OXFORD ASIAN TEXTILE GROUP

Newsletter No. 23 **October 2002**

Mayan Kai Htamg, one of the makers of Kachin textiles commissioned by the Brighton Museum, photographed in Myitkyina, Kachin State, 2002, see p.8. (Copyright Salaw Zau Ring)

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

So many terrible things have been happening in the world of late, that members may well have forgotten the devastating earthquake that took place in Gujarat in January last year. In the June 2001 newsletter (no. 19), we published an appeal by Ann Guild on behalf of victims. As it was an area in which so many textiles were made, we felt it appropriate that O.A.T.G. members should support a charity supplying tools and materials in order to enable workers to start earning again. Another O.A.T.G. member, Lesley Robin, had set up the Kernel Trust for this very purpose and Ann urged members to send donations to her.

I have recently received a progress report from Lesley, and I thought members would like to know how rehabilitation was getting on. The Trust has sent more than £13,000 to Gujarat, much of it going to Kala Raksha's "Stone Soup" project which has helped rebuild earthquake-proof houses and has made grants to 500 artisans. They have also started a design school for artisans, intended both to ensure the preservation of embroidery traditions and to encourage creativity in new and meaningful ways. At present Kernel is holding £5000 which will be sent to Gujarat shortly to help initiate this project. Further information about Stone Soup can be seen on the Kala Raksha website, www.kalmaksha.org

Kernel is also supporting another O.A.T.G. member, Eiluned Edwards, in helping the efforts being made to rebuild the Rabari Ashramshala Anjar school which was totally destroyed in the earthquake. As the Rabaris are semi-nomadic, this small school provides vital facilities for the education of young Rabari students whose parents are often away for many months at a time.

Kernel's aim is to help create the right conditions for small projects to move forward, and it is satisfying to see that this is being fulfilled. It is nice to know that so many O.A.T.G. members rallied round, and Lesley is grateful to all of you who sent donations - but it is an ongoing commitment, and further contributions will be welcomed by her, Lesley Robin, Trustee at The Kernel Trust, 37 Wolvercote Green, Oxford. OX2 BD

PROGRAMME

Wednesday 30 October

at 6 p.m.
A.G.M. of the Oxford Asian Textile Group
followed by refreshments and

at 7 p.m.
Jon Thompson
May Beattie Fellow of Carpet Studies, Ashmolean Museum,
will talk on
Carpet Weavers and Their Patterns: The Technology of Design Transmission

Wednesday 27 November at 5.45 p.m.

Iranian Regional Dress - Beyond the Chador
by Gillian Vogelsand-Eastwood
Director of the Study Centre for Dress in the Islamic World
and Guest Curator for Textiles and Dress
at the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, Netherlands

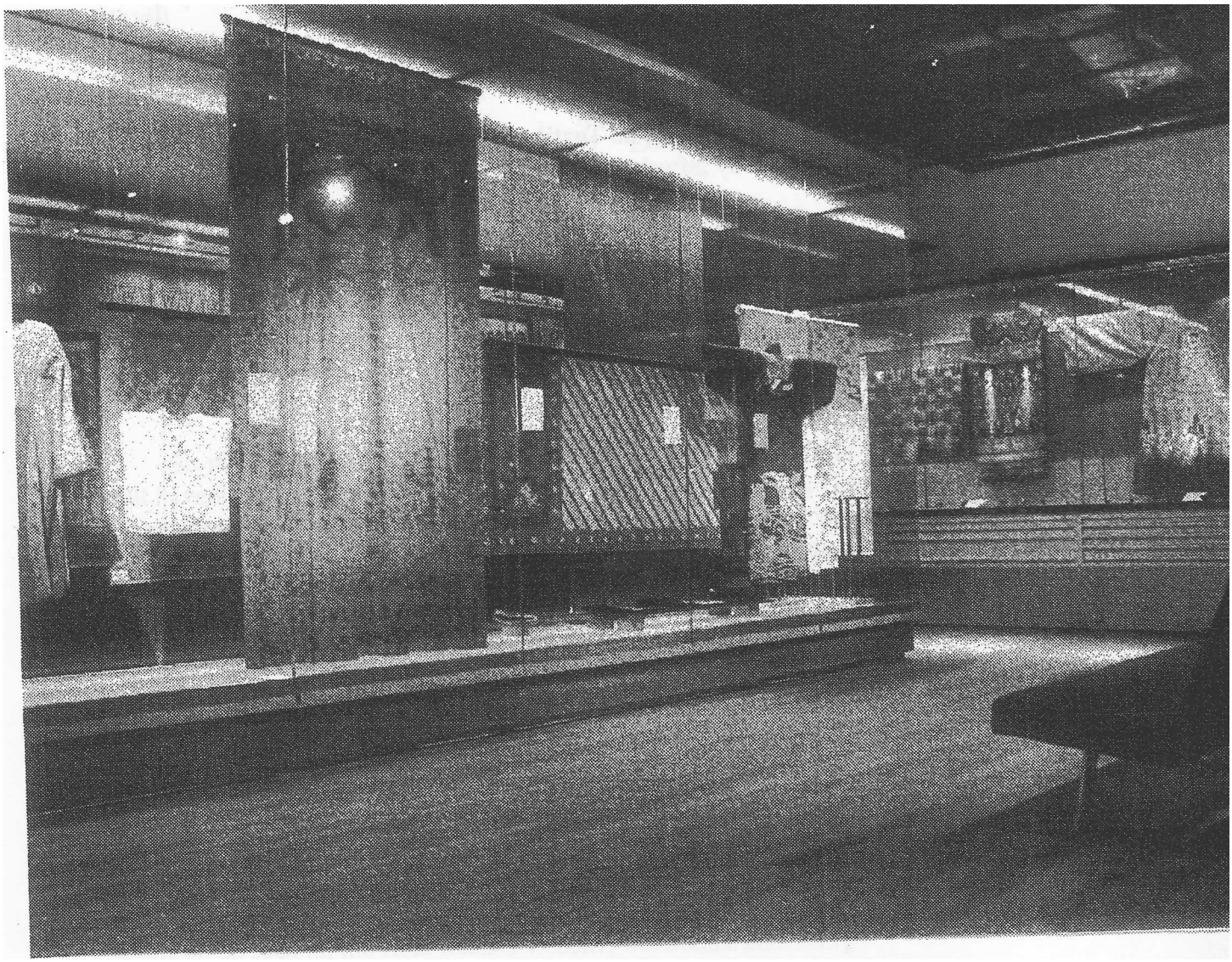
One of the media images of Iran is of a flock of women in black chadors, yet this is far from the truth. In recent years Dr Vogelsang-Eastwood and her husband have been making a survey of contemporary Iranian urban and regional dress, and have collected over 1000 garments representing most of the groups in Iran. Sadly many of these garments are vanishing quickly as globalization takes place.

Both meetings at the Pauling Centre, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford
Members free; Visitors welcome, £2

Further information can be obtained from the Programme Secretaries:

Rosemary Lee. The Garden House, Thames Road, Goring-on-Thames, Oxon, RG8 9AH
Tel. 01491 873276 e-mail: rosemary.leeA@talk2l.com

Fiona Sutcliffe, Heath Barton, Manor Road, Goring-on-Thames, Oxon, RG8 9EH
Tel. 01491 872268 e-mail: j.v.sutcliffe@talk2l.com



THE TEXTILE CABINET IN THE WERELDMUSEUM ROTTERDAM

On 26 November 2000 the Wereldmuseum Rotterdam, the former Museum of Ethnology, opened its doors to show a completely new concept in which cultural encounters and cross-cultural inspiration are major issues. After a two-year renovation with extensions on the Willemskade, the Museum with its 3400 square metres of galleries is now the 15th largest museum in the Netherlands. The visitor is able to enjoy in the new setting of the Treasure Rooms permanent exhibitions of the top pieces from the extensive collection.

Spread over three floors in the new building are 650 objects from Indonesia, Asia, Africa, Oceania and America which until recently, due to lack of exhibition space, always had to be kept in storage. Temporary exhibitions are staged on three floors in the old

building, which also houses "Hotel Het Reispaleis" (the children's museum) the theatre, restaurant and museum shop.

Noticeable within the Treasure Rooms is the Textile Cabinet, a 100 square metre gallery for displaying the Museum's textile collection. The Wereldmuseum Rotterdam is the first and only museum in the Netherlands to allow visitors to admire and study ethnographic textiles. The choice for a textile cabinet in the new setting is a well considered one. After successful exhibitions in the past, the textile collection was designated to be one of the Museum's major focus points in the future. The arrangement in the Cabinet allows for two types of exhibition: a permanent and a temporary one.

