

TÜRKMEN HALILARINDAN ÖĞRENDİKLERİMİZ

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ÖZET

Batı'da Türkmen halısına karşı gittikçe artan ilgiye rağmen bu halının ancak sanatsal ve teknik özellikleri araştırma konusu olmuştur. Bu makale Türkmen halısının bazı özelliklerini dilsel açıdan ele alıyor. Yazıda uzun zamandır tartışma konusu olan *halı* sözcüğünün nasıl türediği açıklanıyor. Halı terminolojisinde 'dokumaya başlamak' anlamındaki *yüğürt-* fiili incelenirken Türkmen ağızlarında Türkmen çadırının, toplandıktan sonra yerde bıraktığı daire biçimli izi için yaygın olarak kullanılan *yüğürt* > *yüwür* sözcüğünün yardımıyla *yurt* sözcüğünün nasıl türediği ortaya çıkarılıyor. Aynı şekilde Eski Türkçede 'kocanın kardeşi' anlamına gelen *yurç* sözcüğünün etimolojisi de açıklığa kavuşturuluyor. *Nikah kıymak* (Azerbaycan Türkçesinde *kesmek*) birleşik fiili konusunda kimse pek kafa yormamış ve bu söz olduğu gibi kabul edilmiştir. Arapça *nikah* sözcüğünün Eski Türkçedeki karşılığı 'düğüm' anlamındaki *tügün*'dir. Bu yazıda *nikah/ tügün kıymak* deyiminin halıyla ilgili olduğu açıklanıyor. İngilizcede evlenmek için *to tie the not/ düğüm atmak* deyimini kullanılırken bu deyim Türkçe karşılığı *tügünü kıymak/ düğümü kesmek*'tir. Bunun halı ile ilgili olduğunu bir Türkmen evlilik ritüelinden öğreniyoruz: imam nikah kıyarken Türkmen kadın da bir düğümü keser gibi elindeki makası sürekli açıp kapar. Öte yandan Türkmen halısının en önemli desenine *göl* denir; her Türkmen boyunun kendisine özgü *göl*'ü vardır. Bu desen Şamanizm'in *yir sub* kültürü ile ilgilidir. *Yir* kavramı da Şamanizm'de kutsal sayılan *dağ* ile ifade edilir. Dağda yaşayan hayvanlar, meselâ *dağ koçu konurbaş* da kutsaldır. Türkmen halk müziğinde *konurbaş mukamu* vardır. Türkmen halısında *dağ Kök* Türk runik alfabesinde kullanılan *᠘* harfiyle gösterilir. Kutsal olan evi temsil eden *᠘* harfi de Türkmen halısının desenleri arasında yer alır. İran'da, Türkmen Sahra'da Göçke Dağ eteğinde Halid Nebi mezarı civarında bulunan karpuz biçimli mezar taşlarının üzerinde görülen alfabe ve andran semboller bulunmaktadır. Bunlar Türkmen halısında görülen motiflere benzerler. Halının müzikle ilişkisi hakkında çok şeyler yazılmış, ancak şimdiye kadar somut bir sonuca varılamamıştır. Bu yazıda halının en eski adının Türklerin en eski müzik aleti olan *kopuzdan* türediği açıklanıyor. Zaten Türkmen halı tezgahında bir *eşek* vardır. Türkçede nedense buna *eşik* denir. Halbuki bu sözcük Farsçada da 'küçük eşek' anlamında *harek* şeklinde kullanılır. Tezgahta telli sazın burgusunun da karşılığı vardır. *Argaç* ise sazın tellerini andırır. Farsçada *argaca tar* denir. Bu isim *dutar*, *sitar* gibi müzik aletlerinde vardır. Tezgahın adı

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Türkmencede *gurama*'dır, çünkü bir müzik aleti gibi kuruluyor, akort ediliyor.

Anahtar kelimeler: Halı, göl, Şamanizm, motif, müzik.

