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Naksha-I-Gashta: A Changed Design

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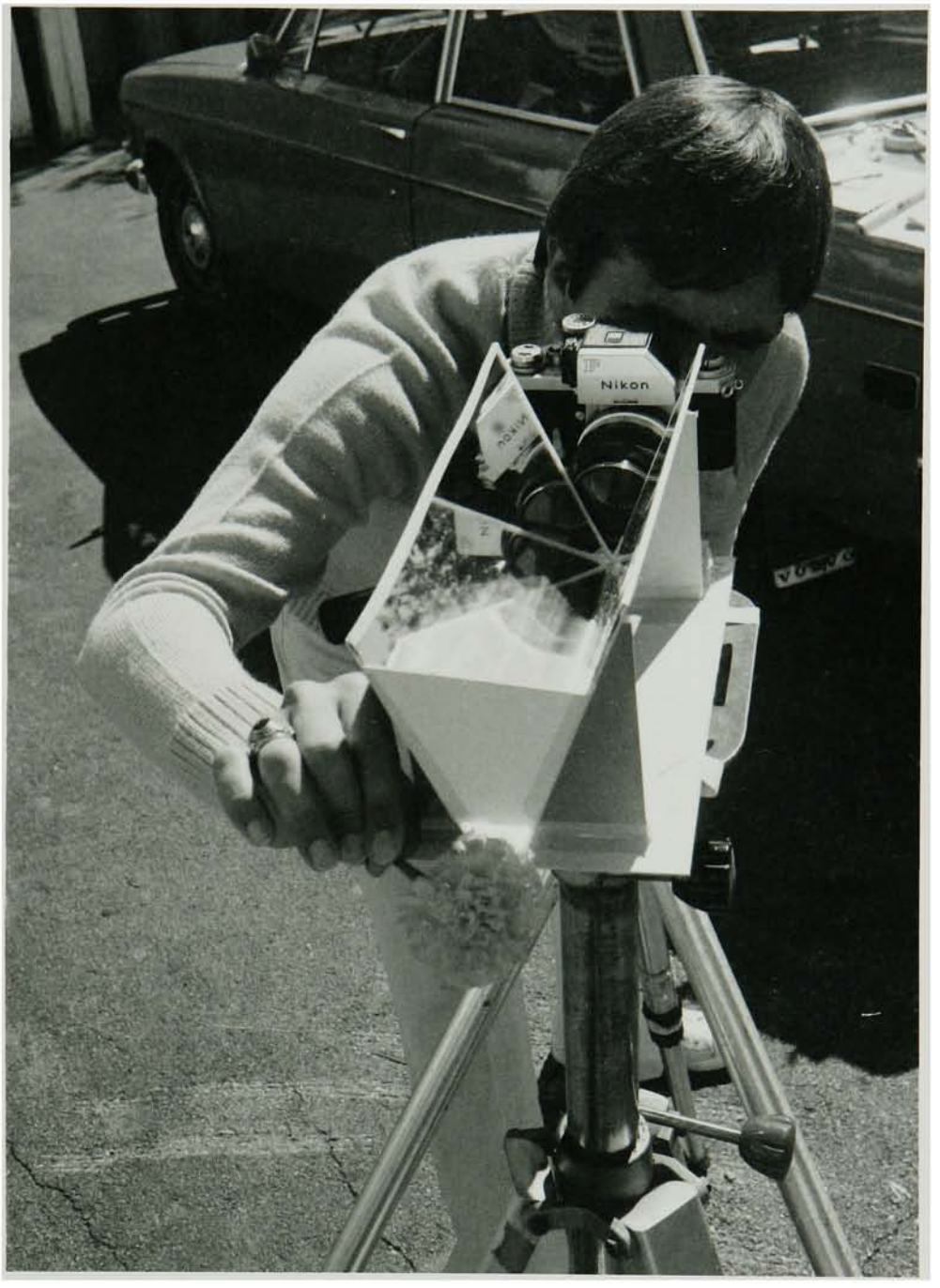
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ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

NAKSHA-I-GASHTA: A CHANGED DESIGN

A WRITTEN THESIS TO ACCOMPANY THE
FLOOR TAPESTRY, NAKSHA-I-GASHTA
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF FINE ARTS,
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IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF TEXTILES

BY
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To my wife, Nancy

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Preface

The design abstraction used in the octagon of Naksha-i-Gashta came from photographing various objects through a kaleidoscopic attachment on the camera. I would like to thank Mr. Richard Margolis for his excellent work in this area. I would also like to thank Ms. Pamela Pearlman for photographing the daily progress of Naksha-i-Gashta. This progress is seen in CHAPTER V, Naksha-i-Gashta: A Photographic Essay. I would also like to thank Dr. Brian Spooner for providing the photographs of antique carpets seen in photos #1, 2 and 3 of the photo essay section.

A special thank-you goes to Mr. George W. O'Bannon, author of The Turkoman Carpet, for his permission to use any illustrations found in his book.

Introduction

The purpose of my thesis, Naksha-i-Gashta, was to bring together those design and weaving influences which were the result of my experiences in the textile crafts of Afghanistan and Greece.

The piece, Naksha-i-Gashta, (hereafter referred to as NIG), incorporated techniques common to Greece and Afghanistan along with some indigenous techniques common to each region. The Afghanistan experience manifested itself through the use of the Turkoman (specifically the Ersari and Chob Bash tribes) design parameters. The Greek influences came through in the use of Greek Soumak, used in secondary border areas, and in the approach to the tapestry areas seen in the interior of the octagons (guls).

The Turkomans were originally semi-nomadic peoples who inhabited today's regions known as the Turkmen, Uzbek and Dara-Kalpak Republics of the U.S.S.R. as well as the area along the Afghan-Russian boundary and northwest Iran.

Concentrating my research into the nature of the Turkomans and their beliefs surrounding their carpets and carpet designs, I was able to manipulate historical data for aesthetic purposes.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL HISTORIC BACKGROUND OF CARPETS

Thematic Introduction

The rug weavers of Central Asia were generally nomads who had been "...exposed to aesthetic influences of whose rule [they were] unaware...."[1] Carpets appear to have been dedicated to serving God through symbolism. Tribal women, professional craftsmen or itinerants and master carpet weavers (maheus or ma'allem) were involved in carpet production.

An imagination for decoration, for adaptive decorative foresight, really, was perhaps the most needed aspect of the multi-faceted talents of the ma'allem or individual rug producers. Because of the complexity of design and the laborious production pace, human imperfection caused unavoidable mutations in the nature of individual designs or design elements. The rug producer or his amateur counterpart never stopped to correct a mistake once weaving began. It was the responsibility of the weaver to adjust his or her work so that mistakes were incorporated into design. Such a feeling for the weave is still common today. "One can imagine the variations that such a manner of proceeding could introduce in the regional themes."[2]

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[1]Robert de Calatchi, Oriental Carpets, 2nd ed. (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle, 1970), p. 3.

[2]Ibid., p. 4.

Rug art went beyond mere decoration and sometimes bore witness to conscious, metaphysical values. To these Central Asian peoples, the rug consisted of a mixture of elements of society and race. If the nomad sought contemplation or solitude, the rug was there as a metaphysical headwater. But in approaching these metaphysical values some startling color combinations took place since to the weaver "...such details [as color combinations] scarcely mattered...."[3]

Such give-and-take attitudes towards color and accuracy of design reproduction influenced the weaving of Naksha-i-Gashta with respect to two parallel thematic concerns: (1) placement and intensity of color and (2) abstraction of design through continuous repetition. An awareness of the kaleidoscopic nature of Turkoman design, and an understanding of the impact of environment upon aesthetics and investigation of rug metaphysics were all a by-product of my investigation.

Ambiguity of Origins

The common denominator of the Asian peoples has always been the use of the carpet as an integral part of their private and spiritual lives. The carpet's use was determined by the general conditions in which people lived, serving well as insulation in a dry and windy climate and proving itself easily transportable. Fabricated from materials which were abundant and indigenous, the carpet represented the perfect embodiment of man's adaptation to environmental aesthetics.

The ambiguity of rug origins is due to the fragile nature of textiles. So few carpets have survived today that to determine where, when and by whom the craft originated is useless. Before 1949 there

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[3]Ibid., p. 5.

was the theory that pile carpets originated during the 6-8th century A.D. in Egypt or Mesopotamia. This belief held wide acceptance since most of the West's knowledge of early civilizations sprung out of these areas and most of the rugs known to the West came to Europe from Turkey, Iran and the Middle East. At this time the oldest known historically dated carpets were 13th century Turkish and Iranian pieces. Major study of pile carpets even today is still confined to those survivors of the 13th century A.D., the Golden Age of Shah Abbas the Great (Persia, 16th century) and those examples illustrated in 14th-15th century paintings by Italian, Flemish, German and Dutch masters.

Upon the discovery in 1949 of a pile carpet in the Altai region of the U.S.S.R. (about 50 miles from Outer Mongolia), this theory of carpet origins was proved to be unfounded. This particular pile carpet, since named the Pazyryk carpet, was found preserved in ice in a tomb of the Scythian nomads, a tribe of Iranian origin. The burial site and articles within the tomb date to 500 B.C. thus proving that pile rug weaving was known in Hither Asia at that time and that the art of carpet weaving did not suddenly appear nor develop as only an imitation of animal skins. Schlosser, in his book, The Book of Rugs, states, "...[the rug]... more likely developed as a mobile substitute of mosaics."[4] Since the Scythians were influenced by the Greeks, such an explanation seems plausible. Excavations at Olumthus (modern Olinthos in Macedonia, Greece) have brought to light colored mosaics with mythological scenes and animals of every kind dating from the 4-5th century B.C. "Why, then, should not a nomad prince have longed for similar decoration for his tent."[5]

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[4]Ignace Schlosser, The Book of Rugs: Oriental and European, (New York: Bonanza Books, 1960), p. 17.

[5]Ibid.

The dating of Turkoman rugs is more difficult because of a limited amount of historical, archeological and scientific information. Earliest known Turkoman carpets have been generally placed in the 18-19th centuries A.D. A good deal of this lack of knowledge is due to the life style of the Turkomans during their peak rug weaving period as well as the tribes' physical isolation in Central Asia during the same period.

The Geography of the Turkoman Rug

Rug classification is grouped into these major categories: Anatolian (Turkish); Caucasian; Persian; Turkoman; Chinese and Balkan (of which Greece is a part.)

The Turkoman rugs were classified as follows: Ersari, Yomud, Tekke, Salor, Sariq, Chaudor, Kizil Ayak, Penjdeh and Khiva (Afghan.) These names were used to classify rugs before 1884 (the fall of the Turkoman stronghold of Merv (Mary) and came into usage through the books of Hartley Clark and Amos B. Thacher published in 1922 and 1940, respectively. The names often seen today such as Bokhara, Khiva and Beshire were merely geographic points for collecting the rugs before shipment to Russia, Istanbul or Beirut.