In the permanent exhibition are shown, in 30 drawers measuring 150x70 cm, some 50 pieces from all over the world. They were selected for their beauty and rarity as well as their technical quality. In this attractive room special seating enables one to study the textiles in the drawers closely. Here one can see the Persian weavings in gold and silver thread, with their bird and flower motifs a feast for the eye! The Coptic weavings from Egypt from the 5th to 7th centuries A.D. show the characteristic decoration resulting from the technique of the "flying spool". Perfection and quality are unequalled in Peruvian textiles, preserved thanks to the funeral habits of the Andean people, as can be seen in the tunic with matching accessories such as bags and a stone sling that are quite impressive. From the North American Indians moccasins, pouches and bags show refined bead embroidery on caribou and bison skin. Motifs have mostly a symbolic meaning or represent relationship, finding expression in being worn at ritual dances, hunting parties and ceremonial festivities. Textiles from Asia and Indonesia present a diversity of materials and techniques. Pretty ikat in hemp, cotton and silk from the Philippines, Borneo and India, batik on fine cotton from Java, lie at the basis of clothing, gifts for exchange at important transition periods of life, such as birth and marriage. Textiles produced from plant fibres show their charm in woven, embroidered and ikat cloth from Zaire and Madagascar.

To show as many objects as possible from the storage department, the selection will change every three years. On site the visitor can obtain more information on the textiles from a databank. The Museum also intends to provide information to the visitor by audioguide. In the library a vast collection of books on textiles and literature lists especially compiled for each exhibition can be consulted.

Twice a year, in May and December, a temporary exhibition with textiles from the Museum's own collection will be on show. The character of the shows is alternately more aesthetic and more educational/scholarly. Regular visitors have already enjoyed the opening exhibition of Japanese kimono from the period 1775-2000, followed by a choice from the rich collection of Peruvian textiles. Participation in the event of Rotterdam being Cultural Capital of Europe in 2001 was realized by an exhibition of depictions of water creatures on textiles, such as birds, fish, crocodiles, flowers, ancestors and ghosts on textiles from all continents which give a symbolic meaning to the wearer. Until 2 December this year a very exquisite selection from the collection is on show of Indian textiles from 1550-1900, which played an important role in the Dutch East India trade. Preparations for the next show are in full speed; it deals with the ever amazing encounter of cultures and its reflection in textiles. The

collection is quite diverse, so themes for the oncoming years are already known: gold-thread weavings from Indonesia and Japanese country textiles.

The creation of the Textile Cabinet is a real asset to the Museum. With the quiet atmosphere in which the textiles are splendidly displayed, with the thorough basis for presentation in showcases of high quality materials of inert glass and metal, within environmentally controlled conditions and with glass fibre lighting, it makes an excellent opportunity to present ethnographic textiles in the Netherlands. Within two years its existence has been justified by the numerous reactions of visitors and colleagues who come from all over Holland and from abroad to enjoy the textiles, and this has led to many people deciding to donate or bequeath their textiles to the Museum. Since the opening the collecion has been growing fast. Co-operation with specialist groups, such as the Dutch Ikat Weaving Group, adds an important contribution to the technical level of the exhibitions.

Textiles are highly appreciated in the Netherlands, and with the Textile Cabinet and major temporary exhibitions, such as the Japanese kimono of the Noh theatre to be hold in spring 2005, the Museum's aim is to satisfy this interest. If you would like further information please consult our website, www.wereldmuseum.rotterdam.nl or contact me at lhanssen@wereldmuseum.rotterdam.nl

Linda Hanssen
Curator/Restorer of Textiles

COLLECTING TEXTILES IN KACHIN STATE, BURMA

"Three Laski women", photograph taken by James Henry Green in the Kachin hills c.1920, one of many he took to record characteristic styles of dress as a way of classifying groups of people in northern Burma. (Copyright The James Henry Green Collection)

In July 2001 The James Green Centre for World Art at Brighton Museum commissioned weavers in Kachin State, Burma, to make a series of wedding outfits. Each outfit has been made to the highest standard and has been thoroughly documented with the weavers, including photographs and interviews recorded at different stages of the project. The commission developed out of the Museum's relationship with Kachin cultural history researchers who, since 1996, have contributed valuable contemporary insights to the photographs, documentation and textiles collected by James Green, a recruiting officer who worked for the British army in the Kachin hills in the 1920s. A booklet about the Green Collection, including images of the textiles that he collected, and copies of his photographs and notes on Kachin dress, was prepared for the weavers as part of the project and translated into Jinghpaw, the Kachin people's main language.

The project was undertaken by local people who co-ordinated the commission in Kachin State as an opportunity to record designs and techniques associated with traditional Kachin dress. For special occasions, such as weddings, festivals and funerals, Kachin people wear richly decorated outfits that can distinguish them as being part of a particular Kachin ethnic group. These groupings were originally loosely based on geographical regions of the Kachin hills. Communities still live in these areas. However, many of the groups have been dispersed and urban centres like Myitkyina, Kachin State's main town, have become home to people from many of the different Kachin groups. To-day, what is described in Myitkyina as "traditional dress" continues to play a significant role in defining and displaying Kachin identity, and is still worn for special occasions and cultural events. There is great variety in the styles of dress worn, which include richly coloured hand-woven skirt cloths, leggings and head cloths; elaborately decorated bags, and tailored jackets, some of which can be covered with silver discs or satin appliqu6 work. The designs used and the group definitions associated with particular traditional styles are not fixed and change over time.

For the project, weavers in Myitkyina were commissioned to make male and female wedding outfits in what they considered to be the traditional styles of dress associated with the main Kachin groups, and a selection of sub-groups [1]. Their choices of designs and how they have described the outfits in the documentation have been influenced by the project's emphasis on recording the "most traditional" group styles, and by the association with a foreign museum. However, the ways in which the weavers interpreted this, their individual understanding and knowledge of traditional designs and techniques formed the focus of the project and resulted in a collection of highly individual outfits.

The designs that the weavers chose to use vary from work meticulously copied from their own heirloom textiles to pieces incorporating innovative new designs, materials and accessories. Some weavers based their choice of designs on what they could remember their elders wearing or on what they had been taught by their mothers or grandmothers. For some outfits this differed from what is worn today as "traditional dress". Muk Yin Hating Nan, who made the Lhaovo group's outfits, paid particular attention to this, making two women's skirt cloths, one in the "traditional" style worn to-day, and one as she remembered them being made by her grandmother. Both skirts were woven on a backstrap loom, but the modem traditional skirt used brighter colours and has many more patterns. Several of the

1 While this was considered a "representative" set by the project participants, there are many variations in dress styles within the groups represented, and other Kachin groups not included in the project

in the project. weavers referred to an increase over time in the use of pattern, colour and silver decorations, and most, although not all, designed their outfits according to contemporary interpretations of traditional style.

This photograph and the one opposite, taken in Myitkyina, show Kachin models wearing four of the seventeen outfits commissioned by Brighton Museum. (Copyright Htoi Awng)

Particular attention was paid by many of the weavers to using what were considered to be the most traditional materials and techniques, for example home grown and hand spun cotton and silk, natural dyes, and specific seeds, fibres, buttons and coins for decoration. These methods often continue to be associated with high quality but are not always used because the materials are rare and the techniques time consuming and expensive. Several of the weavers expressed their concern that knowledge of these materials and techniques is increasingly rare in Myitkyina, with few women learning the traditional methods of weaving, a rise in machine weaving and many weavers choosing to use cheaper and more readily available materials. This concern was a key factor in the choice made by people working on the project in Myitkyina to use the commission to record traditional Kachin methods and designs. (For example, the lady pictured on page 1, Maran Kai Htang, has been displaced from the Htingnai region of Kachin State and had not woven Htingnai designs for thirty years. Involvement in this project encouraged her to start again and to pass her knowledge and skills on to her daughter, who wove part of the Htingnai group's outfit for the Museum from cotton grown in their garden.)

The Museum views documentation as a critical part of the textile commission, and a way of continuing its broader concerns with Kachin archives and cultural records. The

interviews recorded with the weavers and the notes and photographs taken as part of the project are an important record of approaches to weaving and weaving techniques, a field in which Jinghpaw language records are very scarce. The project has encouraged dialogue about recording textile designs in Kachin State and it is hoped that this will continue. The information will form part of a shared archive to be made available as a research resource in Kachin State and at the Green Centre. However, as with Green's own notes and photographs, it is crucial that the information gathered for the project is viewed in context, and that it continues to be framed as the opinions of individual weavers, generated and recorded as part of a project initiated by the Museum.