WHAT WE LEARN FROM TURKMEN CARPETS

ABSTRACT

Despite an ever-increasing interest in Turkmen carpets in the West, little information was available about them until recently. Most studies are about the aesthetic and technical aspects of the carpets and rugs. This article looks at these carpets from a linguistic point of view. Initially, the article deals with the etymology of the word *halı* meaning 'carpet' which has been the subject of an ongoing dispute between Turkic and Iranian carpet experts who are not linguists. While studying the Turkmen verb *yügürt-* meaning 'to begin weaving' in carpet terminology, we found the root of the word *yurt* originally meaning 'abandoned tent site' in the word used as *yügürt* > *yüwürit* in Turkmen dialects. This term also helped us find the root of the archaic Türkic word *yurç* meaning 'the husband's brother'. For *getting married* or *tying the knot* in some Turkic languages the term *nikah kıymak* (*nikah kəsmək*) is used. *Nikah* is an Arabic word meaning 'marriage' and Turkic words *kıymak* and *kəsmək* mean 'to cut, to slice'. No one has ever paid attention to this anomaly about *nikah* being cut. The equivalent of *nikah* in Old Turkish is *tügün* which means 'knot'. Therefore, *to get married* in Old Turkish is *to cut the knot*. The fact that the act of cutting the knot is related to carpet weaving, could be observed in Turkmen marriage rituals; when a mullah is conducting the marriage ceremony, a woman constantly opens and closes a pair of scissors as if cutting a knot. The most important pattern of the Turkmen rugs and carpets is called *göl* meaning 'lake'. Every Turkmen tribe has its own *göl*. This pattern is related to the *yir sub* 'earth and water' cult of Shamanism. The concept of earth in Shamanism is expressed by the mountain that is regarded as a sacred place. Animals that live in the mountains are thought to be *awliyas* or *saints*. For example, the mountain ram called *Konurbaş* is an *awliya* and it bears the name of a mode in Turkmen folk music called *konurbaş mukamu*. In Turkmen carpets mountain is used as a pattern in the form of an Old Turkish runic letter *᠘*. For the pattern of *home* which is also a sacred place, the letter *ᠰ* is used. In the Turkmen Sahara region of northern Iran, at the foot of the mountain called *Gökçe Dağ*, near the historic graveyard of Halid Nabi, there were watermelon-shaped tombstones with symbols on them. These symbols are similar to some of the patterns seen on the Turkmen carpets. Many carpet experts have written about the relationship between carpet and music, but no one has reached a concrete conclusion. This article proves that the name of the carpet in the oldest Turkic texts had derived from the word *kopuz*, the oldest musical instrument of the Turkic peoples. The Turkmen carpet loom,

like a stringed musical instrument has a bridge and a stick functions as a peg by keeping the weft tight. The weft resembles strings of a musical instrument and in Persian it is called *tār*, a word that is noticed in the names of musical instruments like *duār*, a two-stringed musical instrument and *sitār* a three-stringed instrument. The name of a carpet loom in Turkmen is *gurama/ kurama* which denotes setting up and tuning.

Key words: Carpet, göl, Shamanism, pattern, music.

INTRODUCTION

The name Turkmen is always associated with rugs and carpets and horses. Carpets woven by nomadic and semi-nomadic Turkmen tribes have been the most admired, studied and collected of all Oriental carpets over the centuries. Despite the interest in Turkmen carpets, little information about them was available until recently in the West because of language barriers. Most studies are about the artistic and technical aspects of carpets and rugs. This paper looks at these carpets from a linguistic point of view.

The art of carpet weaving developed thousands of years ago. Buddhist and Shamanistic elements that have for centuries been widely incorporated in Turkmen carpets have attracted the attention of researchers. The Turkmens have for centuries reflected their feelings, philosophy of life and environment in the beauty of their carpets, and they have created innumerable designs and motifs in their own characteristic style and with their own technique. The symbolism of these designs reveals a typically Turkmen search for beauty and an aesthetic ideal. For example, from the composition of Turkmen carpets, which is based on a strict but complex set of rules, one can deduce the Turkmens' poetic perspective on their environment. The colour red has become well established in the artistic consciousness of the Turkmens. It is the dominant colour in Turkmen art today. The dominant colour of Turkmen carpets is also red. The colour of the oldest Turkmen carpets is closer to orange. This is said to be related to the cult of the sun in Zoroastrianism. Today, carpets that are woven to meet particular needs, or are prepared in various shapes and sizes for ceremonial purposes, display through their patterns a number of typically Turkmen hallmarks.

In the steppes of Central Asia, felt, kilim and rugs and carpets are important in the construction and decoration of tents. On the first page of a Persian manuscript called *Divan-i Sultan Jalayir* written in 1400, there is an ink drawing of a nomadic camp scene where there are decorated Turkmen tents (Mackie, L. W. and Thompson J.: 1980,

14). A miniature painting from the book called *Khamseh* by Nizami written in 1445 in Herat, which shows the presentation of a manuscript to the Samarkand ruler Mirza Barlas, also features a decorated Turkmen tent (ibid, p. 17). In the XIII century, Ibn-i Sa'îd, an Arab geographer, in his book entitled *el-Busuṭu't-Turkmâniyye* ((البسط التركمانية) "Turkmen Carpets," writes that the Turkmen rugs and carpets woven in Anatolia were exported all over the world (ibid, p. 19). Some of the patterns of carpets woven by the thousands of Turkmens who settled in Anatolia were used in carpets produced later in this region. We see an example of these carpets in a XV century Anatolian Turkish rug at the Textile Museum in Washington D. C. (ibid, p. 19). At that time, in paintings in Italy and other European countries, Turkmen carpets were widely represented. These carpets were very valuable assets in the XVI and XVII centuries in Europe – they were recognised works of art. For example, they were well-liked at the palace of Henry VIII and attracted the attention of the rich and the nobility. The picture (below left) shows the 3rd Earl of Dorset, Richard Sackville, posing on a Turkmen carpet brought from Anatolia. The artist has skilfully drawn all the details of the carpet. These carpets, products of the Turkmen "Tent Industry", were exported to Europe. This picture was painted by William Larkin in 1613 (Thompson, J.,1993, London: 32). The second painting (below right), attributed to Juan Pantoja de la Cruz and painted in 1604, is now kept in the National Portrait Gallery in London. It shows the value attached to a Turkmen carpet – it was preferred as a table cover rather than being put on the floor (Bennet, 1985: 6). In the XIX century painting by Kate Hyllar called *Sunflowers and Hollyhocks* we see a Turkmen Ersary carpet on the floor (Thompson, London, 1993: 36).



