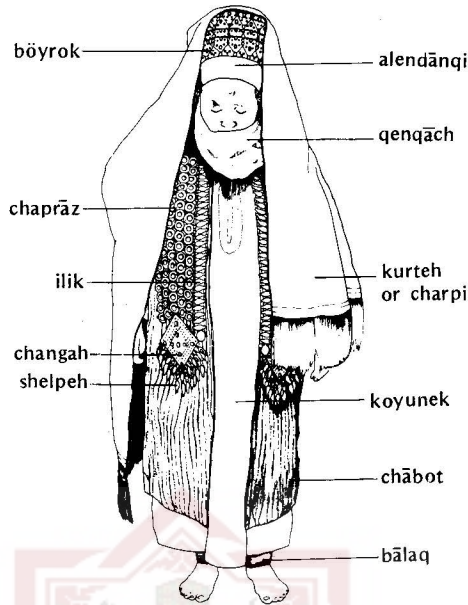


**SILVER ORNAMENTS  
OF THE  
TURKOMAN  
IRAN ALA FIROUZ**





**illus. 1: A Tekke woman's costume as worn today on special occasions.**

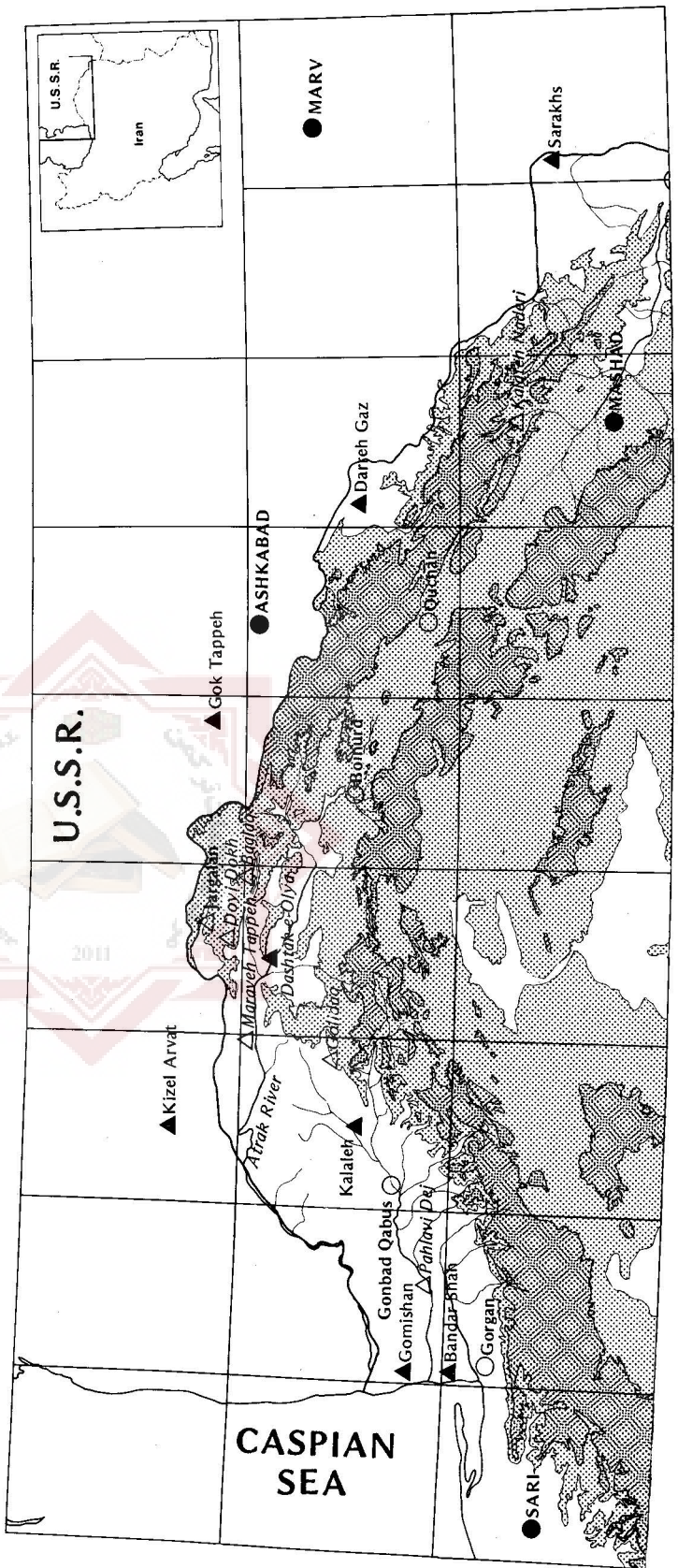
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Cover plate: Amulet, *tumār*, Tekke, 19th century, parcel gilt punchwork on silver, wire twistwork, fretwork opening on a backing of red and green flannel, ornamented with carnelians. Note the sheep horns motif on the edging. The piece ends with bells. It is 33 cm across and weighs 1.446 kg.



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## **Preface**

The main purpose of this brief exposition of Turkoman ornaments is to share this very beautiful and exciting folk art with the public. It is hoped that this effort will be treated with indulgence, for if it merely stimulates interest and incites elucidation of the many unanswered questions, it will have served its purpose. Hopefully this may be done in the near future, before many more traditions disappear.

The research for this treatise was done primarily in the field, the information being obtained almost exclusively from the Iranian Turkoman themselves. I would like to express my gratitude to them for their warm hospitality and for the open and interested manner in which they imparted their knowledge.

I wish to thank in particular Mr. David Stronach, Director of the British Institute for Persian Studies for his assistance in commenting upon the manuscript. Ms. Elsa Gibson, Ph.D. has very generously aided me with helpful suggestions. My gratitude also goes to Mr. Lev Tamp who was consulted on the Turkoman horse trappings; Ms. Susan Ross who drew the diagrams; and Mr. Bashir Mohamed of the Islamic Department of Spink and Son, Ltd. who has aided in the area of silver ornaments.

The support given by Ms. Laleh Bakhtiar and Mr. and Mrs. Nancy Firouz is also greatly appreciated.

The silver ornaments discussed are part of the author's collection.

**I.A.F.**  
**Tehran, August, 1978**

## Introduction

Today when the value of most jewels depends upon the quality, cut and colour of precious stones rather than the motif, design and workmanship of the jeweller, it is a relief, an adventure, to behold Turkoman silver ornaments<sup>1</sup> which surely constitute one of the most spectacular aspects of Turkoman culture. They overwhelm one by their sheer weight and profusion, by their diversity and wealth of detail and by their dogged continuity of a living tradition. The beautiful ornaments belonging to the Turkoman women and girls will be discussed in this work as well as the magnificent silver trappings of the Turkoman horse.

Although the objects in the silver collection under discussion were bought in Iran, it must be stressed that since the Turkoman straddle the frontiers of Iran, Turkmenistan S.S.R. and Afghanistan, these objects undoubtedly relate to all three countries. All the Turkoman being, as they are, of the same race and religion and inhabiting contiguous areas, it is difficult to separate them from the point of view of the culture under discussion. Without a doubt, there is an interrelation of ideas together with an interchange of objects from one tribe to another and from one country to another. Tribal life primarily depended on mobility — either in a nomadic or semi-nomadic way of life — moving from one pasture land to another according to seasonal needs. This was a way of life until the first half of the twentieth century.

The Turkoman of Iran consist of four main tribes: the Yamud, the Goklān, the Tekke and the Nokhorli. The Tekke are smaller in number because their homeland is Turkmenistan, and they originally migrated from Russia into Iran only in the late nineteen twenties and early nineteen thirties. These tribes are composed of many sub-divisions, but it is not within the scope of this exposition to discuss such details.

Historically speaking, the Turkoman tribes came from Central Asia in waves. Their origins are shrouded in mist. It is said that they were part of the Tué-chueh coming from the Altai, for this is when we first hear of the name 'Turk' mentioned in written sources by Chinese, Arab and Persian authors of the seventh century, A.D. The Tué-chueh later split into several tribes and one of the branches, the Oghuz, are thought to be the direct ancestors of the Turkoman. It is only in the middle of the tenth century that the name 'Turkoman' appears in literary sources. Muqadasi, the Arab geographer, was the first to mention it.<sup>2</sup>

It is no easy task nowadays to delimit the homelands of the above tribes with accuracy. Westernmost amongst these are the Yamud who inhabit the so-called Turkoman steppe which extends roughly from the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, through Pahlavi Dej and the areas surrounding Gonbad Qābus and the Gorgan River, and along the Irano-Russian border to around Marāveh Tappeh. The western parts of this area (Bandar Shāh — Gomishān) are centers of the Yamud Jafarbāy subtribe, while the Yamud Atābay occupy the eastern parts stretching

to the Atrak river — which here describes the Irano-U.S.S.R. frontier over a long distance.

They are a people of the plains and depend in particular on a pastoral economy: goats, sheep, horses, camels and some cows. They practice some dry farming producing poor crops of barley and wheat. The Yamud use the wool of their animals to weave felt rugs which they sell on the market. Even today, the Yamud often use the traditional felt covered tent. The other Turkoman tribes are prone to use this tent, *öy*, or the *gotikmeh*, a simpler type, only seasonally when moving their sheep to greener pastures.

The Goklān tribe lives in the general area of Kalāleh and the region surrounding Golidāq, around the Mohammad Reza Shah National Park and roughly up to Marāveh Tappeh. They are a mountainous people living in the highlands usually in green, well watered regions and forests. They depend on agricultural products such as wheat, barley and cotton, and the breeding of cattle and sheep. They rear the silkworm which feeds on the mulberry trees growing in their villages. The silk is drawn from the cocoons in late spring. They also used to weave the traditional silk textiles, but since the development of the carpet industry, the silk is sold on the open market. The women also make felt rugs in late spring.

The Nokhorli inhabit the area to the east of the Goklān, the region adjacent to the Irano-Russian frontier such as the Jargalān steppe.

The center of the Tekke is in Doyi Dokh in the Jargalān area and they are interspersed a little everywhere further east or in small groups concentrated in cities such as Gonbad Qābus. They are well known for their beautiful handicrafts, such as carpets, saddle bags, tent bands and *palās*. They produce silk textiles and embroideries in small quantities at the present time. Amongst all the Turkoman tribes, the Tekke costume makes the most use of embroidery and is also the most proficient.

Irrespective of geographical location, the round, dome-shaped Central Asian tent, or *öy*<sup>3</sup>, has since the distant past, been the main dwelling of these, and indeed all, Turkoman tribes. It was certainly the most practical means of habitation considering the former nomadic life of the Turkoman. It is constructed on the same lines as it has been for centuries. It contains all their worldly goods which can be easily packed in the various tapestry woven bags produced by the women and loaded on camel back. The thick felts which are made with the wool of their sheep and goats, are an excellent means of insulation against the cold in winter and the heat in summer, with added ventilation provided by raising the felts all around at ground level.

The tent consists of a framework of curved wooden struts supporting a roof wheel at the top of the dome and a folding lattice wall all around the tent with a door frame, originally only covered with an ornamented felt, but now often replaced with a wooden door. The tent is then covered with felts and a hole is left at the top for the smoke of the hearth to escape.



Fig. 1: A 19th century sketch from de Blocqueville showing a Turkoman woman wearing a pectoral ornament called elmalgah.

Fig. 3: The frame of a Turkoman tent before being covered with felts.

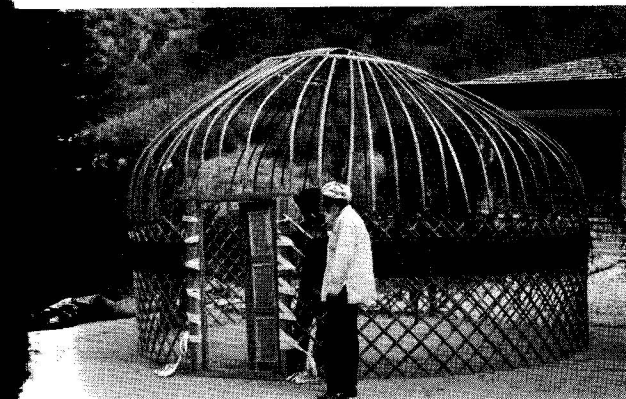
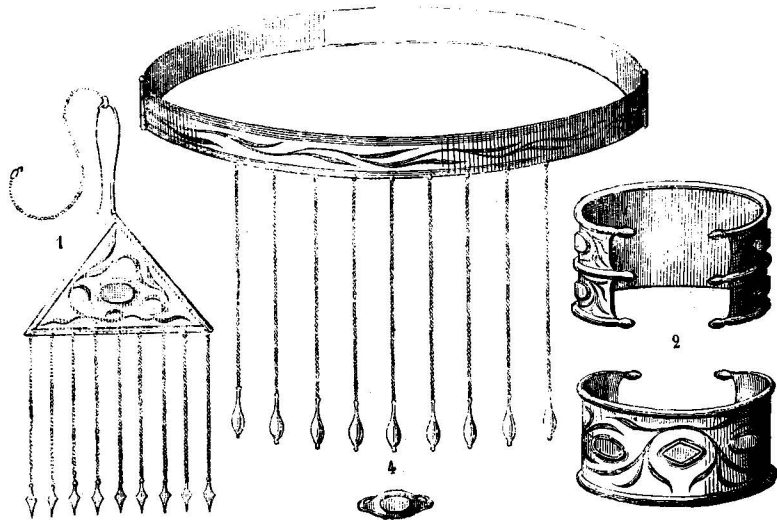


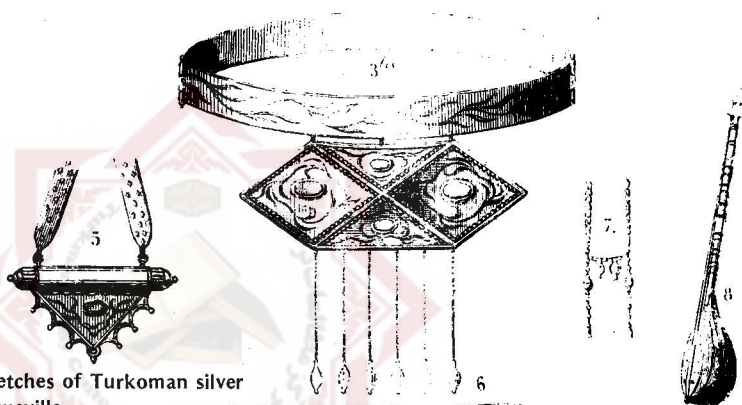
Fig. 2: Two Turkoman women in full costume from *The Country of the Turkoman*, p. 75.

Fig. 4: A Yamud costume, Pahlavi Dej, 1958.





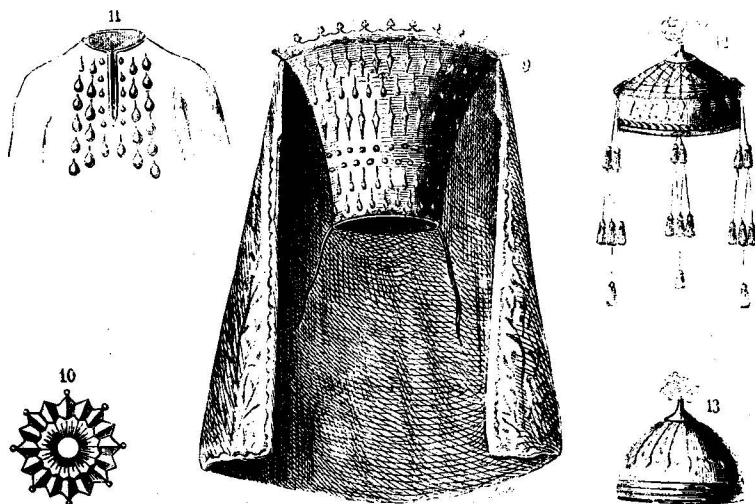
1 Boucles d'oreilles. — 2 Bracelets. — 3 Collier. — 4 Bague.



Figs. 5, 6, 7: 19th century sketches of Turkoman silver ornaments from de Blocqueville.



3 bis Collier. — 5 Cylindre renfermant les versets du Coran. — 6 Turbans. — 7 Extrémité des tresses. — 8 Doutare.



9 Coiffure de matrone. — 10 Sorte de soleil en argent. — 11 Chemise de femme. — 12 Coiffure de jeune fille. — 13 Coiffure de garçon.

There is the *qara öy*, black tent, and the *aq öy*, white tent. They become black from the smoke of many years which blackens the felts, but this also makes them waterproof. The *aq öy* is assigned to newly-weds or those who can afford to have a private dwelling which has not been blackened with the soot of years of habitation.

The interior is furnished with felts, carpets, tent bands, storage bags and so forth, made by the women and all neatly arranged in a preordained fashion.

This type of dwelling is ideal for a nomadic life-style but today it is only used by shepherds moving their flocks to greener pastures. However, many such tents are to be seen today<sup>4</sup> in the areas surrounding Gonbad Qābus, such as Eger Boqāz, and in the vicinity of Marāveh Tappeh.

### Women and their Ornaments

It is the women in all tribes and in many rural communities whom we must thank in particular for having adhered so faithfully to their long traditions of folk art and for having safeguarded this splendid native patrimony. This naturally applies also to the Turkoman women who have upheld, for as long as they have, their magnificent craftsmanship in floor coverings, such as carpets, gelims, *palās*, saddle bags, cushions, felts (*kacheh*), textiles and embroidery. Nor must we ignore our debt to them in respect to the secrets of dyeing, the rearing of silk worms, drawing the silk thread off the cocoons, spinning and, of course, continuing to wear their traditional costumes and silver ornaments.

These women play an increasingly important economic role today and supplement enormously the family finances by weaving carpets, gelims and floor cushions. Despite the fairly strict social structure, they are comparatively free and have a great say in managing the finances of the family. Even though the Turkoman often has several wives (originally based on economic reasons), the ensuing division of labour does not upset the harmony of family ties which are close and warm, and their working relations are usually animated by a spirit of unity for the greater benefit of the family.

Imagine the breathtaking and exciting opportunity of attending a Turkoman wedding with hundreds of imposing women and girls attired in traditional costumes of handwoven red silks, painstakingly and lovingly embroidered, and lavishly adorned from head to knee with a profusion of silver, attaining proportions of positively barbaric splendour! The exuberance of colours, the red hues of the fabrics reflected in the silver, punctuated by gilt encrustations of carnelian and different coloured stones, accompanied by the musical sounds of silver chains, coins and bells in motion — all a stirring sight indeed!

Having written this, it is only fair to turn to O'Donovan who in 1881 wrote:

Anything more awkward, unbecoming, or more generally ungraceful, it would be difficult to imagine.<sup>5</sup>

Victorian in his viewpoint and obviously startled by the Turkoman women in their perpetual panoply, O'Donovan is nonetheless a most perceptive and observant raconteur, and although the following passage is long, it is unhesitatingly quoted because it provides a detailed picture of the attire and ornaments of the women:

On her head was a casque of open silver work, showing the red clothe beneath, and surmounted by a spike like that of a German soldier's helmet. Her entire appearance in her silver panoply was Minerva-like in the extreme . . . The Yamud women wear a head covering of the size and shape of an ordinary band-box, the front hung over with a multiplicity of gold and silver coins, having attached to the top and falling over the shoulders to the loins a mantle of red green or blue cloth.<sup>6</sup> (She) was clad in a shirt of coarse silk, of a dark purple colour, striped with black, and falling nearly to the ankles . . . close fitting trousers of a darker tint, and drawn tightly round the ankles . . . On her neck was a massive silver ornament, resembling more the collar of a Newfoundland dog than any other object to which I can compare it, being at least an inch and a half in depth, and a third of an inch in thickness. At intervals round it were set flat oval cornelians, alternating with lozenge-shaped panels of embossed gold. From its front hung at least twenty silver chains, falling over berth east, and broken halfway down by lozenge-shaped pieces of silver, also embossed with gold, and supporting a cylinder of silver hanging below the level of the waist, and containing talismanic writings, to preserve her from the Ginns and other evil spirits which are supposed to haunt these Central Asian wildernesses. On either breast hung medal-wise a quantity of pieces of a silver money, Russian five-rouble and Persian five-kran coins, so numerous that they presented the appearance of a cuirasse of silver. On either shoulder was a flat cylindrical silver box, about four inches in diameter, in the centre of each of which was also set a flat cornelian. Her long, coarse hair plaited into two tails, which reached below the small of her back, was also profusely decorated with silver coins, growing larger towards the extremity of the plaited hair tail. On her wrists were massive silver bracelets . . . They too, bore the lozenge-shaped gold panels and flat cornelians. Turkoman women seem always in full dress, and I have rarely seen them, when employed in laborious occupations, without it. A ponderous paraphernalia is concomitant of respectability, as it is understood in these parts . . . In fact, nearly the entire capital of a Turkoman family is thus invested in family ornaments . . . Still for all their finery, there are no more hard-working members of society than the wives and daughters . . .<sup>7</sup>

In the East, the pride and delight women take in the display of personal adornment is traditional from time immemorial and indeed, necessary as a status symbol of prestige, power and wealth besides being pleasing to the eye. Moreover, in their semi-nomadic life, Turkoman women adorned in this fashion played the role of mobile



Fig. 8: Goklān woman, Terjenli.



Fig. 9: A young girl's headdress, Dashtak-e-Olyā.

Fig. 10: Goklān woman, Golidāq. Her headdress is ornamented with silver underneath her headscarf.



Fig. 11: Yamud woman, Eqer Boqāz.