This article draws on chapters looking at Kachin textiles and the development of the James Green textile collection in the forthcoming publication Textiles from Burma *edited by Elizabeth Dell and Sandra Dudley.*

An outfit from the Kachin textile project is included in the exhibition Collecting Textiles and Their Stories *on display in the World Art Gallery at Brighton Museum until May 2003.*

Lisa Maddigan

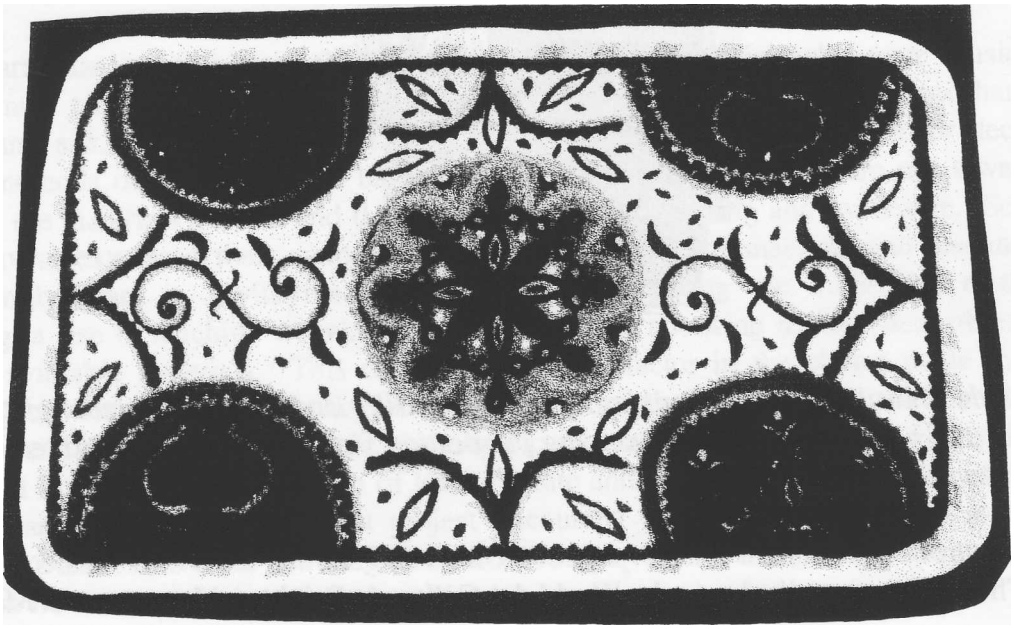
A QUEST FOR CONTEMPORARY FELTS IN ANATOLIA

Last year I was commissioned by the British Museum to travel around Turkey gathering together a group, or representative cross-section, of examples of contemporary felted textiles from the various regions, to extend and develop the Museum's existing collection.

The journey began from Istanbul and ended at the city called Mardin in the south east near the Iranian border. The eight different regions visited were, it was discovered later, the only ones where felt makers and centres survive, apart from among the mountaineer nomadic groups such as the "Yoruk". I had gathered names and addresses in advance through recommendations of each to the other, and some obtained at the International Felt-makers' Association symposium in Kyrgyzstan which I had recently attended, and these people were informed in advance of my coming. In August I set off with a friend and colleague with two digital cameras and a borrowed car for a round trip of two thousand and seven hundred miles spread over a two-week period.

Our first destination was Kula, a small town of the Aegean region which had been a very important felt-making centre until the late 1970s. Now there is only one workshop, where they produce decorated, colourful, felted wool rugs or wall hangings. The remaining makers were producing only plain felt.

The felt-makers' quarter is next to the tanneries, where they take and use dead-fleece, called the scrub of hides. Felt made of this second quality raw material smells very bad and tends to lose hair very quickly. Eventually standards/requirements for felted rugs and wall hangings became more rigorous and, compared to commercially produced items, local felts fell short of that standard. Consumers switched to woven carpets and kilims made of better wool.



quired by Selcuk Gurisik for the British Museum. It is from Tire, by Mehmet Con. 1.34 x 2.24m. (Reg. 2001 As 7.9)

But one of the family businesses in town decided to carry on felt-making and, using better wool, is still producing some felt for the tourist trade in the bigger holiday resorts. They work in the same stock traditional arrangement of motifs throughout all their work, but in different colour ways. The bright colours of chemical dyes and elaborately laid out intensively decorated motifs make these less well-crafted items look better than they really are. Their felt was hard and tensile qualities were of a low standard.

Our next stop was Tire. Mostly popular amongst the "culture tour" tourists, this centre has one of the biggest populations of felt makers. They are local people and all are family businesses in which father and son are involved. Felt making is in most cases a side activity, secondary to their fig orchards and vineyards. They work usually with chemical dyes, but one or two masters use natural dyes/vegetable dyes. Wool from local sheep is their base raw material, supplemented by some other qualities from regions inland, principally Konya.

Apart from village commissions, they stock produce for the foreign tourist, as well as for local tourists. The felt-makers' quarter was decorated with bunches of hanging felts on their shop-fronts or any free wall space they could find nearby. The traditional motifs and technique of this town established a specific look and visual language with their wares amongst the products of the other felt-makers in Anatolia. Especially unusual shapes like oval and circular pieces are to be found, also arched shaped praying mats, designed to be conceptually in harmony with the outline of the object and the inlined motifs.

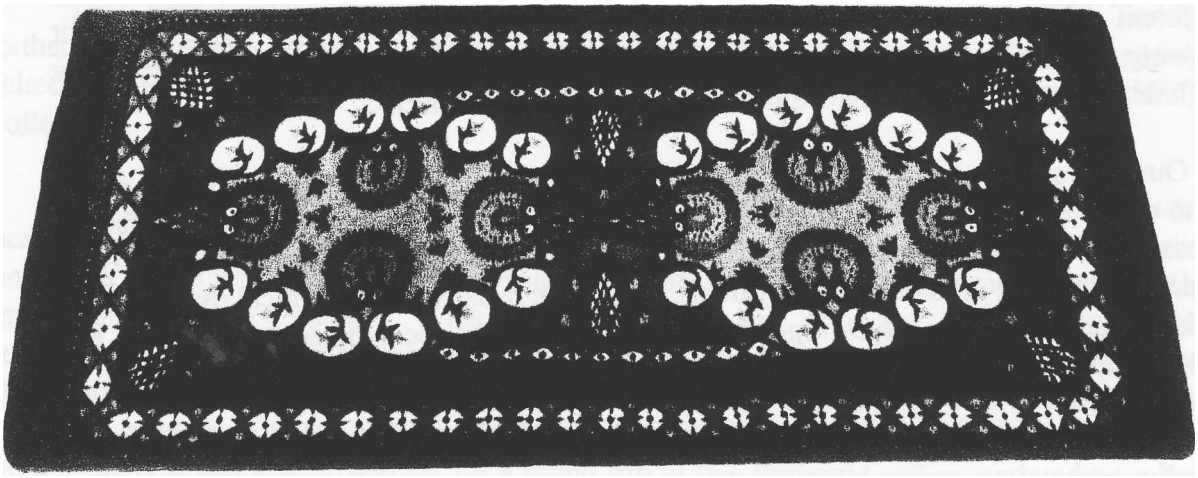
One of the workshops had independently created a photographic documented archive, or samplebook, of option choices, which was opened to any suggestion of the new commissions. We placed two commissions to be collected on our way back from this field study tour. We also took the opportunity to make a video of the procedures and process technology, step by step.

The neighbourhood with its workshops in such close proximity has generated a common or symbiotic development in relation to the kind of visual iconography in the work produced. The themes of the motifs, being very similar, show on closer inspection differentiation of individual approaches and variations of the same theme, very valuable for the semantic study of this research project.

I have been working on and off for the last fifteen years with one of the master feltmakers of Afyon, which we next visited. Therefore a catalogue has been established of his range of products, together with some old samples. Also he himself has been collecting some photographs from his own history. This was the starting point from which to commission a few pieces for the B.M. collection. The process technique applied to his local wool had to be changed for this special occasion. The final result was to convince us of his willingness to apply new methods to his technique and his capability of creating good quality felts by these methods.

The dye-bath of pre-felted pieces, from which they cut out their motifs, has to be changed by consuming less dye and allowing a longer boiling period in the process. This it was hoped would control the bleeding of excess dye on the white surface of the support fleece or felt. Pre-washing the raw sheared wool before sorting would also help with

bleeding problems. He chose the deer cult image out of a Western drawing book, so the particular image is of a deer from a Walt Disney cartoon!