The rugs of the Turkoman territory were unknown to the West until the end of the 19th century when Russia took control of this region, Transcaspia. The first man to take an interest in these rugs as objects worthy of aesthetic judgment was General Andre Bogolubov (Bogoliouboff) during his official work in the region between 1900-1905. He collected 130 examples which were then presented to Czar Alexander III. General Bogoliouboff was among the first to recognize and catalogue the carpets according to the major design characteristics--especially those designs found in the central portion of the rug. The fine lithographic studies, published along with the text, served as a major inspiration for

Naksha-i-Gashta. These patterns or guls, entirely geometric in approach, go back to the old Turkish and Central Asian traditions.

To isolate and analyze Turkoman carpets for aesthetic values only is to see them in half of their potential force. To appreciate them we must try to understand the people who made them and who expressed the phenomena of life through them.

Central Asia, the traditional homeland of the Turkoman, has probably seen more major ethnic movements than any spot on earth. Turkestan has been conquered by the Medes, Persians, Tartars, Monguls, Greeks, Romans, Turks, Russians and the Chinese. One is certainly struck by this historic ebb and flow of the land's history when one sees the world's largest standing Buddha (at Bamiyan) in a land most conservatively Muslim. The ethnic groups of the region include Turkomans, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tadjiks. The intermarrying of Mongol and Caucasoid stock has produced today's Turkoman.

The topography of the land is one of aridity--desert, steppe and high mountains. It is bounded on the west by the Caspian Sea; on the south by the Kopet Dagh Mountains of Iran, and the Parapamisus and Hindu Kush ranges of Afghanistan; to the east by the Pamirs and Tien Shan Mountains; and to the north by the Kazakh Steppe on a line running roughly from Lake Balkhasa to the east to the northern tip of the Aral and Caspian Sea. Most of this territory is in the modern Soviet Union.

Within the area, the dominant features are the Kizil Kum and Dara Kum deserts. The Amu Darya River (the ancient Oxus) and the Syr Darya (the ancient Jaxartes) are the two major rivers of Central Asia. The Caspian and Aral Seas and the mountain ranges mentioned earlier lie to the south and east, respectively.

General Historic Background of the Turkoman

Political power concentrated itself in three major cities of the area: Bokhara, Samarkand and Khiva. Contacts with the West began with Alexander the Great. Alexander is believed to have founded two cities, Merv (Mary), now in the U.S.S.R., and Bala Murghab, now in modern Afghanistan. With the death of Alexander the Great the area became part of the Graeco-Bactrian culture. In the time span from the death of Alexander to the Arab conquests in the 7-8th centuries A.D., the area had little contact with the Roman and Mediterranean peoples.

In the 7-8th centuries the militant Arab Islams destroyed the older Persian culture of Sasanian times. The Arabs made their capital in Khorasan (northeastern Persia.) Samarkand became the capital of Transoxiana--that area between the two rivers Amu Darya and Syr Darya.

By the 10th century A.D. when Turkomans had migrated from Mongolia, Bokhara had been made capital of Transoxiana and Khorisan. During the latter half of the 10th century A.D. the Arab historians first used the terms Turkomans and Turks to describe the natives of the area. These Turkomans were also known as Oghuz (an ancient ancestral tribal head) and appeared to be related to the Toguz-Oghuz in Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang.)

According to the descriptions of life styles that have been recorded from the 10th to the 20th centuries, the Turkomans changed very little. They were semi-nomadic herders, well adapted to their harsh environment. They raised sheep, goats, cows, camels and horses in order to barter for other goods in the marketplace. These people followed the grazing lands from summer to winter pasture in what Douglas L. Johnson, in his book, The Nature of Nomadism: A Comparative

Study of Pastoral Migrations in Southwestern Asia and Northern Africa, calls horizontal nomadism.

The political structure is notable in that the Turkomans never established an empire which exercised political control over Central Asia as did the Arabs and the Uzbeks. There was no position of king, khan, or shah. The men functioned as elders or advisors by the authority granted to them by the clan. This heirarchy was due to the nomadic and social structure inherent in the Turkoman life. Each person was able to accept or reject advice. There was no grand council of elders. Unity came about only because of the common meeting ground of language, family ties or common historical past.

Islam and Arab influences spread slowly through the area. It was on the edge of the Arab Empire and the only contact made was for trade and commerce. In 992 A.D. the Arab ruler of Bokhara turned to the Seljuk Turks for military support and helped to establish the importance of the Seljuks and the Turkomans as soldiers and as mercenaries. In the 9-10th centuries the Turkomans expanded into the Manghislak Peninsula on the Caspian Sea. The 11th century was important in that it was this century which established the geographic boundaries that lasted until the 19th century. The Arab historian, Mahmud Kashghari and Rasid al Din, of the 11th and 12th centuries, A.D. recorded the names of the Turkoman tribes. Kashghari listed 22 tribes and Rasid al Din listed 24. Later in 1660 Abdul Ghazi Bahadur gave a detailed history of the Khan of Khiva. Thus, the Turkomans are unique in that their geneology is complete, although they themselves had no written language or documents.

The Turkomans took the rug weaving craft into newly conquered lands. By the 13th century, Arab geographers were commenting about the

rugs made by the Turkomans of Anatolia (Turkey.) However, the main body of Turkomans remained in Central Asia. The Turkomans eventually fell to Genghis Khan of Mongolia. This is an important fact since this new domination led to the introduction of Chinese influences into the art of the region. Such peoples as the Safavids (basically of Turkish stock) of Persia brought with them out of their ancient Chinese ancestry a belief in the favorability of the center of the universe as a source of cosmic power. This centralistic viewpoint dominated Safavid art. It was concerned with light and the metaphysical sun as a source of that light--symbolized in the Central Asian Sunbird.

During the 16th to the latter half of the 19th centuries, the Turkomans consolidated the lands along the eastern Caspian Sea, south Central Asia and the Amu Darya. The Turkomans never exercised political control but merely control due to their presence.

The Turkomans not only warred against major political powers, but also among themselves. This was especially true in the 19th century. The purpose of such inter-tribal wars was to gain control of ever decreasing winter grounds and grazing grounds. The first half of the 19th century saw a major change in Turkoman location due to wars with Persians and Khivans. It was at this time that Czarist Russia entered and established political control. In 1863 Russia controlled Central Asia from the northern Caspian Sea to the Aral Sea and the north bank of the Syr Darya. By 1874 Russia controlled Khiva, Bokhara and the lands west from the Caspian Sea to Kizil Arvat. This Russian interference proved to be the major factor in the increasing inter-tribal wars of the period--especially between Tekke, Sariq and Salor.

Because of this increased Russian activity, Persia and British India were seeking the establishment of their own spheres of influence.

This, sadly enough, caught the Turkomans between the three powers and altered the nature of Turkoman life and thus altered their rug design purity. In 1881 the Russians took the Tekke stronghold of Geok Teppe and three years later, in 1884, the stronghold of Merv fell to the Russians. With British help the Afghans occupied Penjdeh and finally gained control of the area established by the Russo-British boundary commission. 1887 saw the establishment of a well defined border between Russia and Afghanistan with both countries claiming the Turkomans as citizens.

The political actions of Soviet Russia have caused the nomadic life of the Turkoman to cease. They have no real herds and the land belongs to the State. The Turkomans have been integrated into Soviet life. In Afghanistan, those Turkomans who emigrated from Russia between 1874 and 1930 have become farmers. Settling into a sedentary life has altered the designs of their rugs with the establishment of cottage-industry weaving. Such studios have become prone to the dictates of the Western designer market.

The Turkomans living in Afghanistan before the 1874-1930 migrations maintained their own life style. They have large flocks, roam most of northern Afghanistan, but no longer cross the Afghan-Russian border. They chiefly produce rugs and raise Karakul sheep for the pelts.

The Turkoman Nomad

The life style of the traditional Turkoman was characterized as semi-nomadic. The degree of nomadism depended upon the area inhabited and the social structure of the tribe. The areas inhabited were the harsh, poor, marshy and mountainous areas around the Caspian Sea; the oasis of Kara Kum and Kizil Kum; and the arid mountains of Kopet Dagh. Those Turkomans located around the shores of the Caspian Sea were more

sedentary in that they farmed, fished and had extensive herds of sheep, cows, goats, horses and camels. Semi-permanent settlements were located on the outskirts of irrigation canals of the Amu Darya near permanent Uzbeks and Tadjiks. The oases of Kara Kum at Merv, Yolatan and Penjdeh offered permanent settlements. There, Turkomans maintained their own canals, but still herding was the major occupation.

In his book, The Turkoman Carpet, George W. O'Bannon noted a division between the nomad and the permanently settled Turkoman. In general, the nomad or chorva was responsible for herds, while the chomur[6] was responsible for the farming. The chorva had the higher status within the tribe. Upward mobility was possible and depended upon the individual's ability to bring himself into the class.

The chorva would remain encamped for weeks at a time yet maintained a contact with their settled cousins. They established grazing lands and disputes over those boundaries led to war. This chorva nomadic existence was characteristic of the Yomuds, Tekkes, Sariq, Salor and Ersari tribes and was built around nomadism with permanent settlements at wintering sites. Chorva groupings moved with flocks through spring and summer seasons.

O'Bannon speculated that it was probably in these settled areas of the chomur that the Turkomanized Arabs dyed wool and cloth. This, of course, suggests a life in which interaction between chorva and chomur was somewhat common. The carpet appears not to be a complete wool-to-dye-to-finished-product item as might be suggested

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[6]George W. O'Bannon, The Turkoman Carpet, London: Duckworth and Co., 1974), p. 29.

by the term nomadic rug. I agree with Mr. O'Bannon's observations on dyeing and material procurement since dyeing means setting up shop in one place to acquire dyes and dye plants at various stages of the year. According to O'Bannon, the wool "...might have come from a nomadized, non-rug weaving tribe...."[7] The wool was dyed by Turkomanized Arabs and the carpet was woven by the semi-nomadic Turkoman women.

Part of the fierce nature of the Turkoman was due to the inability of the land and the flocks to supply all needs. Caravan raids supplied goods such as woven material, household goods and prisoners--a source of income through their ransom money. Thus, it can be assumed that even in the earliest times, the Turkomans had a contact with ideas and designs outside their normal ken. The fearless, bold and forthright manner in which the Turkoman women designed their carpets reflects the Turkomans' lack of respect for death; it reflects the fearlessness with which they led their lives.

The basic Turkoman dwelling was called the kibitka[8] (yurt.) It was a circular dwelling made of woven mats and pieces of felt covering a wooden frame, held in place with ropes and belts. A second frame and felt construction made the roof. The roof had a single hole in it to let out smoke from the fire. In the kibitka, half of the floor opposite the door was covered with ketcha[9] (felt rugs), usually one half inch thick. On this were laid rugs of galincha size, those less than 6' x 9'. They were both floor covering and bedchamber. The other half of the tent was bare earth, used for rough domestic operations such

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[7]O'Bannon, Turkoman Carpets, p. 34.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid.

as wood chopping. Around the walls of the interior of this structure hung large flat camel bags, juwals, which held household goods. The Anglo-Russian boundary commissioner, T. H. Holdrick, even noted that the door opening was closed by a carpet.[10]

The settled Turkomans lived in mud houses common to Central Asia. Wealthy men in these settlements had large rugs produced to fill the larger rooms. O'Bannon comments that even the settled Turkoman kept several kibitka within the courtyard to be used for family activities.