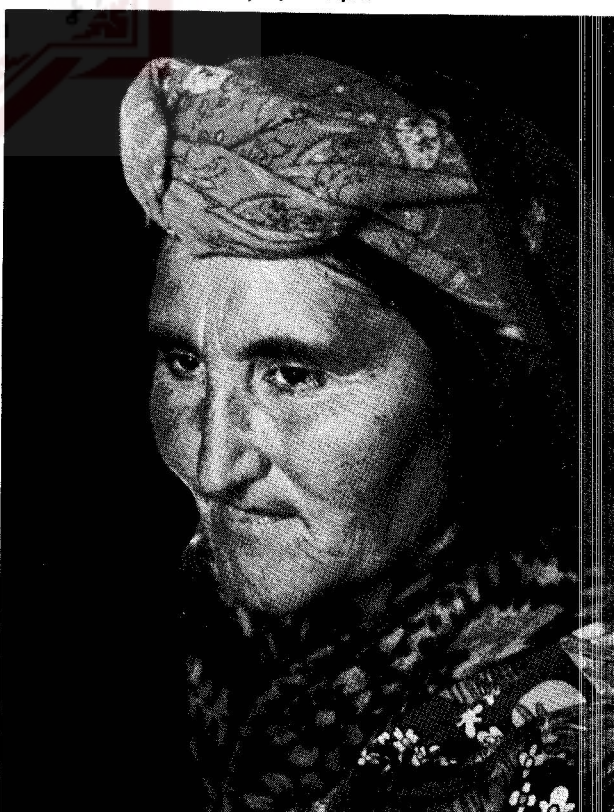
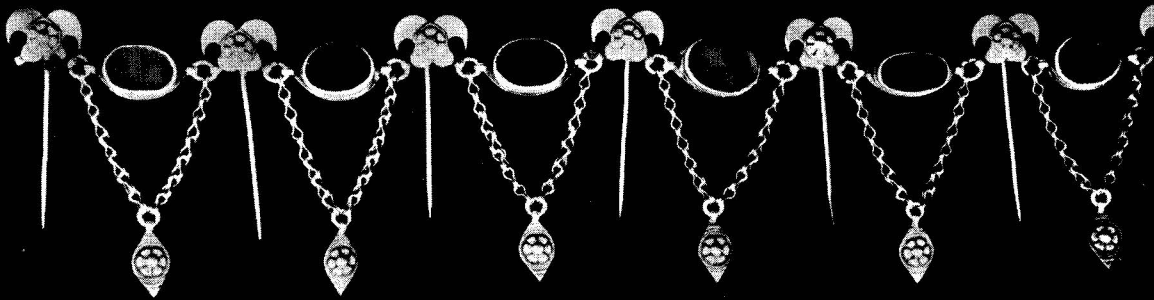




Fig. 12: Headdress ornament, sunsuleh, Yamud, 19th century. This headdress can also consist of only one or two rows of embossed silver pieces.

Fig. 13: Headdress ornament, sanjeleq, Yamud, 19th century.

Note the stylized sheep horns on the top of the pins. The top of the pinheads are ornamented parcel gilt. The stones are carnelians.



banks and thus often wore all the family fortune, useful both as a ransom<sup>8</sup> or serving as ready cash in moments of stress. So ingrained was this habit that, until a few decades ago, Turkoman women wore their cumbersome silver ornaments in everyday life, even while performing the most menial tasks.

Tasks, as O'Donovan also mentions, which were arduous indeed: besides tending to their numerous offspring, they had to carry water, milk their cows and sheep, make butter, bake bread, draw silk off the silkworm cocoons, card wool, dye, spin, weave textiles, rugs, saddlebags and containers for all their worldly goods, embroider, make felt mats or set up the tent at each stop of their continuous journey.

The detailed nineteenth century descriptions of the Turkoman costume, complemented by the silver ornaments, are extremely valuable as comparative material, but precisely where these silver ornaments were made and by whom, or to what particular tribe or clan they belonged, is even today a moot point. The Turkoman in Iran, until quite recently, invariably denied that they had silversmiths. They claimed that all this silver came from Turkmenistan S.S.R., in particular the Tekke pieces. This seems true only to a limited extent, for not only does the argument appear unreasonable in light of the facts, it was also perhaps a means of raising the prices astronomically! How could the Turkoman, and in particular, the small number of Tekke migrating from Turkmenistan to Iran in less than a decade have brought such great quantities of silver as to supply both the Turkoman in Iran and the outside market until the nineteen seventies?

There are two answers to this question. First, the migrating Turkoman came as a self-sufficient entity, comprised of the shepherd as well as the saddlemaker, the ironmonger as well as the weaver, each playing a role in the village culture. Few were limited to one specialized trade; rather, each member of the community contributed by practicing the skills he possessed. Seen in this light, it is quite reasonable to assume that the village artisan could also play the role of the village silversmith. O'Donovan confirms this opinion:

The village smith (is) the *usta-adam*, the comprehensive rendering of which in English would be handy-man, or Jack-of-all trades; for here there is no division into guilds, and one *usta-adam* acts in many capacities for the immediate population. He will make silver rings for the women, shoe horses, repair gun locks, and even bleed a plethoric individual. . . The *usta-adam* . . . could work silver and gold . . . and perform all manner of skilled labour.<sup>9</sup>

Secondly, we know today that Turkoman silversmiths reside and ply their trade in cities such as Gorgān, Gonbad Qābus, Gomishān, Bandar Shāh and other centers of the Turkoman area, including Bojnurd, essentially a Kurdish city. They are continuing a living tradition since we know that the Yamud, Goklān and Nokhorli have always inhabited north-eastern Iran, between the Caspian and Afghanistan. We can therefore conclude that wherever the Turkoman tribes settled,

there too the silversmiths would produce ornaments for their community.

The distinctions among the costumes of the various Turkoman tribes as seen today, most notably in the headdress as well as the stylistic differences of the silver ornaments, help us to a certain extent to identify the particular tribe they belong to. The general claim can be made that the more sober pieces of silver with parcel gilt punchwork designs, mounted with carnelians, but massive in size and weight belong to the Tekke tribes; and, if we may judge by what is actually made today, the lighter and more ornamental pieces of silver decorated with repoussé parcel gilt sheet or small embossed lozenges and crescents soldered onto a silver backing and encrusted with stones of coloured glass, belong to the Yamud tribe.

Nowadays, however, these two distinct styles of silver are not restricted to the two tribes mentioned above, but are often worn interchangeably by women of other Turkoman tribes as well. In addition, Turkoman silver has influenced the motifs and techniques of silver made by the Kurds of Khorassan and the Kazāqs who settled around Gorgān, Gonbad Qābus and Bandar Shāh. In the case of the Kazāqs, the silver is made to order by Turkoman silversmiths in Gonbad Qābus, for example. The picture is further complicated by the womenfolk of non-Turkoman communities often wearing the Turkoman silver as such. Turkoman ornaments were highly prized in some of the villages of Khorassan as also around Kalāteh Nāderi (e.g., Zāvein and Qoleh Zoh), which are neither Kurdish nor Turkoman, and even such distant places as Abiāneh, situated between Kāshān and Natanz.

Today these silver ornaments are generally used for special occasions such as weddings, circumcision, festivities and religious occasions. It is amazing how a living tradition can persist, but with the inevitable impact of the twentieth century, changes will now come about in an extremely short period of time.

Before describing the manner in which these silver ornaments are used on or with the costume, whether it be in the form of headdress, hair ornaments, amulets, pectoral ornaments, bracelets, earrings or rings, let us briefly resume the description of the mode of Turkoman apparel, especially in full regalia as worn on special occasions.

### Costumes

All Turkoman women wear a long shift, *koyunek*,<sup>10</sup> of a purple or red colour made of handwoven silk, often with stripes of yellow, these being the selvages as the material is woven in narrow strips. The shift is ornamented around the cuffs of the sleeves and around the bodice opening which was formerly embroidered, especially by the Tekke, but today is mostly machine made. The shift is sometimes ornamented on the bodice with silver coins or flat geometric elements such as large rosettes—often with carnelians—hanging to the waist. The shift is worn over a pair of trousers, *bālaq*, narrowing at the ankles with



Fig. 14: Headdress ornament, temple pendant, tenechir or earrings, Tekke.

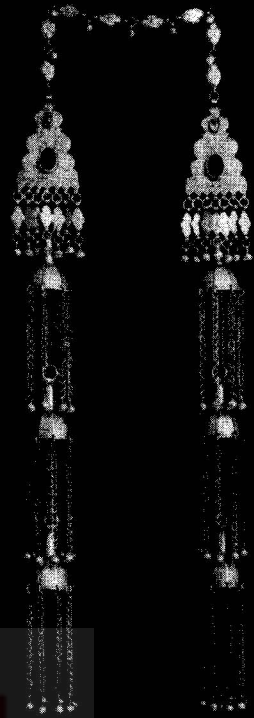
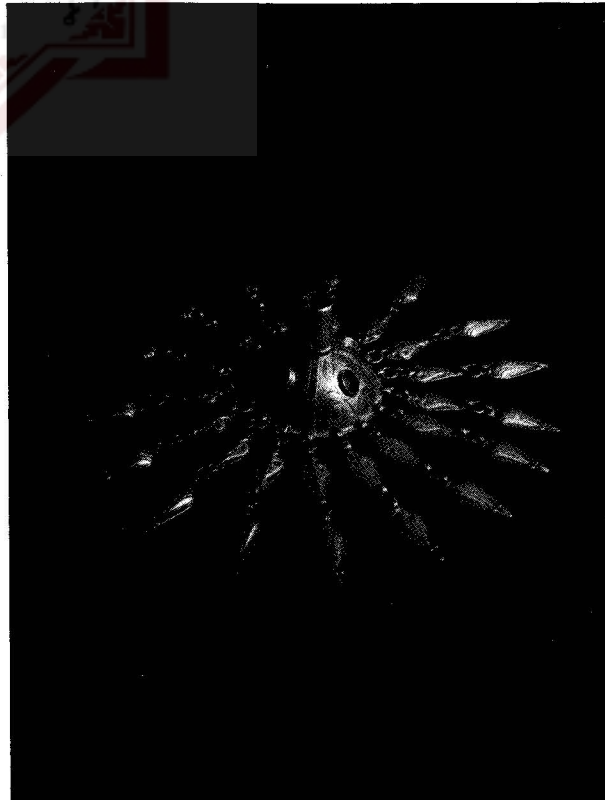


Fig. 15: Headdress ornament, side piece, ādamlyk āssar-qāh, Yamud, decorated with coloured stones and embossed parcel gilt work.

Fig. 16: Frame of woman's hat, böyrok (Tekke), tobi (Goklān), made with plant fibers.

Fig. 17: Young girl's headdress, qobbah, Tekke.



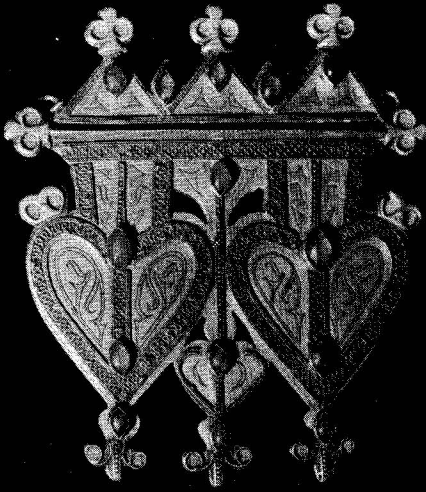


Fig. 18: Hair ornament, goshāh ātheekh, Tekke.

Fig. 20: Hair ornament, ātheekh, Tekke. Rectilinear designs.

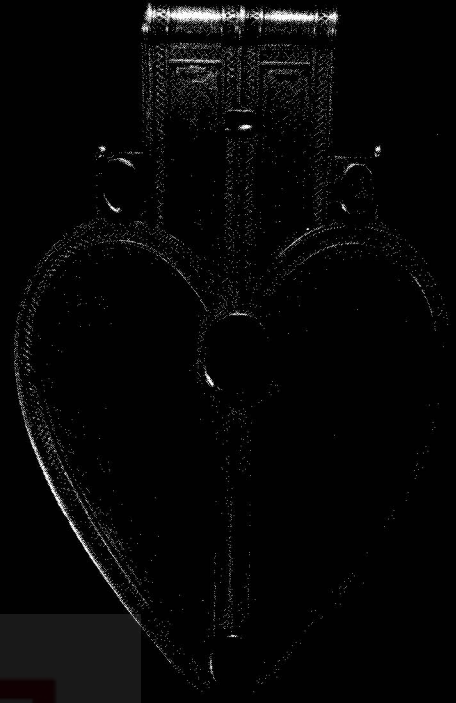
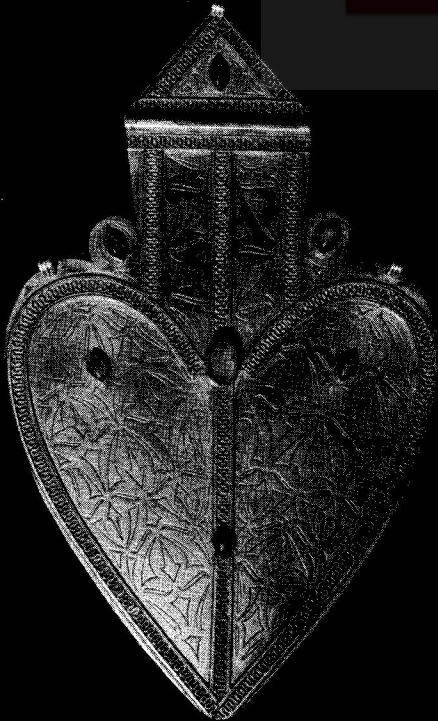
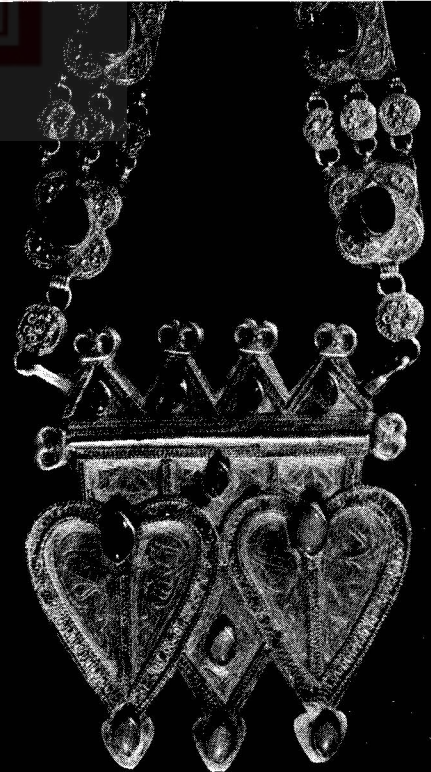


Fig. 19: Hair ornament, ātheekh, Tekke. The top center stone is a rare example of a garnet embellishment whereas the other oval stones are carnelian. Arabesque designs.

Fig. 21: Hair ornament, goshāh ātheekh, Tekke.



the cuffs always ornamented with embroidery.

In cold weather and during festive occasions, a coat, *chābot*, is worn over the shift. It is made of handwoven silk of red colour and pin striped. The ornamentation of the coat varies according to the different tribes.

The Tekke women decorate their coats with row upon row of silver medallions, *chaprāz*, in bands which stretch from shoulder to well below the waist, thickly fringed on each side of the lapels with an edging-chain, *ilik*, with pendants shaped like small fish. The *chaprāz* terminate with big, parcel gilt punchwork lozenges, *changah*, which can be hooked, ornamented with carnelians and edged with pendants, *shelpeh*.

There are other Tekke plaques that are not hooked and could have served either as *changah* or as pieces sewn on each side of the lapels of the coat.

Pls. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8  
10, 11, 12, 16

—a pair of big lozenges terminating with pendants. This piece was seen used as a pectoral ornament in Upper Dashtak.

—a very big lozenge with a double section at the base emphasizing the lozenge shape and pendants (measuring 26 cm at the widest point across and 41 cm in length, weighing 1.21 kg.)

—a pair of plaques with the heads of two birds (?) back to back

Fig. 4

A multitude of silver coins, old and new, large and small, are sewn on the Yamud coat around the skirt edges and side slits in rows. The lapels of the front of the coat are turned back and elaborately decorated with machine made designs. Sometimes small embossed silver plaques are sewn in rows on the short sleeves or around the side slits of the coat skirt.

### Headdress

The headdress is of special significance. It not only denotes the tribes but also the status of the married woman or young girl. It may indeed be said to be the crowning glory of womanhood! It also connotes a strict tradition of the religious and social mores of the community, a discussion of which is not within the scope of this exposition. Suffice it to say that until marriage, the young girl is unveiled and wears a simple embroidered cap crowned with a silver cupola with radiating pendants and her hair is dressed in two plaits hanging on her breast. The young bride is fairly heavily veiled especially in the presence of her elders and strangers. In contrast, the matron covers only her head and mouth. On the whole, however, tribal women were always less strictly veiled than women in urban areas.

Fig. 9

Pl. 21

The Tekke headdress is the most decorative and has remained more or less in its pristine form as compared to the Yamud, which has been reduced to a simple head ring with no silver.

Fig. 7

Fig. 16

The Tekke woman's headdress consists of a tall hat (sometimes up to 18 cm long)<sup>11</sup> without a brim, widening slightly at the top, which is flat with a hole in the center. Called *böyrok*, it is made of plant fibers, stitched together spirally and smoothly covered with a red silk cloth. A large triangular cloth, *qenqāch* of red handwoven silk, ornamented on the edges, is used to cover the hat and hangs down the back, one corner of this cloth being brought forward to cover the mouth and chin.

A kind of 'robe' completes the Tekke headdress. This 'robe' takes two forms. It is either a *kurteh* or a *charpi*. The *kurteh*, which usually dates from the 20th century, is hand embroidered only around the edges of the collar, lapels, skirt, skirt slits and forearm of the false sleeves as well as the sleeve cuffs. The *charpi*, on the other hand, is entirely covered with embroidery. The example presented is one hundred years old or over. Whichever one is worn, it is draped over the hat with the left 'armhole' placed over the centre of the hat. These headdress 'robes' are still being made today and are embroidered by the young bride herself as part of her dowry and used throughout her life. Usually two such 'robes' are made: one embroidered on a black or very dark navy background and the other on a red handwoven silk textile.

Pl. 3

Figs. 8, 10

Fig. 11

The Goklān wear a commercially produced square silk scarf with block print designs, folded into a triangle over the hat frame called *tobi*. The Yamud, as was mentioned before, nowadays only wear a head ring covered with a commercially produced shawl. Formerly the Yamud had a hat covered with silk, called *hazaba* which has been discontinued for some time.

Pl. 20

The Norkhorli women still currently wear bands of silver medallions and thick fringes of pendants, attached in rows to the front edge of the *kurteh*, a robe with false sleeves, draped askew over the headdress.

Silver elements ornament the front and two sides of the headdress above the forehead; in most cases they were attached with end-book plaques. The most important pieces are as follows:

### Tekke

Pls. 18, 19

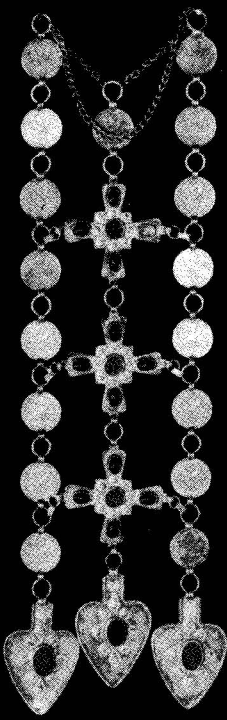
—*egmeh*: a sort of tiara, curved and slightly tapering rectangle, approximately 33 cm across by 15½ cm long, which is sewn onto the front of the *böyrok*. It is ornamented with gilt punchwork and fretwork and is decorated with wire twistwork and carnelians.

Pl. 37

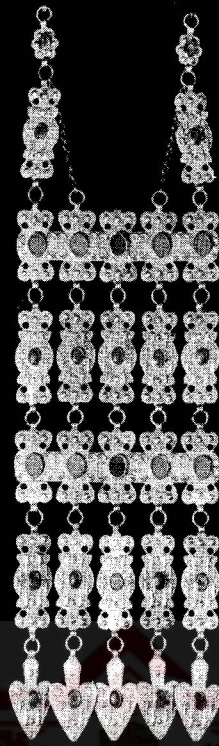
—*manlayleq*: rectangular plaques joined together with silver rings, with pendants, fringing the lower edges. These are ornamented with gilt punchwork and fretwork, and are also decorated with wire twistwork and carnelians. On each end there are two hooks to attach the *manlayleq* to the headdress

Pl. 13

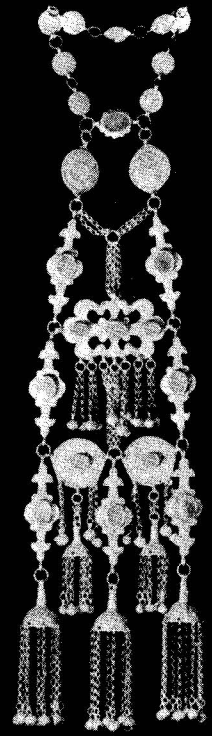
—*eurmeh*: general term for other shapes of headdress ornaments, wrapped around the *böyrok*. These consist of



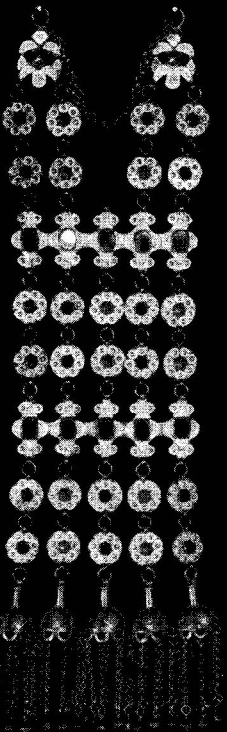
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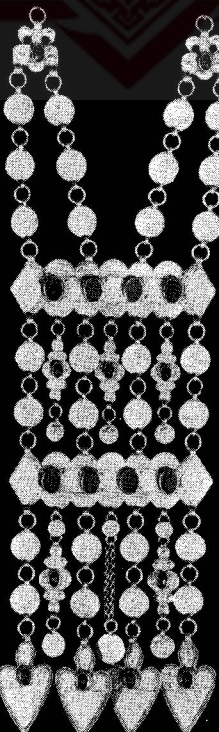
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24



25



26

Fig. 22: Hair ornament, ātheekh. This piece is called irishmeh by the Goklān and zinjerreh by the Sheikh, mid 20th century. The Russian silver coins used are of interest.