Felt from Konya by Mehmet Girgic, 1.48 x 3.24m (Reg. 2001 AS 7.16)

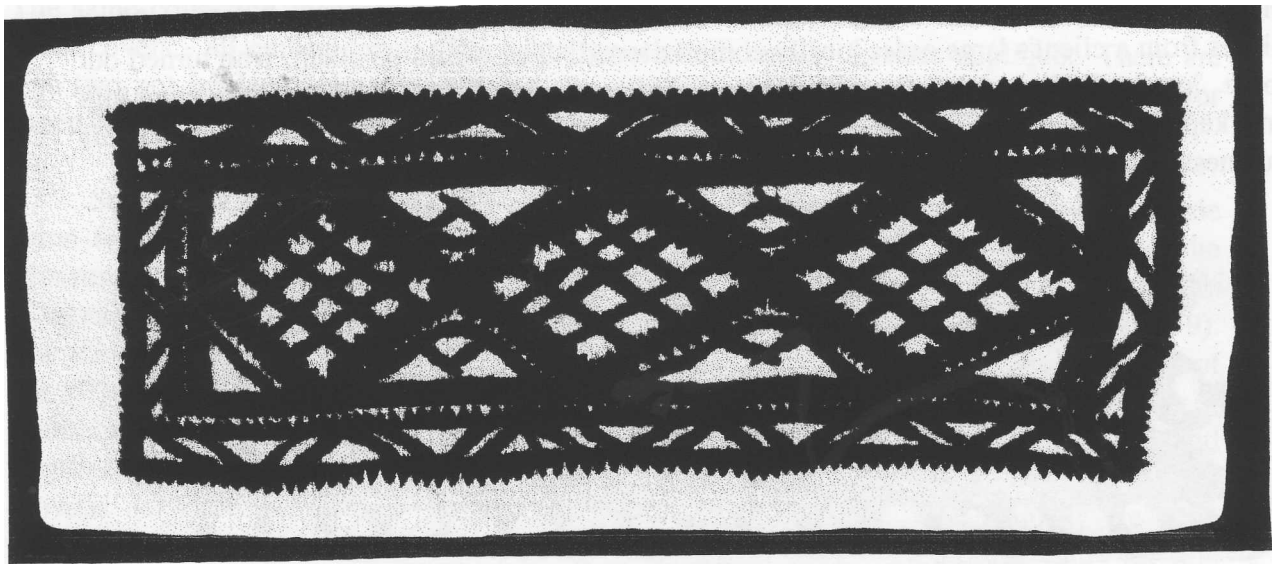
The city of Konya has been a very important centre for certain sects of the Moslem religion since the eleventh century until the present day. One of the sects established was named Akhi, or member of the brotherhood, and formed one of the first artisan guilds. Their first chief was the master felt maker, and he was later closely associated with the Sufis through the son of Mvlana Cedllaleddin-i Rumi, who established the sect in Konya. This historical context, together with the requirement that Sufis' headwear must be distinctive, prompted the use of the ancient moulding or shaping capability of felt to exploit the city's craft skills. It also helped to establish Konya as one of the most important centres not only for felt-makers but also for the attendant skills of its craftsmen in carpet and kilim weaving to a high level of excellence.

These established felt-makers in this city (numbers of whom are diminishing) are still producing high quality felt products, for which there is some demand by the newcomers to the area, such as tourists. Likewise there is still a demand for apprenticeship in this craft. The very fine levels of craftsmanship in both product and process technology, for example in the use of natural dyed raw material of the best available quality, good preparation of the wool, and better tuned machinery, are indicative of a high quality culture.

The felt-makers of Konya have kept very detailed photographic records of their traditionally produced pieces to use to attract new commissioned work. These albums are also valuable historical documents as well as refreshing the memories of the felt-makers as they refer back to their own resource of motifs.

One of the workshops in this centre organizes culture tours and accommodates amateur or would-be felt-makers from all over the world in and around its premises. This particular master felt-maker has been invited to give demonstrations and workshops about felt-making in England, where he made connexions resulting in many commissioned works and exports of felted work to many countries such as Canada, the U.S.A. and the U.K.

The south-east Anatolian city of Urfa used to hold a very important position in felt-making, but the assimilation of nomadic groups of Kurdish and Turkish minorities by the central authorities led to a decline in the tradition. As the sedentary settlements were enlarged to include these groups, a strategy employed to eliminate the possibility of terrorist action has been in force for the last fifteen years, leading to the disruption of local economic stability. The older population had, as a result of its feudal history, been independent and anarchic towards any external authority that tried to impose change upon them. The recent expansion in the population may eventually lead to changed structures, but not before a prolonged and difficult transition period has taken place.



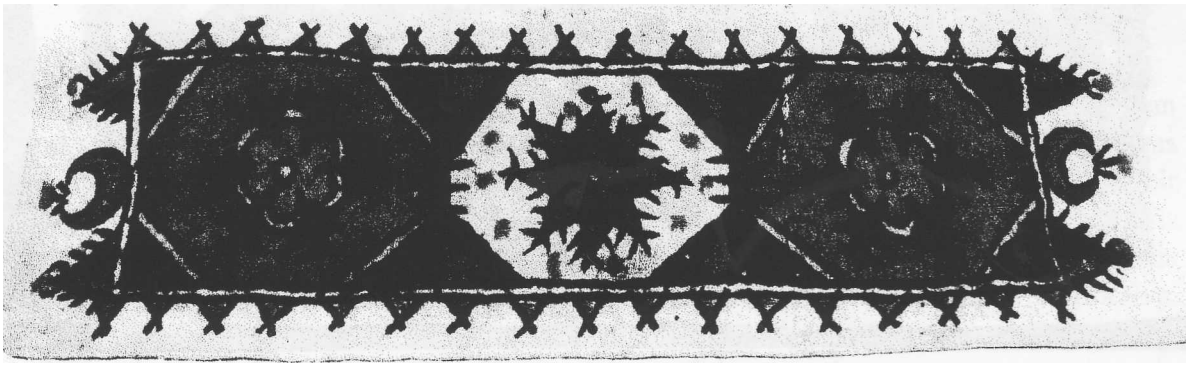
Felt from Urfa by Ramazan Talasik, .88 x 2.06m (Reg. 2001 As 7.29)

On the periphery of this ancient culture there persisted a semi-nomadic tradition where large families still meet for ritual feasts on such occasions as weddings, circumcision ceremonies and some religious holidays, gathering sheltered under their tents woven from black goats' hair. Large felt rugs have usually been used to cover the ground and to sit upon during these meetings. Many felt-makers are commissioned to produce this type of large, thick and very stiff felted rug. These are not only produced today to replace worn-out ones but made new for the following generation of these very traditionalist people. Little if any consideration is given to quality, in the Western sense of the word; these products are strictly utilitarian, intended to last long and make these wild, empty interiors a little more dressed-up to show the power of the family to which they belong. The vivid colour ways of the motifs are usually primitively stylized and abstractly designed on mainly natural-coloured backgrounds. Some of the influence is distinctly Kurdish. As at Kula, the felt-makers' quarter is side by side with the tannery and the clipped wool of the pelts, a by-product of the tanning process, is used in the middle of the felted pieces. Usually felts produced in this way keep the strong smell of sheep for a very long time.

These Arabic and Kurdish nomadic groups used highly stylized and transposed motifs, such as the sun, mixed with the contemporary Turkish crescent and stars which have symbolic meaning referring to the power of the republic and, reinforced by naming, for

example, any star motif "Commissar Star". It is difficult to ascertain whether these titles have any element of irony considering the traditional nature of the people who devise them.

Mardin, the last stop in this tour of Anatolia, was suggested to us by one of the old felt-makers in Urfa, who told us that one of the last felt-makers in the region was Armenian or Syrian Orthodox. However, when we arrived we found that he was dead, but there was another felt-maker, an old Kurdish man of 75, who is the last person to have a workshop here, though sadly no longer in use. We were taken by the local tailor to the old man's workshop behind the fruit and vegetable market, but his old age, hearing difficulties and lack of the Turkish language made communication very difficult. He had some left-over felted pieces from a client's large order locally commissioned. The would-be client, who turned out to be "on the fiddle", delayed producing any money, therefore the old man did not trust him and kept his pieces. When he finished the 25 piece collection he wanted to sell out his business and retire.



Felt by Cemil Kazanci, the old Kkudish felt-maker of Mardin, 1.07 x 3.20m (Reg. 2001 As 7.9)

The commissioned pieces referred to were brightly coloured, bulky, with motifs freely laid out on large backgrounds. The excess dye in the coloured fleece was in a harmonious but random way blended into each other as a consequence of the steam finishing process, creating half-toned mid-colours. The exuberant energy of these special pieces was bright and sunny; they were also very good examples of the specificity in the way of using colour in this region as it varies from culture to culture.

It is usually the men who make felt in Anatolia, exceptions being found only among the mountaineer nomads called Yoruk. Their felt-makers are women, as were their ancestors who migrated to Anatolia from Central Asia.