The Turkomans could be hospitable provided the traveller had the proper introductions. The chief had a special obligation for his visitor's safety. The older men of the tribe were independent, courageous and inventive but would rather remain idle than conduct war parties. The women had a rather special status since they were income producers. This life style ended with the defeat of the Tekke at Merv in 1884 and the establishment of the Afghan/Russian border in 1887.

Pastoral Nomadism

People may believe that the nomad wanders aimlessly. O'Bannon and Johnson clarify this misconception. Pastoral nomadism as most likely practiced by the Turkomans was a style of life that was "...ecologically adjusted at a particular technological level to the utilization of marginal resources...."[11] Generally their resources were

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[10]Ibid.

[11]Douglas L. Johnson, The Nature of Nomadism: A Comparative Study of Pastoral Migrations in Southwestern Asia and Northern Africa, (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1969), p. 2.

found in areas too elevated, dry, or steep for agriculture to be a successful means of supplying family needs. The pastoral nomad used what were otherwise neglected resources.

Some groups within the system increased the size of flocks of domestic animals in order to use arid regions to best advantage. Therefore, in years in which rainfall fell below normal farming requirements, they would abandon agriculture and rely upon flocks for food and clothing. This herding did not mean that the peoples had no need for agricultural products nor was their nomadism a "... one-way evolutionary process in which progress always proceeded away from the sedentary agricultural life."[12]

As suggested by O'Bannon's brief sociological description of the Turkomans as well as by Johnson's observations of pastoral nomadism in general, these nomads always remained in contact with the farmers. Sometimes this contact took the form of conquest. The settled farmers could increase their own herds to the extent that they could move and become nomadic. At the same time, a nomad whose herds were decimated by drought could be forced into a sedentary life. A series of rainy years could also entice nomads to settle. As Johnson states in his book:

> Once pastoral life is established, it can best be visualized alternately waxing and waning along the arid margins of agriculture as a succession of moist years tends to favor an expansion of agriculture. A series of dry years tends to encourage concentration of the agricultural frontier and a corresponding increase in pastoral nomadism.[13]

The resources available to such people are limited. Adequate pastorage is dependent upon a variety of factors such as drought,

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[12]Ibid., p. 3.

[13]Ibid.

elevation, temperatures, precipitation and natural insect pests. The time of year in which pasturage is available also varies. The nomadic movement thus depended upon a combination of seasonal and area variables of water/pasture. Thus, the survival of herds and herdsmen centered upon moving from a place of little to one of plenty. The key to pastoral nomadism was movement based upon the seasons.

There was a sense of territorial limitations. Every tribe tried to control an area that would support tribal life. The size of this territory depended on the size of the tribe, their political power, mobility, wealth and tribal prestige. It is entirely possible that smaller, less powerful tribe areas could be located within the central area of more powerful groups. The sphere of influence for tribes was understood. Tribal rights to use resources in that area were also understood, but vague geographical boundaries were common. Only in extreme cases (as the latter half of the 19th century for the Turkomans) would a tribe outside the sphere of influence interfere with that sphere of another group. Therefore, seasonal regularity and tribal territoriality again tended to remove pastoral nomadism from the realm of random and aimless wandering.

A yearly rainy season was critical to the generation of the pasturage. It could have varied yearly in duration, intensity, location and value--all of which affected the migration patterns. Heavy rainfall for several years increased pasturage and consequently flock size. Dry years correspondingly resulted in a decrease of herd size due to disease, poor pasturage and inadequate water supply which resulted in death of animals. This kept the nomad in balance with nature.

It appears that flexibility was a key factor to the life of the nomad. This is evident in the vagueness of boundaries between tribes. When a move was considered several factors came into play: travelers' accounts in the area (a reason for the traditional welcome and almost sacred nature of travelers), scouting reports on grazing conditions, the present political status, conditions of the herd and estimations of rainfall. Thus, the seasons gave shape to the nomadic regime, while flexibility permitted fluidity in order to meet emergencies of an immediate situation. The economy was based on the exploitation of animal herds. The types of animals to be herded were dependent upon the nomads' inclination.

As evidenced by current accounts some nomads had only one animal type in their herds while others had several. In grazing activities the nomad wanted to place a buffer zone between himself and potential disaster, whether it was human or natural. And, the best way to prevent a natural disaster was to increase the size of the herd. The native could also increase the amount of time and attention devoted to agriculture. The selection of animal or animals reflected the different abilities of nomadic types to adapt to marginal grass or scrubland and convert it to a usable product.

According to Johnson, North African and the Near Eastern herds were generally only camels, sheep, goat and cattle. In the Near East donkeys could be used as beasts of burden while horses were kept as prestige animals. The main purpose of animals was to provide capital. Of course the individual's prestige and power increased with the size and composition of his herds. By examining the various characteristics of animals, one could establish their total value, not only as beasts of burden, but also as means of converting livelihood into agricultural

and aesthetic products.

Camels were vitally important as baggage animals. They were very rugged, mobile and yet required little water. They gave milk and their hair could be used in weaving. Camels were easy to herd and were not bothered by flies or sleeping sickness. They disliked straw but easily ate salty plants, thus adding to their mobility and desirability. A disadvantage of camels was that they were less prolific than most herded animals, having a gestation period of 12 months.

Goats needed more water than camels, were tough, quick and agile, and provided much more meat and milk. Their hair was used in tent construction. Goats did not get lost easily and they needed little tending. The goat was not selective in grazing. No matter how poor the vegetation might have been, they could survive as long as they had water.

Sheep were much different than the goat since they stayed bunched together making herding even easier. Sheep were, however, the least hardy of the groups mentioned. They needed water frequently and were selective in their grazing habits. The by-products of meat, wool and milk far outweighed any disadvantage of water requirements. It should generally be noted, however, that the better the water resources of the area, the larger the flocks of sheep. Limited water availability increased the number of goats and camels found in herd composition.

Cattle were rarely used since they were slow, had a high water requirement and were unable to eat the salty vegetation characteristic of the area. Therefore, cattle seemed to be unable to fulfill the requirements of the Turkoman life style for hardiness and mobility. However, according to Bogoliouboff, the Yomuds, some Tekkes, Sariqs and

Ersaris were devoted to cattle breeding. This suggests a more settled life style for the members of these tribes.

Readings in O'Bannon, O'Donnovan and Johnson indicate that the tent was the basic unit of the pastoral nomad and was the social and political unit to which the nomads' herds belonged. Johnson says that a tent contained one family of approximately five persons. Bogolioubоff counted 36,000[14] tents in the Tekke area alone suggesting a population of 180,000 people. According to Johnson's observations tents were grouped into herding units of 5-6 tents in order to pool labor and supplies as well as to provide defense. During the rainy season this unit was widely separated; during the dry season, this unit was clustered around the well or wadi. In mountainous regions the unit was composed of 24-30 tents. Above this basic configuration is the clan, tribe or confederation.

Johnson states that each basic herding unit made daily decisions on herding movements and policies. The overall direction was controlled by the chief of elders. Johnson states that the minimum number of sheep in this unit was 25-60. There were also 10-25 camels in such units. Projecting Johnson's figures for herd size into Bogoliouboff's account, the Tekke herds could have contained between 150,000-360,000 sheep and 60,000-150,000 camels. If agriculture was an important part of the life style, then herd size could conceivably decrease with the deficit of animal products made up through agricultural products. This is evidenced by O'Bannon's comments on the existence of the chorva and the chomur.

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[14]Andre Bogoliouboff, "Rugs of Central Asia," trans. Amos B. Thatcher, (St. Petersburg: State Printing Office, 1908), p. 9.

Disease, drought, theft and cost of hiring help outside the family also helped to control herd size.

Animal herding and the resulting by-products did not, obviously, provide an adequate diet nor did such herding meet all of the peoples' needs, especially their material needs. There were ways in which the culture could acquire those products (cloth, vegetables, etc.) from the surrounding sedentary society. It could be that the tribe itself would plant and harvest within its own territory. They could own the crops in a particular oasis that was farmed by slaves or lower class nomads--and conveniently return at harvest time to collect rent. It seemed that the Turkomans were of this nature. They could also get tribute from farmers within the nomads' domain in exchange for protection against raids by other nomadic groups. Sometimes this action was considered a parasitic feature of pastoral nomadism. Generally there was a symbiotic relationship in which security was exchanged for grain.

Trade was a major force of exchange and took two forms: trade in local markets within urban communities along migration routes; or trade with long distance caravans which was random and not related to tent and flock migration. Sometimes both forms were used. It would seem logical that the Turkomans' trade had such a dual nature.

Johnson points out that nomadism was never pure, i.e. a life without contact with any agrarian society. Factors that influenced the kind of nomadism were animals or combinations of herding animals; the importance of agriculture and its by-products to the nomadic groups; the amplitude of yearly migration; the natural seasonality in the area; the physiography of the area and the quality and quantity of water and grazing lands available.

In Central Asia there were three types of nomads: the Tibetan type that herded sheep and yaks; the Mongolian type that herded horses; and the Turkish type, that herded mixed groups of animals.[15] Although of Mongolian descent, the Turkomans seemed to fit the Turkish herding type. The herding classification cannot alone classify major Central Asian groups. As a subcategory Johnson lists the five Bernard and Lacroix types of nomads. These are: (1) quasi-sedentary in which agriculture was more important than herding but tents still remained as the dwelling mode with local movement occurring; (2) nomads with restricted movement not exceeding 50 kilometers (31.25 miles); (3) nomads with distinct summer-winter encampments; (4) nomads moving to mountains for summer pasturage and (5) Saharan nomads who used camels and wandered widely.[16]

The Menor list cited by Johnson only divided the nomadic life style into four sub-categories: (1) full nomads living in steppes and taking definite yearly changes; (2) semi-nomads dwelling on the border of culturated zones and raising some crops themselves; (3) waste or desert nomads where seasonality of pastoral availability is non-existent and pursuit of haphazard rainfall was of paramount importance and (4) mountain nomads who utilized vertical variations in order to sustain flocks.[17]

Looking at the two categories in combination, it appears that the Turkomans could be described as a combination of these two sub-

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[15]Johnson, Nature of Nomadism, p. 14.

[16]Ibid., p. 15.

[17]Ibid.

groupings, i.e. of number 3 of Beranard and Lacroix (nomads with distinct summer and winter encampments--"...permanent settlements were the wintering grounds for the tribes."[18]) and number 2 of Mener (semi-nomads dwelling on the border of culturated zones--"...permanent settlements in such areas as the shores of the Caspian, Merv or near Khiva."[19])

Johnson stresses that no matter how nomads were classified, all nomads lived in nonpermanent dwellings during all or major parts of the year. This dwelling could have been a goat hair tent, skin tent, felt yurt or rush-mat hut. Nomads had flocks of sheep, goats, camels or combinations of these. A major amount of time involved the care of these animals. They could trade and raid, or sow and harvest in order to meet agricultural needs. Nomads lived mainly from the flocks while following regular patterns of movement in relation to the seasons, pastures and water. As a result, sections of the domain would be obviously empty while nomads followed migration routes.