Fig. 23: Hair ornament, ātheekh, Yamud, mid 20th century.

Fig. 24: Hair ornament, qorbāqeli mon-jooq or qorbāqeli howzah, Yamud, mid 20th century.

Fig. 25: Hair ornament, ātheekh, Yamud, mid 20th century. Here the rosettes interestingly enough are soldered onto 19th century silver coins. The rosettes themselves are embossed parcel gilt and coloured stones.

Fig. 26: Hair ornament, ātheekh, Yamud, mid 20th century.



Fig. 27: Hair ornaments, Tekke woman, Spring, 1975, Gonbad Qābus. Note that the woman's braids are covered with silver.

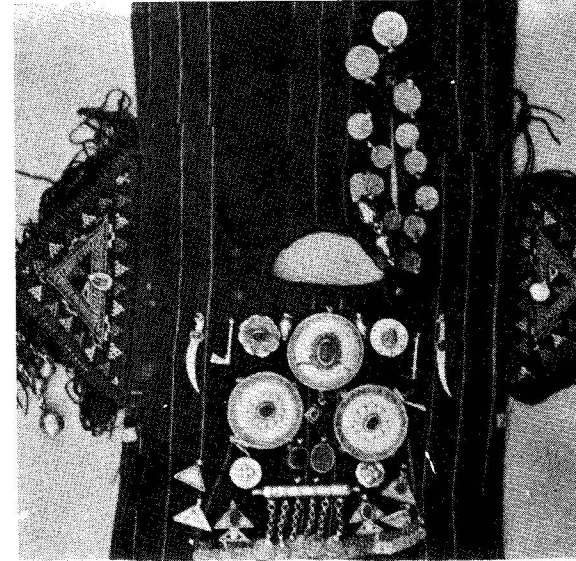


Fig. 28: Hair ornaments, Tekke woman, Spring, 1975.

Fig. 29: Amulet, tumār, Tekke. The silver ornaments on the straps are backed with green felt. One end of the cylindrical piece opens to insert a prayer.



Fig. 30: Amulet, small child's robe, the gilt fringe has been added later and is not a correct part of the ensemble, Tekke. The coins fall down the back of the left shoulder whereas the amulets and other objects of symbolic significance adorn the front of the child's costume. The embroidered triangular pieces fall on the shoulders.



wide bands made up of different geometric shapes connected together by silver rings. There are hooks at each end of the band and one or two on the top edge to attach it to the headdress. These pieces are ornamented in the same fashion as the above.<sup>12</sup>

Pl. 25

—*ildirqich*: consists of small geometric pieces linked together, ornamented in the same fashion as the above and with two hooks on each end. This band is fringed with *shelpeh*, long on each side and shorter over the brow.

### Yamud

Fig. 13

—*sanjeleq*: a dainty piece with pins to attach to the headdress. Ornamented with oval carnelians alternating with embossed gilt pieces and light pendants.<sup>13</sup>

Fig. 12

—*sunsuleh*: made up of small rectangular embossed pieces, linked together in rows, and fringed with pendants it also has two long pieces which are hung on each side of the headdress. The upper portion has several plaques ornamented with carnelian, the central one being in the shape of horns or juxtaposed bird's heads (?).

### Goklān

Pl. 17

—*ildirqich*: silver piece for the headdress made by the Yamud and used by the Goklān as well as the Sheikh.<sup>14</sup> The Goklan women wear a hat, *tobi*, made of fibers and covered with a large silk scarf; it is however shorter than that of the Tekke. This silver piece is wrapped around the scarf covering the *tobi*. It consists of two pieces. Each piece is made up of four or five horizontal rows of very small geometric shapes linked by silver rings and ending in triangular plaques. One of the end pieces is hooked to attach to the headdress and the other has a ring. This ornament is called *ilgijak* by the Sheikh and *ilderqich* by the Yamud. This ornament is decorated with embossed gilt designs and carnelians or simulated carnelians. This headdress ornament is of the mid 20th century.

### Young Girl's Headdress

Pls. 9, 15  
Figs. 9, 17

—*qobbah*: the charming headdress of the young girl, it consists of a hand-embroidered cap covered with a large cupola in the middle and mounted by a sort of finial. Attached to the cupola there are radiating pendants of chains, coins, rosettes, fish and bells. These pieces are treated with two techniques: embossed gold or gilt sheet and coloured stones (Yamud); gilt punchwork with fish pendants and carnelians (Tekke). The young girls of nearly all Turkoman tribes wear this headdress.

## Temple Pendants

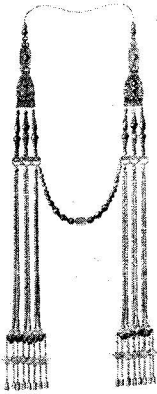
Additional pendants are sometimes attached to each side of the headdress.

Pl. 22  
Illus. 2

Fig. 15

Pl. 24

Illus. 2 Headdress, temple pendants, Mongol, from Martha Boyer, *Mongol Jewellery*, p. 66.



—*adamlyk*: added by the Yamud, it consists of two ornamented plaques to which are attached long streamers of chains  
 —*adamlyk asserqah*: long chains attached to plaques interspersed with cupolas which are fringed with a multitude of chains ending in small bells. These pendants are sometimes up to 53 cm long. The plaques are decorated with gilt embossed crescents and lozenges and ornamented with coloured glass stones and carnelians. The chains and cupolas are either in plain silver or ornamented with embossed gilt piece.

—*tenechir*: added by the Tekke it consists of two triangular plaques attached with hooks to each side of the headdress above the temples which are edged with pendants. The *tenechir* are ornamented with gilt punchwork, wire twistwork, fretwork and carnelians.

## Hair Ornaments

Besides these headdresses, the women wear a variety of hair ornaments which are intertwined with their braided tresses between the shoulders on the back. Even today in daily life, Turkoman women wear a few silver coins or silver pieces attached to their braids. The braids, surprisingly enough, end with beaded fringes and keys to their cupboards and chests. These are then hidden under their silk scarfs. A few popular hair ornaments are described below:

— coins and chains with bells intertwined in the braided hair  
 — a ladder-like pendant, *athekh* (sometimes as long as 55 cm) which is made up of rows of gilt embossed rosettes or other geometric designs, linked together with chains and silver rings. These pendants terminate in belled cupolas or hearts and are decorated with numerous coloured glass stones. There are many variations on this theme, and sometimes silver coins are used in rows ending in hearts. These silver coins, often of the 19th century, are either Russian or Iranian and are called *irishmeh* by the Goklan and *zinjerreh* by the Sheikh. Some of these pieces are mid 20th century.  
 — another type is the heavier 'box-linked' style, ending with belled cupolas. It is decorated with carnelians and embossed gilt pieces. This Yamud item is of the mid 20th century and is called *qorbāqeli monjooq* or *qorbāqeli howzah*.

—the Tekke women most commonly use a big silver heart *athekh*, or a combination of several small hearts slung on the back between the two braids, often profusely covered with rows of silver coins, medallions, or 'boxed' geometric pieces

Figs. 22, 23,  
25, 26

Fig. 24

Pls. 26, 27, 28,  
29  
Figs. 19, 20



Fig. 31: Amulet, pectoral, Yamud. The top piece opens to insert a prayer.

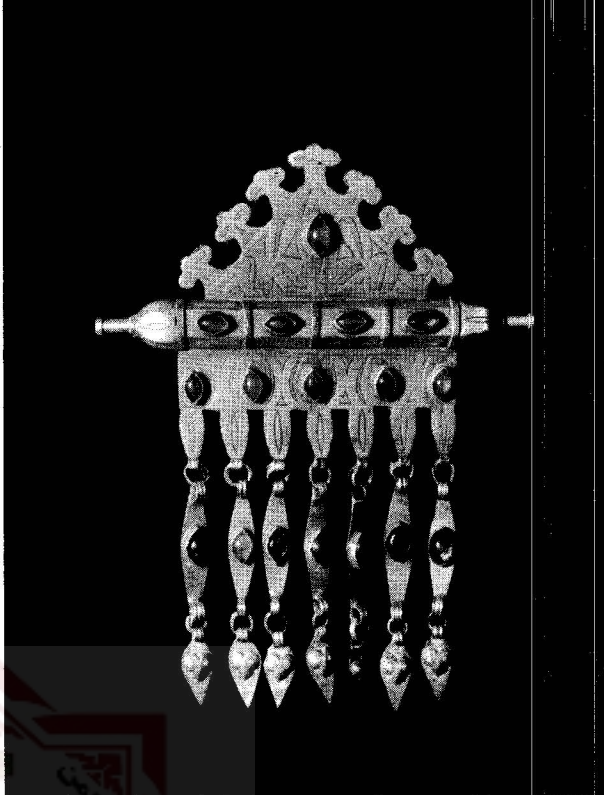


Fig. 32: Amulet, tumār, one of a pair, Tekke.

Fig. 33: Amulet, pectoral, Tekke. The top triangular piece opens to insert a prayer. The silver ornaments on the straps are attached to leather bands.



Fig. 34: Amulet, bāzbant, worn on the shoulders. The top piece is Yamud and the lower two are Tekke. The lid is removable for the insertion of a prayer.





Fig. 35: Amulet, heykal, Quran containers, Tekke. The entire piece is leather backed.



Fig. 36: Amulet, Yamud. The top pieces open to insert prayer.

Fig. 37: Amulet, tumār, Tekke.

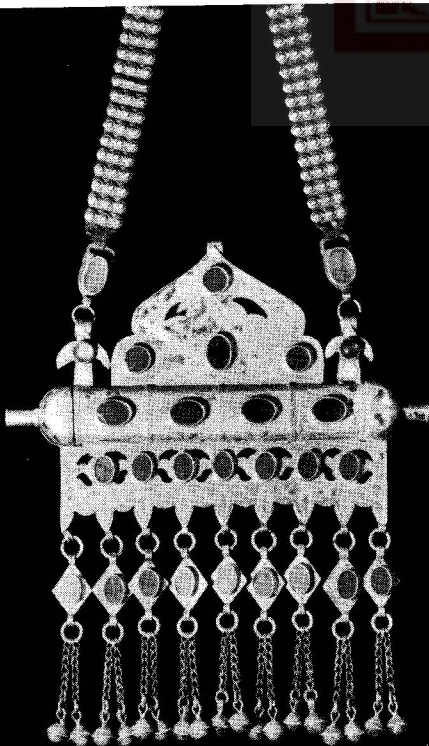


Fig. 38: Amulet, tumār, Tekke.



reaching well below the waist. The big heart can measure up to 26 cm in length and the smallest, 12 cm. This has a tubular section on top. The decoration consists of gilt punchwork with either arabesques or angular designs. Both have wire twistwork and are ornamented with a few carnelians. These hearts are sometimes signed and dated.

Figs. 18, 21

—there is also the Tekke *goshāh ātheekh*, a combination of hearts made all in one piece.

### Amulets

Certain pieces of silver are made exclusively for religious purposes or invested with symbolic, magic or protective significance. This category of ornamentation is quite possibly the origin of all jewellery. In the case of newly-born babies and young children in particular, prophylactic charms, amulets, miniscule Qurans, blue beads, bits of mirror, agates and so forth, are frequently used as being a protection against the 'evil eye'<sup>15</sup> as well as against sickness. A few examples are described below.

Cover Plate  
Figs. 29, 37, 38

The most spectacular is the *tumār*, a Tekke pectoral amulet holder referred to by O'Donovan in the nineteenth century. It is basically a triangle joined at the base to a cylindrical capsule that can be opened at one end and is edged with numerous and elaborate pendants. Sometimes this object can be extremely large, measuring 33 cm across. One weighs 1.446 kg. It is adorned with gilt punchwork and fretwork sometimes opening on a backing of red and green flannel. The amulet holder is worn diagonally over the breast and is attached to two leather straps profusely embellished with silver pieces or links with gilt designs and carnelians, or silver coins made up in a chain.

Figs. 31, 32  
33, 36,

There are numerous such pectoral amulet holders in various shapes and sizes: square boxes or square boxes with a detachable triangular section on top to insert the amulet or prayer. They are decorated in either Tekke or Yamud style.

Fig. 34

The prayer capsule, *bāzbant*, is worn often in pairs on the shoulders and it usually takes the shape of a circular box with embossed decorations (Yamud) or with gilt punchwork and carnelians (Tekke).

Fig. 59

Often a small square silver box containing prayers is attached to the embroidered cap of a boy and it is called *depebent*. It is ornamented with four chains with bells and gilt crescents and lozenges soldered to the surface of the box with a carnelian in the middle.

Fig. 30

A very interesting Tekke child's dress belonging to a small boy is described below in detail to illustrate the importance of symbolism and spiritual protection. This is a universal practice and applies to tribal, rural and to a certain extent urban communities in the Near and Middle East.

The child's dress is of handwoven silk in striped colours with embroidery and fringes decorating the shoulders. The front of the dress is

adorned with the following silver pieces:

- two miniature sabers, *qelech*, symbol of courage and martial attributes
- one miniature adze, *paltā*, and one miniature axe, *tesheh* (Tekke) or *karki* (Yamud), a symbol of hard work and industriousness
- three prayer capsules, *bāzbant*
- one very small container decorated with a carnelian, containing the first hair cut from a baby's head
- one cylindrical prayer capsule with a fringe of silver coins
- six silver triangles, ornamented with carnelians, attached to chains called *doqājeq* (?)

The opening of the neck has a silver clasp, *ilik*, with a loop. The back of the dress over one shoulder is ornamented with silver coins and a few bells (*doumeh*) which are hung on the fringes of each shoulder so that they tinkle whenever the arm is moved.

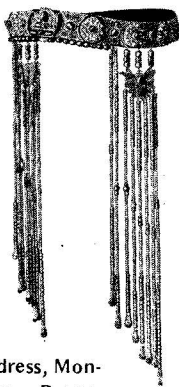
Figs. 35, 71

A very beautiful piece is the *heykal*, a flat folded leather envelope bag with a leather strap decorated with silver. This is a container for the Quran and is worn diagonally across the chest. The outer portion of the bag is ornamented with a silver plaque containing gilt punchwork, fretwork and encrustations of carnelians. The stylized curled sheep horns should be especially noted on this Tekke piece.

### Pectoral Ornaments

We now come to another category of silver, namely, the decorative and ornamental pieces which are bulky but suit the imposing stature of the woman. We refer here mainly to the enormous, heavy neck pendants and breast ornaments. A few of the main styles are described below:

Pl. 32, 33, 40  
Figs. 40, 41,  
44

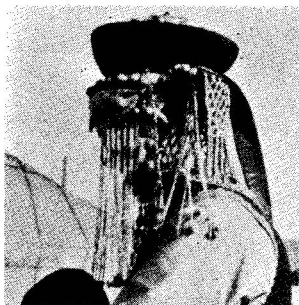


Figs. 42, 45

—a silver neck pendant, *boqow*, with a flat stiff circular collar with enormous hooks at each end. These hooks support a large surface, 26 cm across and 31 cm long of silver, richly ornamented with fretwork designs and three pendants resembling butterflies with tassel endings of fish. The decoration consists of gilt punchwork arabesques encrusted with carnelians. This piece is Tekke.

—another style of *boqow* is the stiff circular Yamud neck collar. It has a long narrow rectangular piece in front which is hinged. Pendants ending in small bells fringe the lower edge. This neck band is decorated with embossed gilt lozenges and crescents soldered onto the silver base and is decorated with carnelians and coloured stones. Another such *boqow* has a long delicate lattice of chains suspended from the rectangular top piece. This gives one food for thought. Worn as

Illus. 3: Headdress, Mongol, from Boyer, *ibid.*, p. 87. Note similarity with Turkoman butterfly-like motif.



Illus 4: Headdress, married woman, Mongol, from Boyer, *ibid.*, p. 119. See discussion of Yamud pectoral ornaments in the text.

Pl. 23  
Fig. 39

a neckband, as the Yamud assure us, this piece seems awkward and does not hang smoothly over the breast. Instead the shape seems to adapt itself well if used as a ring on the hat of a tall headdress and would have been used as a bridal headgear. We know that the Yamud did have such a headdress, the *hazaba*, thirty to forty years ago. Furthermore, two such pieces are dated: one is sixty odd years old and the other, seventy-six years old (Qara Tappeh Sheikh).

—a Tekke breast plaque in the shape of an elongated hexagon 34½ cm across and 33cm long, weighing 876 gms, the top of this solid piece is fretted and the lower edge is terminated with pendants, ending in fish shapes. The hexagon has designs of two lozenges and two triangles symmetrically spaced, framed by wire twistwork and decorated with carnelian. The background of the plaque has gilt punchwork in angular designs. This piece, called *gonjök* by the Iranian Tekke, was apparently attached to the shift at the base of the neck opening.<sup>16</sup>

—one of the main ornaments of the Yamud today is the gigantic collar stud, *gol yaqeh*, of a diameter ranging from about 3 to 12 cms; it is used on the loops of the neck opening of the shift. These collar studs are sometimes flat, sometimes made up of round bosses of smaller diameter soldered onto the large, flat, round base. They are decorated with parcel gilt sheet with a multitude of repoussé designs or small embossed pieces in the shape of lozenges and crescents soldered onto the silver base and decorated with coloured stones. The back of the *gol yaqeh* has one or two studs. The Tekke are also said to have a collar stud, but done in a different technique; however, according to the women themselves, the *gol yaqeh* seems to be, in both cases, an innovation of the beginning of the twentieth century.

Pl. 1

—a circular pectoral plaque called *elmalqah*, basically designed in the form of a cross within a circle, with gilt features and ornamented with nine carnelians on the axes of the cross. It is also used as a breast decoration and is attached to the shift just below the bodice opening.<sup>17</sup>

Pl. 31  
Fig. 1

### Bracelets

Bracelets, *bezelik*, worn in pairs, one on each wrist, are large and long, of cylindrical shape tapering slightly at one end and often covering most of the forearm. The bracelet has a narrow tooth-edged opening and has to be slipped sideways onto the wrist. It varies in width and is divided into two to five sections, called *qoshmah*, ranging from

Pl. 44  
Figs. 50, 51,  
52, 53

3½ cm to 15 cm in length. These sections are named in accordance with the Turkish words for the numerals from two to five, thus: *iki qoshmah* (two sections), *ooch*, *deurt* and *bash*. The largest pair of bracelets weighs 982 gms. The bracelet is encircled by bands of symmetrical gilt punchwork, framed by raised ribs and wire twistwork and decorated with carnelians in the Tekke style. The Yamud bracelets are of two different styles and are sometimes so heavy as to make one think that they are filled perhaps with pitch.<sup>18</sup> One pair is probably made for the Goklān.

### Earrings

Pl. 41  
Fig. 46

Big, wide earrings, *qolaq halqeh* consist of a flat triangular section at the base decorated with embossed gilt pieces and coloured stones. The lower edge of the earring illustrated is decorated with roundels. The earrings are attached to the ear lobe by a thin circular wire fastening to the open bill of a bird's head. These pieces are Yamud.

### Rings

Fig. 47

Rings, *yüzük*, consist of a rosette with gilt embossed designs and a coloured glass stone in the middle. One ring has a thimble attached to it. The other sample consists of four rings linked together (Yamud). The Tekke sometimes wear a very simple silver ring ornamented with a carnelian. Rings are an item which are less often worn amongst the Turkoman women.

### Practical Objects Women's Utensils

Pl. 43

Small objects for practical use are also to be found. These include combs made of wood or bone with teeth on two sides of a central silver piece ornamented with gilt embossed sheet and coloured stones as well as tweezers. A thimble attached to a ring has also been mentioned.

Pl. 38  
Figs. 48, 49

Such embellishments extend even to distaff utensils. Thus the spindle and whorl collar, called *ik bāsh* or literally, wood head, and the spinning strap, called *sarmakh*, are sometimes lavishly adorned with embossed gold leaf or crescents and triangles terminating with tassels of small bells. One fine piece is decked with some niello work and a small figure of a bird on the back (probably from the Caucasus). The spindle shaft is held in the right hand to spin thread and the spinning strap is held in the left to pluck the wads of combed wool.

### Daggers

Pl. 45

One of the few silver objects that Turkoman men are accustomed to use is a dagger, *jowhar pchāq*, with a sheath, *qeen*, from 35 to 42 cm long. This is tucked into the wide sash wound around their waist. The



Fig. 39: Pectoral ornament, gonjök, Tekke, 19th century.

Fig. 40: Pectoral ornament, boqow, 19th century. Tekke.