Selcuk Gurisik
Research Student at the London Institute,
Central St Martin's College

FELT TEXTILES AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

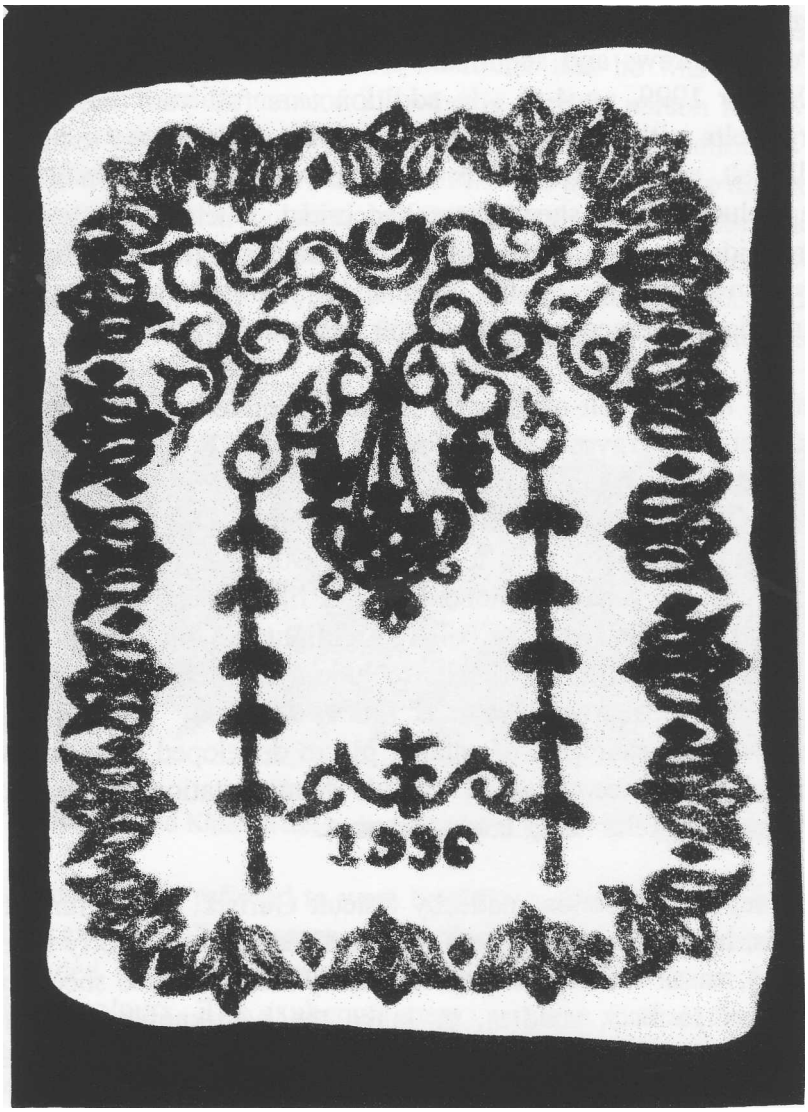
Selcuk Gurisik's collection has added to a growing and important body of textiles in the Department of Ethnography. Most of the acquisitions of felts in recent years have been from Central Asia and three collections stand out. First are the Turkmen felts from north-eastern Iran, collected by Peter Andrews and acquired by the Department in 1973 (see O.A.T.G. Newsletter no.14, October 1999, pp 4-6). In addition to a full yurt (including white felt covers), there are large felts with decoration matted into the body of the textile, a door felt, vast hearth felt, cradle felt, and four floor felts - some of which are patterned on both sides. The same collection includes a gun sheath, tasselled bridal pouch, a saddle cover and two horse covers - all embroidered. The bridal pouch additionally features appliqué. There are also two pot holders¯ one embroidered, the other appliquéed - and a simple felt pouch for sheep shears. (A man's cloak was acquired from Peter Andrews in 1975.)

Second are the felt textiles, felt-making tools and raw materials collected by Stephanie Bunn for the Department in Kyrgyzstan in 1995 and 1996. These were displayed at the Museum of Mankind, as was, in 1997 *(Striking Tents: Central Asian Nomad Felts from Kyrgyzstan* - see Newsletters no. 6, February 1997, p.6, and no.8, October 1997, pp 8-9). The thirty-five textiles date from the 1950s to the mid-1990s and are largely in the form of *ala ki7z* ("bright felts") with patterns embedded in the textile, or *shyrdak* ("mosaic felts") of interlocking positive and negative patterns, often highlighted with couching threads and attached to a backing felt. Other decorated felts include the couched felt *(syrmak),* quilted *shyrdak (shyrak shyrdak)* and patchwork *shyrdak (kurak shyrdak)*. The majority are large floor covers, although there are examples of smaller pieces developed more recently for sale to visitors. This material was accompanied by full documentation and supporting field photographs of the makers, and felts being made and used.

Third is, of course, the collection made by Selcuk Gurisik. With funding from the British Museum Friends, he put together a commissioned collection of forty-nine pieces for the Museum. In Turkey, small workshops predominantly hand-produce sheets of plain felt for industrial purposes or to back saddles, or make the well-known shepherds' cloaks. However, masters in Balikesir, Tire, Kula, Afyon, Konya, Urfa and Mardin continue to create decorated felts.

A number of very different textile types are represented in the collection. Most masters hold smaller felts in stock and make larger textiles to commission, with locals often bringing their own fleece to be made up. The largest floor covers can be up to 1.5m wide by almost 4m in length. These are commissioned for special occasions such as wedding parties, circumcision ceremonies, wrestling matches and prayer gatherings. The collection also features smaller mats, prayer rugs, Dervish hats, a saddle cover and patterned shepherd's cloak. Some of the pieces from Tire have been developed for sale to visitors, both from elsewhere in Turkey and from abroad. These are smaller items - such as seat covers and mats - which can be easily transported. Tasselled amulets were acquired in Urfa and Konya shops and possibly produced by Yoruk makers, nomads who traditionally hang felt amulets in their tents. The workshop-produced decorated felts are predominantly purchased by traditionally nomadic tribes now largely semi-settled but taking their tents and flocks to the mountains for summer grazing.

With the exception of two older floor covers, all the examples in the collection were made this year. A maker in Afyon, however, marks his prayer felts "1996", whatever the year of manufacture - the date his father, who designed the pattern, died (see illustration below).



Prayer mat from Afyon by Yasar Kocotas, 1.48 x 3.24m (Reg. 2001 As 7.11)

The commissioned collection was made in the context of Selcuk Gurisik's own research into traditional Turkish felt-making, and is also accompanied by extensive documentation, photographs, and also video footage of various masters, workshops and the process of felt-making.

Other acquisitions over the last six years include contemporary floor felts from Turkmenistan and a Turkmen coat; further examples of contemporary felt-based artefacts developed for the tourist market in Kyrgyzstan; Uzbek floor felts (most notably a fine nineteenth century example from the collection of' artists Sally Matthews and Richard Harris); embroidered felt tent pole bags with horse hair tassels, tent hangings, and a camel

headdress; an embroidered floor felt attributed to the Lakai; a saddle felt, tent hangings and an embroidered coat from Afghanistan; and contemporary floor felts from Iran.

Earlier acquisitions of larger felt pieces include two striking Baluch floor covers from Pakistan (acquired 1972), and from Turkey three floor covers and two shepherd's coats (acquired 1968).

Felt artefacts from farther afield are largely hats and other costume items: there are examples of hats from Turkey, Iraq, India, Mongolia, China (including Tibet), Bolivia, Egypt and Tunisia; boots and slippers from China and Korea; and felt capes from China (Miao).

Putting a figure to the felt collections is difficult. The computerized collections database is largely drawn from original documentation where "felt" or "felted", even if applicable, may not have been recorded. Where it is noted, this can often refer to woven wool textiles subsequently felted (such as men's coats, jackets and trousers, and women's waistcoats, held from such places as Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, Romania and parts of the former Yugoslavia), or felt used as a backing for saddles or inner soles for shoes. However the total number, excluding these latter forms, is around 250.

These felt holdings will be showcased in a major new British Museum Press volume, *Felt: In the Footsteps of the Central Asian Nomads* by Stephanie Bunn, to be published in 2003. It will also feature examples of felt from regions other than Central Asia, including work by contemporary artists and craftspeople. Illustrations will include felt textiles and artefacts from other museum collections (such as the very fine material held at the Horniman Museum, London), many previously unpublished, as well as field and archive images.

Sarah Posey
Curator - Europe, Central Asia and Middle East
The British Museum Department of Ethnography

REPORTS OF O.A.T.G. MEETINGS

A Visit to the HALI Carpet and Textiles Fair

The HALI Fair took place from 6 to 9 June at Olympia with the Summer Fine Art and Antiques Fair and the Antiquarian Book Fair, and was visited by parties from the O.A.T.G. on Thursday 6th and Saturday 8th. I was one of the Thursday party,

It was an opportunity to study, or perhaps buy, high quality textiles presented by dealers who came from all over the world, and collectors of rare objects of apparel and ritual from remote areas. There was a wide variety of carpets and textiles; most visitors would be encouraged to explore beyond their special interest area by the imaginative displays of every aspect of fabrics and stitched objects. There was inspiration everywhere. It is very difficult to describe the total experience, so the account below will reflect the particular interests of the writer.

For those interested in antique carpets, where better to start than the special exhibition of Caucasian carpets and textiles before 1850? These were in the category of *Masterpieces on the Market* and a conducted tour of the exhibit had been arranged. The sixteen pieces were all well documented and all fine examples, so provided the cultural context for many of the distinctive styles and designs to be seen in the rest of the show.

At the other end of the temporal range were contemporary carpets, especially the Amrapur rugs. The wool for the rugs and kilims had come from a vegetarian co-operative in the Rajasthan desert, where contented sheep had been hand sheared. The wool had been hand spun and subtly dyed using natural dyes. The designs were simple, resulting in rugs with an appealing contrast, an heirloom in the making!