Finally it must be said that the Turkomans were involved in what Johnson called horizontal nomadism which relied upon the "...utilization of horizontal variations in seasonal availability of pasture and water."[20] The tribe dwelt in lowland plains, steppe or plateau during the year and moved over large horizontal distances (rather than vertically move up and down mountain slopes) to find pasture and water. The length of distance displacement varied depending on rainfall conditions in the year.

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[18]O'Bannon, Turkoman Carpet, p. 30.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Johnson, Nature of Nomadism, p. 165.

Horizontal nomadism had a practical nature in that it allowed overgrazed areas to regenerate themselves. The cycle repeated itself when the rains fell again.

Rug Classification According to Size and Use

Rugs in the world of the Turkoman had a specific use. In his book, Carpets of Nomads and Farmers in Afghanistan, D. H. Wegner lists 15 types. I assume that because of political pressures the names of carpets came into Afghanistan with the Turkoman tribes. The classifications are:[21]

1. ghali(n) [qalin]: house carpet; floor carpet; 8-25 meters square
2. nim-ghali(n) [qalincha]: house carpet, [nim means ½;] 1.9-2.2 meters by 2.6-3.1 meters
3. galistsha: floor carpet, tent size; .80-1.5 meters by 1.3-2.2 meters
4. odjaq bash: herdsman carpet; 1.2-1.8 meters by 1.6-1.7 meters
5. daliz: house carpet; staircase size [seems to be related to the kenerah size as listed by Lewis in his book, The Mystery of the Oriental Rug,] made in pairs; 1.0-1.1 meters by 3.5-4.5 meters
6. pardah: [khatchlis or huchlis]: curtain for tent door; 1.3-1.5 meters by 1.6-2.1 meters
7. dja namaz [joi namaz]: prayer carpet; .7-1.3 meters by 1.0-2.1 meters
8. dahanagh: threshold carpet; .4-.8 meters by .8-1.1 meters
9. balisht [pushti] : Belouch [tribal people of Afghanistan, related to the Turkoman] pillow always rectangular; .8-.9 meters by .4-.5 meters
10. djawal [juwal] or doshaq [toushaq]: tentbag for clothes or camel bag; 1.2-1.7 meters by .9-1.2 meters; always made in pairs and always rectangular
11. torba [torba]: tentbag for small items always in pairs and rectangular in shape; .9-1.1 meters by .4-.5 meters
12. khardjin [kharjin]: saddlebag, made in one piece; pile design at opposite ends with flat woven connection in center; .4-.6 meters by .5-.7 meters
13. djollar [juwal]: camel cover; always made in pairs; always rectangular; 1.1-1.6 meters by .3-.5 meters
14. djollar purdah [pardah]: door flaps, rectangular; 1.1-1.6 meters by .6-.8 meters
15. tang: strip for tents; .25-.35 meters by 13-17 meters[22]

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[21]Please note that words placed in brackets follow the spelling used by George W. O'Bannon and were discussed in his book, The Turkoman Carpet. This spelling is used throughout the text.

[22]Dietrich H. G. Wegner, "Carpets of Nomads and Farmers in Afghanistan," trans. Madga Lauwers, New Series-Band XXI, (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1964), pp. 11-12. (mimeographed)

The size of the rug generally indicated its use. Rugs were made to serve the nomadic life. Such a life style places a premium on light and unbreakable objects in which goods and household items could be carried. The size specifications for NIG were taken from O'Bannon's list; it is my hope to weave a series of pieces whose size specifications are governed by these descriptions.

Because of its size, NIG can be classified as a qalin. The qalin is used as a floor covering. This size is typical of carpets woven by the Ersari Turkomans along the Amu Darya River.

The qalincha is a small rug. The term "cha" is a diminutive form meaning "half." A high degree of nomadism and the small size of the kibitka (yurt) dictated use of smaller looms. It is a size common to all tribes and is used as a floor covering. Fringe length on qalin and qalincha sometimes measured up to 15 inches. The kilim area measures 2-3 inches. Today the kilim is usually white, but in older pieces it may be red with blue bands and nearly 14 inches wide. Qalinchas have been common throughout rug history. They became the standard size. These carpets are generally more tightly knotted than others.

A hearth rug, the odjaq bash listed in Wegner's book "Carpets of Nomads and Farmers in Afghanistan" is in essence a guest rug which was spread before the fire upon the arrival of the guest. According to Lewis in The Mystery of the Oriental Rug, should a fugitive set foot on the rug, the owner and his clan would defend him. Wegner notes that such carpets are rare. He does confirm their use as described by Lewis.

The pardah (khatchli) means curtain and is probably an indigenous term. The term khatchli is Armenian for "cross." These rare pieces

are usually galincha in size. The carpet originally served as a door for the kibitka. The piece is characterized by fringe only on the bottom while the top is finished off as a kilim which is turned under and stitched. Some have cords at the top corners by which the piece could be attached to the door frame. Four panels intersected by bands similar to border designs make the characteristic cross from which the rugs often take their Armenian name. The panels themselves have a candelabra-like device in the design. These particular pieces were first used as part of a dowry. The design is assymetrical in that more and different patterns appear at the bottom of the skirt. It has long been contested that these tent flaps might have been used for tribe identification. An interesting side note must be added here. Lewis suggests in The Mystery of the Oriental Rug that such a rug was used to cover the body before interment and the grave after interment. It was used instead of flowers and usually combined the handiwork of all members of the family. Such a use for the khatchli was not confirmed in my readings.

The joi namaz acts as a place of prayer (a direct translation of its name) and is smaller than the galincha. For unknown reasons, the Turkomans produce fewer prayer rugs than some of the other rug producing cultures. This lack of prayer rugs had given speculation to the idea that perhaps the pre-20th century Turkomans used the khatchli as prayer rugs as well as door coverings. The joi namaz serves as a portable, clean place for the five-times-daily prayer ritual. The design of the rug is also a distinguishing factor. It has a central panel called the mihrab (pulpit) which is pointed at the top. The point is placed during the prayer ritual in such a way that it points in the

direction of Mecca. Modern weavers, such as Shelia Hicks, have used the mihrab as a design influence.

The juwal or toushak serves the same purpose as a torba. It is intended to be used and then loaded onto camels or horses, thus accounting for its large size. These unusually fine pieces represent the dowry work of young girls. Unlike the torba, the juwal is open on one long side and closed on the narrow sides.

The torba can be either a donkey bag or pillow. It is usually used to carry possessions, grain or flour. When stuffed with cotton, hair or clippings from the rug trimming process, it is used as a pillow. It has a definite front and back: the front is pile; the back is kilim. It is made in one continuous piece with the piece folded in half and edges bound together. The top is left opened. At the opening are loops of horsehair or cotton braided and sewn into position. The bag is closed by interlacing these loops.

The kharjin is another type of donkey saddle bag. It literally means, "donkey pocket." Unlike the torba, this piece is made with two pouches. As with any saddlebag, it is made to carry possessions. It is woven as one piece. The knotted area measures about 2' x 2' and is sewn to the kilim section. Usually a wide band of kilim is left between each pouch so that the entire piece fits over the animal's back. The piece closes with the same loops as the torba.

CHAPTER II

CARPET SYMBOLISM AND VITALITY

World Idea: The Carpet as Center of the Universe

According to Schuyler Cammon and George O'Bannon, the people of Asia made models of the universe long before the coming of the Prophet. As such it represented the arena of human existence and the interaction of gods in that arena. This stylized universe was represented in the structure of mosques, churches, palaces, altars, thrones, robes and even tents. Thus, such representation could be expected to appear in rugs designated for use by rulers, and more simply, for individuals.

This universe was always of three levels, divided horizontally into three parts. There was the flat earth (square or cross shaped), the sky which arched over the earth and the shadowy underworld. Although the basic plan of the universe was three dimensional, it could be conveyed on a two dimensional textile surface such as a rug. Such "...patterns on the rugs of Persia and her neighbors seem to represent a God's eye view down on Earth through the Sky Door."[23] The "Sky Door" can best be described as that point:

> ...at the apex of the sky [where] there was a door or gate, leading into Heaven, beyond which dwelt God, or gods. Through the Sky Door they [the Old Asians] believed divine spirits could

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[23]Schuyler V. R. Cammon, "Symbolic Meanings in Oriental Rug Patterns Part I, II, III," The Textile Museum Journal, (Winter 1974): p. 31.

> communicate with Man, provide him with energy, or constructively influence his actions.[24]

Reading further in Cammon's essay, I found that the "Sky Door" concept could permit a view of the beyond as well as block passage to this arena. The device acted as a symbolic fence or barrier. This is indicated by the nature of the patterning on many rugs--continuous rows of spear-like projections on the outermost guard stripe and a similar inward projecting guard stripe on the innermost edge of the border. Sometimes these projections were merely triangles (such as I used in NIG) arranged in saw-tooth fashion. Those projections facing outward were intended to keep away evil forces--those facing inward intended to retain good spirits. The common defense motif consisted of "...conventionalized symbols of an ancient Sunbird."[25]

There is a basic element in the Old Asian idea of the Universe--a limiting boundary. Thus, the border of the rug contained no specific symbols to link it directly to the sky. Such rhythmic designs and repeats were typical of Sky Door borders on rugs.

A problem with investigating this symbolism is our:

> ...blindness to the old traditions, and [our] inability to see things as the Old Asian architects and rug designers did. [This] has been a major obstacle to our full appreciation of their productions. It is difficult, for...modern man...has...lost touch with his own ancestral tradition...we no longer tend to think in terms of metaphors and similes.[26]

Although Islamic faith and belief must be considered when viewing rugs of Central Asia, it must be remembered that remnants of beliefs and traditions from older religions and distant cultures remained or were incorporated into the emerging culture, especially in Iran. Old Asian symbolism on rugs can be found on those rugs from Persia and especially

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[24]Ibid. [25]Ibid., p. 15. [26]Ibid., p. 26.

on rugs produced during the Safavid Dynasty in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The representation of this universe can be manifested on three different levels: (1) a representation which was developed to stand for the phenomena of the elements, (2) a representation which showed thought and interpretation of natural phenomena, and (3) a representation which illustrated the human appeal to the powers above. The use of symbols asks the viewer to participate and understand the environment and confines within which the rug functioned. "In absence of any other furniture, they sat on them, ate on them, visited on them and slept on them...their eyes were constantly being attracted to study the patterns."[27] Although there are no metaphysical overtones to NIG, it is with this idea in mind, this constant attraction of the eyes to the carpet's design and the resulting design abstraction, that I approached NIG.

Many have lost the ability to understand carpet metaphysics, incorrectly assuming that rugs were merely pure decoration. Cammon suggests that these misconceptions were the result of the fact that Muslim scholars did not think carpets important enough to write about. They were more concerned with people, events and ideas--a typical attitude toward folk art. Material objects held no interest for the Islam scholar. Loss of touch with religious tradition and symbols was also partly responsible for this lack of scholarly interest. Those who could collect symbols, the middleman rug merchants, were generally Christians and therefore, not really interested in rugs as symbolic manifestations.