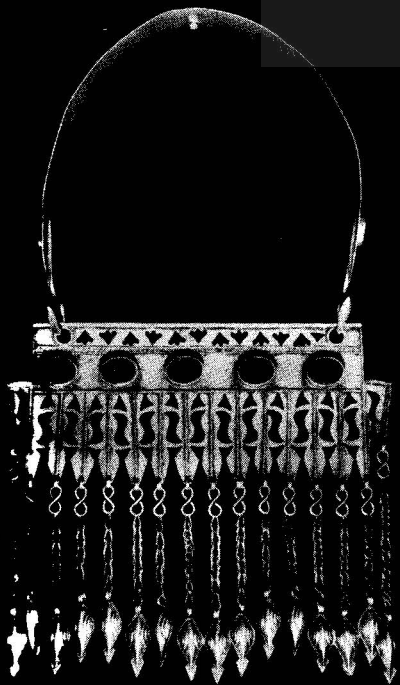
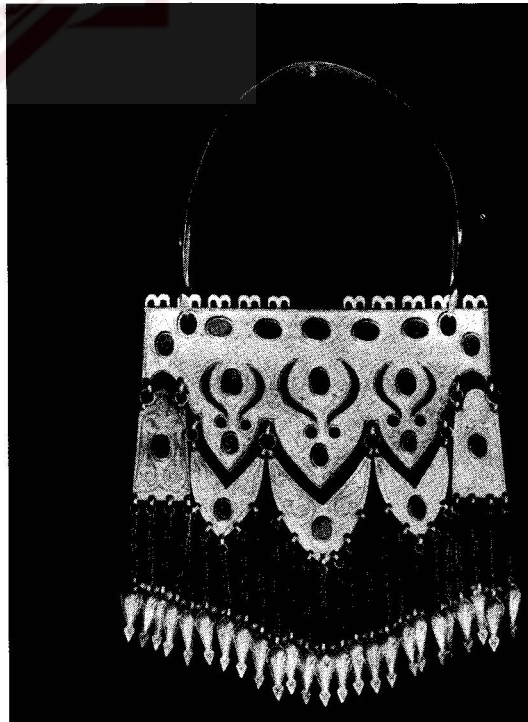


Fig. 41: Pectoral ornament, boqow, 19th century. Tekke.



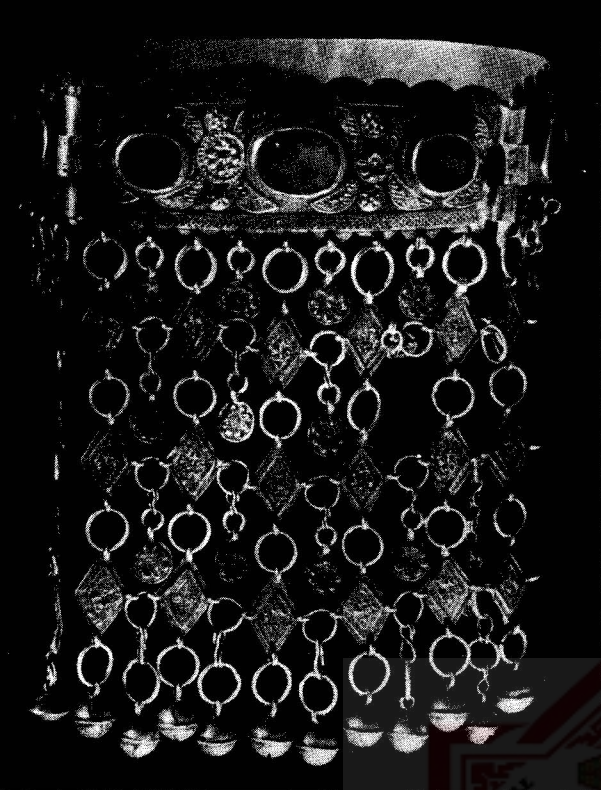


Fig. 42: Pectoral ornament, boqow (?), Yamud,



Fig. 43: Pectoral ornaments, Yamud, mid 20th century. Note the motif of bird heads on the left hand piece.

Fig. 44: Pectoral ornament, boqow, Tekke, 19th century.

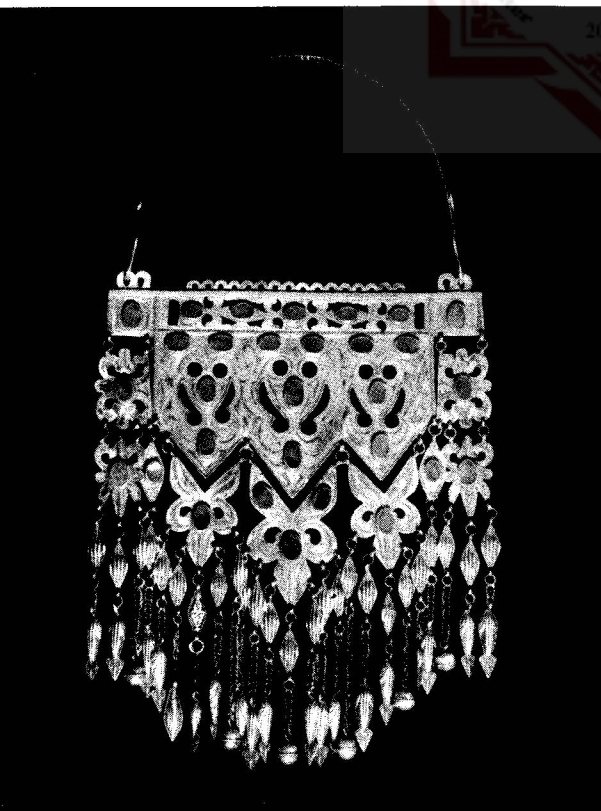


Fig. 45: Pectoral ornament, boqow (?), Yamud, as questioned in the text. This piece is inscribed on the neckband, "Work of Mollah Tāghen Dordi year 1337" (1971).



dagger is forged of watered steel and has a few gilt designs on the upper part of the blade, sometimes with Quranic inscriptions and the name of the metalworker in miniscule letters. The daggers in this collection do not seem to belong to the sheaths because they are not tight fitting. Those on the market are often of inferior quality perhaps because the Turkoman dislikes parting with this particular object.

The handle of the dagger is made of two pieces of ivory and, more often, bone, joined to a central metal band. Sometimes there are later additions of silver bands and jewelled tops on the handle of the daggers, possibly to repair damaged pieces. The sheaths range from the ordinary green plastic leather cover backed with cardboard to plain silver or to the richly adorned gilt punchwork pieces. The sheath is tapered towards the point with a soldered joint down its length. It tapers to a faceted acorn-shaped point (or chape). On the upper part of the sheath there are bands of designs in silver punchwork on a gilt background framed by wire twistwork, often encrusted with carnelians. A wavy, stiff frog band is on the back of the sheath to attach either a silver chain or leather thong. Two Tekke sheaths seen in Qoleh Zoh, north of Kalāteh Nāderi, in 1973 were also inscribed and in addition, ornamented with carnelians.

Besides such Tekke products there are also Yamud daggers, treated in their own style. The sheath is covered with embossed gilt sheet and decorated with carnelian or coloured stones.

Some sheaths are of a special and different workmanship. They are beautifully chased silver with some gilt and floral designs which are accentuated with niello work, produced in the Caucasus, acquired by a Turkoman. On one such, the inscription is as follows:

Fig. 56

Mollah Haj Tāghen and Sāneh Khezri  
Made by Ahmad Khān . . .  
. . . Dordi Oghli

Pls. 34, 35,  
36  
Fig. 58

#### Children's Objects

**oq yaiḥ:** worn by boys on the back of their clothing, it is made up of two half circles fixed side by side, representing a bow and arrow. Chains fringe the lower portion ending in bells. This *oq yaiḥ* is Tekke, dated 1333 (1913) with some gilt punch work and ornamented with carnelians. The other *oq yaiḥ* is controversial because of its size. It was probably used as an *ātheḵh* for a woman and is contemporary. Decorated with embossed gold sheet soldered to the silver base, rows of rosettes and chains fringe the lower edge ending in bells. Coloured stones are encrusted on this Yamud piece.

Figs. 54, 55

**ayaq burma:** or childrens' anklets. There are three types, (two of which exist in this collection): an open twisted silver

Pl. 39

circle with bells spaced all around; a plain silver band with a simple design incised and a medallion inset with a simulated coral; a silver band covered with embossed parcel gilt and coloured stones with heart shaped pendants spaced and clasped with a pin and safety chain.

**depebent:** an octagon with radiating pendants of graduated medallions ornamented with embossed parcel gilt designs and coloured stones. The pieces are attached to each other with a figure eight clasp and worn on a child's cap.

Pl. 42

**qowuz:** a mouth organ which produces a very twangy sound.

### Horse Trappings

The horse used to be the most valuable asset in the life of the Turkoman. This is well described by General Ferrier, who, over a century ago, wrote:

(Turkoman horses) on which they bestow more care than upon wives and children . . . It is more than tenderness, it is an absorbing passion which they feel for that noble animal. It is a sin in their eyes to maltreat him . . . A horse is to the Turkoman what a ship is to the pirate, it carries himself and his fortunes.<sup>19</sup>

Fortunes, indeed, for their horses carried them hundreds of kilometers into Persian territory on their *chapo* (raids) to rob, plunder, kidnap and then to retreat swiftly to their encampments and on to Bokhara or Khiva to dispose of their newly acquired loot and slaves. The renowned swiftness of the Turkoman horse together with its stamina over enormous distances was certainly instrumental in guaranteeing the success of the Turkoman marauder down to recent times.

In preparation for these raids<sup>20</sup>, the Turkoman took great pains to train his steed according to very special methods. The Turkoman thus showed his great pride by adorning his horse, especially on important occasions such as weddings and special religious feast days. To quote O'Donovan:

. . . throughbred Turkoman (horses were) very richly caparisoned. Besides embroidered saddle clothes and housings, they had heavy silver collars studded with turquoises and cornelians, and the corresponding ornaments on every available part of the body. The value of the trappings must have equalled that of the steeds themselves.<sup>21</sup>

Pl. 48

Figs. 60, 67,

68, 69, 70

Illus. 5

Surviving horse trappings, *ala qeish*, include: the bridle, *uyon āqzdrukḥ*, *uyon* meaning reins and *āqzdrukḥ* meaning bit. The *yengeḥ sāleq* (?), crown piece, is attached to the bridle with a buckle on each side. There are two or three neckbands or collars, *āten boqowi*<sup>22</sup>, breast band, *gowussbent*, and forehead piece, *gözluk*.

The present discussion relates to basically four techniques:

Fig. 66

—rows of indented circles interrupted by plaques ornamented with gilt punchwork and carnelian, Tekke.

Fig. 61

—raised rectangular silver pieces in rows which are often



Fig. 46: Earrings, qolāq halqeh, Yamud, mid 20th century embossed parcel gilt and coloured stones.

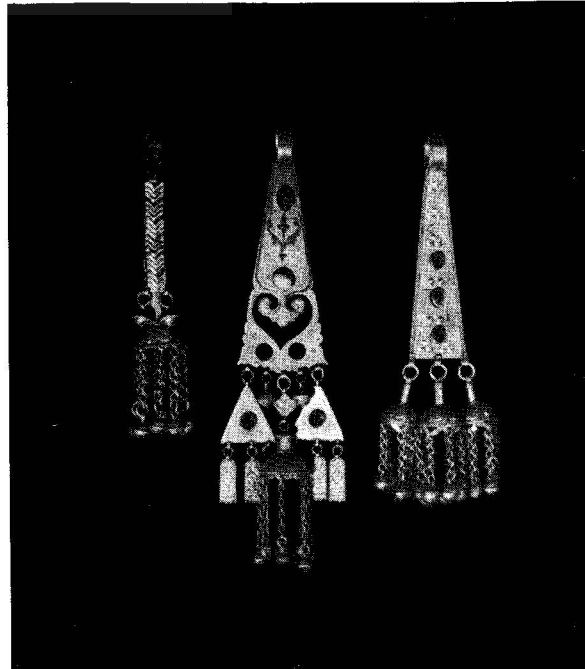


Fig. 47: Rings, yüzük Yamud, mid 20th century, embossed parcel gilt and coloured stones.

Fig. 48: Yamud woman from Eçer Boqāz, using a spindle shaft.



Fig. 49: Spinning straps sarmakh (left to right) Yamud, alternating silver with parcel gilt embossed units on leather strap, middle piece, Caucasian, niello, parcel gilt with coloured stones, the third piece is Yamud, parcel gilt and coloured stones.



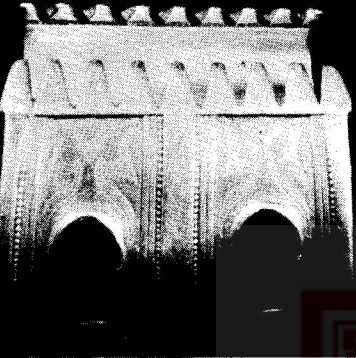


Fig. 50: Bracelets, bezelik, Tekke. The inscription on the top edge on one of the pair reads, "Work of Farid Begli". The other bracelet reads "Year 1329" (1909).

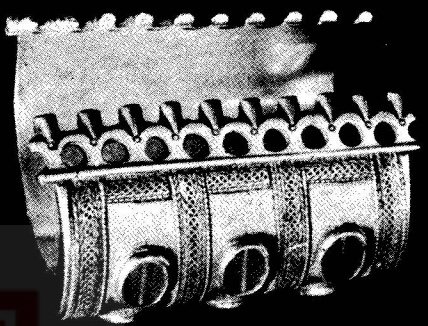


Fig. 51: Bracelets, bezelik, Yamud.

Fig. 52: bracelets, bezelik, Goklān (?).

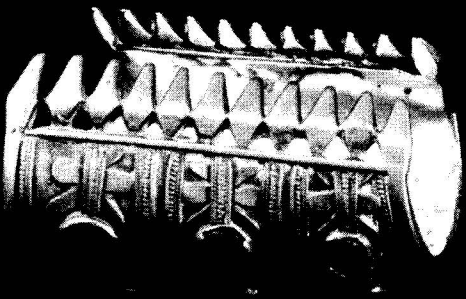
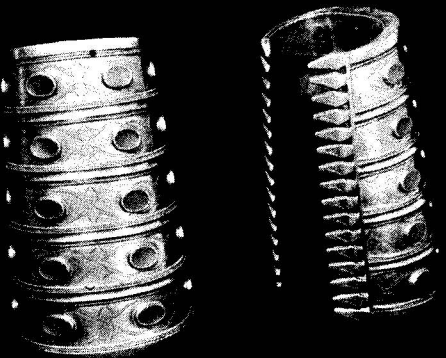


Fig. 53: Bracelets, bezelik, Tekke.



interrupted by plaques decorated with gilt punchwork and carnelian (Tekke). The central round boss of the breast band is also decorated with gilt punchwork.

Fig. 62

—niello work combined with chased floral parcel gilt patterns ornamented with rows of raised rectangular pieces with designs of stylized curled sheep horns. This technique is also interrupted by plaques ornamented with parcel gilt niello work and coloured stones. The lower edge of the breast band is fringed with small pendants. This particular technique is made in the Caucasus, certainly acquired and used by a Turkoman.

—richly chased gold sheets with floral designs on the central medallion with a carnelian mounted in the center. Radiating straps from the central medallion are formed from small embossed gilt geometric pieces linked into each other (some thing like chain mail) and attached to the leather.<sup>23</sup> A detail of this technique in plain silver is shown here.

Fig. 63

There are several reasons to explain the commonality among horse trapping from Central Asia to Asia Minor whether it be a product of urban or tribal expression. This would include work from Bokhara, Iran and the Caucasus.

—the Turkoman swept all the way from Central Asia to Asia Minor. The origin of their language is Turkic and the names inscribed on the pieces are common Turkoman names even today

—the pieces were used by and purchased from Turkoman. When comparing the shape of these horse harnesses with those of the Turkoman, they are identical

—the coloured glass stones inset into the harness are a typical Yamud method of ornamentation

—the knot on the reins is identical to that of all Turkoman reins

—the leather thongs attached to the haft of the whip are identical with that of the work of the Turkoman

—all silver elements used on the harnesses are attached to the leather by two-pronged headed fasteners perforating the leather and opened and pushed back securely against the leather on the back side

The various parts of the bridle, i.e., the nose strap, cheek strap and headband, may be ornamented according to the methods mentioned above and, in addition, with several medallions set with carnelians. One of the special features is the curious knot made by the Turkoman on the rein . . . perhaps a reminder of Central Asia!

Fig. 66

The horse whip, *qamchi*, is an interesting piece of work. The short haft, consisting of several sticks is bound together and partially or totally covered with silver work, then decorated with embossed gilt designs, twisted wirework and coloured stones.

The top of the horse whip sometimes features a bird's head, the stylized horns of wild sheep, or perhaps a horse's head. A typical Turkoman characteristic here is the long leather thong with many short ones, stitched around its base, all attached by a ring to the haft. In this collection, there is also a whip ornamented with niello work, from the Caucasus, giving the name of the owner and the date.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the Turkoman gradually settled and their main means of livelihood, the *chapo*, was naturally extinguished. The introduction of mechanized transportation and agricultural machinery in the nineteen fifties, changed their way of life radically. The horse survived for those who cherished it and could afford it, and, as a status symbol. Hence the need for horse trappings also dwindled.

In view of the very recent interest evinced in Turkoman culture and the breeding of the Turkoman horse, it is hoped that there will be a revival, amongst other things Turkoman, in the production of traditional horse trappings.

### Motifs

The motifs used in the silver ornaments of the Turkoman are of great interest. An important feature of the silver ornaments is the perfect balance and sense of symmetry in the treatment of the various elements whether in the shape of the objects or the designs used. These characteristics as well as the repetition of the motifs may have derived originally from magic and religious rituals.

Eclecticism is a marked feature of the traditional Turkoman silver and many motifs survive from ancient historical sources. It is difficult to define succinctly the character of the art in question except that they are derived from the mythical ideas of ancient cosmogony reflecting botanical and animal renderings. However, the motifs that were thus adopted and later modified were used not only symbolically but decoratively. Moreover, they often became so stylized as to become unrecognizable.

The Turkoman were gradually converted to Islam roughly between the ninth and eleventh centuries. In spite of the fact that the Islamic religion had a preference for ornament and decoration, a few examples of pre-Islamic symbols and motifs have survived unconsciously as the continuation of a long tradition.<sup>24</sup>

**Horns of Wild Sheep:** These are often so stylized as to be barely recognizable as in the ornamental fretwork on the top edges of plaques, pendants, hair pieces and pectoral amulet holders. This is also true of the designs of gilt parcel punch-



Fig. 54: Child's anklet, ayaq burma, Yamud, mid 20th century.



Fig. 55: Child's anklet, ayaq burma, mid 20th century. The central medallion is ornamented with a simulated coral.

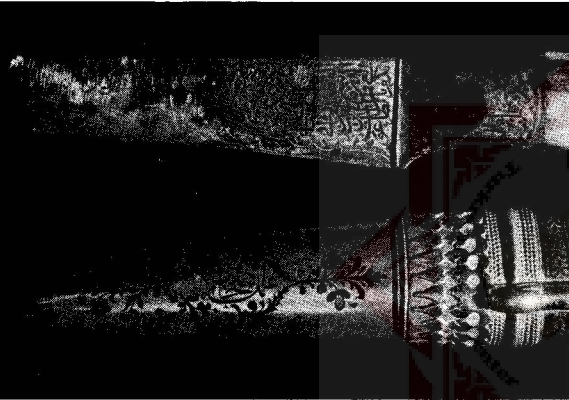


Fig. 56: Dagger, jowhar pchaq and sheath, qeen, Caucasian. The inscription on the sheath reads: top line, "Mollah Haj Tāghen and Sāneh Khezri", middle cartouche, "made by Ahmad Khān . . ." (inscription rubbed out), bottom line, "Dordi Oghli" . . ." (inscription rubbed out).



Fig. 57: Horse whip, qamchi, Caucasian, the inscription on the shaft of the whip reads: "Owner Bezā (?) ul-qamchi Haj Mohammad Dordi ibn Haj Dordi year 1332" (1912). The inscription on the bottom of the shaft reads "Work of Daniel (?)"

Fig. 58: Back piece of a boy's costume, oq yaih, Tekke and Yamud, mid 20th century.

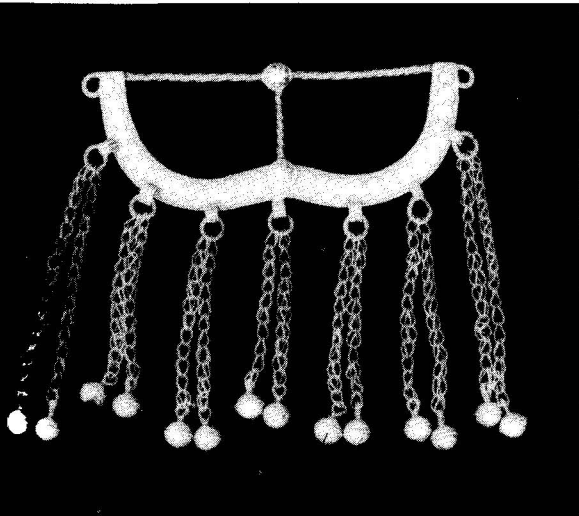
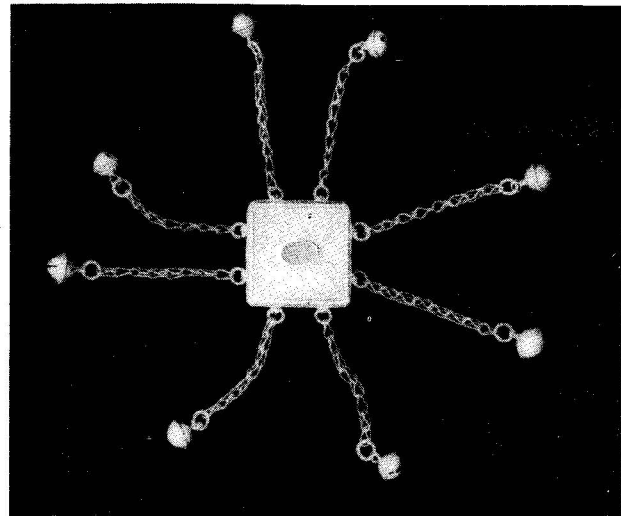


Fig. 59: Amulet, depebent, attached to the embroidered cap of a boy, Tekke and Yamud, mid 20th century. The rectangular box contained prayers.