Today Turkmen carpets are woven in the areas where the Turkmens live in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Iran and Afghanistan. The carpet known as the Turkmen carpet around the world, in Afghanistan is called the *Afghan carpet*. Machine-made Turkmen carpets produced in Pakistan are called *Pakistani Carpets*. Turkmen carpets years ago used to be called *Bukhara carpets* in Europe, because in olden times they were sold in Bukhara. The most popular Turkmen carpets are Teke, Yomut, Ersary, Chowdur, Saryk and Salyr. These carpets are named after the tribes that weave them. They are differentiated from each other by the shape of their main motif called *göl*. Every Turkmen tribe has a *göl* of its own.

About the Word “Halı” (Carpet) Used As “kâli” قالی in Persian and “kâlin/koîin” قالین in Tajik and Dari

There are different views about the etymology of the word “halı.” It is significant that some Turkish dictionaries say that this word is Persian and some Persian dictionaries call *kâli* a Turkish word. For example, a Turkish-Arabic dictionary from the XIV century, explaining an old Turkish word *köwür* meaning ‘carpet’, says: قالی و هو بالترکمانی مأخوذ من الفارسی (It means *kâli* [carpet] which is a Turkmen word taken from Persian) (Houtsma, M. T., 1884: 16). A Persian dictionary called *Farhang-e Amid* (Amid, 1343, H. Sh.: Vol. II, 784) and *Haim Persian-English Dictionary* (Haim, S. 1354, H. Sh.: 620) say that the word *kâli* قالی is Turkish. *Farhang-e Farsi* repeats the etymology given by a XII-XIII century Arab geographer, saying that “*qa:li: = qa:li:n = ha:li: = ga:li:n* is taken from *Kaligula*, the name of a town in Armenia (Moin, M., 1381, H. Sh.: Vol. II, 2624). This sounds like folk etymology.

In an article entitled “Signs of Iranian Carpet Weaving before the Bronze Age”, Ali Hasuri, an Iranian carpet expert who claims that he has studied the etymology of *halı/kâli*, writes:

The Persian word for carpet, i. e., *qali/qalin* was pronounced *kalin* in middle Persian being cognate with the word *karaydi* in the Avestan, and it (is) obvious that the root is *kar* (to plant) which relates to the age when carpet weaving was comparable to planting rather than weaving, i. e., the Paleolithic age. A verb for ‘weaving’ exists in the Avestan (*wap*), but it is not used for forming *karayaon*. (Hasuri A., 2001:92).

Ali Hasuri presented his paper on this subject to the conference held on Oriental carpets in Milan in 1999. He mentioned that wooden carpet-weaving instruments were in use in the Stone Age, adding that these instruments were still used in Iran. To prove this he showed a photograph of a Turkmen woman using a wooden mallet to drive a stake of the carpet loom into the ground.

The word *wap* which Hasuri quoted from the Avesta, is used in Middle Persian meaning ‘to weave’ (Mackenzie, 2009: 151). This word exists in Modern Persian as *ba:ftan* بافتن also meaning ‘to weave’. The root of this infinitive is *baf* باف. The English words *weave*, *weft* and *web* seem to be related to *wap*.

The word for *to knit* and *to weave* in Persian today is *tani:dan* / *teni:den* تنیدن (its root is *tan-* تن) and *ta:r* means ‘weft’ or ‘string’. *Ta:r-ten*, a compound structure made by these two words literally

means ‘knitter’, but it is used to designate ‘spider’. Its diminutive form *ta:r-tenek* تارتنک also meaning ‘spider’ is forgotten in Persian, but it is used in Turkmen in the Garrygala region of Turkmenistan. The Persian words *ka:r-ten*, *ka:r-tene* and *ka:r-tenek*, also meaning ‘knitter and spider’, are not used in Persian any more. *Kar*, the first part of these compound words, today means ‘work’. It seems to have derived from the infinitive *ka:šten* ‘to plant’. This is the word Ali Hasuri wanted to relate to ‘carpet’ in his explanation above. In Turkmen and some other Turkic languages this concept is explained by *etmek* ‘to do’, *yapmak* ‘to do, to build’ and *örmek* ‘to knit, to build’. These concepts will be explained below.

