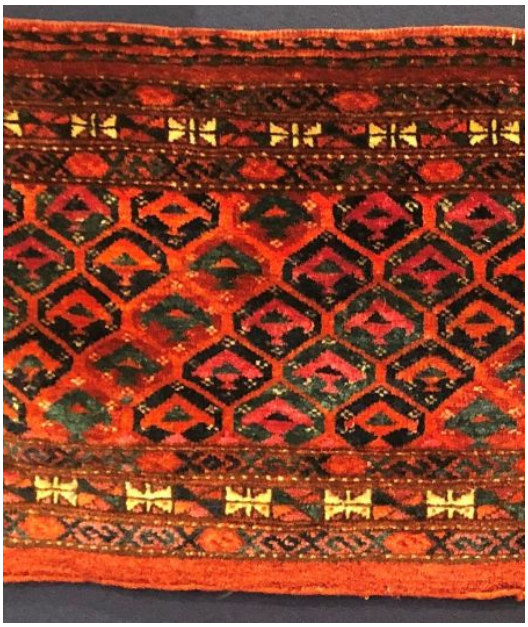
David described it as a Salor chuval, woven in the 19th century, in Char Juy on the Amu Darya River in Turkmenistan. The modern name of this town seems to be Turkmenabat. The literature now indicates that there were a great many tribes along the Amu Darya and that the Salor were visible among them.

Here is a map that shows Turkmenabat on the right center. (click on this map to get a larger image)

This piece deserves a closer look. Here are some details of it.

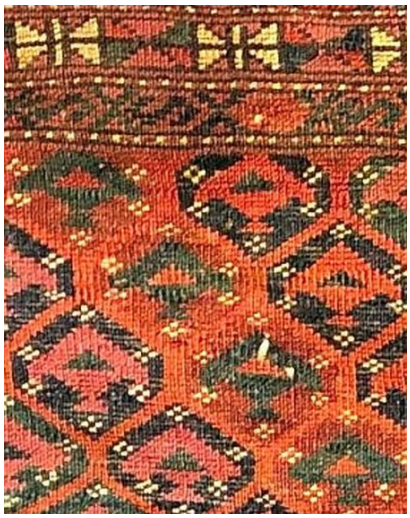
This bag has a lot more color in it than you see at first. There are several reds, one of which looks to be from cochineal. There is a strong green, a white, and what seems a black.

If the cochineal is real and on wool, rather than silk, we should check to see if the pile threads have more than two plies. Jurg Rageth found that the dying with cochineal on wool, with more than two plies, faded out about 1850, so its presence is a pretty clear age indicator.



Sometimes you can see colors better on the back. Here, below, is a large detail of the back of this piece.

There is some ridging of warps in the detail below(right), indicating some warp depression, something you would expect with a Salor weaving.



All in all a very nice piece.

The next piece was Baluch in a format we do not see frequently: a rifle cover. Done in pile with some flatweave varieties at both ends. Lots of tassels.

Details below. The image, below, is of the top where the rifle is inserted.

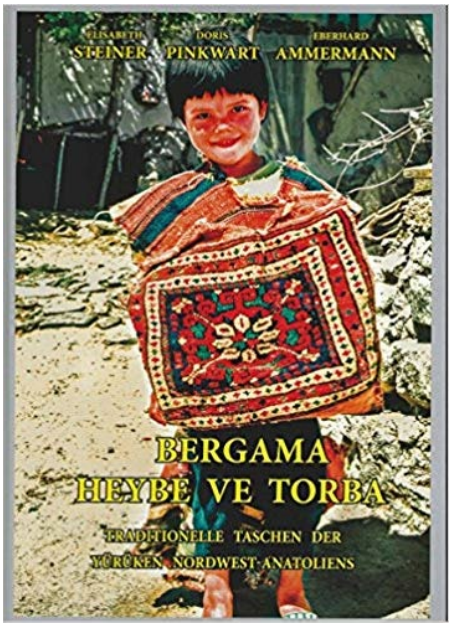
The piece below was a small, complete, miniature, half khorjin. Pile face with hanging cords at the top corners. Probably Tekke about 1910.

David said that the next, interesting, small, pile, Yomut, Turkman, bag: same design on both sides, could have been used in a variety of ways, but one likely one would be as a koran cover.