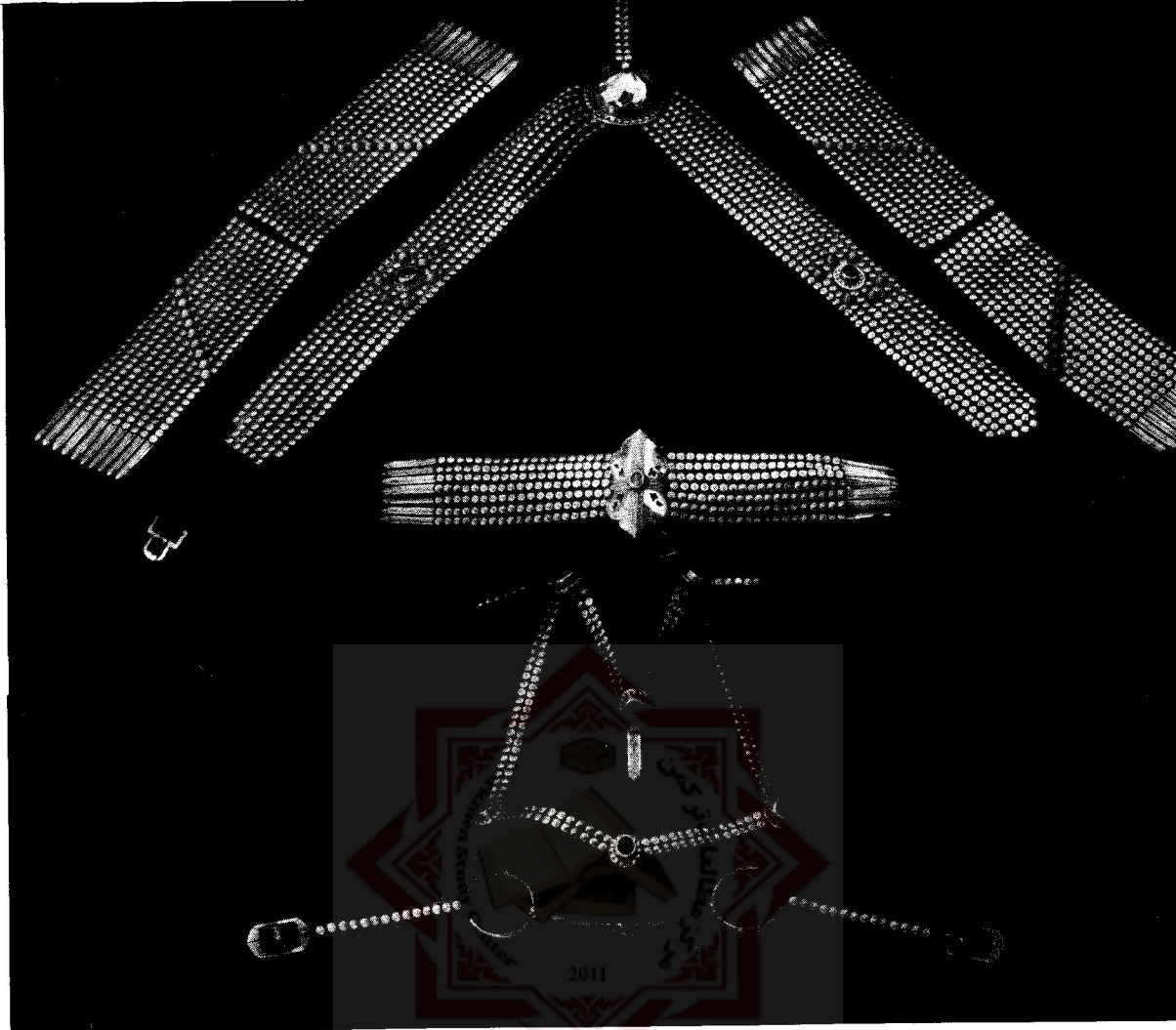
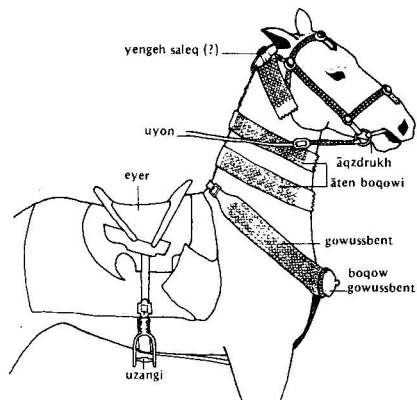


Fig. 60: Horse trappings, 19th century. The two top pieces are collars ornamented with diagonal bands of simulated turquoise. The next piece down is a breast band. The central boss is of plain silver. The two side medallions are ornamented in the middle by carnelians and surrounded by simulated turquoise. The bottom half of the photograph is the bridle. The medallion of the crown piece as well as the stones ornamenting the rest of the bridle are carnelians. These horse trappings are of silver.

Illus. 5: Diagram of horse trappings, ala qeish.



work covering the background of the Tekke pieces as well as the Yamud embossed gilt sheet pieces. It must not be forgotten that the wild sheep was very much part of the natural environment of the Turkoman. Wild sheep horns are still to be seen attached to poles on their houses in the villages. The same motif serves as the capital of columns (usually of juniper trunks) supporting the terraces of their houses today. Such stylized sheep horns have been noted as a detail of a niello horse breastband, the decorative piece of a *heykal*, the top edges of plaques, pendants, as well as the pin heads of Yamud hair ornaments, *sanjeleq*.

**Birds:** The frequent use of a pair of bird heads, which in some cases closely resemble the ancient griffin of Pazyryk, which probably originated in the remains of totemism.<sup>25</sup>

This is especially notable in a boat-shaped Yamud pendant with the heads of two birds back to back. This motif(?) would seem to also appear on two Tekke plaques. As previously mentioned, there are earrings, *qolāq halqeh*, with the clasp fastening to the open bill of a bird's head.

—the figure of a bird in niello on the back of a spinning strap

—the figure of two birds on each side of an *oq yaih* in the shape of a bow and arrow

—many a pommel of the whip

**Pomegranates:** the spaced fixed bells attached to the base of the earrings may have originally been a representation of pomegranates. Variations on this theme have been prolific in Iran from earliest antiquity.

Other popular designs most of which have already been mentioned include:

**Rosettes:** six or eight-lobed in profusion on pendants, necklaces, hair ornaments, headdress pieces and so forth, on Tekke and Yamud silver pieces

**Flowers and Leaves:** forming abstract patterns

**Fish Shapes:** terminating most of the pendants

**Astral Symbols:** a half crescent with a star or stars engraved usually on red glass stones ornamenting the silver, a common feature in other tribal and rural silver ornaments of Iran

**Single Large Hearts:** worn as plaques on the back between the braids of the women's hairdress or the small hearts ending the *ātheekh* of both the Tekke and the Yamud types

**The Human Form:** *ādamlyk*, a part of the headdress, means human shaped and indeed resembles the figure of a woman

**The Sabre and Bow and Arrow:** which symbolizes courage and warlike attributes

**The Axe and Adze:** symbols of industriousness

**Geometrical Forms:** such as squares, rectangles, circles, lozenges, triangles abound in Turkoman ornaments either as

panelled designs, in parcel gilt punchwork and embossed gilt, or as independent elements connected together by a multitude of chains and ending in a profusion of cupolas, bells, pendants and coins. These geometrical shapes are either made in flat sections of silver or 'boxed'.

## Materials

The ornaments of the Turkoman give the general impression of:

—**mass**: because of their size and weight

—**motion**: because of the profusion of pendants, chains, bells and other hanging elements which are in constant motion

—**sound**: silver coins, chains, pendants and bells clashing against silver at the least motion

—**colour**: as the ornaments are made up of bright materials such as silver and gold sheet or parcel gilt in combination with coloured glass stones of brilliant reds, greens, blues and orange-reds and of carnelians, glittering at the least ray of light

These chains and pendants then stress the contrast between the static qualities of the central plaque or pendant and the flexibility of the chain links. They also lend a sense of mobility and fluidity coupled with a comforting and pleasing musical sound in the vast and silent wilderness surrounding the former Turkoman encampments.

## Silver

Turkoman ornaments are essentially made of silver, *kömush*. We may ask ourselves why silver, rather than say, gold, *gezel* or *gethel*, constituted the main element for their ornaments.

In answer, we might speculate that since the Turkoman silversmith intended to give an effect of mass and bulk, especially in the case of the Tekke ornaments, he could achieve this more easily by the use of silver which is also less costly than gold. The ornaments are sometimes up to one centimeter in cross section, such as the *tumār* pectoral amulet holder and the 'boxed' links of some of the hair pendants.

There seems to be a tradition strongly in favour of the use of silver with carnelian rather than gold. This may have an aesthetic reason. The orange-red carnelian contrasts more effectively with silver and the Tekke used this stone almost exclusively to ornament their silver. Furthermore, the silversmith could better show his craftsmanship by embellishing and decorating the background of his work with parcel gilt sheet soldered to a silver base.

In contradistinction, the Yamud used a lot of coloured stones and the ornaments are lavishly covered with very thin embossed gold or gilt sheet soldered to a silver base.

Secondly, there may also be a religious significance because Islam may have encouraged the use of silver as being a more modest and humble substance, and man in his imperfection cannot pray to God

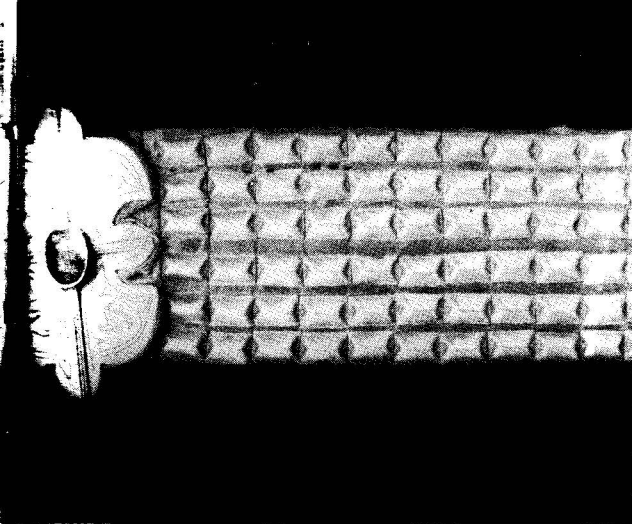


Fig. 61: Horse trappings, detail, Tekke.

Fig. 63: Horse trappings, detail. Note the 'chain mail' technique.

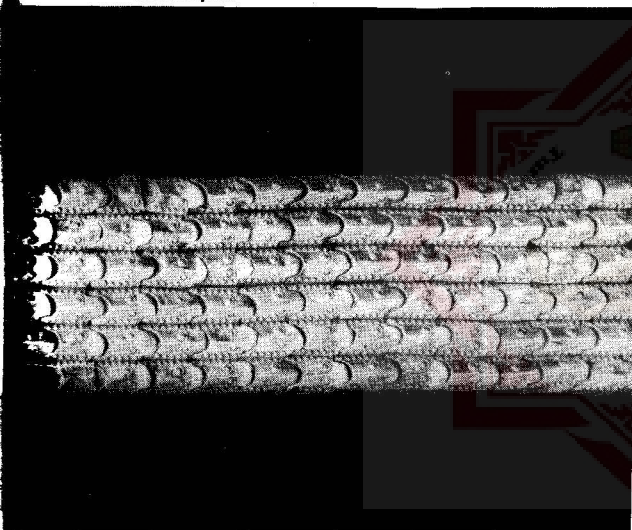


Fig. 65: Horse trappings, detail, one of the neck collars of the Caucasian set of horse trappings. It is interesting to note that this piece was entirely repaired by the Yamud in their technique — embossed parcel gilt plaques replacing the original niello work.

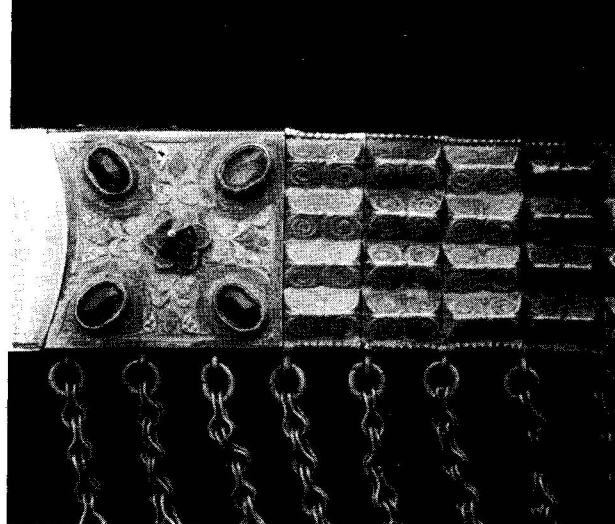
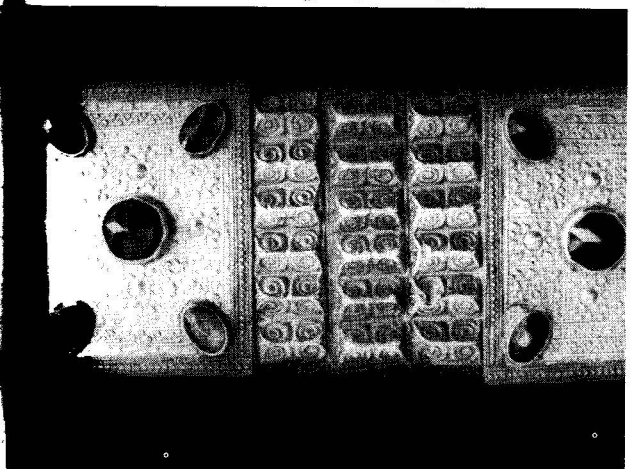


Fig. 62: Horse trappings, detail, Caucasian. Note the similarities between this and the previous piece.

Fig. 64: Horse trappings, detail, indented concentric circles technique.



Fig. 66: Detail of the knot of the reins. Used in Turkoman horse trappings as well as in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

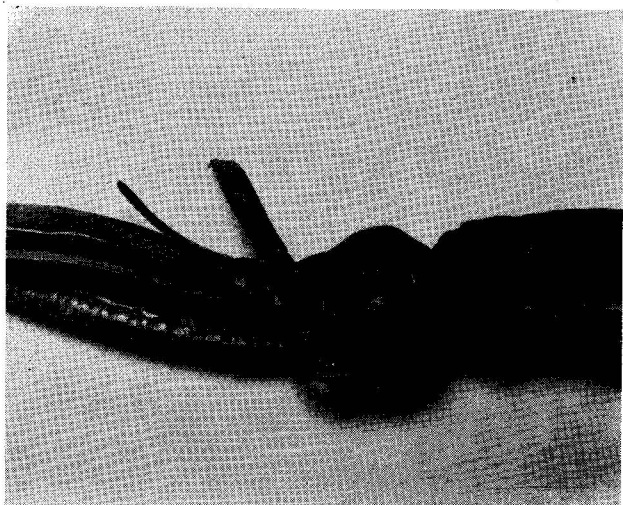




Fig. 67: Horse trappings, central boss of breast band, Tekke, parcel gilt punchwork.

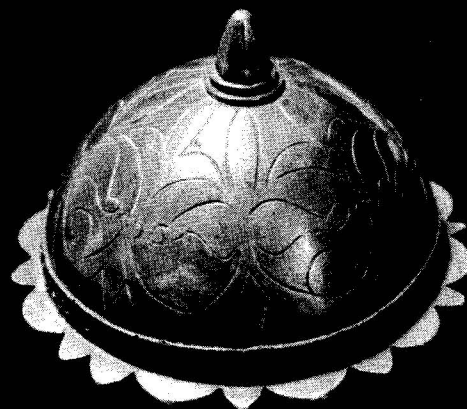
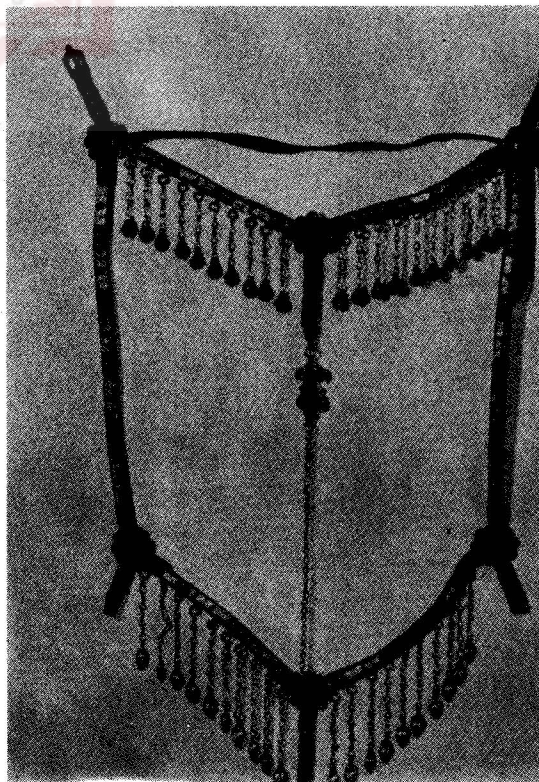
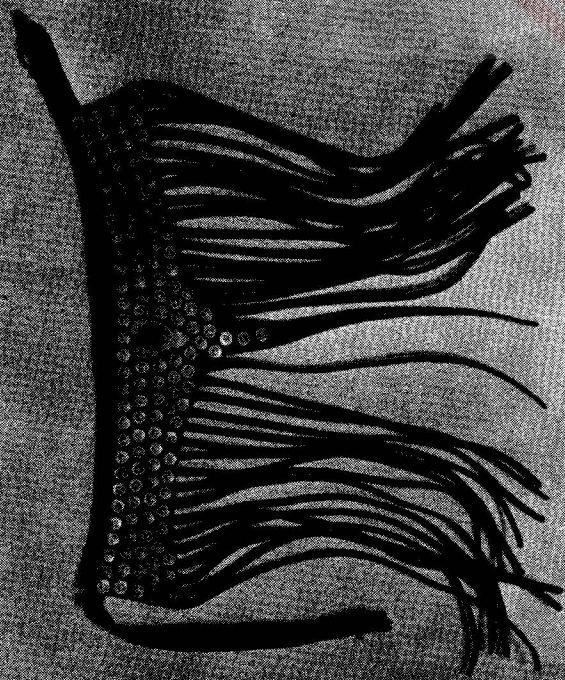


Fig. 68: Horse trappings, central boss of breast band, Tekke, parcel gilt punchwork.

Fig. 69: Horse trappings, gözlük, forehead piece, Tekke.

Fig. 70: Horse trappings, portion of a bridle, Cau



apparelled in unseemingly opulence.

Even in non-Turkoman ornaments, until quite recently, a lot of silver was used in conjunction with turquoise and carnelian. The carnelian is used for the engraving of prayers such as the *bāzuband*, worn on the forearm and composed of three oval pieces with Quranic inscriptions.

Thirdly, the essence of folk art is that it is accessible to one and all and is not subject to class distinction. It thus reflects a sobriety attuned to the tastes of the tribal or rural community and escapes the ostentation frowned upon and usually born in the urban milieu.

Fourthly, it is interesting to note that in the case of silver ornaments, designs and shapes seem to adhere much longer to their original and traditional conception. However, when influenced by the proximity of an urban culture and fashioned in gold, the connotation as, indeed, the complexion of the ornaments undergoes a basic change. Perhaps the workmanship is finer but some of the primeval strength and virility is lost in the process.

Certain properties have always been ascribed to metal and stone. Silver and iron, for instance, are said to be used as protection against unknown forces; and carnelian against disease and danger, while prosperity is believed to be a property of turquoise. Furthermore, the colour blue is believed to be a protection against the evil eye.<sup>26</sup>

The ornaments are often very heavy and bulky and are exclusively and traditionally made by men. The silver is usually sold by the *mesqāl*, a unit of measure equivalent to 4.6 grams. The silver content is determined by a unit of measure called *ayār* and varies enormously. Both of these units are presently used throughout Iran.<sup>27</sup>

Old Russian and Persian silver coins (especially of the 19th century) are still used on objects such as on chains and pendants. Sometimes gilt rosettes are superimposed on these silver coins. Then again until quite recently it was customary for the jeweller or client to buy old silver or gold coins to melt down for the fashioning of ornaments.

### Parcel Gilt

Other than silver, parcel gilt is used to decorate Turkoman silver either for the Tekke punchwork or the Yamud embossed pieces made of very thin gold or gilt sheets.

### Carnelians

The stones used to embellish the Tekke ornaments are the semi-precious carnelian, *aqiq*, an orange-red variety of chalcedony, or simulated carnelian. These stones are cut in oval or round shapes, sometimes in cabochon but usually table cut. The carnelian is usually in a setting that is enclosed in collets or in boxes, thus giving an effect of relief. The carnelians may sometimes be foiled at the back to intensify and reflect colour.

## Coloured Stones

On the Yamud pieces, a variety of other stones are used besides the above two, such as the turquoise or simulated turquoise, and, translucent green, red, brown and dark blue glass stones and occasionally simulated coral. These stones, *qāsh*, usually of a carbochon cut, sometimes many faceted, are of oval or circular shape. The coloured glass stones are made up of discarded coloured bottles, broken into pieces, melted down and run into a mould divided into oval shaped units. These are now imported from Italy.

Ten years ago an American jeweller passing through the Mashad bazaar mentioned that some of the Turkoman silver was studded with precious gems! This is doubtful unless the gems in the old pieces were replaced by coloured glass stones later on. The same story has been told of certain Kurdish ornaments. In this collection only one sample of a garnet being used has been found.