The word for carpet in Persian is *tenbese* تنبسه which seems to have been derived from *teni:den* ‘to knit’. *Tenbese* in Arabic has become *tanfese* تنفسه (Amid, 1343 H. Sh.: Vol. I, 320). There is no word resembling *halı* or *ka:li:* in Middle Persian. In this language the word used for ‘beautiful carpet’ is *bo:b* (Mackenzie, 2009: 281).

The word for the concept of carpet was written in a XIII century Turkic manuscript of an interpretation of the Koran as *kalıñ* and it meant ‘(thick) mattress’ (Clauson, 1972: 622). This word has become *kōli:n* in Tajik, *ka:li:n* in Dari قالین and *ka:li:*, pronounced *ga:li:* قالی in Persian. In these languages diminutive forms of these words are used: *kōli:nçe*, *ka:li:nçe* قالینچه and *ga:li:çe* قالیچه respectively, and they mean ‘rug’. The sound of /ñ/ at the end of *kalıñ* in Old Turkish has changed to /n/ in Tajik and Dari and the word *kalıñ* has become *kōli:n* and *ka:li:n* respectively. The word *kalıñ* also means ‘thick’ in Turkic languages. One may think that the knots of thin threads or weft settling on the warp creates a thickness that in Turkish is called *kalıñ* meaning ‘thick’. In other words carpets are created after knots are settled on warps.

The word *ip* ‘thread’ used in Turkish today, is used as *yıp* or *yip* in old Turkish (Clauson, 1972: 870). This word today in Turkmen has become *yüp*. In VIII century Turfan Uyğur texts the word *yipke* is used to mean ‘thread’ (ibid: 875). This last word, *yipke*, reminds us of the relationship between *ip/yıp/yip/yüp* meaning ‘thread’ and Turkic *yupka/yuvka* meaning ‘thin’. And in a way this makes us think that thin threads pile up to bring about *kalıñ* ‘thick’ (carpet). A thinner and more loosely woven version of the Turkic *kilim* is called *ja:ji:m* جاجیم in Persian. In Turkmen and Turkish it is called *jijim/cicim*. This word comes from *çeçim* derived from *çeçmek* in Old Turkish meaning ‘to undo (a knot),’ hence ‘being loose’. There is no letter for the /ç/ sound in the Arabic alphabet. Therefore, in old Turkic texts, perhaps before the XV or XVI centuries, *çeçim* in Arabic script was written as ججم

which could have been pronounced in Persian as *ja:ji:m* with an open /e/. In Persian there is a tendency to use the letter *alif* for the open /e/ sound in foreign words, i.e. Turkic and Mongolian words. That is why Turkic words like *Türkmen*, *külek*, *çelik* and the Mongolian word *kekül* have respectively become *Türkma:n* ترکمان, *ku:la:k* کولاک, *ça:li:k* چالیک and *ka:kul* کاکل in Persian. And in accordance with this property of the Persian language *çeçim* ججیم has become *ja:ji:m/ca:ci:m* جاجیم. In Ottoman Turkish and Turkmen the word *çeçim* has become *cicim/jijim*. The Arabic letter used for the sound of /ç/ or /tʃ/ was improvised possibly after the XV or XVI century as چ with three dots. It is used in Persian and Ottoman Turkish. In his book *Türk Dilinin Etimolojik Sözlüğü* Hasan Eren writes that Turkish *cicim* is taken from Persian *ca:ci:m* (Eren, 1999: 71). The word *sicim* used in Turkish and Mongolian meaning ‘thread’ must be related to *cicim*. If we take into account the thinness of the thread and the fact that *cicim/jijim* is a thinly woven material, and if we accept that the word *halı* has come about after a phonetic procedure as follows: *ka:lıñ* > *ka:lın* > *ka:lı* > *halı*, it becomes clear that the concept of carpet denotes an idea that is the opposite of thinness.

The word *ka:lıñ* used in Old Turkish meaning ‘bride price’ must also be related to the carpet. In *Dede Korkut*, a Turkish epic story from the XIV century, there is a sentence which says: *kızñ uç cânver ka:lıñlıđı ... vardı* meaning ‘the bride price of the girl amounted to three animals...’ (Tezcan, 2001: 242). Here the word *ka:lıñlık* means ‘the equivalent of *ka:lıñ* (carpet)’ which is worth three animals. According to a tradition of the Turkmens, which seems to have been continued since the Oguz period (before X century), the bride initially stays in the groom’s house for the time allowed for the wedding ceremony one day, three days, a week or forty days whichever is affordable to the groom. After that the bride goes home and together with other female members of her family or relatives weaves a carpet (*ka:lıñ*) and prepares other decorative items for her house, as an exchange for the bride price. This tradition still continues among the Turkmens in rural areas. The word for ‘bride price’ exists in Turkic languages as words like *ka:lıñ*, *ka:lın*, *ka:lym* and *ka:lim*. The word *ka:lym* meaning ‘bride price’ in Tatar is used in Russian (Şipova, 1976:155-156). There is a sentence in *Divanu Lagat-it-Türk* which says: *ka:lıñ birse kız alır – Kerek bolsa kız alır* (If he pays the bride price he will have the girl – If need be he can pay dearly) (Atalay, 1999: Vol. III, 371).