Someone has said that this piece is most likely a pair of camel knee decorations that have been sewn together. David has checked the selveges and says they seem to be original, but agrees that knee decoration indication is probably correct.

The next piece was an unusual set of bag in more than one way. David said that it was a Quashqa'i bag set with long connecting panels that fit over the head in a way like Anatolia heybes do. It is rotated 90 degrees below for viewing purposes.

Here is a Turkish child wearing a heybe



The faces of this Qashqa'i bag set are woven with areas of plain weave interspersed with those of long pile. These areas of pile are arranged in vertical rows and terminate at the bottom in similar tassels that hang down below the bottom edge of the bag.

The colors seem chosen for dramatic and graphic effect. Some synthetic dyes seem certain.

The connecting "shoulder straps" are done in weft-faced, tapestry with a zigzag design. Notice the long "slit' for the head.

I had seen lots of Anatolian heybes worn, with the head through slit, and the bags handing front and back, but I had not see a similar Persian example.

The next piece was a tall and relatively narrow Baluch mostly pile piece. There was comment in the room that it had the shape of a Baluch balischt, but David said a balischt is a pillow and this seemed to him to be a bag.

It has a back in mostly slit tapestry but also some brocade. Here is a detail of this back.

Notice that both the top and the bottom have flatwoven decorations but are different.

Additional details of this piece.

Some pieces had been brought in and we dealt with them next. The first of these was a Heriz in a scatter carpet size. It has nice, fresh Heriz colors and a "plant in vase" field design.

Heriz rugs are woven in far NW Iran about 50 miles east of Tabriz. They are woven with symmetric knots and longer pile. Edwards says that Heriz weavers can do something he has not seen other

weavers do. They can look a a scrap of a curvilinear design (often something from nearby Tabriz) and weave a version of it that is rectilinear.

Detail of the back of this piece.

The next piece was described by its owner, at David's question, as a Caucasian bag. David examined it closely, saying that the side selveges are not original. He called attention to an unusual red and the edges of the central medallion. He agreed that it is Caucasian.

It has this back that might seem a little incongruous but which is woven on warps that continue, from the front pile face, without interruption.

The next piece was a nice Veramin bag face. David liked it a lot. Good drawing and colors. A great many groups moved through the Veramin area and so lots of influences are visible. Someone wrote that even some Tekke Turkmen were seen.

(click on the image above to get a larger version)

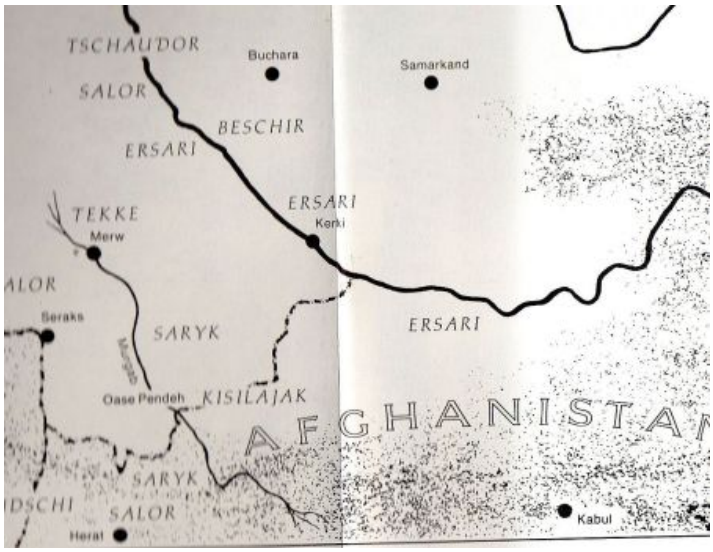
Some has suggested that this panel is not that of a torba-like envelope bag but rather the front panel of a cargo-type mafrash bag. David agrees.

Details of this piece.

Its owner said that the next piece was a Saryk torba. It is well drawn and, as is often the case with darker pieces, has a wider range of color than one initially thinks (there are several reds and a striking blue).