One display was visited several times because of the unique juxtaposition of colours and textures in the silk on silk designs. Western textile experts have only recently known the powerful embroideries of the Kaitag peoples. They are from Daghestan, which is located between the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus Mountains. This is on the important trade route between Turkey and the Middle East to the South and Central Asia to the north. Over the centuries the Kaitag culture has absorbed a wide range of diverse ethnic and religious influences which have been transformed into vivid compositions using silks. The embroideries were used for rituals associated with the principal rites of passage, birth marriage and death. Because they were passed down through the generations, many of even the oldest ones, perhaps from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, have survived in excellent condition. The embroidered side was turned toward the inner surface during the ritual; over the baby's head to avoid the "evil eye"; marriage gifts from the bride were wrapped with the embroideries inward, and the head of a dead person was immediately covered with a special piece with cosmic designs, again with the design side concealed. It was removed before burial to be passed on to the next generation.

By happy coincidence, O.A.T.G. members visiting the HALI Fair on the Thursday gathered in a Middle Eastern restaurant beforehand. This set the mood and enabled everyone to become acquainted before spreading out to explore the wonderfully colourful exhibition. This was an experience to savour, and also to share with like-minded people. Many thanks to Fiona and Rosemary who organized this experience for us.

Margaret Scholey-Hill

Old Friends Revisited

Until comparatively recently it was possible to travel to the rural areas in the New Territories of Hong Kong and still find examples of hand tailored and embroidered clothing reflecting the ethnic identity and way of life of the local people. This was the subject of a talk given by Valery Garrett to members of the Group on July 1st behind the scenes at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Valery collected in the lesser-known parts of Hong Kong first between the late 1970s and 1986, in the holidays between terms while she was teaching there. Later, in the late

eighties, the Hong Kong Museum of History gave her a grant to study and collect traditional costume there on their behalf.

Valery's own collection was acquired by the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1996, and the Group was given the opportunity to see a selection from the collection while Valery described the pieces and the circumstances of their collection - hence the title of her talk. Some lively anecdotes provided vivid pictures of the bustling markets where some items were obtained, and the negotiations which went on with other vendors, who flocked to show her their handiwork, cast-offs or once-treasured festive costumes. At the same time, she outlined the characteristics of the traditional clothing of the various groups and explained the differences between them.

There are four main ethnic groups represented in the collection: the Cantonese, the Hakka, the Tanka and the Hoklo. All four groups wore a *sam* or tunic, most dyed in indigo, though these varied in style between the different groups.

The Cantonese, or Punti (literally "local people") were the earliest settlers in the area, first arriving in the eleventh century. They were traditionally farmers, and had the best land to work. Their tunics were comparatively small, following the contours of the body quite closely. The apron was bound with bias binding. When a Cantonese woman married she would "open her face" by wearing a headband, and the Group were shown two of these, one made of intricate beadwork.

The Hakka (literally "guest people") arrived much later, in the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries. They were also farmers but they had to settle in the less fertile and higher areas. They grew hemp from which they made their own fabric. Having to work hard for their livings, they tended to re-use fabric and were more likely than the Cantonese to keep old clothing. Their *sam* was in the past much larger and wider than those of other groups. The colours of the narrow bands used to attach the apron indicated marital status, and the patterns were once passed down from mother to daughter. By the 1970s home production had all but died out, and most were being purchased from the market. The Hakka also wore headcloths and a "cool hat" of basketry with a fabric "curtain" round the brim, as well as basketry wrist-covers to protect their arms while harvesting rice.

The Tanka, or Shui sheung yana (literally "people who live on the water"), as they prefer to call themselves, were in the past not allowed to live on land nor to intermarry with land people. They lived in boats and had their clothing made up by tailors ashore. We were shown a distinctive Tanka straw hat. Although these were purchased from China, they were decorated locally, this one with a star on the peak, symbolizing how they navigated. Headscarves were also worn, made of a square of fabric with an embroidered rim along two adjacent edges.

The Hoklo (people from Hokkien) also lived predominantly from fishing. The decoration on their clothing was sophisticated, with small flashes of bright colours applied in small areas. For festivals, an intricately decorated hair bun was worn. A Hokklo wedding skirt, elaborately decorated with bells and sequins was much admired.

Many of the items we saw are illustrated in Valery's book, *Traditional Chinese Clothing,* published in 1987 by the Oxford University Press in their *Images of Asia* series.

Fiona Kerlogue

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Deliberately Concealed Garments Website Launch

In her report on the Pasold conference in the last Newsletter, Ruth Baines mentioned the Textile Conservation Centre's project on objects deliberately concealed in old buildings. Members may like to know that a website www.concealedgarments.org was launched in August this year. It was developed by the Textile Conservation Centre (TCC), University of Southampton, to raise awareness of and provide information about the centuries-old practice of concealing objects in buildings. This folk practice may have been for protection against perceived malevolent forces such as witchcraft.

The website comprises information, including images, about what deliberately concealed garments are, their cultural significance, and presents an online database of garment and associated finds. It also includes guidelines on how new discoveries should be handled and who should be contacted, so that if anyone should come across anything during building works they know how to proceed.

In 1995, while a student at the TCC, I was lucky enough to work on a doublet which had been concealed in the wall of a Reigate building in the early seventeenth century. It was a hugely rewarding project which focussed on detailed documentation of the garment, and consideration of the ethical issues relating to the conservation of the piece. A minimal intervention approach was chosen and the doublet was preserved in the creased and crumpled state in which it had been found, housed in a custom-made display case. In order to aid interpretation of the piece, I made a replica, keeping to the precise measurements and construction of the original and using a machine linen fabric. Details and photographs of this project are accessible on the new website. There are also details of a garment cache found in Abingdon which included fragments of a doublet, a pocket and a cap.

Although the website deals with finds from the United Kingdom, it would be interesting to know if such practices took place elsewhere in the world. When Patricia Baker spoke to the O.A.T.G. in 1998 on Seventeenth Century Travellers in Iran, she talked of the remains of a silk Safavid crown found concealed in the walls of a desert fortress. Perhaps this was an example of a deliberately concealed garment from Asia

Susan Stanton

Textile Conservator, Ashmolean Museum.

O B I T U A R Y

Valerie Berinstain

Valerie Berinstain left us in June 2001, too soon, as she was only 45 and our thoughts go to her family especially to her four-year-old son Hugo.
With a diploma in Museum Studies from the Ecole du Louvre and a doctorate on painting in Upper Punjab, she was responsible for lectures on the Art and Civilization of India at the Sorbonne and the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilization. Her first researches were on the development of painting on mobile stands in India, but between 1985 and 1990 she worked as a curator at the A.E.D.T.A. beside Krishna Riboud and her researches turned to the study of textiles created in the Indian Sub-continent. By comparing them with painted miniatures she was able to date textiles and study the evolution of Indian costume. Much of her later research was on the cross-influences between Indian textiles, the Muslim world, the Far East and Europe, with particular studies on the Island of Réunion and Uzbekistan. She was the author of many books and publications on these themes.

Lively and enthusiastic, she enjoyed discussions, even controversy. Able, erudite, but sometimes too modest, she was generous with her knowledge and liked to share it. She was a member of several research teams and learned societies, as well as being Treasurer of the Association for the History of Timur and for France-Uzbek exchanges.

Valérie Lefebvre-Aladawi

MUSEUMS ROUND-UP

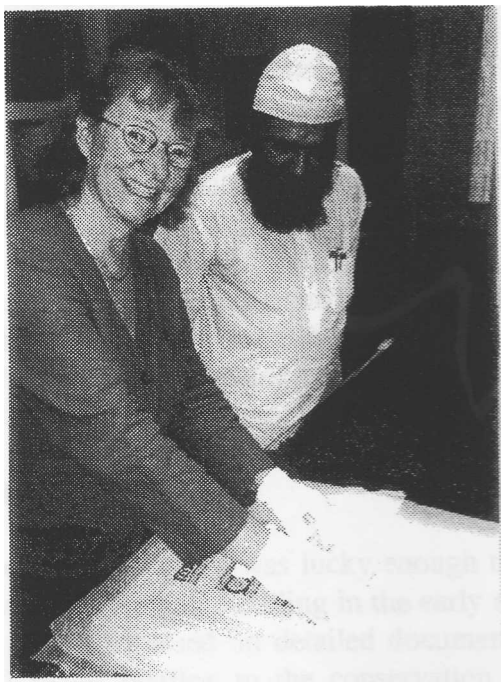
Unfortunately too late to be included in the last newsletter was notice of an exhibition being held at the Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock during July. Called *KAPRF,* it comprised a series of complete costumes, both made to order and donated, by members of Oxford and Banbury's Asian communities. The project grew from a seminar held in 2000 when museum staff were introduced to members of the Asian community, a community known for its practice of traditional skills such as sewing.

Since the County Museum Service exists to collect, preserve and display things relating to the lives of Oxfordshire people and the Asian community was a part of that people not yet represented in the collections, it was decided to commission some garments from them.