In his book *Türkische und Mongolische Elemente im Neupersischen* Doerfer studies the word *ka:lın* and comes to the

conclusion that it is a borrowed word in Persian but does not say where the word comes from (TMEN, 1963: 399).

The word *ka:li*: (pronounced *ga:li*: in Persian) cannot be a Persian word, because there is no /k/ sound written with the Arabic letter *qaf* ق in Persian. Here, we must mention a phonetic property of the Turkic languages of the Oguz group like Turkmen, Azerbaijani and Turkish. In these languages the change of the /k/ sound to /h/ takes place only in Turkic words: *kanı* > *hanı/hanı* (in Turkish) ‘where’, *qanda ise* > *handiyse* ‘nearly’, *qatar* ‘a row of... , a train of...’ > *hatar* (in Turkmen) ... The word *qalıñ* meaning ‘bride price’ has become *halım* or *halıñ* in Hakas, *halım* in Yakut and in Chuvash *hulam* and *hulan*. All these examples show that the /k/ sound can easily change to /h/. This rule does not apply to Arabic words. For example words like *qabi:le* قبیله ‘tribe’ and *qalem* قلم ‘pen’ cannot become *habi:le* and *halem* especially in the the Oguz group of the Turkic languages.

On the basis of this information, we may say that *qalıñ* > *qalın* > *qalı* has become *halı* in accordance with the above-mentioned rule. In other words, the fact that /k/ has changed to /h/ shows that *halı* is a Turkish word.

Hasan Eren believes that *kilim* is a Persian word (Eren, 1999: 243). However, in Middle Persian there is no word resembling *kilim*. Furthermore, Turkic words like *kalm* and *halım* remind us of *kilim*. This should be investigated separately.

The Word “Yurt” Is Related to A Carpet-Weaving Term

The verb *yügürtmek* > *yüwürtmek* in Turkmen means ‘to start weaving a carpet’; it can also mean ‘to kick off or start an action’. This verb and its derivatives play an important role in defining significant aspects of Turkic and Turkmen culture, especially those related to Turkmen cultural life. This verb comes from the Old Turkish verb *yügür-* which itself comes from *yüg* meaning ‘feather’ or ‘wing’. *Yügür-* also means ‘to move fast, as if flying’. This verb is made from the noun *yüg* by the suffix {+ür-}. Normally, such a suffix does not make a verb from a noun. It is the auxiliary verb *ur-* ‘to hit, to strike’ that has turned into a suffix, hence *yüg ur-* ‘to move the feather’ > *yügür-*. Turkic *kep/gep* meaning ‘a word, or something which is said’, when used with the auxiliary verb *ur-* becomes *gap/gep ur-* > *gapir-/gepir-* in Uzbek meaning ‘to talk, to have a chat’. This usage has passed into the Persian language with the same meaning as *gap zadan/ gep zeden* گپ زدن. The equivalent of the Old Turkish

auxiliary verb *ur-* in Persian is *zadan/zeden* زدن. The Turkish compound verb *yüg ur-* (yüg urmak) > *yügür-* (yügürmek) means, as mentioned above, 'to move fast, as if flying' and its Persian equivalent is *par zadan/per zeden* پرزدن or *ba:l zadan/ ba:l zeden* بال زدن, meaning respectively 'moving the feather' and 'moving the wing', denoting the action of flying. The concept of "feather" is used to show the speed of the movement. In Arabic *ijtanahati'n-na:katu* اجتاحت لئاقه means 'The camel (as if it had wings) went really fast'. In this sentence the verb is related to *jana:h* جناح which means 'wing'.

The above-mentioned Persian compound verbs are not very old while their Turkish equivalents have a long history. The auxiliary verb *ur-* has changed to become a suffix. Today we see this suffix in verbs like *çağır-* 'to call', *çığır-* 'to scream', *hapşır-* 'to sneeze' and others. They have all come about from onomatopoeic words like *ça:k*, *çı:k* and *hapş* followed by auxiliary verb *ur-*: *ça:k ur-* > *ça:kur-* > *ça:kır* > *ça:ğır-* > *çağır-*; *çı:k ur-* > *çı:kır-* > *çı:kur-* > *çı:ğır-* > *çığır-*; *hapş ur-* > *hapşur-* > *hapşır-* (for detailed information see: Youssef Azemoun, "A Study of A Suffix Used after Turkmen Onomatopoeic Words Ending in /k/ or /ñk/," Belleten, 2013/ Winter: 167-181), also see Ýusup Azmun, *Söz Kökümüz, Öz Kökümüz*, 2016: 48-54).