## Dating

The dating of these silver ornaments is at times controversial. Some of the silver in this collection has been dated as belonging to the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup> Others, seem to belong mainly to the beginning of the twentieth century. A few pieces are signed and dated, such as:

—three big heart-shaped pendants, Tekke, dated 1323, 1327 and 1334 A.H. (Qara Tappeh Sheikh) respectively. The Lunar year being 1398, they date from about 75, 71 and 64 years ago.

—a Tekke *oq yaih*, for a boy's costume, dated 1333

—two Yamud neck ornaments, dated 1322 and 1337. The former was seen in Qara Tappeh Sheikh

—a niello whip from the Caucasus: Work of Daniel (?), Owner Beza (?) *ul-qamchi* Haj Mohammad Durdi ibn Haj Durdi year 1332”

— a niello breastband for a horse from the Caucasus: “Owner Jah (?) Hassan, work of Gholzar (?) Qelich 1332”

—a pair of Tekke bracelets dated 1329

Therefore these pieces are not more than sixty to seventy-six years old, if we can assume that the dates inscribed represent the actual year the silver objects were made. Quite a few of the other silver ornaments are of the mid 20th century.

As to the undated pieces, we have the following guidelines to follow:

—the works of 19th century travellers who have described and illustrated the silver ornaments and costumes

—presumably a tradition such as the Turkoman silver ornaments did not spring up overnight but has had a long and continuous history

—many pieces have been handed down from generation to generation because silver, unlike textiles, is more durable

—contemporary field experience within the last fifteen years



Fig. 71: Amulet, heykal, Tekke, 19th century, cover of a Quran container. Note the stylized sheep horns in the central portion.



Fig. 72: Amulet, Tekke, container for prayers. Note again the stylized sheep horns.



Fig. 73: Children's object, the controversial oq yaih. This photograph shows the back of the work.



Fig. 74: Hair ornament, qorbāqeli howzah, detail of the back of the work.

Fig. 75: Pectoral ornament (?), boqow, Yamud, detail of clasp showing how it is fastened.

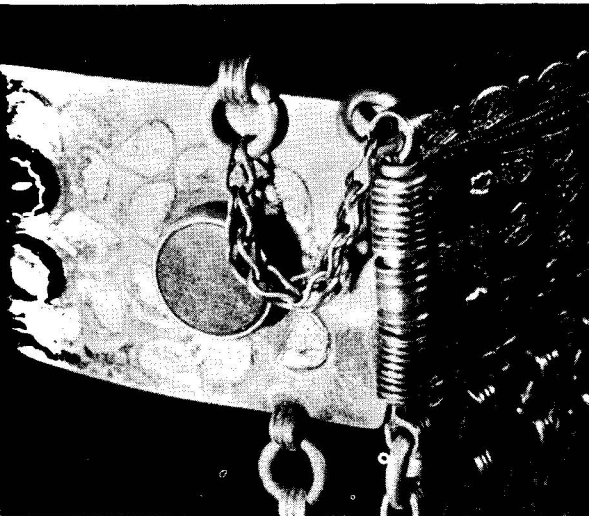


Fig. 76: Detail of a silversmith at work.





Fig. 77: Two silversmiths at work Sheikh Morād Kāmi and his wife, Anjān Toui, Gonbad Qābus, Spring, 1977.

Fig. 78: The silversmith, Qolām Aq, Gonbad Qābus, Spring, 1977.



in Iran has seen that ornaments are still made and worn in the traditional way with variations on the same theme

### Silversmiths

Fig. 77

A few words should be said about some of the silversmiths working today and their workshops. Some of the best known in Gonbad Qābus, for example, who work in their homes, are Sheikh Morād Kāmi, better known as Tāj Mohamad and his wife, Anjān Toui, a rare example of a Turkoman woman silversmith. There is also Oustā Nazar Kāmi and his son.

Fig. 78

One of the best is Qolām Aq known as Khan-e Tekke, who works especially for the Kazāq in the traditional Turkoman Yamud style despite his being a Tekke. He did mention that he could fashion ornaments in the Tekke style, i.e. parcel gilt punchwork, but that it was too long and arduous a task and not sufficiently remunerative. Because of the rapidly growing interest in things Turkoman, both amongst themselves and in the consumer market, there are happily many silversmiths plying their trade nowadays.

As in most small provincial cities or villages in Iran, the silversmiths are seated on the floor with one leg bent in front of an anvil, *sandali*, with the horizontal bellows, *korok*, connected to a clay bowl containing live coals, *komor*, and pincers conveniently at hand. Nowadays this is often replaced by a blow-torch to solder the various metal parts.

The tools used by the silversmiths are surprisingly few and rudimentary considering the beautiful work that is done, and include scissors, various sizes of hammers, chisels, fretsaws, wire cutters, files, pincers and various moulds for the embossed work. Qolām Aq, in particular, had very beautiful and detailed moulds made by himself. What is more, he was interested in making innovations.

The names of the silversmiths inscribed on the objects of this collection and the year of the object should also be mentioned

—a large Tekke heart (Qara Tappēh Sheikh): "Work of Mollah Heydar year 1334"

—a Yamud *boqow*: "Work of Mollah Tāghen Dordi year 1337"

—a pair of Tekke bracelets, one bracelet signed "Work of Farid Begli," on the other identical bracelet, "year 1329"

—a large Tekke heart: "Work of Mollah Tāghen (?) Dordi year 1323"

—a niello sheath from the Caucasus: "Work of Ahmad Khan . . . ."

—a niello whip from the Caucasus: "Work of Daniel year 1332"

—a niello breastband for a horse from the Caucasus: "Work of Gholzar Qelich year 1332"

—a large Tekke heart: "Work of Farid Begli year 1327"

## Techniques

Cover Plate

Pls. 12, 27, 40

Figs. 18, 19,  
20, 21

The techniques employed are varied:

**Parcel gilt punchwork** (sometimes punchwork silver on gilt, sometimes vice versa) is done with a punch and hammer. It is called parcel gilt because the metal has been completely or partially gold-plated. This is special feature of Tekke work which uses this technique to cover the flat surfaces with either rectilinear geometric designs or a delicate tracery of graceful arabesques. Perhaps the latter is made by a different sub-tribe of the Tekke. As has been mentioned before, this particular technique is not being used by the Iranian Turkoman of today.

Pls. 4, 5, 11

**Fretwork design cutout** is another technique done with a chisel or fretsaw and sometimes soldered either onto a silver backing or attached to a leather backing (leather bags containing the Quran and horse neckbands, for example), or left with no backing (plaques for coats, pectoral ornaments, edges of headdress pieces, etc.). There are also backings made up of pieces of red and green flannel.

Pls. 1, 36

**Low relief embossing** is a current technique used on the Yamud ornaments. Very thin parcel gilt metal sheets are positioned on a mould and placed on the anvil, then a lead block, softened and warmed, is placed on top of the thin metal sheet to be embossed from the back with special chisels and hammers. Being malleable, it adapts well to the shapes that have to be hammered in and preserves the metal sheet from being damaged. When the embossing is done, the thin gilt sheet thus embellished, is soldered onto a solid silver base. The thin metal sheets of parcel gilt, used for embossing, are no longer prepared in the old arduous and time consuming methods of hammering the metal into thin sheets by hand, but are extruded through modern machinery.

Another technique applied to Yamud ornaments is the use of small embossed units which are stamped with a die in such shapes as lozenges, crescents and rosettes, made in sheet metal of gold or gilt and soldered onto a silver base. The terminal fish pendants are made of sheet silver beat into dies and then the concave half is soldered onto a flat piece. In the older pieces, there is often a hole on the back of these fish which, as a silversmith explained, are provided in order to allow the hot air to escape lest the thin and fragile metal collapse during the process of soldering. This is equally the case with some of the tubular silver bracelets made in Iran fifty to eighty years ago. Upon completion of a bracelet, the hole was usually covered up but the mark would remain visible. The terminal bells too are made in this fashion with the two bowl-shaped pieces soldered together and a metal bead inserted so as to give a musical sound.

Pls. 11, 40

**Wire twistwork and applied zigzag** is used to outline or to form panels containing the designs of parcel gilt punchwork, a technique used primarily in the Tekke pieces of silver. Wire twistwork is also used in bands wrapped around various parts of the dagger sheaths. The wire prepared for this technique is nowadays extruded through a machine to the desired thinness and is no longer hand-drawn.

Niello work is not Turkoman work per se but a technique popular in the Caucasus. Breastbands, whips and dagger sheaths are adorned in this manner and are usually inscribed with the name of the silversmith as well as that of the owner. The name of the owner on a sheath in this collection, for example, is 'Mollah Haj Tāghen Dordi Oghli. A whip is inscribed 'owner of the *qamchi*, Haj Mohamad Dordi ibn Haj Dordi Mohamad'.

The niello process consists of incised designs on silver filled with a black coloured mixture of silver, copper and lead, the article being then heated in a kiln until the enamel fuses with the silver, and it is finally polished until the design becomes flush with the surface of the silver. Examples of niello work can be seen in this collection on a spinning strap, a set of horse trappings composed of a chestband, one neckband, forehead piece, bridle and bell-shaped cupola, as well as a whip and the sheath of a dagger.

The backs of the silver ornaments, the hinges and the joints of the different elements attached to chains, links, pendants and so forth are left with a somewhat haphazard and rudimentary finish. This is explained by the fact that only the front side was to be seen and to excite admiration – and perhaps the mentality engendering this standard truly conveys another side of their culture too.

### Conclusion

The ornaments in this collection were produced with the same general techniques employed by present-day silversmiths. The execution of their craft was of a high standard, especially during the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, because these products were intended exclusively for domestic or tribal use. Furthermore, the ever existing demand combined with enough leisure as well as pride in workmanship created a high degree of motivation for the production of these objects. This was true of all art forms, whether carpets (where the urban demand added a particular stimulus), textiles, embroideries or pottery. It is evident that these silver ornaments were highly prized and were handed down from generation to generation.

If unfortunate, it is also inevitable that a number of factors have contributed in this generation to the reduction of both supply and demand for traditional silver as well as the handwoven silks and embroideries for indigenous costumes. These may be enumerated as follows:

- the change from a semi-nomadic to a sedentary and agricultural life style
- the growing market for handwoven carpets and cushions which provided a greater economic incentive and, being also a very popular cottage industry, tends to monopolize the time of the women
- the accessibility of urban sophistication

- the young being formally educated and breaking away from traditional ways to take up careers outside the home
- the increasing cost of silver and silks
- the availability of cheap and ready-made materials together with an awareness of gold as a better investment <sup>29</sup>
- the allure of new fashions and the sheer impediment of weight!

An important and direct cause for the depletion of the supplies of silver ornaments was unquestionably the sale of many of the finest objects, twenty and thirty years ago, to foreigners with a sense of discrimination for this type of folk art. Added to this 'art drain' is the sad fact that the silver objects, not having been popular in the Iranian market until very recently, were often melted down as a more profitable alternative.

We are perhaps attracted to folk art because we can identify ourselves with it so readily. In contradistinction, a sophisticated and polished art, no matter how perfect, seems unattainable to the vast majority. Folk art, moreover, has immense potential precisely because it is a more natural and spontaneous expression of the essence of a culture.

Today, folk art has an added value in as much as many objects that we use are mass produced and machine made and thereby, impersonal. There is no longer an interrelation between the object produced and the user. A craftsman gains satisfaction in producing an object with his own hands, however humble, concentrating painstakingly and lovingly on an entity that is all his own, without being just a robot or a small link in a chain. This in itself is an important factor in giving him a sense of achievement and stability. It is important therefore to restore the craftsman's confidence in his own culture and encourage him to revive, continue and renew his crafts especially since it is through him that we may hope to restore the valid place and prestige of man's traditional arts.

## Footnotes

1. The term, ornament, has been used throughout instead of jewellery, as the latter implies the use of precious materials and/or gems. The distinction between jewellery and ornaments, however, extends beyond this. Jewellery is used independently whereas ornaments can also be an integral part of a costume.
2. V.V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, translated from the Russian by B. and T. Minorsky, Vol. 3, pp. 77-9.
3. For further information see Peter Andrews, *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, Vol. 11, pp. 93-110.
4. The öy is occasionally still made today. One was made for the author in the exact traditional manner in Shahpasand near Golidaq in 1976.
5. Edmond O'Donovan, *The Merv Oasis*, Vol. 2, pp. 261-2.
6. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 261-2.
7. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 146-7.
8. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 39. "(Turkoman captive's) horses are generally given in exchange for the prisoners, but sometimes money payments are made. The wives of the captives often send in their personal ornaments, especially the numerous silver coins which deck their hair and garmets, to purchase their husband's freedom."  
As recently as ten years ago such a case was recorded in Tangeh Turkoman, near the village of Baqlaq, in the Jargalan area.
9. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 156-7.
10. The Turkoman names for the various parts of the costume and silver ornaments described throughout have been given whenever possible. The list of names has been checked through numerous villages of the Turkoman area, but, often they do not coincide either because they are pronounced differently or have a totally different name. The language differs slightly amongst the various tribes and clans. Furthermore, in the case of some of the silver ornaments which are no longer used or made today, their original use and name has been forgotten. This confuses the picture even more.
11. Henri Couliboeuf de Blocqueville, *Quatorze mois de captivité chez les Turcomans*, p. 248. De Blocqueville mentions that the headdress was about 40 cm in height. On page 258 and 259 he has drawings of Turkoman silver which are reproduced here. Amongst them, the tiara as he saw it.
12. *The Decorative and Applied Art of Turkemenia*. In this book, these pieces are called *ildirghich*.
13. *Ibid.*, called *khasaveh*.
14. The Sheikh play a special role in the Turkoman community. Descendants of the Prophet of Islam, they often live within a Goklān community. Because of their special position, they arbitrate among the Turkoman tribes.

15. Especially in rural areas which are composed of a small and closed community and where there is more often a fear of jealousy, hence, the effects of the 'evil eye' – in particular if strangers are present. See Brian Spooner. "The Evil Eye in the Middle East" (15), A.S. A. Monographs.
16. A common enough practice in the Near and Middle East especially when dealing with delicate gold jewellery made up of thin embossed sheets of metal.
17. *The Decorative, op. cit.* Here this ornament is referred to as *gursakcha*, dated 19th century and belonging to the Akhal Tekke. It was also seen in Qoleh Zoh, north of Kalāteh Nāderi (not a Turkoman village).
18. de Blocqueville, *op. cit.*, p. 256.
19. J.P. Ferrier, *Caravan Journeys and Wanderings in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkistan and Beloochistan*, pp. 93-4.
20. *Ibid.*, Ch. 7, p. 84 and ff.
21. O'Donovan, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 487.
22. The neckbands must be of the same width, but their length differs slightly. Each neckband is a bit longer than the others as they are attached down the neck of the horse. A large bell shaped cupola with pendants is attached to the last and longest neck band and is called *qotoz alaqeish* (?). The saddle, *eyer*, had a high pommel that was also often ornamented with silver.
23. See illustration number 102 in *The Decorative, op. cit.* It most probably belonged to a Jafarbāy Yamud Turkoman, renowned for his richly ornamented horse trappings. Because of the refined style of this particular piece, it would seem to be a product of Bokhara rather than tribal work.
24. The only clear and distinct representation of the human figure and animal forms to be seen in Turkoman art are in the rare tent bands used only for very special occasions. The design is in a raised pile carpet weave on a plain weave recessed background. The subject matter is a bridal procession of camels, and two humped camels with palanquins and rich trappings bearing the bride and dowry. People follow the procession, one person holds the horns of a wild sheep and a stream of horses, perhaps donkeys, sheep and goats trail behind.  
Another example, seen in the Turkoman area east of Golidāq, were roughly hewn human heads in geometric designs on wooden posts sunk into the ground and mounted on the tombs of the graveyard outside some village such as Bāqlāq, a predominately Nokhorli village in the Jargalān area.  
Another example was the figure of a camel embroidered on the back of a *charpi*, head robe, seen in a shop in Tehran. See also, *The Decorative, op. cit.*, plate 57, where the figures of a teapot, temple pendant, a man and a horse appear.
25. Barthold, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 111. "Rashid al-din provides some data which are absent in Mahmud Kashghari. Thus we learn from him that some remnants of totemism survived among the Oghuz even after their conversion to Islam. Each clan revered some bird which the members of the clan neither touched nor ate. Such a totem was designated by the term *onghun* or *uyghun*."

26. See Joan Allgrove, *The Qashqai of Iran*, p. 45.
27. It is difficult to determine the silver content as one would have to damage the object in order to test it. We have only general guidelines such as the brighter the silver remains, the less pure is the content. Qolām Aq, a Tekke silversmith, working in the traditional Turkoman style, mentioned that he uses only fairly pure silver of about 80 *ayār* (80% silver). Other contemporary Turkoman silversmiths claim that the chains attached to the objects, in particular, are of an inferior quality of silver. Perhaps because the silver content of the ornaments in general is sometimes dubious, this induced the Turkoman to exchange their silver objects for gold as being a sounder investment.
28. *The Decorative, op. cit.* Here the dating goes back to the beginning, mid and end of the 19th century.
29. How often, fifteen to twenty years ago, Turkoman women in Gorgan, Gonbad Qābus and Pahlavi Dej were seen in shops or markets bartering their superb pieces of silver for questionable gold jewellery.

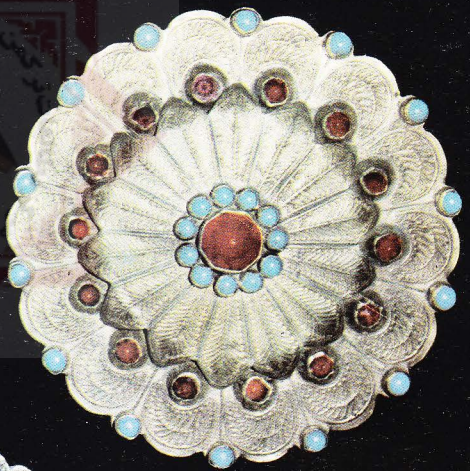
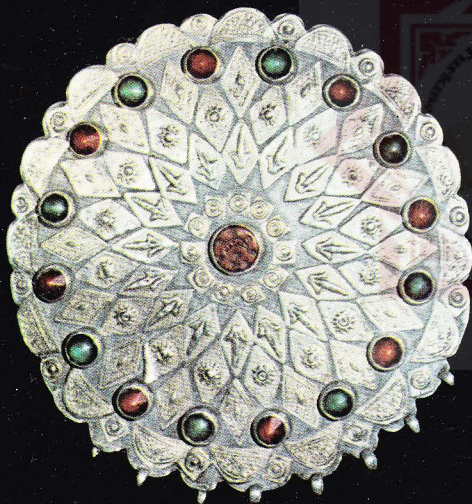
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**Plate 1 : Collar stud, gol yaqeh, Yamud, mid-20th century embossed parcel gilt sheet soldered onto a silver background ornamented with glass colour stones. Some of the studs have embossed stylized sheep horns. The second from the top, left hand side stud still shows the hooks for pendants. The back of the gol yaqeh has one or two studs. The diameters range from 3 to 12 cm.**

A marked feature of Turkoman silver, as to be further seen in the colour plates to follow, is that traditional craftsmen embellish the total surface of their work. The designs and motifs are based on symmetry and repetition and are an integral part of his means of expression.

**Errata: Plate 41 should read *qolāq halqeh*; Plate 44 should read left to right.**





2

Plate 2: Felt covered tents, qara öy, Yamud, Aq Atābay, Eger Boqāz near Gonbad Qābus.

Plate 3: Costume, Tekke woman, Spring, 1967, Gonbad Qābus. She is wearing the 'headrobe,' charpi, 100 years old or over.

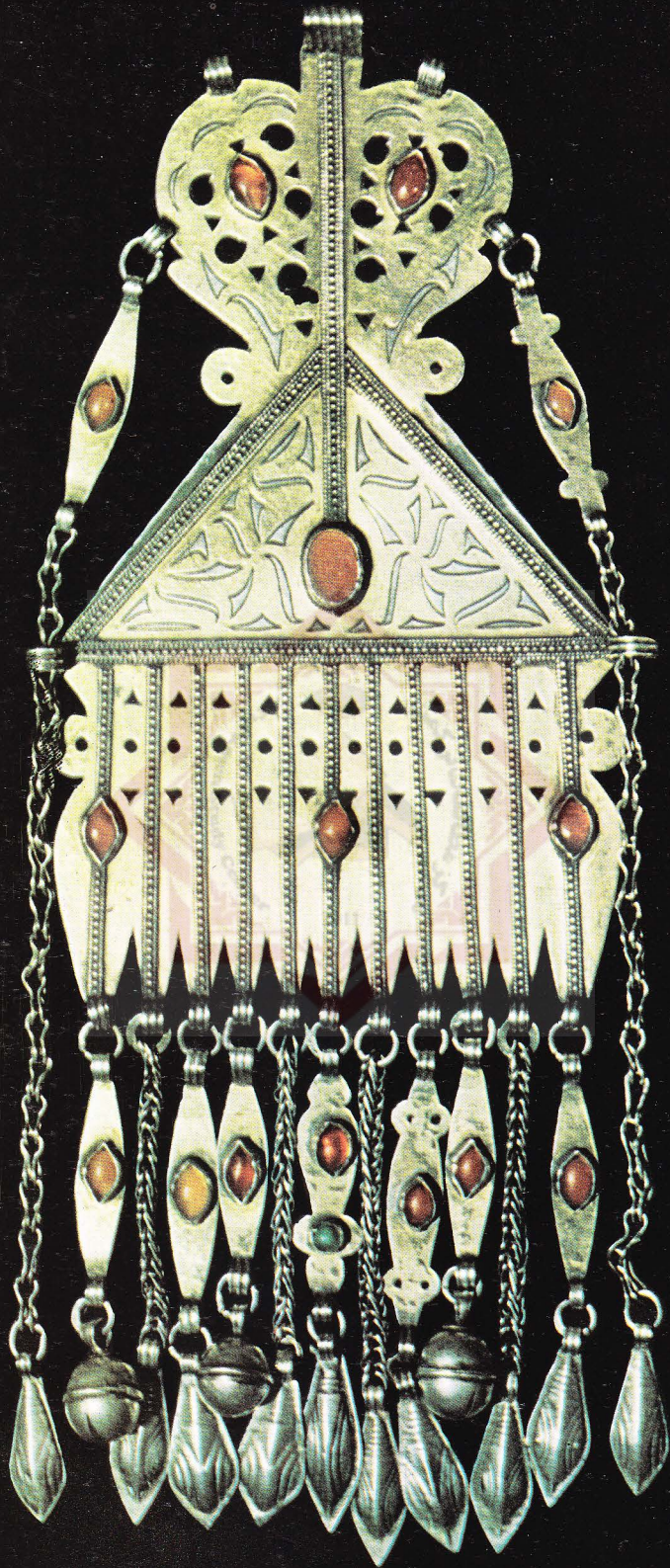






Plate 4: Clasp of a woman's coat, changah, Tekke, terminating in fish pendants and bells.