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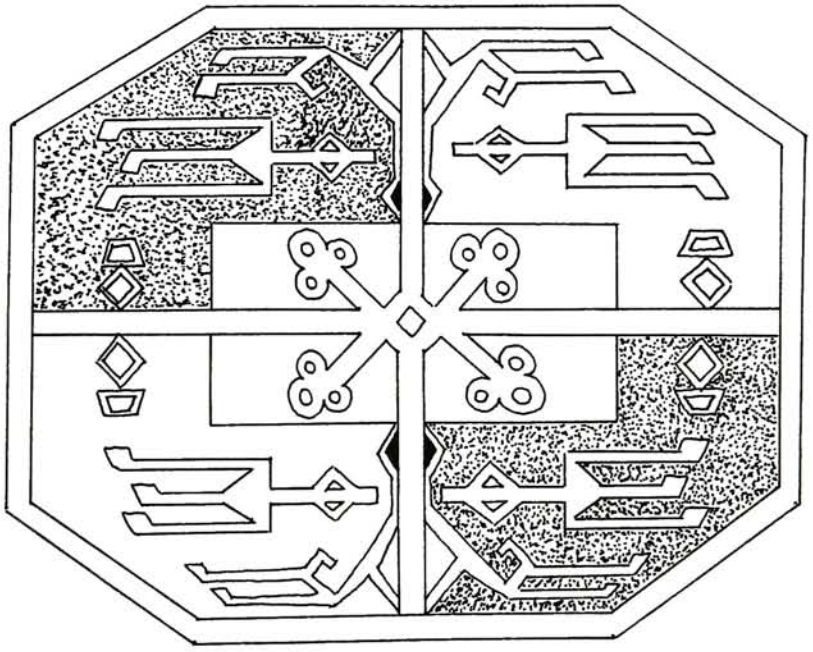
[27]Ibid., p. 21.

The "Sunbird" and other sun symbols predominate in all carpets because the sun was (and is) a physical feature that made an impression upon man. The early people of Asia conceived of the sun as a disk and often represented it with a human face. They "...frequently placed a cross with a disk to indicate the four stations of the sun: in the East at dawn, overhead at midday, in the West at sunset and 'underneath' at night."[28] Such a characterization seems to fit the description of any gul design of the Turkomans, especially the Ersari, a major design influence on NIG.

The symbol of the "Sunbird" was further developed in northern and Central Asia and the Near East. This metaphysical sun was symbolized by a large eagle (usually double headed) facing left and right. The body gradually became stylized until it was simply an open ring or diamond. This emphasized the "Sun Gate" aperture through which Divine



[28]Ibid., p. 7.

Light streamed forth. "Often the Sun Gate at the center of Heaven was symbolized by four 'trefoils' projecting from a central ring."[29] If such a description is true, one still sees these described elements in the most common Ersari patterns. This may have stood for the "Sunbird" with the double heads at the top and bottom and two more at the sides in place of wings. It is interesting to note again a seemingly Turkish connection between the peoples of Central Asia and Anatolia since the "Sunbird was more specifically a Turkish symbol."[30]

Authors of rug books are usually at extremes concerning design and symbolic meaning in any carpet. If, as according to Cammon, the rug was such an important aspect of life, and incorporated symbols common to the viewer, one would assume that local flora and fauna would be incorporated or abstracted into the piece. Therefore, I do not agree with Kybalova when he states that local plant and animal life never appeared in the designs.

Kybalova gives a few symbols that should be noted, however. The triangle was considered the happiness sign, mother earth symbol or god symbol. It is found in simple form mainly among the nomads. The checkered design (used in very minor secondary borders in Turkoman work) was a nomadic symbol for the sun. Originally it was a circle divided by two diagonals, thus confirming Cammon's description of the sun symbol. This was later changed to a square and is found in rugs of Baluchistan and Turkestan. The zig-zag is a symbol of running water. It is particularly common to the Caucasian. Arrow points (used in a secondary border area of NIG) are emblems of the Chaldeans (peoples related to the Babylonians) and is found on Turkoman and Caucasian rugs.

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[29]Ibid., p. 39. [30]Ibid., p. 41.

The herringbone of Turkestan and Caucasus was a symbol of wealth and health. Animals used by the nomads are generally stylized dogs, cocks, camels, spiders and scorpions. The scorpion design was an important secondary Tekke gul. The use of such symbols would protect the owner from painful attack or bite.

During the past 100 years since the Russian conquest of Central Asia, there have been definite changes in the design of the Turkoman rug. This is due in part to the resettlement of the tribes, the modification of traditional habits and the increasing commercial demands on the weaver. Historically and aesthetically, all of this should be viewed in respect to the peoples' experiences. The carpet and designs of today do flow out of those of the past.

Vitality in Primitive Design

The growth of rug design generally seems to have had:

> ...two periods: the first when natural objects were simply copied, the second when metaphysical thought about the design, of however simple a character changed the natural object into the conventional.[31]

Geometric (naturalistic) ornamentation, was the first noted and used by the weaver. This level was the result of the nature of the materials, i.e. the interaction of the warp and weft (or knot) to restrict work to rectilinear design. The difference in approach to geometric and conventional design was even noted by Bogoliouboff. He attested to the:

> ...many theories as to the origin of the design in the various arts. Semper, a German writer, argues that the primitive artist was restricted in this decoration by the results obtainable from the plaiting of reeds, and in consequence, the primitive mode of decoration was essentially rectilinear.[32]

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[31]Mary Churchill Ripley, The Oriental Rug Book, (New York: Fredrick A. Stokes Co., 1904), p. 296.

[32]Bogoliouboff, "Central Asia," p. 16.

The naturalistic approach showed, even at that moment, that the weaver was a thinking being. No matter how crude the representation, abstract thought was incorporated into the design.

Conventional ornamentation can be described as "developed," "approved by general usage" or "established." It is the arranging of motifs to suit the needs and/or fancy of the designer. NIG more heavily relied upon the tenets of geometric ornamentation rather than conventional ornamentation.

Even in areas such as the field of the carpet, ideas seemed to have been expressed. In the field:

> ...whenever...there was a sizable empty space, the archaic ornamentation of the rug [was] completed by small motives in varying forms of stars and crosses. This showed, first, the need of filling open spaces (fear of the desert), and secondly, the wholly primitive character of composition. There is no general idea underlying the design, but the latter developed little by little as the work progressed.[33]

In order to transmit this particular feeling, but not to accomplish it through time-consuming small tapestry areas, I used the soumak technique. The physical character of the soumak coupled with a change in the color composition of the ply used (a total of 4 strands made up the ply used in this area) created areas suggestive of such small motifs.

The design of NIG, and especially the design of the first octagon, was based on a belief that rug motifs could trace their roots to the copying of every-day objects. Such observations were made by Bogoliouboff and a German by the name of Riegel (who published a book, Antique Oriental Carpets, in 1891.) According to Riegel, design came about through the naive copying of natural objects. Geometric figures, stylized animals, mingled with plant forms.

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[33]Ibid., pp. 41-42.

One reason for my fascination with the Turkoman carpet is that it is perhaps one of the purest forms of Mid-Eastern expression. It has long been recognized that Western tastes dictated Eastern carpet production in design and in coloration. Those Persian carpets so often reproduced are witness to loss of Oriental theory for "...if it be true that symbolism goes out as reproduction increases, then the Persian masterpieces, beautiful though they be, are false to Oriental theory."[34] Even coloration has fallen prey to the dictates of the Western market. When carpets are produced for local consumers, "...they are not made in the soft, light pastel tones so popular in America, but are made in backgrounds of brilliant red...the brighter the better."[35]

The bolder, older designs are perhaps the "...final triumph of the inherent over the acquired."[36] This gives the Turkoman rugs a value generally overlooked by Oriental aestheticians. If it is generally accepted that there is symbolic meaning in all rug designs, then the tribal rugs or rugs made by the weaver for personal family use (those free from influences of palace and master designers) must be "...considered a pure type, and expressive of Eastern meanings."[37] The least influenced carpets of the mountains and steppes are far more consistently executed and should be valued as truthful reflections of native life and character. Isolation saved design. Despite ignorance of artistic precept, the tribal carpets have:

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[34]Mumford, Oriental Rugs, p. 59.

[35]Charles W. Jacobsen, Oriental Rugs: A Complete Guide, 13th printing. (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Company Publishers, 1973), p. 118.

[36]Mumford, Oriental Rugs, p. 59.

[37]Ibid.

> ...an accurate, intuitive sense of color value, which makes them, where bold, intense color effects are required in decoration, useful as the dainty and intricate Persian can never be.[38]

Even though the carpets may seem garish or eccentric, they are harmonious.

The rug came from a unified civilization which extended from the Atlantic coast in North Africa and Moorish Spain, to the Bay of Bengal, and to West China and Indonesia. The elements used as patterns or motifs drew upon the later ideas and tenets of a mutual religion, Islam.

Examination of any rug design shows a field and border or borders. The main border is bold and regular with firmly repeating elements that "...return upon themselves to make a kind of endless belt..."[39] while the background or field is much looser and less disciplined.

Careful examination of the ground shows that the "...field pattern does not stop neatly at the border; instead it seems to run on endlessly under and beyond it, as though it could continue on forever."[40] Cammon makes it clear that this idea did not originate with Islamic thought. The same idea can be seen in an Assyrian stone slab of the 6th century B.C.--remember that the Pazaryk carpet is from the 5th century B.C. showing a rug with a pattern seemingly extending beyond the confines of the rug. Such an idea of endlessness appears in the rug patterns of Persia and those lands which adjoin it to the north and east. It also appears in the rugs of the Saraband, Sehnas, Afshari and

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[38]Ibid., p. 60.

[39]Cammon, "Symbolic Meanings," p. 8.

[40]Ibid.

Turkomans. This idea of endlessness is better demonstrated in the large Ushak court carpets. Endlessness is presented as an "extra" repeat of design, thus making the rug assymetrical in the field area. Cammon offers us this explanation:

> Apparently when the Ushak weavers approached the desired length of a carpet, they simply terminated the field pattern; it did not matter to them, or their patrons, where they stopped. The resulting effect of incompleteness on otherwise definite surface area creates a paradox.[41]

A nearly indefinable aspect of Muslim spiritual design was the dissolving of design surface area. In this approach the surface area could be made to appear light or airy by breaking it up into progressively smaller decorative areas. This patterning was used on domes where large design areas around the base became progressively smaller toward the apex of the dome. The technique applied to floors in mosaic or tile. Cammon submits that in Central Asian rugs the principles of infinity and breakup of design area seemed to have been represented simultaneously. There is also a compound view obvious in Turkish rugs of the Anatolia region of the 15-16 century A.D. The Holbein rugs, (often thought to be Turkoman rugs) of the same era embody the principle of infinity in that:

> ...the medallions themselves display both these qualities, the outer framework of each consists of a knotted cord that returns upon itself...and the very core of each medallion is broken up by being colored in two different shades in an assymetrical diagonal manner.[42]

Cammon discusses the idea that there are three types of designs--three degrees of stylization of nature. Unlike Ripley, who is concerned with naturalistic and conventional rug design interpretations, Cammon breaks down his groupings into major art forms--

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[41]Ibid. [42]Ibid., p. 10.