The suffix *-(U)t* which makes a noun from the stem of a verb, sometimes makes nouns which define a location: the verb *geç-* means 'to pass' and *geç-(i)t* means 'passage'; the Turkmen word *uç-(u)t* 'cliff, abyss, precipice' which literally means 'the place one flies' is made from *uç-* 'to fly' and from the verb *kavuş-* > Tkm. *gowuş-* 'to meet, to come together' the noun *gowş(u)t* > *gowşut* is made which means 'the place where two things come together'. From the verb *yügür-* 'to take off, to start moving' *yügürüt* > *yüg-ür-(ü)t* > *yügürt* has derived 'the place left behind after residents of a yurt dismantle the yurt and take off.' This word in the Yomut dialect of the Turkmen language becomes *yüwürt* after the sound /g/ changes to /w/ between two vowels. This word (*yüwürt*) is used for a circle-shaped space on the ground after a tent is dismantled, in other words, a place where a caravan takes off after the tent and belongings are placed on camels. This word today in Turkmen literary language is used as *yur:rt*, in Turkish and Azerbaijani it is used as *yurt/yurd* meaning 'country and homeland'. The word *yurt* in Old Turkish meant 'abandoned camping site, ruins,' but in the medieval period it came to mean 'dwelling place, abode'. In *Divanü Lügat-it-Türk*, an XI century Turkish-Arabic dictionary, the meaning of the word *yurt* is given as 'ruins of a camp, a dwelling, traces of old buildings'. (Atalay,1999, Vol. III:7) This

meaning is similar to the meaning used in Turkmen dialects explained above.

The word *yu:rt* is defined in *Turkmen Diliniň Sözlügi* as follows: 1. *The place where villagers get settled and move away (seasonally)*; 2. *A state, a country*. It is significant that the first meaning of the word *yurt* has more to do with people living in tents. Here we define only two idioms related to *yu:rt/yüwürt*: *yurdunda yeller öwürmek* literally means 'the wind is blowing in the place where he lived' and figuratively it means 'he is left with no belongings or relatives'; *yu:rtta ga:lan* is a curse literally meaning *may you be left in the yu:rt*, and figuratively it means *may you be an orphan*; because, a child who was somewhere else when her/his family dismantled the tent and took off to go to another location, would feel like an orphan when he returned and saw the *yu:rt*, the abandoned camping site.

Today the word *yurt* in Anatolia means 'the place where Yörüks are settled in the winter or summer;' it also means 'a place to live' (*Derleme Sözlüğü*, 1993: Vol. XI, 4321). Furthermore, the compound verb *yurt olmak* literally meaning 'turning into a yurt' is used to mean 'to turn into a ruin, to be destroyed;' *evi yurt oldu* means 'his house is destroyed'. From these examples we understand that *yurt* is an abandoned place. It is a place where residents of a tent take off to get settled in another location.

The word *yügürt* > *yüwürt* as explained above means a place where the action of *yügür-* taking off or flying away takes place. The word *köç* meaning 'moving from one place to another' denotes being lifted. Often *köçmek* meaning 'to move to somewhere else' is completed with the verb *konmak* which denotes *perching* (like a bird). In other words, when the caravan takes off it eventually lands somewhere.

The verb *yügürt-* in Turkmen means 'beginning to weave (a rug or carpet)'. In *Divanı Lugat-it-Türk* the sentence *ol böz yügürdi* has been translated by Besim Ataly as: 'He prepared the weft (for the carpet)' (Atalay, DLT, 1999: Vol. III, 68), but Clauson translates it as: *He wove the woof of the cotton cloth* (Clauson, 1972: 914). These examples show that the verb *yügür-* can mean 'to take off, to begin an action,' and *yügürüt* > *yügürt* means 'the location where the action of moving takes place.'

The word *yügürt* has been preserved in dialects of the Turkmen language as *yüwürt*. As a result of a phonetic contraction /w/

is dropped and the remaining two vowels have turned into a long /u/ sound and the word *yügürt* > *yüwürt* has become *yu:rt*. Because of the long vowel, the final unvoiced /t/ sound always changes to voiced /d/ when followed by a vowel. The word *yurt*, a contracted form of *yügürt*, is used in the VIII century Kök Türk runic scripts, the writing system used by Kök Türks from 6th to 8th century AD in what today is Mongolia. The process of the change may be demonstrated as follows: *yügürt* > *yüwürt* > *yu:rt*.

Yurt is not the only word that has gone through phonetic contraction. There are many words in Kök Türk scripts that have changed and shortened as a result of contraction: *bu ödke* > *bödke* ‘at this time’; *anı teg* > *anteg* ‘like that’, *bunı teg* > *bünteg* ‘like this’...

There is another contracted word also derived from the verb *yügür-* in Kök Türk scripts – *yurç* ‘younger brother of bride’s husband’. Another meaning of the *yügür-* is ‘to run’ and *yügürçi* means ‘one who runs around for a service’. This word has become *yügürçi/yügurçi* in Çagatay. In Turkmen it has become *yüwürçi*. It was contracted in Old Turkish to become *yu:rç* with the same meaning as *yüwürçi*.