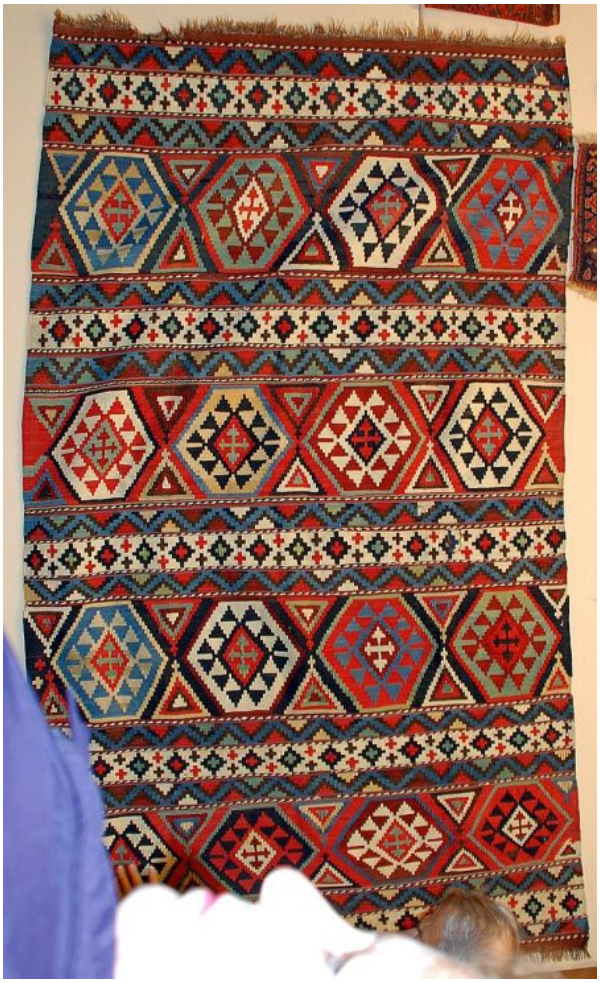
It did not have some classic Turkmen Saryk features, like a symmetric knot and cotton whites. But there were Saryk weavers in Afghanistan.

Below is a detail of a map Schurmann supplies in his "Central Asian Rugs" which shows Saryks in Turkmenistan and Afghanistan in the Pendeh area.



I had thought the the major gul form seemed less that typically Saryk, but Jourdan shows a 19th century Saryk torba with precisely this same gul (p. 87, item 29) as well as the rectangular blocks below and above it. So this piece may well be a late 19th century Saryk weaving.

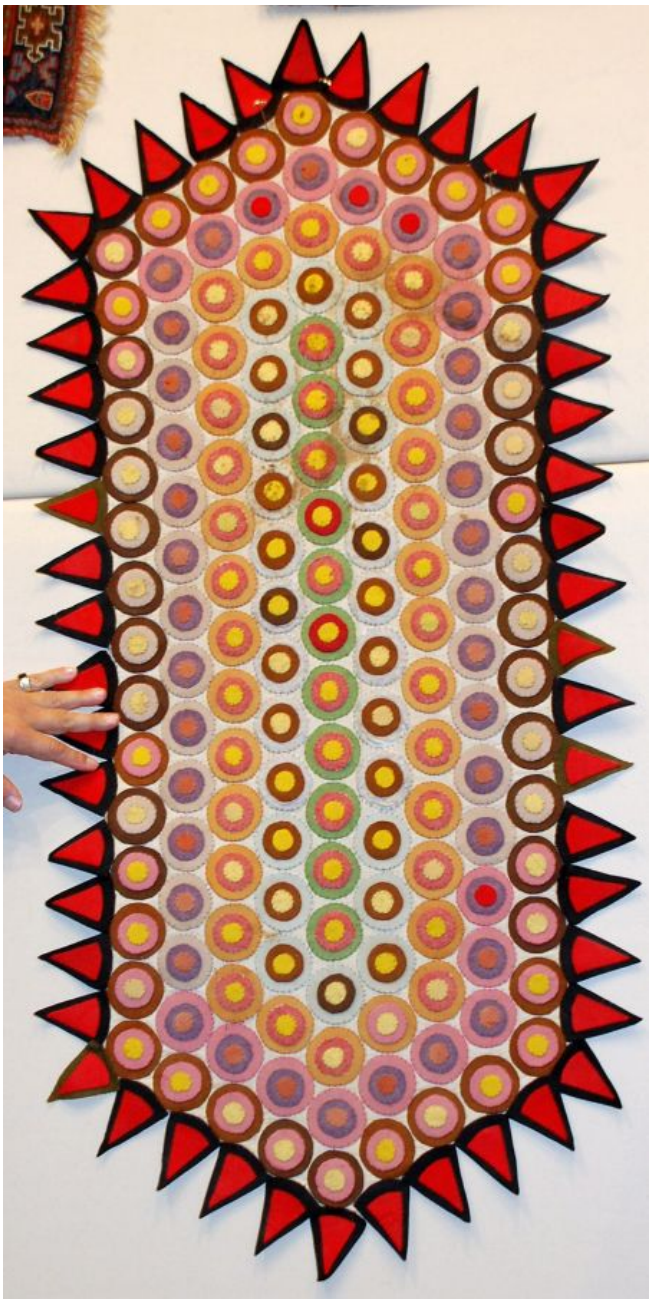
Next was a small Caucasian mostly slit tapestery Shrvan kilim, with nice fresh colors. David liked its small size that would make it easier to display variously.