Mosque Art carpets, Palace Art carpets and Popular carpets. All, however, seemed to have been influenced by the artistic principles derived from Chinese painting traditions during the Mongol domination of Iran (and Turkestan since the Monguls invaded the Turkoman area in the 13th century.) All designs on rugs were subjected to stylization so that individual elements were subordinated and decorative effect of the entire piece increased.

> ...the pattern designers seemed to have appreciated the fact that excess detail is difficult to reproduce in rug knotting, while at the same time a more generalized figure offers greater scope for the viewer's imagination and hence increases his enjoyment.[43]

It was with this degree of aesthetic relaxation that I approached the individual octagons of NIG.

Popular Art is art of the common man. It is non-representation of flowers and on occasion, animal, bird, people or stick figures.

> One marked feature of the Popular Art was its insistence on maintaining old traditions, compelling the weaver to repeat the patterns of his or her forebearers as exactly as possible and permitting liberties only with some of the non-essential filler elements in the backgrounds. With time, or in more careless hands, this rote-copying might become rather slipshod, until mistakes crept in, finally resulting in garbled and confused patterns.[44]

Looked upon by the contemporary weaver, such an attitude toward execution presents an excellent means for abstracting an idea or design.

In contrast to the ideas presented by the central design or designs of the field of the carpet, the viewer often finds areas in the border which symbolize different aspects of the universe. The rhythmically repeating elements suggested orderly progression of

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[43]Ibid., p. 11. [44]Ibid., p. 12

cyclical time. Muslim time concept was linear, but the Turks and Iranians retained a sense of the cyclical concept. The concept of on-going time was expressed by repeated elements characterized by inverting every second motif. They sometimes gave this reversed element a darker color which "...added a suggestion of alternating contrast between night and day in the everlasting round."[45] Taking this reversal into consideration, I reversed every 5th white triangle of both primary borders--unless it seemed to be visually "wrong" within the progression of alternation.

> In view of the specific Time symbolism on the border, even though the border and the field pattern of an Oriental rug each expressed a different order of existence--one concerned with Time, in contrast to Timeless heaven (earthly time is finite and ends with the Day of Judgment) they were intimately related. Together they depicted a combination of finite and the infinite, the temporal and the spiritual. Thus, the rug was in a sense a Universe in miniature.[46]

In conclusion it can be said that the world of the spirit was symbolized by the inner field which was a source of divine protection, the fount of wisdom, the ultimate destination, the guarantor of success in marriage, war, hunting and trading adventures. It was important to keep oneself symbolically in contact with heaven and the universe in general.

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[45] Ibid., p. 14.

[46] Ibid.

CHAPTER III

THE WEAVING OF NAKSHA-I-GASHTA

Design Inspirations and Guidelines

Scholars and rug collectors agree that a modern carpet is anything produced since 1945. Today, terms of identification generally indicate quality and not tribe. The major modern groups are Mauri, Ersari carpets of Afghan and Khivan design, and other Ersari patterns.

The object of this paper cannot be to list and illustrate the design characteristics of all Turkoman carpets since it would be repeating the work done by George W. O'Bannon in his book, The Turkoman Carpet. The purpose of this paper is rather to discuss briefly the major influences of Turkoman thought and design upon NIG. The major design influence came from the Ersari patterns with colors chosen from those common to the Chob Bash tribe.

The Ersari, the main Turkoman tribe in Afghanistan, produce rugs generally known as Afghan, Beshire, Ersari or Khivan. In Afghanistan they are known as the filpoi (elephant footprint) design. The term "Afghan" is applied to those of coarser pile and quality. They make generous use of yellow which is unusual in Turkoman rugs. The size of the carpets produced indicates that the tribes are much more settled than other tribal groups.

Design names are derived from the old tribal names and are used for description only. These old tribal names cannot be used to

refer to designs exclusive to one tribe since it is a common practice today for a tribe to weave many different tribal patterns. The large size of the Ersari gul, around 12 inches, and the general placement of this particular design influenced my thesis, Naksha-i-Gashta. A later discussion of the Chob Bash characteristics will show influences of color choice more distinctly.

Within the Ersari group, O'Bannon lists several design categories: the Daulatabad group, the Kunduz group, the Charshango group, the Chob Bash group, the Labijar, the Kizil Ayak, and the Waziri groups. Commissioned pieces can be done by these groups and are thus treated as a separate category.

The Chob Bash Ersari is one of the most important carpet types today and one that had the most direct influence on the coloration of NIG. The rug is known by its typical Turkoman red and liberal use of white. It is the best example of tribal intermixture, design adaptation and change of design because of resettlement. I wanted to express all these concepts in NIG. The Chob Bash grouping is supposedly to have assimilated different designs of the Sariq and the Ersari. It is thought the tribes had Chaudor origins because of the frequent use of white, especially in the borders.

The Chob Bash Ersari has a coloration composed of many shades of red. Design details are done in white, yellow, indigo blue or black. There is no typical design of this tribe but various Daulatabad, Sariq, Salor and Chaudor guls predominate. The kilim section at the foot of the carpet is often elaborate and multicolored. The Chob Bash weave qalin, qalincha, joi namaz and runner types.

In his publication, Notes on Carpet Knotting and Weaving, Tattersall gives the weaver some very good basic guidelines for the

designing of carpets. These guidelines can be helpful to follow when making a rug. The design should have a flat appearance, be symmetrical so that it can be viewed from any direction and should have 2, 3 or more major borders which are bands filled with running patterns with narrow borders and edging. In the case of knotted carpets, it is useless to design smaller than the scale that can be interpreted by two adjacent warp threads. Once designed, shapes should be defined by value, dark vs. light, rather than by color changes. Concerning color, delicate or subtle shades should not be relied upon to give effect. When new, colors should be positive, rich and transparent. With regard to color choice, Tattersall forwards the belief that "...a frequent mistake is to use whites that are too light."[47] Often poorly designed carpets have "...definite colored streaks in the ground...in imitation of oriental rugs...."[48] I agree with Mr. Tattersall that such pitfalls are common to carpet weavers who try to imitate antique carpets. But, such an attitude closes the door on the contemporary weaver whose purpose is to observe and adapt design elements presented to him from the past through either accident or intent. Thus I used soumak to introduce colored streaks within the field and purposely used bright white (instead of the ecru white) for accenting design detail.

Tattersall also recommends a plain weave band with occasional decorations at each end. Fringes are formed by the exposed warp ends, and are sometimes single, although they are generally twisted together

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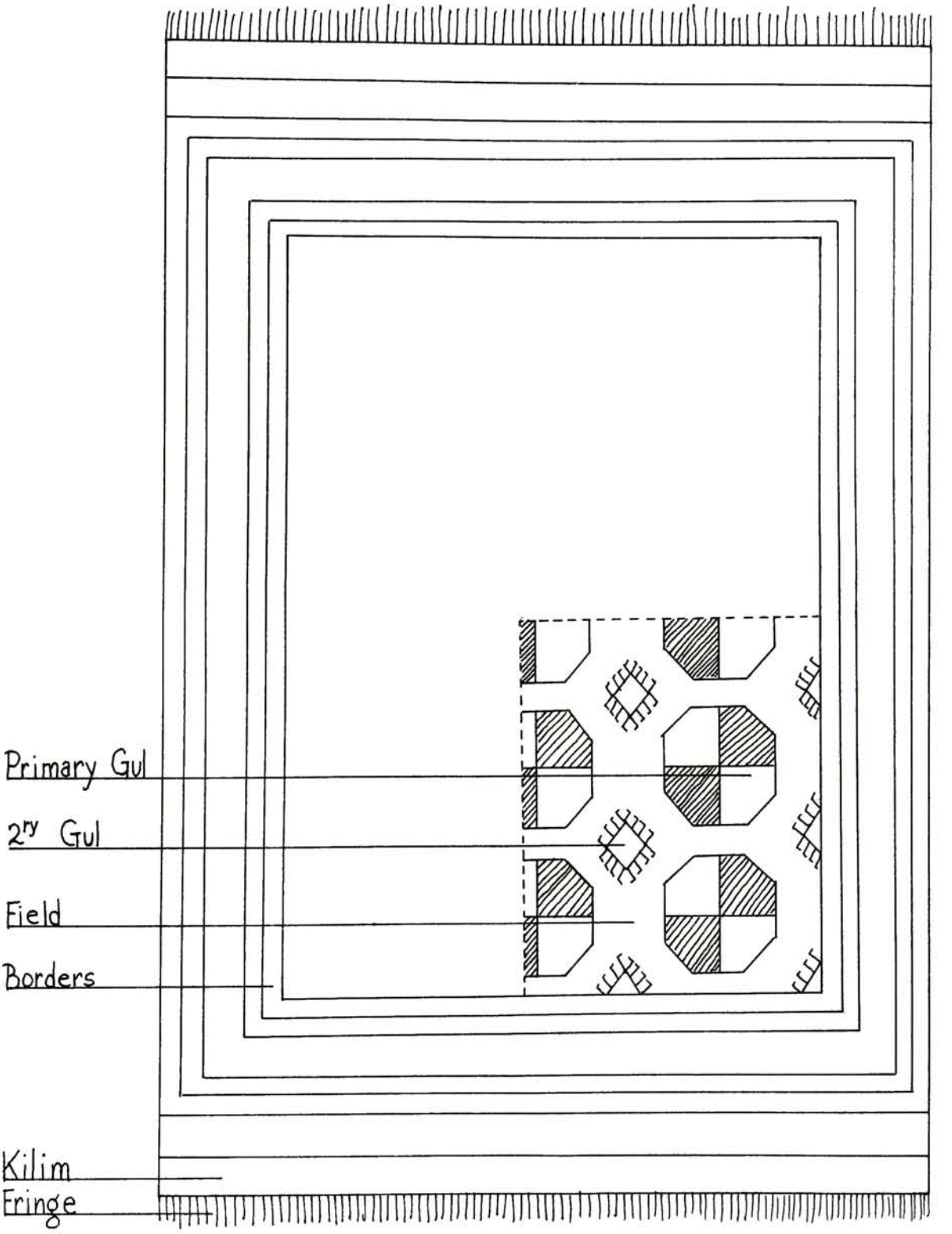
[47]Tattersall, Notes, p. 36.