Plate 5: Clasp of a woman's coat, one of a pair, changah, Tekke.



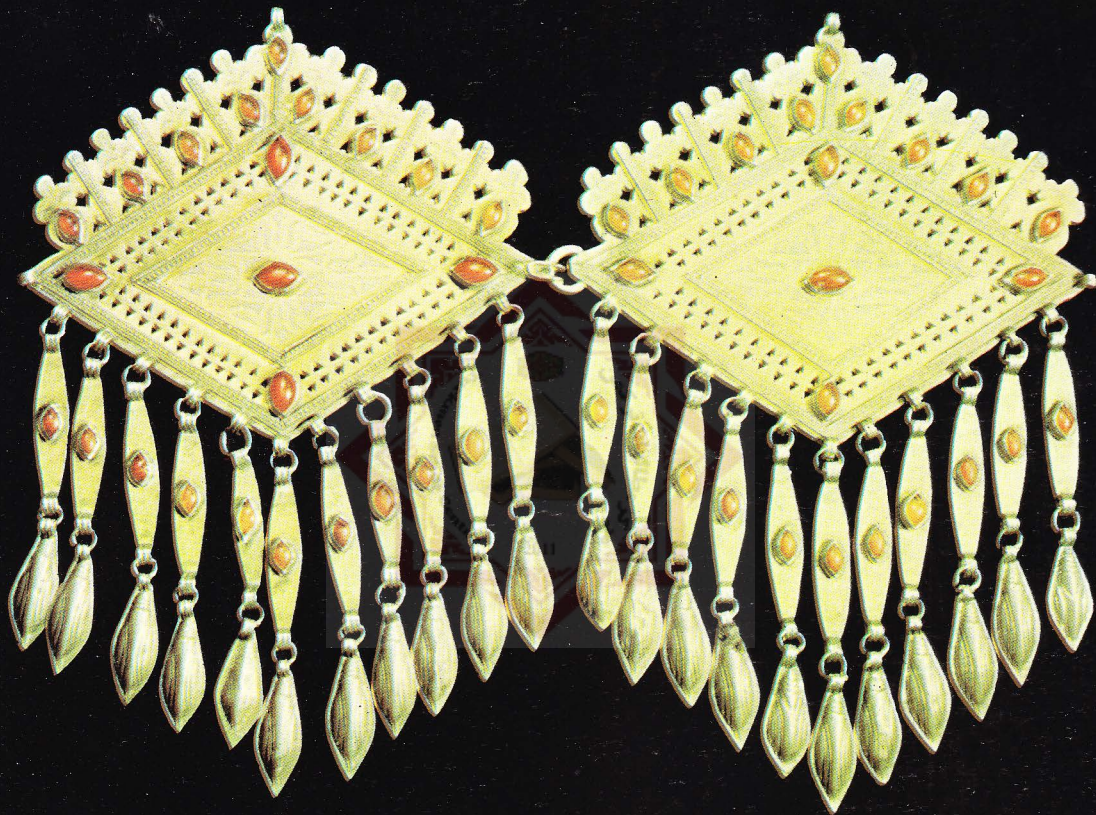


Plate 6: Plaque for a woman's coat (?), one of a pair,  
Tekke.

Plate 7: Clasp of a woman's coat, changah, Tekke.

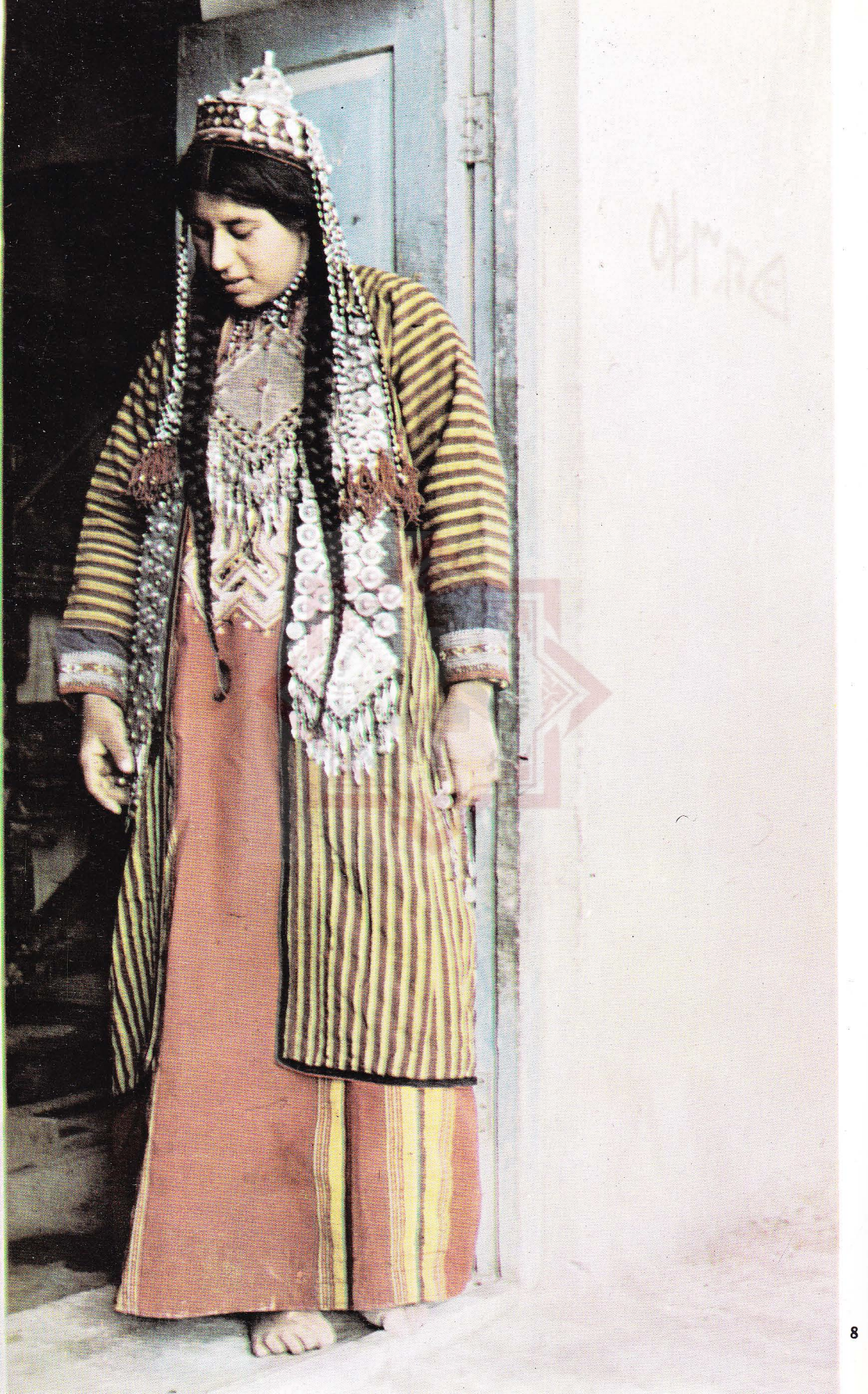




Plate 8: Costume, Tekke girl, Spring, 1975, Dashtak-e-Olyā. The plaque is worn here as a pectoral ornament, whereas elsewhere it has been described as a plaque for a woman's coat. Among the Turkoman, a young girl can be distinguished from a married woman in the following ways: she is never veiled until she is married; she only wears a qobbah sewn on an embroidered cap rather than the head-dress and head robe; she wears her two braids forward on her breast whereas a married woman places here braids on her back. It is interesting to note that since married women's hair ornaments are very elaborate and long, often false braids may be used in addition to her own hair.

Plate 9: Girl's headdress, qobbah, Yamud, mid 20th century, small embossed parcel gilt units soldered onto a silver base with a coloured stone ornamenting the finial of the cupola.



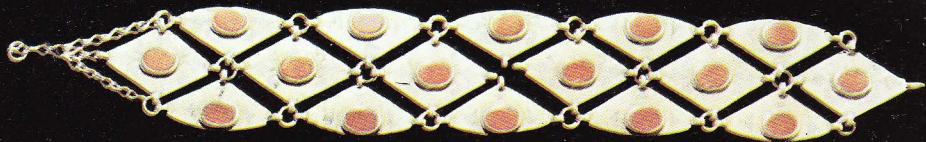
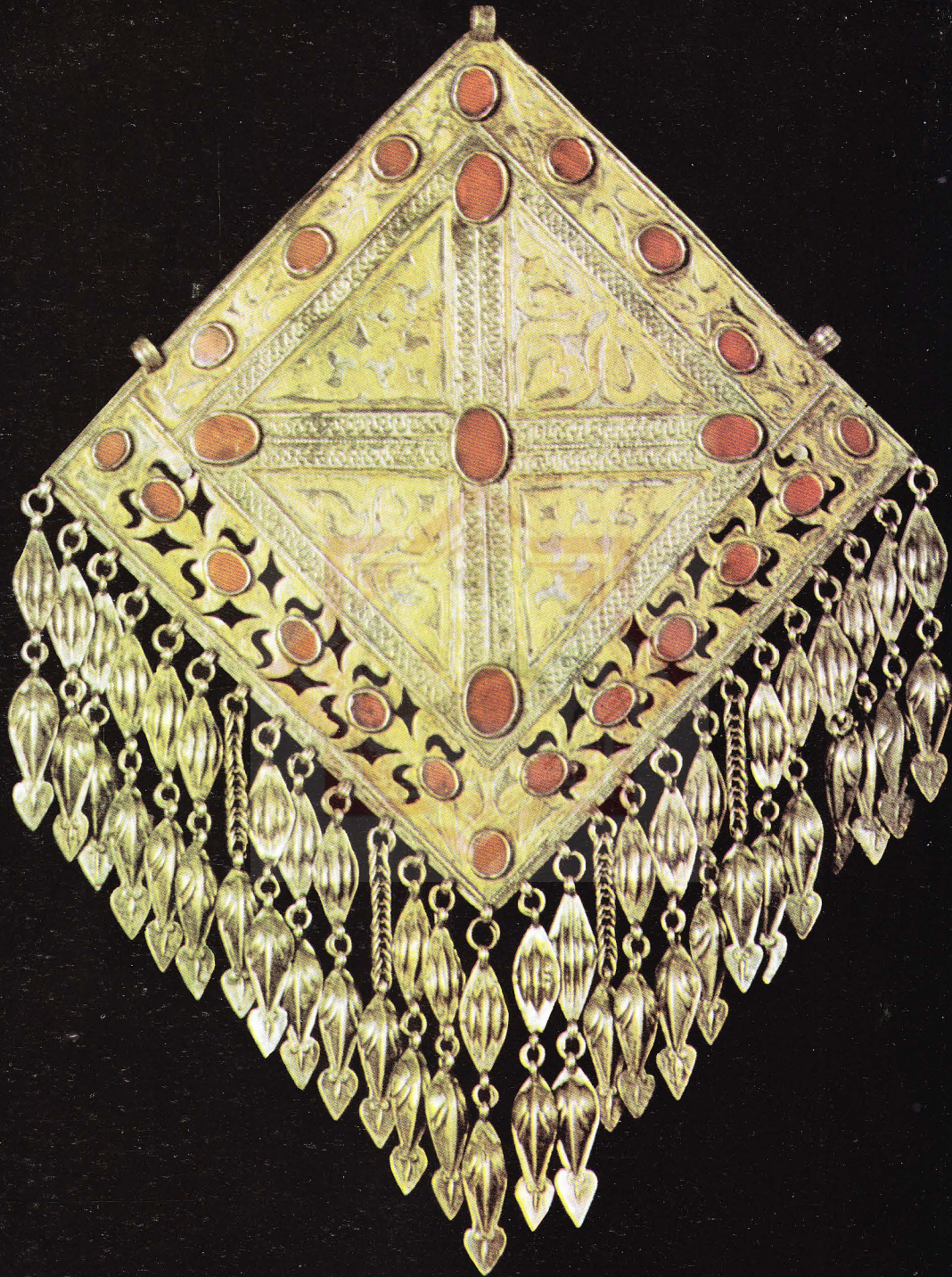


Plate 12: Coat plaque (?), Tekke.

Plate 13: Headdress ornaments, eurmeh, Tekke. These pieces have hooks at each end of the bands to attach to the headdress, böyrok.



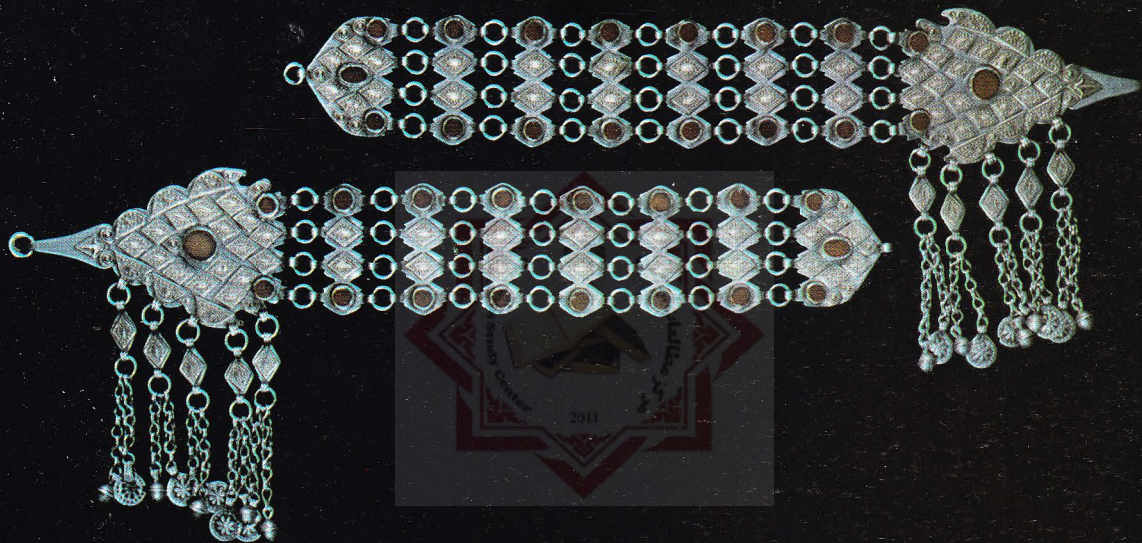


Plate 16: Coat plaque (?), one of a pair, Tekke.

Plate 17: Headdress ornament, ildirqich, Yamud mid 20th century also used by the Goklān.





Plate 19: Headdress tiara, egmeh, worn as the previous piece, Tekke, 19th century. Note the motif of stylized sheep horn.

Plate 20: Nokhorli woman and child, Baqlaq in the Jar-galān area, Spring 1975. The bodice of her shift is covered with silver elements which here are partially covered by her fringed scarf.

Plate 21: Headdress, Tekke woman, Spring, 1975, Gonbad Qābus.









Plate 22: Headaddress ornament, temple pendants, ādamlyk, attached to each side of the headdress, Yamud, mid 20th century. The top piece resembles the shape of a woman.

Plate 23: Pectoral ornament, gonjök, Tekke, 19th century see Fig. 6. Stylized sheep horns cover the top edge.





Plate 24: Headdress ornament, temple pendant tenechir (hook missing), Tekke.

Plate 25: Headdress ornament, ildirqich, Tekke. Each end has a hook as well as the top edge to attach to the headdress.

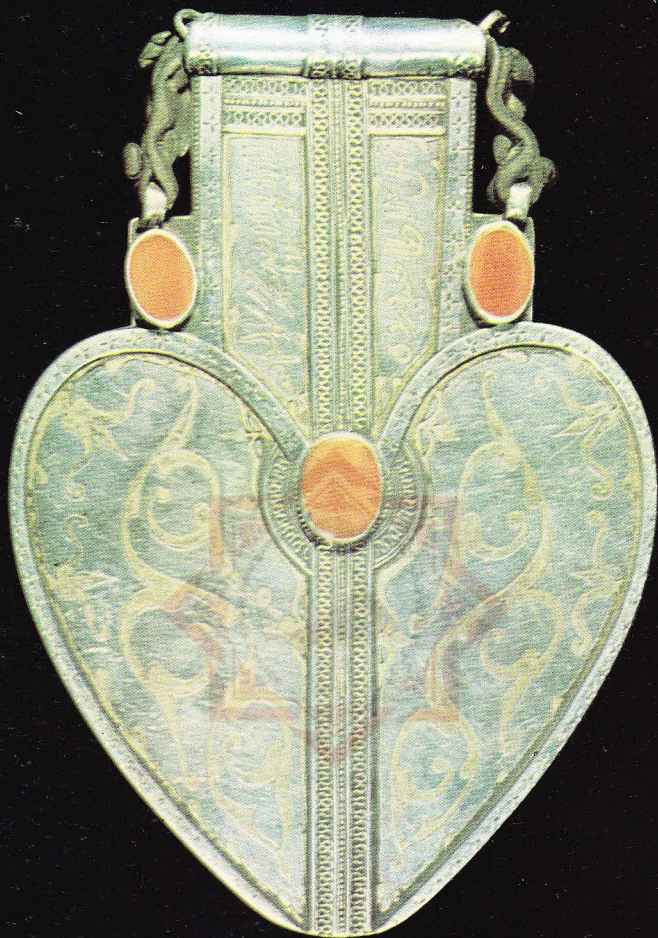


Plate 26: Woman's hair ornament, *ātheekh* (*āssekh*), Tekke the inscription on the left hand cartouche, written vertically reads: "There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Prophet of God." The inscription on the right hand reads: "Work of Mollah Tāghen Dordi, 1323" (1903). Parcel gilt punch-work in arabesque motifs on a silver background with leather straps which pass through the tubular section attached to carnelians.



Plate 27: Woman's hair ornament, ātheekh, Tekke, the top cartouches seem to have a mosque motif. The left hand cartouche has an inscription which reads "1327" (1907). The right hand inscription under the mosque motif reads, "Work of Farid Begli". This ornament also has the arabesque motif.





Plate 29: Woman's hair ornaments, ātheekh, Tekke.



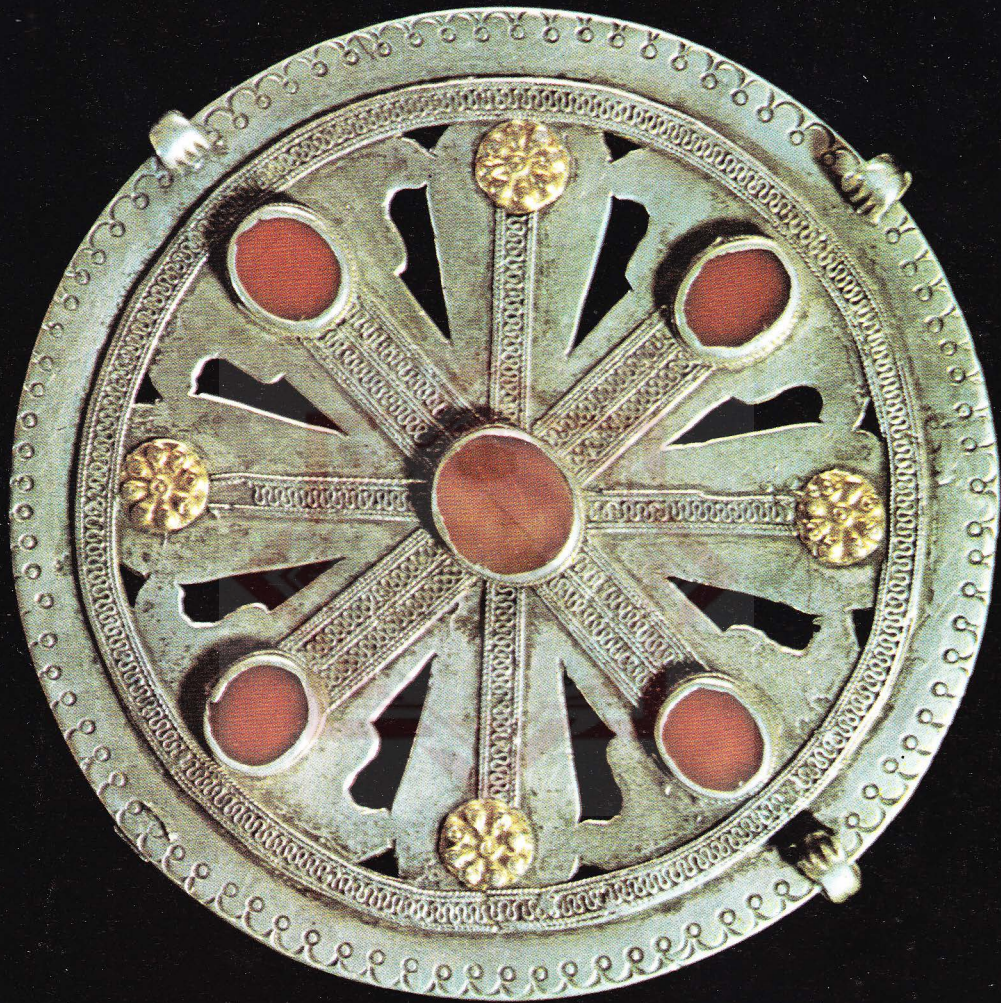


Plate 30: Woman's hair ornament, ātheh, Tekke.