First, curators visited the Asian women's sewing group at the Ethnic Minorities Business Service in Cowley. Then women from the group visited the Museum Service's resource centre at Standlake, where they studied clothing handmade by women in Oxfordshire in the 19th century. Then the partners made a shopping trip to Southall in

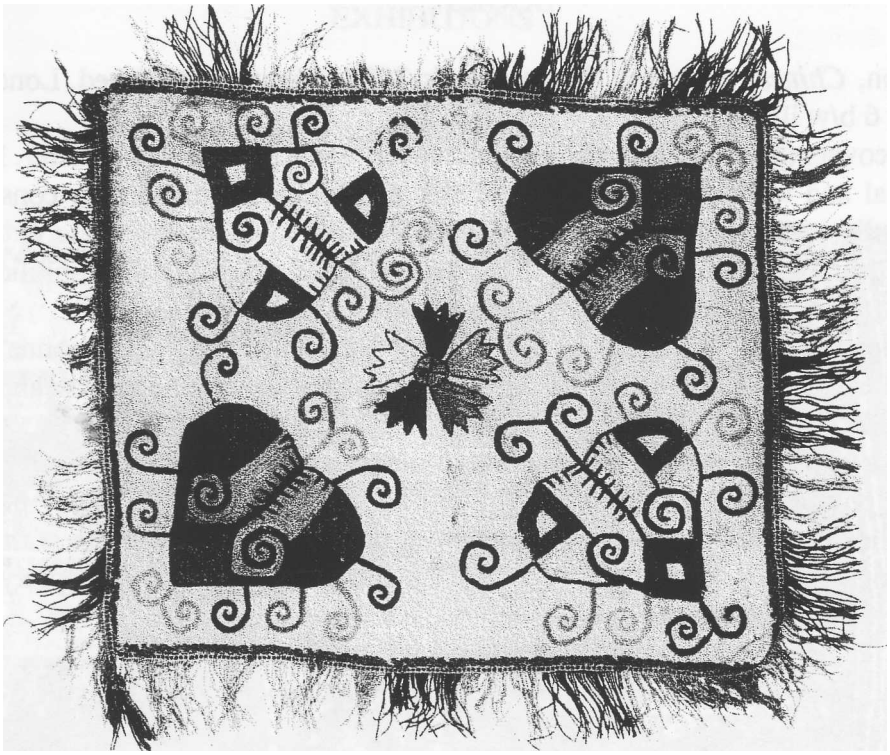
London to buy material for the eight costumes which were created in Oxford and Banbury early this summer. Following the exhibition they were taken into store and are available for display in museums and for study by visitors. Photographs and descriptions can be visited on the Museum's website, www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

In June the Department of Eastern Art at the Ashmolean had a visit from Mr Ismail Mohammad Khatri of Dhamadka in Kutch, Gujarat. He comes from a family of well-known block-printers and dyers who continue to produce exceptionally good quality block-printed cotton cloths, primarily so-called *ajarkh* for the local market, but also tablecloths, napkins and other decorative textiles for the Indian and oversea visitors who find their way to the family compound.



Ruth Barnes visited the Khatri family in 1994 and still remembers their generous hospitality and remarkable craftsmanship. At that time she showed them photographs of the Ashmolean's Newberry collection of mediaeval Indian textiles, and now Mr Khatri was brought by Eiluned Edwards (another O.A.T.G. member, who is carrying out research on the family's history and textile expertise) to see the textiles themselves. He was obviously thrilled to be able to inspect the material in detail and immediately commented on the likely work processes involved, the types of resist used, and the combination of different mordants to achieve particular hues of colour. Ruth was delighted to be able to show a contemporary block-printer the work of his colleagues of many centuries ago.

The British Museum has recently acquired a rare collection of tribal embroideries from northern Afghanistan. One of the casualties of 25 years of civil war and upheaval in that country has been the loss of traditional skills and crafts. Attempts have been made to preserve them among the thousands of refugees, but these are small scale and fragmentary, and on the whole both inside and outside the country skills that once were taken for granted are no longer carried on by the younger generation. In this context the B.M.'s saving of 50 fine examples of embroidery is invaluable.



The pieces, which probably date from the late 19th to mid-20th centuries, are of a rare style hitherto relatively unknown in the West, made by the Lakai, an Uzbek tribe living around Qunduz. Lakai embroidery excels in the use of bright, contrasting silks on a plain weave cotton or napped wool flannel base. The backgrounds are usually strongly coloured and motifs consist of highly abstracted and stylized animals, especially insects - as can be seen on the illustration above. Lakai textiles are functional rather than purely ornamental and worked by the women of the tribe, mainly as part of their dowry.

The textile elements of the display in the Nehru Gallery at the Victoria and Albert Museum are undergoing one of their periodical changes, and the new hang will be on display next month. As part of the new line-up the impressive 17th century Mughal carpet known as the Fremlin Carpet which, although it has been part of a touring exhibition, will be seen in the Nehru Gallery for the first time. Uniquely, it will be shown encased, and its conservation will be carefully monitored.

Several other large-scale textiles will also be shown, of which the most spectacular is an embroidered wall-hanging *(palampore)* with a stunning tree design made in the 18th century for the European market. Examples from the V.& A.'s unrivalled holdings of chintzes made for the West will also be on display, and have been specially conserved for the purpose.

Finally, from farther afield, comes news that the library at the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., has begun a collection of books for children about textiles, costumes and techniques, as well as the different cultures whose textiles are represented in the Museum's collections, an idea which other museums might well follow.

Editor

BOOKS

Jocelyn Chatterton, *Chinese Silks and Sewing Tools,* 2002, privately published, London, 108 pp, 145 colour & 6 b/w illus., ISBN 0 9542173 0 6, £28.

This book covers the subject for the general reader, collector and embroiderer. It covers the cultural, social and technological history of silk and includes chapters on conservation and on the symbolism of the motifs most frequently found in Chinese embroidery. The last third of the book deals with silk technology and tools. There is a glossary and a bibliography.

Rosemary Crill, Jennifer Wearden and Verity Wilson (with contributions from Anna Jackson and Charlotte Horlyck) *Dress in Detail from Around the World,* Victoria and Albert Museum, 2002, ISBN 185177 377 0, £30

Following a short introduction by Verity Wilson, there are sections on necklines; fastenings; cuffs, edgings and seams; contrasting fabrics, linings and pockets; pleats and gathers; and applied decoration. Each two-page spread has colour photographs of the details facing line-drawings of the garments from which they come and written commentary. There are maps, glossary, bibliography and indexes of people and places.

Walter B. Denny, *The Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets, 2002*, Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., 128pp, 72 col. illus., p.b., $25

The theme of this book is the creative tension between tradition and innovation in the development of the Anatolian carpet. The continuity of classical carpets from the fifteenth century onwards focuses on outside influences, technical limitations and challenges, and design evolution. Examples are drawn primarily from the Textile Museum's core collection acquired by its founder, George Hewitt Myers. The book is published to coincide with an exhibition under the same title at the Museum (see below p.)

Marianne Ellis and Jennifer Wearden, *Ottoman Embroideries,* Victoria and Albert Museum, 2001, ISBN 185177 357 6, £18.95

A beautifully and profusely illustrated book with very good detailed photographs, but a rather short text, each author having only one chapter.

Eds. Linda Komaroff and Stefano Carboni, *The Legacy of Genghiz Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353,*2002, Yale University Press, 394x228 mm, 424 pp, 200 colour & 125 b/w illus., ISBN 0 300 096917, £55