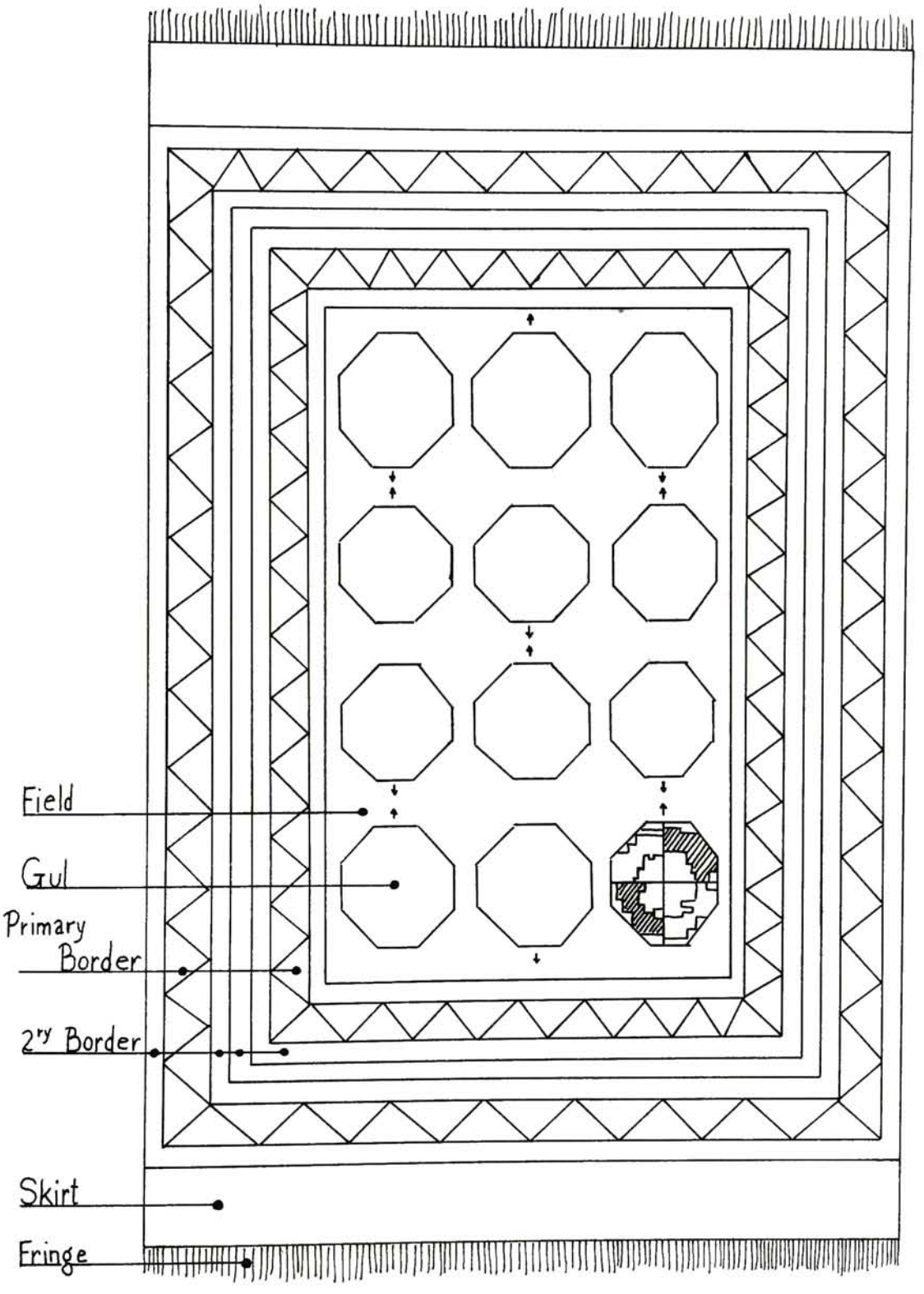
[48]Ibid., p. 37.

in groups or left looped as they come off the loom. In the design of the Turkoman rug (and every Oriental rug for that matter) this flat weave (kilim) always starts the rug. It acts as a firm base upon which the carpet can be built. The fringe on the kilim section is long (up to 15 inches) while the kilim, usually white, red or gray is woven for 2-3 inches. In older pieces the kilim can be up to 8 inches in width. For a visual map of the design areas, please refer to the illustration on page 42. The basic design of the carpet is broken down into two areas--field and borders. All carpets have these regardless of use. The major design element is located in the field and is known as the gul (Persian for flower.) It is repeated in rows throughout the field. Before the 20th century each gul was distinct to each tribe. If the tribe ceased to exist or was incorporated into another tribe, such as the Salor tribe was into the Sariq, that particular gul was absorbed by the conquering tribe.

The guls themselves are divided into two groups: primary and secondary guls. The primary gul is usually a polygon and can be from 4 to 15 inches in diameter. The outline, size and shape help to indicate the design. The secondary gul was not used in NIG. A limited number of these were used by each tribe.

Turkoman rugs are characterized by one primary border and two or more secondary borders. NIG has three secondary borders and two primary borders. A primary border is usually two times the size of any single secondary border. The primary border on NIG is 2 inches while the secondary border is only one inch. Sometimes, a secondary primary border appears on rugs of room size. This is the case of NIG. The borders touch the field on all four sides.


Primary Gul
2ry Gul
Field
Borders
Kilim
Fringe


Field
Gul
Primary Border
2ry Border
Skirt
Fringe

A special border called a "skirt" is found on only two sides of the carpet, the beginning and the end. It is primarily geometric in nature. In the case of NIG, the border area is simply a band of color at the ends of the carpet.

Not only the border, but the field of Turkoman rugs employ geometric forms. The principal gul is usually a quartered polygon with opposing quarters having the same color. Two of the quarters are usually black or dark blue while two quarters are red, white or orange.

Turkoman rugs are the easiest to identify and are known as the "Red" Orientals. The primary color is one or two shades of red; the variety of reds in the grouping is wide. Secondary colors are usually deep blue, black or white and are used mainly to outline designs. Natural browns are used to outline borders. There can be a rare use of green, yellow or light blue. The variety of red used can characterize the weaver.

The selvedge of the carpet can be done in two ways. Both methods prevent the carpet from unraveling. One way to secure the selvedge of the carpet is to overcast the two outer warp threads using a needle and thread to bind the selvedge threads together. This method usually produces a rounded edge $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep. The second method is to weave a selvedge while the carpet is being done. The warp, usually larger in diameter than the weft is double sleyed and when woven, makes the heavy selvedge needed.

On the following page the reader can find specific production-related aspects of Naksha-i-Gashta:

TITLE: Naksha-i-Gashta (Changed Design)

MATERIALS USED: 27.5 lbs. of wool for a total cost of $134.75 and approximately 7 lbs. of cotton rug warp for a cost of $7.00

MATERIAL SOURCE: cotton rug warp--Cooper Kentworth of Providence, R.I.
wool--"Bulgari" wool of Scott's Mills, Uxbridge, MASS.

WEAVING HOURS: 568 hours

STARTING DATE: September 24, 1976

FINISHING DATE: November 25, 1976

TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKING DAYS: 55

AVERAGE HOURS PER DAY: 10 1/3 hours

LOOM: vertical tapestry loom with string heddles and shed rod

SIZE OF CARPET: approximately 6 feet by 9 feet

COLORS: bleached white, navy blue, dark brown, light brown (with a yellow overtone), marigold yellow, pumpkin orange, intense yellow orange, brick red and scarlet

DESIGN INSPIRATION: Turkoman carpets, Ersari family with Chob Bash coloration

DESIGN SOURCE FOR MAJOR DESIGN AREA: sea shell photographed through kaleidoscope

ITEMS PHOTOGRAPHED FOR DESIGN CONSIDERATION: marigold, magazine page, daisy, stamen, Queen Anne's lace, facial features, pencil, map, pen, coke bottle, aspirin, pansy, level, "C" clamp, screwdriver, U.S. dollar, shell, antler, cabbage, camera (please refer to page ii)

TECHNIQUES: soumak--used
Greek Soumak--used
Greek Skulato (looped pile)--not used; warp set not close enough for successful application to piece
Kendima (inlay)--not used; warp set not close enough for successful application to piece
kilim tapestry--used throughout piece
Macedonian approach to kilim--used in gul

The Weaving of Naksha-i-Gashta: Problems and Solutions

Once photographing, design, design abstraction and material procurement were finished, I started to put the warp on the upright frame loom in the "M" fashion described by Peter Collingwood. The process itself took 2 days, September 21 and 22. Tensioning and setting up the sheds were finished on September 23. By September 24 I began to weave the cotton border section.

By Monday, September 27, it was obvious that the loom was not constructed to withstand the pressure to which it was being subjected. There was, at this time, a noticeable bowing of the upper and lower horizontal beams. This was causing the carriage bolts that held the horizontal beams to the vertical beams to strip and pull out. September 28 I was forced to rebuild the loom and strengthen it with a shim. The shim, placed in the middle of the two beams, rested on two wedges. These wedges faced each other so that one plane was on top of the other. By pounding these two wedges together, the shim was raised, thus straightening the two horizontal beams.

To correct the wavy line in the weave that was created by the uneven tension, I took a heavy needle and pushed up the woven area until a straight fell line was created.

September 29 saw the start of the Greek Soumak area of the border. On October 1 I started the first primary border of triangles. Sewing of the slits created by the slit tapestry technique began on October 7 and continued until the rug was finished. The second major border was also begun at this time. The first gul pattern was finished October 20. By October 25 I had advanced to the point where I needed to remove the tension in order to expose new work surface.

From this point weaving was without incident. On November 25, 1976 Naksha-i-Gashta was finished and cut from the loom.

CHAPTER IV

INFLUENCES UPON NAKSHA-I-GASHTA

Conclusion

> In making [a] choice we develop a standpoint. How much of today's confusion is brought about through not knowing where we stand, through the inability to relate experience directly to us. In art work any experience is immediate.[49]

Anni Albers best describes the reason for the existence of Naksha-i-Gashta. The piece is an attempt to relate various weaving experiences and influences. Some were absorbed consciously; others were absorbed unconsciously. All experiences are a part of the past five years since I began to approach the textile craft.

As evidenced by the preceding material, the piece is strongly influenced by Turkoman rug design. The study done for the piece was in no way to break new ground into Turkoman tribal research, nor was it an attempt to use the rug as historical data. Rather, it was an attempt to use historical data for aesthetic manipulation. The field of carpet study has been for too long flooded by amateurs and rug merchants interested in seeking a romantic notion along with a room size rug.

Like many Americans, my life style has a good chance to be more and more nomadic. To remain in one locale, a fact seemingly common to the preceding generation of Americans is not now the norm.

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[49]Anni Albers, "Refractive," On Designing, 2nd ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), p. 31.

Going from one place to another isn't enough. One must go and establish a home--a base from which one can draw strength and security. This inevitably means carrying things and objects that we love from one habitat to another. Thus, I realized the obviously practical nature of things made of threads and pliable materials.

> We move more and more often and always faster from place to place, and we will turn to those things that will least hinder us in moving.
> .....
> And, if these things include a work of art that is to sustain our spirits (italics mine), it may be that we will take along a woven picture as a portable mural, something that can be rolled up for transport.[50]

The spirit described by Albers can best be understood as the total well being of the individual--the individual accepting and relating to the environment at hand.