Plate 31: Pectoral ornament, elmalqah, Goklān (?), traditionally worn at least since the 19th century as can be noted in Fig. 1.

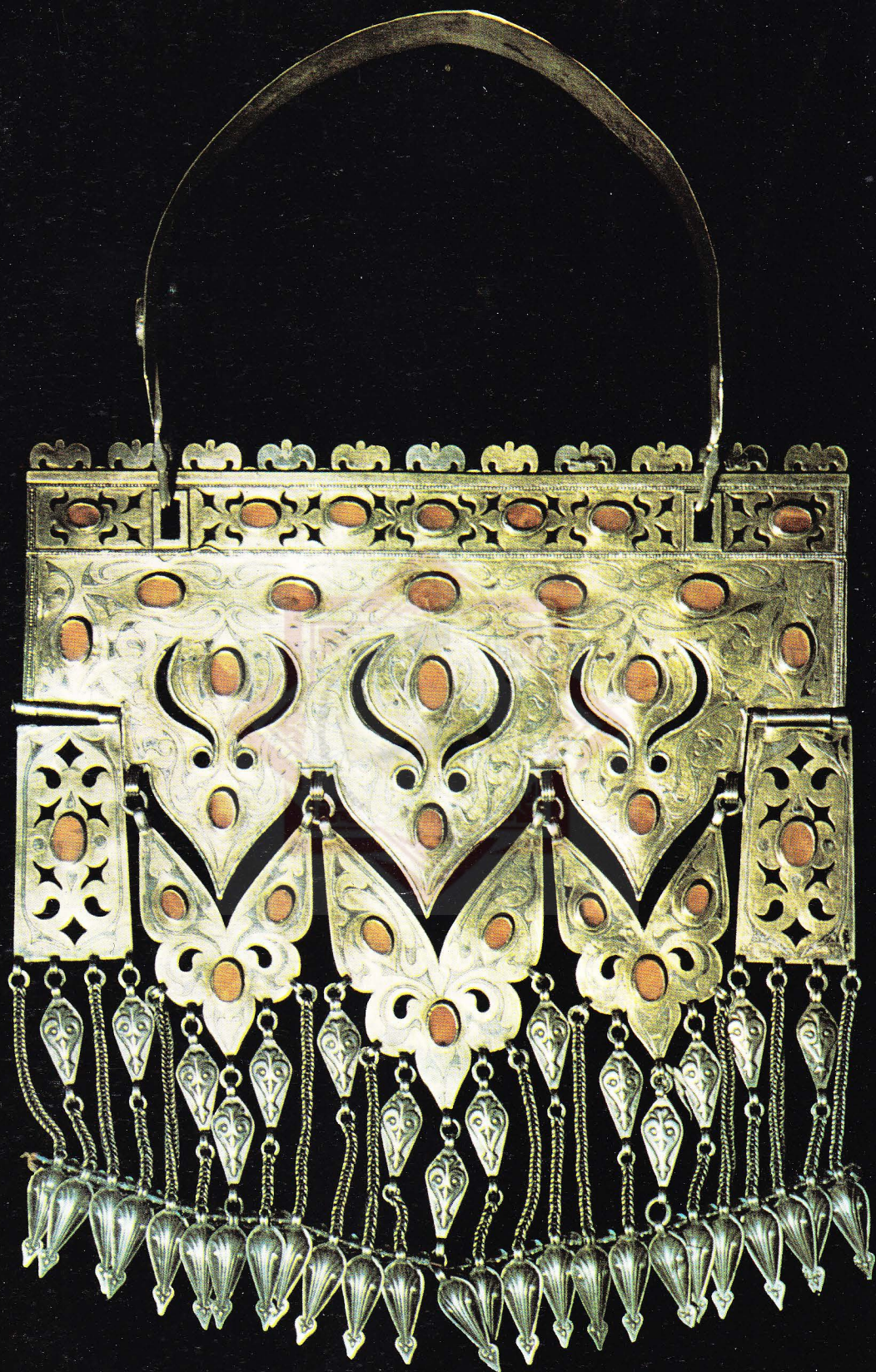




Plate 32: Pectoral ornament, boqow, Tekke, 19th century  
Note, in particular butterfly-like motifs. Compare  
this motif to Illus. 3.

Plate 33: Detail of plate 32.

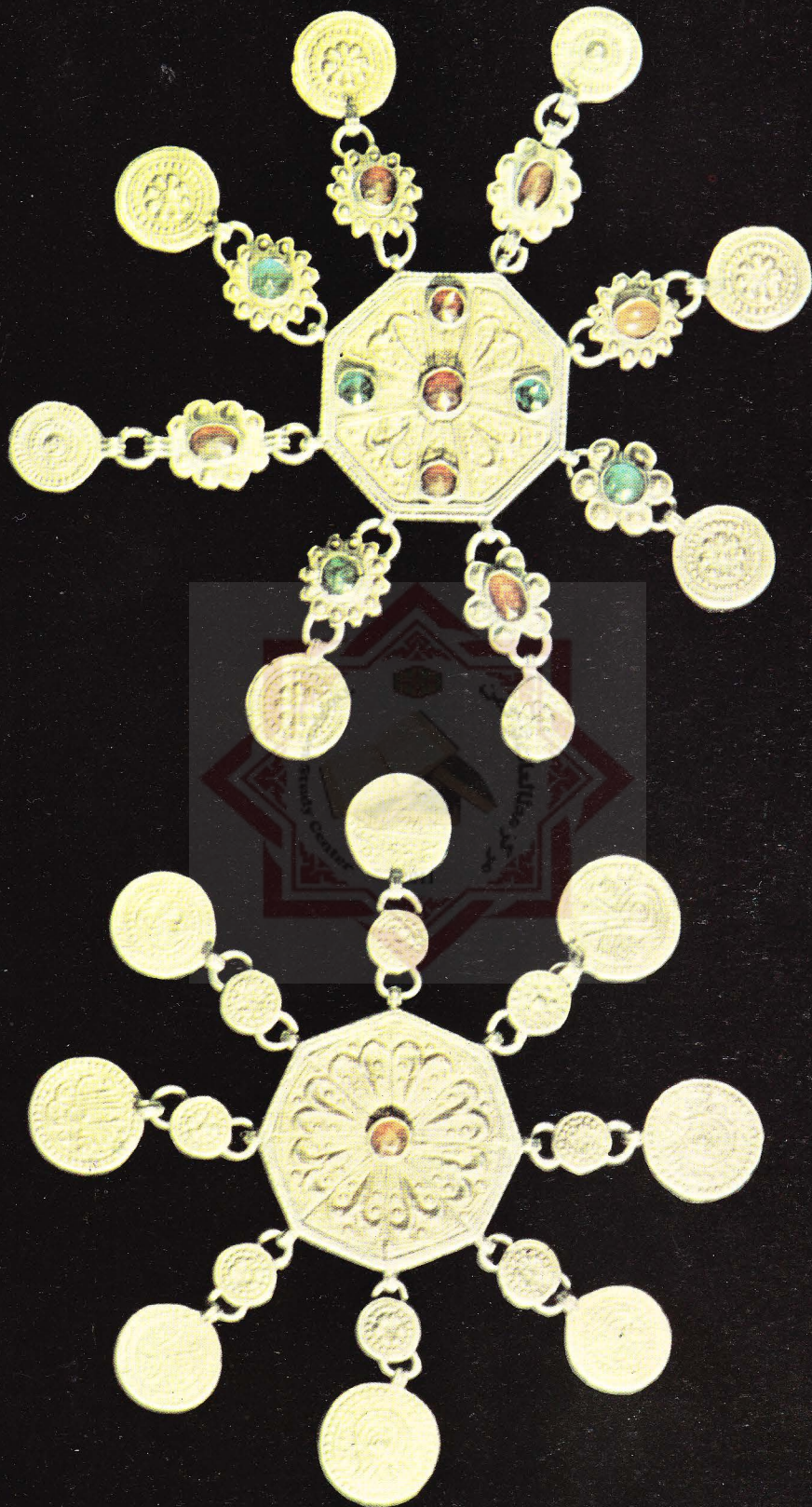


Plate 34: Children's object, boy's ornament, oq yai, worn on the back of his costume, Tekke, dated 1333 (1913). Note the two birds on either side of the top portion. The general shape is that of a bow and arrow.



Plate 35: Detail of plate 34.





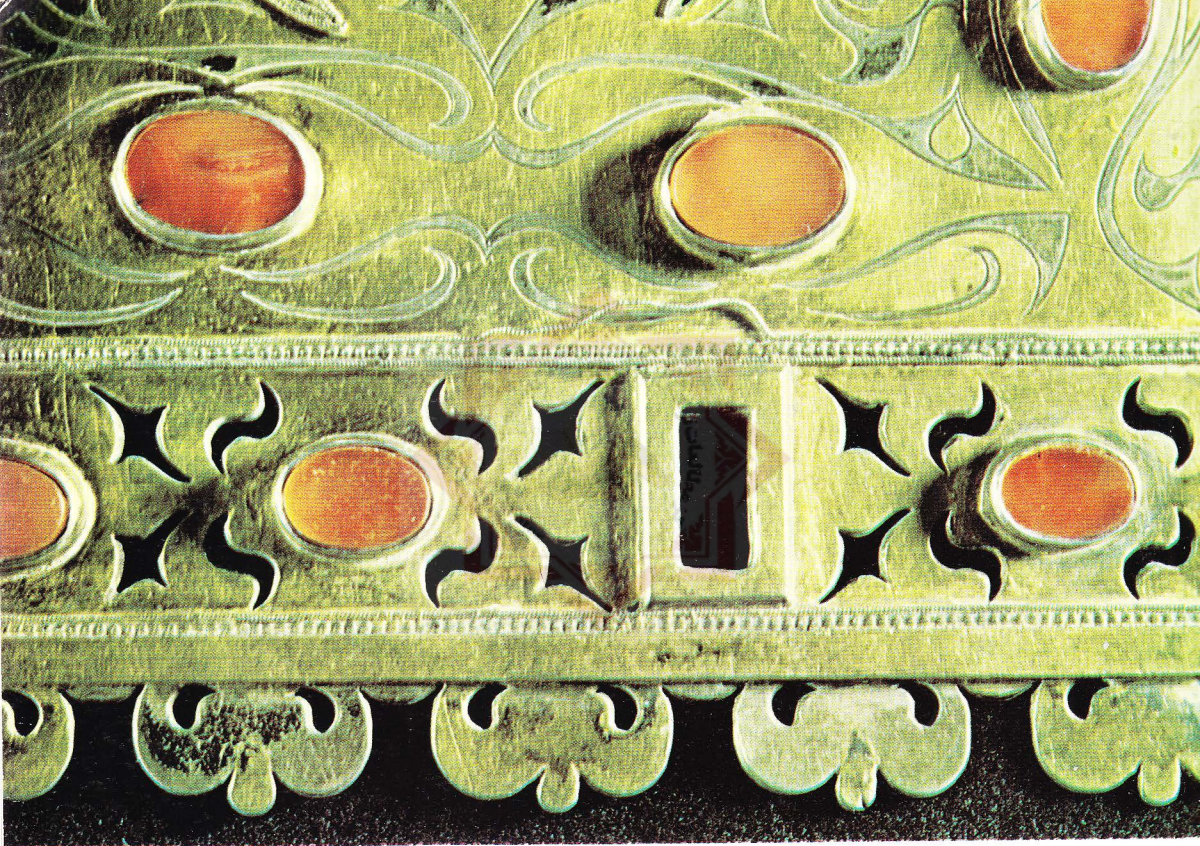




Plate 41: Part of a clasp of an earring, golāq halqeh, Yamud, mid 20th century. Detail of Fig. 47. Note the clasp with the motif of bird heads.





Plate 44: Bracelets, bezelik, (right to left) a five section Tekke bracelet, bash qoshmah, the pair weighing 982 gms., a three section Yamud bracelet, ooch qoshmah, and a Goklān (?) bracelet. Turkoman bracelets in this collection range from approximately  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 15 cm in length. They are always worn in pairs.



Plate 45: Daggers in their sheaths, jowhar pchaq (dagger), qeen (sheath), (from top to bottom) Tekke, with gilt parcel punchwork with rectilinear designs, Yamud with green plastic cardboard backing, Caucasian and plain silver, ranging from 35 to 42 cm long in this collection.



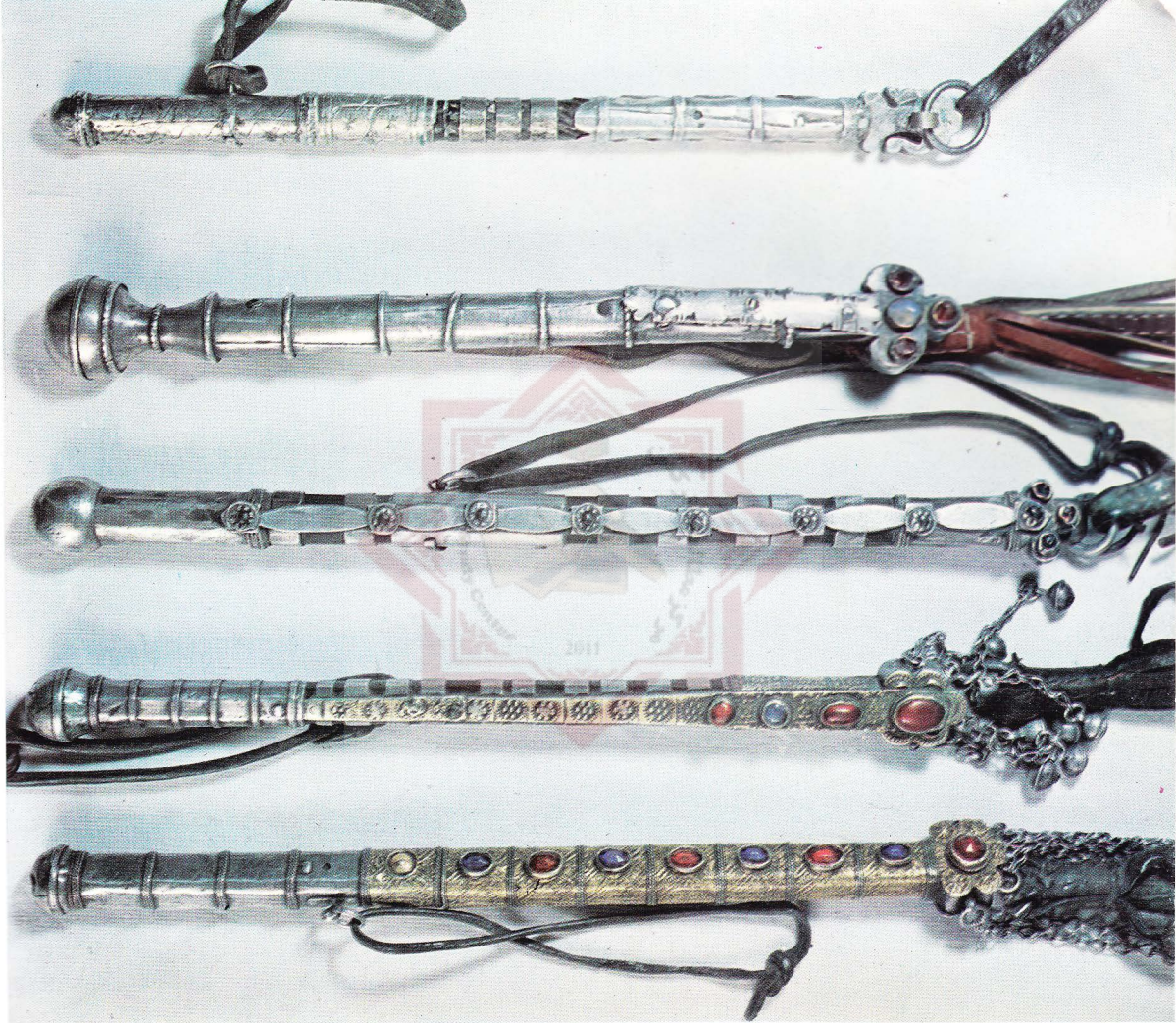


Plate 47: Horse whips, Yamud and Tekke, 20th century.

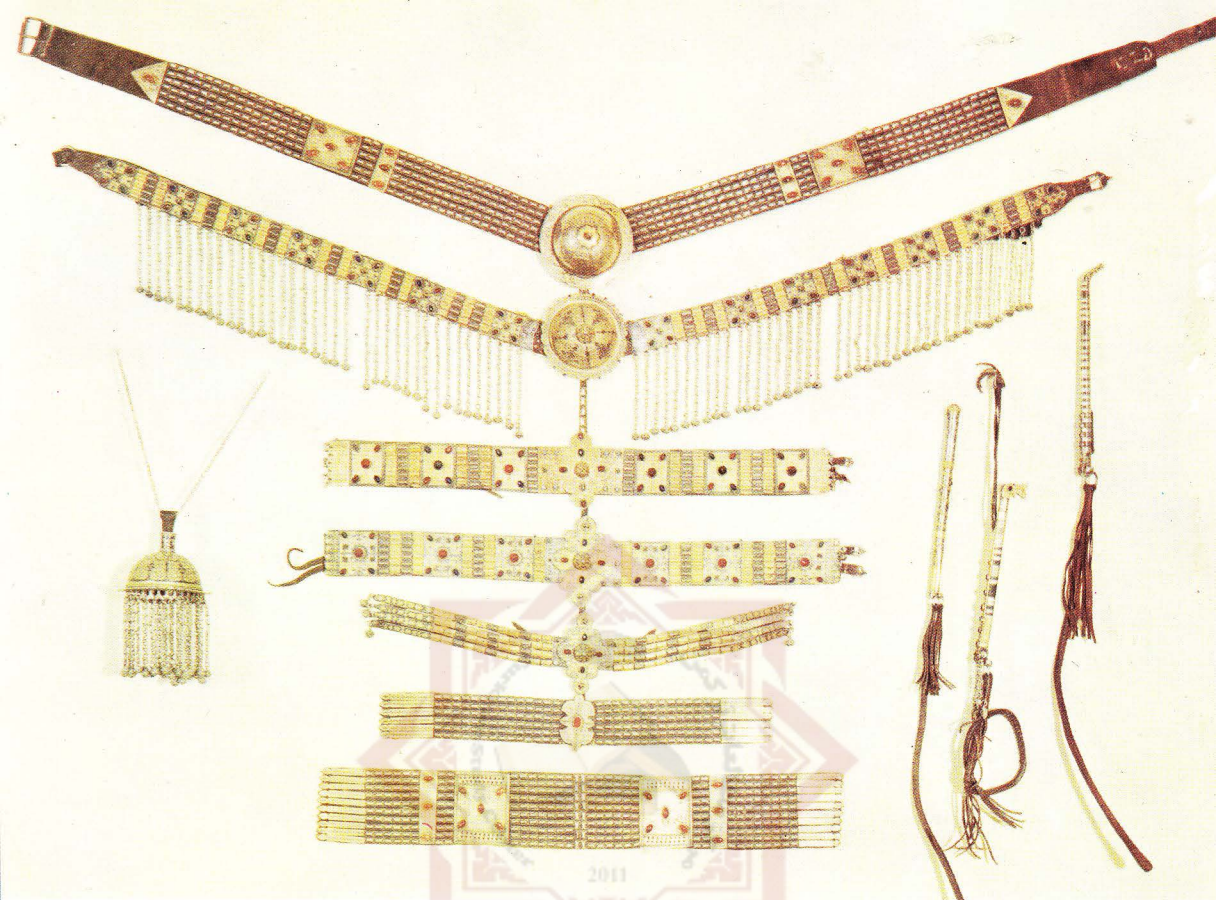


Plate 48: Horse trappings (from top to bottom) breast band, Tekke; breast band, Caucasian, niello and chased parcel gilt designs and coloured stones, pendants (not silver) added at a later date presumably by its Yamud owner, inscribed on the two sides of the central boss, "Owner Jāh (?) Hassan" and on the other side, "Work of Gholzar (?) Qelich, 1332"; neck collar of the Caucasian set, the plaques of which are repaired in the Yamud style; neck collar of the same Caucasian set, signed on the right hand edge, "Gholzar (?) Qelich"; crown piece of the Caucasian set; crown piece of the Tekke set; neck collar of the Tekke set. To the left, the bell-shaped cupola of the Caucasian set. The pendants are a later addition and are not of silver. This latter piece is not always traditionally used. It is to be noted that blue beads and/or prayers were often attached around the horse's neck to ward off the 'evil eye'. On the right, samples of two Turkoman horse whips and the third from the right, a Caucasian horse whip.



The silver ornaments of the Turkoman have heretofore been among the hidden treasures of Folk Art. Beautifully illustrated, here, for the first time, an Iranian unveils many of the mysteries of this very fine and splendid art.

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