In his article published in *Makaleler I-Altayistik*, Talat Tekin compared *yurt* with its Mongolian equivalent *nutug*, but he did not deal with the etymology of *yurt*; he only mentioned that the vowel of this word was long (Tekin, 2003: 377).

The roots of words used in dialects are usually searched for in archaic texts. We have found the root of the archaic words *yu:rt* and *yu:rç* in the dialects of the Turkmen language (for details see Youssef Azemoun , “Değişen Bazı Sözcükler ve Türkmençe *Yüwürçi* ve *Yüwürt*’ ün Eski Türkçe *Yurt* ve *Yurç* ile İlişkisi Hakkına” (Some Changed Words and the Relationship between Turkmen *yüwürçi* and *yüwürt* and Old Turkish *Yurç* and *Yurt*), Tofiq Hacıyev Armağanı (Festschrift), 2016: 227-234 and Yusuup Azmun, *Söz Kökümüz ÖZ Kökümüz*, 2016: 48-54).

Yüwürt is used in a poem by Kemine (1770-1840), a Turkmen classical poet: *İ:l göçer ğa:lar yüwürde, di:ri çüyrä:ndir ğarı:p* (A poor man rots alive after being left behind [like an orphan] in the *yurt* [when nomads move away]).

Today *yurt* in English means a Mongolian and Turkic nomads’ circular skin- or felt-covered tent, with collapsible frame, and is believed to have been borrowed from Russian *yurta* (Collins English Dictionary, 1992:1784). The word *yurt* is believed to be

borrowed from Russian, because it was used in Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, old republics of the Soviet Union.

Carpet Knots

The concept of the *knot* in some languages expresses an agreement with or loyalty to a situation. For example *‘aḳd* عاقد in Arabic is related to a *knot*: *‘aḳade ‘uḳdeten* means ‘he tied a knot’. The determinative construction *‘aḳd-i izdiva:c* means ‘marriage agreement’, and in English *to tie the knot* means ‘to get married’. This idiom was first used in the XVIII century (Oxford Dictionary of Word Histories: 290). The Persian word *giriḥ/gereḥ* is derived from Sanskrit *grath* meaning ‘to tie the knot’. The word for knot in Middle Persian is *grah*. A knot is perceived as round. The Turkish word *düğme* means ‘button’; it is used in Persian as *togmeh/dogmeh*. A button is usually round and its name in Turkish is derived from the archaic verb *tüg-* meaning ‘to tie (a knot)’. The word for ‘round’ in Persian is *gird*; it seems to be related to *giriḥ*. The English verb *gird* means ‘1. To put a belt, girdle etc., around (the waist or hips); 2. To bind and secure with or as if with a belt, and it is related to Old Norse *gyrtha* (see also *garth* meaning ‘1. A courtyard surrounded by a cloister; 2. Archaic. A yard or garden’ from Old Norse *garthr* and *girth* meaning ‘circumference’, from Old Norse *gjörth* meaning ‘belt’) (Collins Dictionary: 652-653 and 636). The root of this English word seems to be similar to that of *giriḥ/gereḥ*. The equivalent of this Persian word in Kurdish is *gi:ri:* which means ‘knot and marriage’. During the traditional Persian picnic on the 13th day after Nowruz (the New Year), young girls tie a knot in grasses in the hope of finding a husband! Bulgarian priests when marrying a couple say *virüzka vam* which means ‘I tie you (like a knot) to each other’ (source: Rosa Hays, former BBC Bulgarian Broadcasting producer). As mentioned above, in many languages *knot* refers to a vow like marriage. In Christianity some nuns who call themselves “brides of Christ” wear girdles (this word is related to *gird* and Old Norse *gyrthill* [Collins Dictionary: 653]) which have three knots each representing a vow: *chastity, poverty and obedience*. In the Turkmen marriage ceremony, the bride and groom hold hands (which resemble a knot) while an elderly woman recites a poem about how the groom should treat his wife. Shaking hands after an agreement too resembles a knot. In English the verb *to wed* comes from Old English *weddian* and Proto-Germanic *wadjōjanan* both meaning ‘a pledge’ (Chambers Dictionary of Etymology, 2003: 1225).

The equivalent of *to tie the knot* in Turkish and many other Turkic languages is *nika:h kıymak* which literally means ‘to slice *nika:h*’; in Turkmen it is *nika: gıymak* with the same meaning and in

Azerbaijani it is *nika:h kəsmək* (kæsmæk) meaning ‘to cut the *nikah*’. *Nika:h نكاح* is an Arabic word meaning ‘marriage’ and it is derived from *nekehe/ nəkəhə نكح* which is related to ‘sexual desire’ (Sarı, M., 1984: 1556). This word entered the Turkic languages after Turkic-speaking peoples became Muslim. In Old Turkish the word for marriage was *tügün* which originally means ‘knot’. Therefore, the idiom *nikah kıymak/kesmek* was originally *tügün kıymak/kesmek* meaning ‘to slice/cut the knot’. So, if we replace *nikah* with *tügün*, the afore-mentioned expression will mean ‘to cut (slice) the knot’. Thus, the equivalent of *to tie the knot* in Turkish is ‘to cut the knot’. The archaic word *tügün* in Modern Turkish has become *düğün* meaning ‘wedding’ and the word for *knot* in Turkish today is *düğüm* and its equivalent in Turkmen is *düwün* and in Azerbaijani *düyün*. *Düğün* meaning ‘wedding’ is also used in Dede Korkut, a XIV century Turkish epic story.