Details of this piece.

David had suggested that one test for the kinds of things we should bring to this potpourri RTAM would be pieces that we had not been able to part with. I tried to follow this rule.

A first piece that I brought was the "penny rug" below.



I have written about this piece and others like it,before, on Turkotek, in early 2004. It might be best just to give you the link:

http://www.turkotek.com/salon_00104/s104t2.htm

One caution about making a post like this one on Turkotek. At the point that I wrote it, I had seen a few other penny rugs, but owned only this one. But, quickly, after making this Turkotek post, I began to get contacts by groups making penny rugs, asking me to come and speak to them. I had to confess that I had only one and was not at all an expert.

Today, while writing this, I looked around the web and found this treatment that may provide some additional information.

https://pennyrugsandmore.blogspot.com/2017/02/a-history-of-penny-and-sewn-rugs.html

Enough about penny rugs,

A second piece I bought was this flat-woven Baluch strip that my wife bought in Berkeley, CA over 20 years ago.

Here is an end detail of the back. You can see that it's a strip of mostly sumak, folded over and sewn down on the sides.

A first question is what is it? It's clearly taken from something but a lot of people have looked at it and we have not had certain answers.

A second question is about the design. We have not seen it before.

David proposed an answer to the first question. He said that he was certain that this was a center connecting strip from a Baluch khorjin. The two bags hung down from it.

He agreed that the design is unusual.

The last piece of the day was an instance of my discovering I was mistaken about something I thought I had researched successfully long ago. The piece in question was this small weaving. Flat-woven mostly in sumak with some plain weave. It has good crisp drawing and fresh colors.

I've owned this piece for over 25 years and, as I say, I thought I had researched it. It seemed to me likely an item of Kurdish weaving from northeast Iran, Kurasan, about which Wilfried Stanzer had written the book "Kordi."

In his book shows the piece below that seems very similar to mine.

He describes this piece as a "Kordi Tobreh Posti."I had read somewhere (I thought perhaps in Stanzer's book) that "poshti" was sometimes translated as "small rug,"

When I said that to David before our session began, he immediately said that my piece was part of a bag. This turned me around because I thought I had researched it.

So after this session I went back to confirm my research and the results have been humbling.

First, "poshti" is nowhere translated as "little rug." The seeming preferred translation is "back."

Next, I turned to Stanzer to see what he said and he also sees "poshti" as part of a bag. In his description of the piece above he uses the terms "Kordi Tobreh Poshti." He says that a tobreh poshti could be part of a khorjin, and he shows khorjins similar to the two pieces above. Here is one with the same side borders.

But he says a "tobreh poshti" is more likely to be a "small shoulder bag for provisions and utensils."

It has taken me at least 25 years but maybe, finally, I've got something right about my little Kordi piece.

Thank you, David.

Stanzer ventures that "the palette, the clear and accurate design and the structure of (ed. his similar piece above) are typical of the Lain area." He gives a good map that shows Lain to be on the far eastern side of north Kurasan, near what was once the USSR border.

I probably should not tempt things with a geographic speculation.

David answered questions and brought his session to a close.

I want to thank David for preparing and giving this useful potpourri program. David also worked with me, after, to fashion this virtual version. I also had excellent help from other experienced folks who want to be anonymous.

Sometimes not a lot of structure is needed to put on a program that is both entertaining and that results in real learning. I can testify in this case.

I hope you have enjoyed, even learned a little from this RTAM.

'Til next time,

R. John Howe[18]

[18]Retrieved by the Arthur D. Jenkins Library on 5/11/19 from: https://rjohnhowe.wordpress.com/2019/01/