The nature of art is to sustain the spirit. It is necessary for the spirit to find some order. Moreover, it is important to understand how the environment at hand can mesh with the needs of the individual's spirit, emotions and senses. In the East it is common to accept the idea of spirit without a sense of rivalry or antagonism such as can be the case in the West. We must unite science (the environment at hand) with the metaphysical realm (the environment within.) In doing so, we produce art. Art is the:

> ...forming of a vision into material reality....[It] directs itself to our lasting fundamental, spiritual, emotional, and sensuous needs: to the spirit by embodying an idea, prophecies, criticism; to the emotions through rhythm, harmony, dynamics; to the senses through the medium of color, sound and texture.[51] (Italics mine.)

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[50]Anni Albers, On Weaving, 1st ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1965), p. 70.

[51]Albers, "Art, A Constant," Designing, p. 43.

Naksha-i-Gashta does not represent anachronistic romanticism that may be embodied by the terms "spirit," "emotions," and "senses." It was undertaken with the intent to work within strict, even severe limitations in order to gain lucidity. Such "...lucidity, a considered position, a reduction to the comprehensible by reason or intuition... [is]...a basis for designing...."[52] I was trying to free myself of the romanticism surrounding Turkoman carpets not only in my design, but in my choice of color. I was attempting to prevent the art from being reduced to mere decoration. In short, I was trying to understand the original mental attitude of the Turkomans and project these attitudes into my experiences and understanding of 20th century materials and procedures.

In her book, The Oriental Rug Book, Mary Ripley is astute enough to note that the Turkoman pattern has "...almost a kaleidoscopic effect about details...."[53] Taking this as a cue I began to look at nearby objects through a kaleidoscope. I chose to look at these everyday objects because it is my belief that the design of the Turkoman rugs did, indeed, result from the weavers' immediate surroundings. People use objects within their frame of reference to relate their spirit to what confronts them daily--to explain the phenomenon of living. I disagree strongly with Kybalova who states "...motifs are not taken from nature but are drawn from a systematic system of ornamental composition."[54] Such a dogmatic approach does not allow for the adaptation and change so obviously made clear by O'Bannon.

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[52]Albers, Weaving, p. 72.

[53]Ripley, Oriental Rug Book, p. 220.

[54]Kybalova, Carpets of the Orient, p. 10.

I wanted to return to the general principle that textiles should relate to the life and activities of the individual, thereby uniting the spirit with the environment. This unity is not Utopian and was possessed strongly by the Turkomans. Unity appeals to the individual's internal aesthetic compass. It is time for this compass to awaken and remove craft from its backwoods subsidy with its therapeutic overtones. The Turkomans realized that craft is a form of useful art. As Dr. Cammon pointed out, this particular art form as developed by the Turkomans was a union of reality and vision.

We must set up limitations so that we can marry this vision and reality. By doing so we can control and direct a creative project to mirror ourselves. "Great freedom can be a hindrance...while limitations ...can spur the imagination...."[55] By choosing the limitations of form and color of the Turkoman carpet and augmenting these limitations with various Greek techniques, I was able to concentrate on the placement of color and texture. I did not, however, approach the piece in a completely dogmatic fashion. This would have created a mere copy or a piece out of step with the intrinsic qualities of Eastern carpets. The only cartoon and, therefore, the only pattern drawn, was one to show the numbers of borders and general placement of guls. Only one gul design abstraction was transferred directly to the warp. The other guls became increasingly abstracted since each was woven from the previous gul. Counting exact numbers of picks per pattern area was not desired.

I approached NIG as an American who has discovered that weaving fits into the needs of the 20th century American nomad. Weaving, as a

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[55]Albers, On Weaving, p. 79.

floor covering, or as a source of color for a room, should also function to make the mind look, search and supplement. Naksha-i-Gashta functions on three levels. It covers the floor, thus helping to insulate the room against cold and sound. It adds color to the room. And, since each gul is abstracted and rotated from its neighbor by 180°, it makes one look to discover differences.

Upon being projected onto a piece of paper, the original gul design was then placed on graph paper (transparent) which again changed and considerably abstracted the design. Graph paper was chosen since it emphasized the geometric aspects of the design. After direct transferal I did not want to further simplify or abstract the design since once weaving began this would occur naturally. The loom and the weight of wool had indicated the direction I had to go.

When judging carpets, many rug collectors seem to consider techniques first and overall aesthetics second. Due to the nature of the sedentary court society, Persian rugs are expectedly more fine (although often pretty to the point of being trite.) Achdjian states:

> Theorists and amateurs are both inclined to make a definite distinction between geometrical and natural styles (plants, animals, human forms.) They...overlook the fact that the choice of one or the other style is not solely guided by aesthetic preferences but by technical conditions....[56]

Because of availability of materials, Turkomans made aesthetic choices that appeal to the contemporary weaver. These aesthetic choices made it difficult to graft onto this work my Greek experiences. Through generations of experience, the Turkomans avoided additions that were decorative. The only two areas that I could successfully modify

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[56]Achdjian, A Fundamental Art, p. 6.

were the secondary border, which used Greek Soumak, and the gul area, which took on an appearance characteristic of kilim in Northern Greece.

The geometric forms of the Turkoman emphasized clarity of design. I chose slit tapestry to heighten the imagery of the geometric aspect of these rugs as well as to heighten the pictoral quality that seems hidden in the geometry of the gul.

As with anything approached from the viewpoint of the late 20th century, time also became a design element. It would have been impossible within my time limit as well as anachronistic to weave a hand-knotted carpet (even though the simplicity of the pile technique gives perhaps the greatest freedom of any weaving technique.) The simplicity was continued in the design considerations of slit tapestry, i.e. sharp, definitive lines and geometric shapes, although the disadvantageous slits had to be sewn closed for structural integrity.

In weaving one must not only design with colors and threads, but also with respect to the loom--the machine which turns fantasy to fact. I chose the large vertical tapestry loom rather than a horizontal harness loom with nearly the same weaving width, because I did not want the uniformity that a horizontal multi-harness loom would provide.

Man-made objects are prone to a reversal of nature's way. Nature is unsurpassed in variation. Thus, by reducing the mechanical aids that control the weave, I hoped to produce a practical, man-made object which was susceptible to the variations of handwork. A horizontal 4 harness loom would have been much easier to dress and thread, but the evenness of beat would have been deadly to the piece and its inherent idea--variation in gul patterns.

The soumak area as seen in the field was accomplished by doing a two over-two under double soumak. By randomly increasing the colors in the soumak from brick to scarlet, I could create pockets of color and shape that suggested the sign devices seen in early carpets which supposedly related to the original weaver's agoraphobia. Such simplification also served to further the dichotomous design characteristic of "...ostentation and simplicity, luxury and asceticism, comfort and austerity."[57]

The strong white used in the carpet is there for a definite purpose. These dashes of white help to establish a rhythm--a visual "pinball effect." The eye is forced to follow a white dash around and around the various borders, skipping from primary to secondary border and back again. The white also helps to make colors within the limited palette change in intensity as various colors are placed next to white areas. As Kybalova points out "...no emotion is expressed, the only concern is a rich rhythmical repetition covering the whole area of the carpet."[58]

In conclusion it must be said that color is the first thing noticed in Naksha-i-Gashta. Such garish use of color is difficult for most Westerners to understand. It must be remembered, however, that "...Asia Minor and Persia [are] countries of intense sunshine... [where]...the colors of the sky and land are most pronounced...."[59] Neutral or pastel shades hold little interest to the areas' population or to me.

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[57]Kybalova, Carpets of the Orient, p. 7.

[58]Ibid., p. 10.

[59]Dr. G. Griffin Lewis, The Practical Book of Oriental Rugs, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1913), p. 79.

It is hoped that the organization of Naksha-i-Gashta has a sense of mystery so that we, the viewers, comprehend a unity which relies not on embellishment, but rather on integration.

CHAPTER V

DAILY PROGRESS

Naksha-i-Gashta:
A Photographic Essay

Photo — Description

#1.....Quarter Karakalpak rug from Samarkand as recorded by A. Bogoliouboff. Note gul size and diagonal flow of border.
photo: Spooner

#2.....Quarter of Afghan rug from Kizil Ayak as recorded by A. Bogoliouboff. Note use of white in guls and dashes of white in primary and secondary border.
photo: Spooner

#3.....Quarter of Afghan rug from Tchar-Villaiet as recorded by A. Bogoliouboff. Note spear-like projections on outside of rug and possible "Sunbird" symbol of gul.
photo: Spooner

#4.....Kaleidoscopic view of sea shell used as design source for primary gul.
photo: Margolis

#5.....Geometric abstraction of photo #4.
photo: Pearlman

#6.....Woven abstraction of photo #5.
photo: Pearlman

#7.....Macedonian kilim rug. Note influence of approach upon the woven abstraction of photo #6.
photo: Smith

#8-9-10.....Method of weaving: transfer of gul outline to warp
photo: Pearlman

Photo Description

#11-12-13.....Method of weaving: weaving the gul
photo: Pearlman

#14-15-16.....Method of weaving: weaving of borders showing method of lacing borders together so that they can be stretched out to loom frame to prevent weave-in.
photo: Pearlman

The following description notates the method of weaving the Greek Soumak areas. Greek Soumak is different from soumak in that the weft is wrapped around a single warp thread three or more times before proceeding to the next adjacent warp thread.

#17.....Method of weaving: new splice tied to a warp thread adjacent to the last possible soumak row.
photo: Pearlman

#18.....Method of weaving: nearly expended Greek Soumak weft wrapped around new splice one time.
photo: Pearlman

#19.....Method of weaving: nearly expended Greek Soumak weft brought to surface of carpet and left.
photo: Pearlman

#20.....Method of weaving: new splice untied and wrapped 2 times around warp thread so as to create the needed three wraps common to Greek Soumak.
photo: Pearlman

The purpose of the above steps was to create a smooth, uninterrupted line of Greek Soumak. The ends left by this operation were then threaded back into the weave.

#21.....General progress: October 4-9, 1976.
photo: Pearlman

#22.....General progress: October 9-27, 1976
photo: Pearlman

#23.....General progress: October 28-November 5, 1976
photo: Pearlman

Photo — Description

#24.....General progress: November 6-21, 1976.
photo: Pearlman

#25.....General progress: November 23, 1976.
photo: Pearlman

#26.....Method of weaving: border construction.
photo: Pearlman

#27.....Method of weaving: closing of field and borders.
photo: Pearlman

#28.....Method of weaving: picking the shed.
photo: Pearlman

#29.....Method of weaving; for even soumak edge: upon return of double soumak weft, binder brought to edge.
photo: Pearlman

#30.....Method of weaving: soumak weft wrapped around final warp thread and binder weft.
photo: Pearlman

#31.....Method of weaving: soumak weft brought behind outside warp and on to face of carpet and around binder weft--the soumak taken through loop created.
photo: Pearlman

#32.....Method of weaving: loop created in photo #31 closed.
photo: Pearlman

#33.....Method of weaving: binder weft crossed over soumak weft--four rows of binder weft used to secure soumak row.
photo: Pearlman

#34-35.....the completed rug
photo: Smith

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