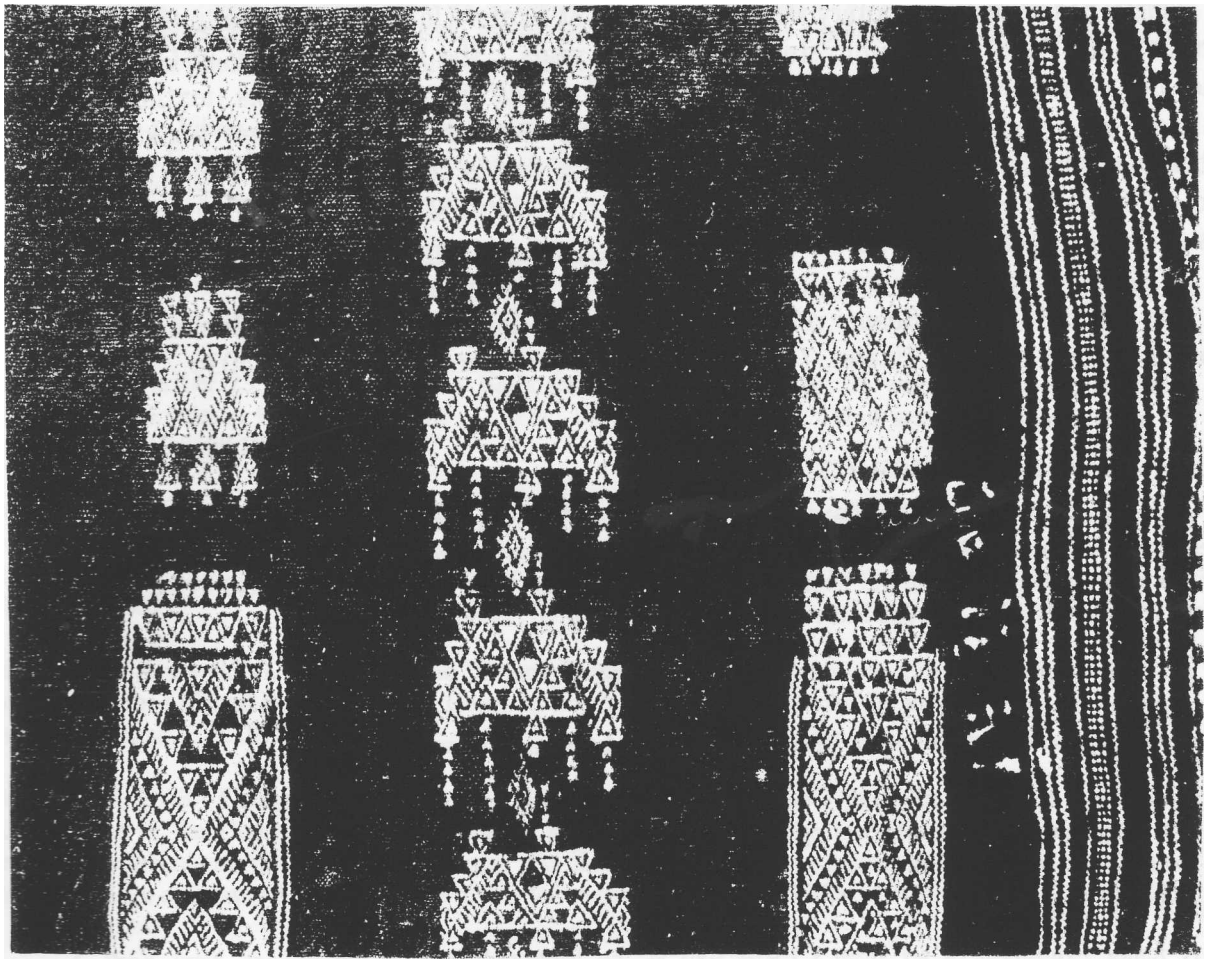
The period covered is that during which the Mongols ruled Iran and were converted to Islam. The objects covered include manuscript painting, tiles, metalwork and textiles. A series of essays provides the historical background. The book is published to coincide with a major exhibition to be held at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and the Los Angeles County Museum, California (see below p.26).

Jennifer M. Scarce, *Women's Costume of the Near and Middle East,2002* Routledge Curzon, 234x156 mm, 192 pp, 128 illus., ISBN 0 7007 344 6, hb. £25, pb. £15.99

In this reissue of a book first published in 1995 Jennifer Scarce makes brilliant use of years of research to provide a lucid account of the development of women's dress in the Near and Middle East from the 14th to the early 20th centuries. This is set in the broader context of the social and economic background of the Ottoman Empire.

EXHIBITIONS

The Beauty of Arab Costume
A Personal Collection Over Thirty Years



Indigo-dyed woven woman's shawl *(bagiuk)* with tapestry designs in white wool. Worn in the south of Tunisia. especially around Gabes. Probably mid-20th century.

Jenny Balfour-Paul, writer, artist and traveller, has loved arts and crafts from an early age, but living in the Arab world in the 1970s ignited a particular interest in Arab costumes and textiles and their production methods, whether weaving, embroidery or dyeing. (The last later led to her PhD at Exeter university on *Indigo in the Arab World,* published by Curzon Press (now Routledge Curzon) in 1997, and also to *Indigo,* British Museum Press, 2000.)

Travelling in the Arab world for almost 30 years, she acquired examples of costumes and textiles that especially attracted her. In the 1980s and '90s many of them were of indigo, and all have been collected *in situ*. This exhibition is, therefore, a very personal collection, reflecting an interest in texture, colour and unusual craftsmanship. Exhibits range from exquisite embroidered dresses and ikat-woven coats from the Levant, to indigo-dyed garments from the Arabian peninsula and wedding outfits from Egypt's Siwa oasis. During innumerable

journeys in the Maghreb, including the Atlas mountains, she acquired such items as a spectacular "eye" design cloak, finely woven Tunisian shawls and Bedouin tent bands.

Supplementing the exhibits are examples of silver jewellery and other accessories such as face-masks and embroidered shoes, as well as textile tools and photographs.

(Jenny has been an Honorary Research Fellow at Exeter University's Institute (formerly department) for Arab and Islamic studies for many years. She lectures widely in U.K. and abroad and writes many articles, most frequently for *Hali* (journal of carpets, textiles and Islamic art) as a contributing editor. She is currently researching for two new books, is a member of the indigo team at Cornwall's Eden Project, and is consultant for a major touring indigo exhibition due to open at the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, in January 2005. She is also a member of the O.A.T.G..)

The exhibition, *The Beauty of Arab Costume is* on in the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter, 7 November - 13 December. Tel. 01392 264036.

Kangxi Carpets, Western China, 1661-1722

An exhibition by the Textile Gallery at Colnaghi, 15 Old Bond Street, London, 6-16 November. A representative selection of examples from the high-peak of Chinese carpet making during the reign of the Kangxi Emperor, principally from the western province of Ningxia. Very few of these carpets survive outside the Palace Museum, Beijing, and this is the first exhibition of them in London since 1910.

Last Chance to See ...

Contemporary Japanese Textiles - at the Victoria and Albert Museum, ends end of December

Overseas Exhibitions

The Legacy of Genghiz Khan

A major exhibition of art from C13-14 Iran at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 5 November to 16 February 2003 and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California, 13 April to 27 July 2003.

Secrets of Silk

- at the Textile Museum, Washington D.C., until 5 January 2003. Starting with the silkworm and its cocoon, the exhibition shows how generations of weavers and explorers have come to terms and exploited the special properties of silk. All exhibits are drawn from the Museum's own collections. Tel. 001 202 667 0441.

The Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets

- at the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., until 16 February 2003. This exhibition focusses on the continuity of tradition from the classical 15th and 16th century examples through the village weaving traditions of later times. It also explores the relationship of Anatolian carpet weaving with those of Syria, Egypt and Tabriz. The overriding theme, however, is the creative tension between tradition and innovation. The exhibition is accompanied by a fully-illustrated colour catalogue. Tel. 001 202 667 0441.

Lectures and Events

October 18-20 - **25th Annual Rug Convention: Six Centuries of Design in Anatolian Carpets**, at the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C. For further information visit website www.textilemuseum.org or tel. 001 202 667 0441.

November 7-15 **- Asian Art in London** at a variety of venues at which 46 participants will be holding exhibitions and sales, among them the usual textile dealers. There is also a programme of talks and symposia. Full details can be found on www.orientations.com.hk

November 20 - **Fibres and Wools from Socotra, Yemen,** talk by Dr Miranda Morris, University of St Andrews, to the Oriental Rug and Textile Group in Scotland at 7 p.m. at Daniel Stewart's College, Queensferry Road, Edinburgh. Tel. 0131443 3687

November 21, **Silks and Velvets and the East India Company**, and
November 28, **Chintz and the East India Company**, gallery talks by Patricia Baker at 1 p.m. at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Tel. 020 7942 2209

Saturdays November 23 to December 14 - **Batik for Families,** for children 8+ with adult, in the education centre at the Homiman Museum, 11 am. - 1 p.m., limited to 16 people. Four sessions, f5 per person per session. Tel. 020 8699 1872

December 4 - **Common Threads: Textiles of the Swakaftani** (Nomad shepherds of northern Greece), talk by Diana Wardle, archaeologist, Director of the Mycenae Project, University of Birmingham, to the Oriental Rug and Textile Group in Scotland at 7 p.m. at Daniel Stewart's College, Queensferry Road, Edinburgh. Tel. 0131443 36887

January 22 - **Some N.T.S. Rugs and some "Oriental" ones too**!, talk by Ian Gow, Curator, National Trust for Scotland, to the Oriental Rug and Textile Group in Scotland at 7 p.m. at Daniel Stewart's College, Queensferry Road, Edinburgh. Tel. 0131443 3687

February 15, 2003 - **Caring for Textiles, at the British Museum,** 10 am.-12 noon, limited to 20 people, f12. Atlyson Rae of the Department of Conservation and Helen Wolfe of the Department of Ethnography will demonstrate techniques of conservation, storage and care of textiles with examples from the B.M.'s collection. Participants are also invited to bring in one textile for advice on how to look after it Tel. 020 7323 8511/8854

O.A-T.G. SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW OVERDUE

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on or before I October. Rates remain at £10 for individuals and £15 for two or more people living at the same address and sharing a newsletter For those of you who have not yet renewed, this is the last newsletter you will receive. Send your cheque to the Membership Secretary, Joyce Seaman at 5 Park Town, Oxford, OX2 6SN or better still, ask her to send you a banker's order form and save yourselves the an*n*ual burden on your memory.

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