Nobody has shown any curiosity about why the knot is tied or cut in Turkish or English. The explanation for *cutting* or *slicing* the *knot* can be found in a Turkmen marriage ritual that reflects certain aspects of carpet weaving. Traditionally, among the Turkmens, when a mullah is conducting a marriage ceremony a woman constantly opens and closes a pair of scissors. This is believed to be done to fend off (or cut away) evil spirits (or Satan) which might be present. However, the action with the scissors shows that a *knot* or *tügün* is being cut or sliced. The action of closing and opening a pair of scissors by the woman is related to the fact that all through history women wove the carpets. Otherwise, to fend off the evil spirits a young man with a white Turkmen sheep-skin hat and red robe would be wielding his sword! Among the Turkmens men who weave carpets are given the nickname *gı:z* meaning ‘girl’. A man named Sapar, who wove carpets in the 1940s in Turkmenistan, was called *Sapar Gı:z* (source: İşan Azmun, my late eldest brother).

Two strings of different colours, warp and weft, that are tied to each other and cut to make a knot, resemble a young male and female that are tied to each other after the *tügün* ‘knot’/nikah is cut and they are married to begin a colourful life together. The verb for marrying a girl to a young man in Turkmen and some other Turkic languages is *çatmak*, meaning ‘to tie’. The *newly wed* in Turkmen is *ya:ş çatınca* meaning ‘the young ones that are tied to each other’. This verb is also used as *çitmek* and *çıtmak*. For example, Turkish *kaş çatmak* in Turkmen is *ga:ş çitmak*, meaning ‘to frown’ and literally it means ‘to tie the eyebrows to each other’. In Turkmen dialects this idiom is also used as *ga:ş çitmek*. In carpet weaving the verb for *tying*

the knot and cutting it is çitmek, and it is the same as *çatmak* which means marrying someone to someone else. So *nikah/ tüğün kıymak*, literally meaning 'cutting/ slicing the knot', is related to carpet terminology.

The Turkmen carpet, as will be explained, is a symbol of a beautiful life. At the two ends of a Turkmen carpet there is a white part with no design on it which is called *toprak*, meaning 'earth, soil'. The design above and below this at each end is called *æ:lem*, meaning 'world'. This shows that man is created from the soil and settles in the soil when he dies. The surface of the carpet reflects the colourful and harmonious beauty of life. As the knots settle in the beautiful surface of the carpet, the married couple start a beautiful life after their marriage ceremony *nikah/tüğün kıymak* - 'cutting the knot' - is completed.

We mentioned above that a knot could be perceived as round in shape and the Persian *giriş/gereh* meaning 'knot' was related to *gird/gerd*, meaning 'round'. The concept of roundness is also noticeable in English *gird* and *girdle*. The words *garden* and *yard* which are related define an enclosure around something. These words come from Old German *gart* which means 'surrounded by a wall' (for details see Azemoun, 1998:108-109). Generally speaking gardens are beautiful enclosures. In Arabic the word *cennet* means both 'garden and 'paradise' (Sarı, M., 1982:284). It seems that in olden times people created their own paradise. It is said that a Persian king set up in the yard of his palace the most beautiful rose garden with the most beautiful flowers available in the region. This garden was called *pairi daeza* meaning 'a closure'. *Pairi* means 'surrounding' and *daeza* 'round-shaped wall'. *Pairi* also resembles the Greek prefix *peri-* which means 'enclosing, encircling, around, adjacent or near' (Collins, 1992: 1158). The Old Persian word *daeza* has later become *diz/dez* meaning 'castle'. This word is preserved in the word *kohendez* *كهندهز* < *koheh/kohen* (old)+ *dez* (castle) and it was the name of many old castles including the ones in five towns in the Khorasan region to the east of Iran and west of Afghanistan today, namely Samarkand, Bukhara, Balkh, Marv and Nishapur. *Kohendez* has later become *kondoz* *کندوز* meaning 'old castle' in Persian. In the Ottoman administration the *dizda:r* was in charge of guarding and protecting the castle. The word *dez/diz* has become *dezh* *دژ* in Modern Persian. The image of the garden of the Persian king has later been reflected in Persian carpets. In Turkish it is called *Acem Bahçesi*, 'Persian Garden'. This garden was a source of inspiration for the Russian poet Yesenin, who called the collection of his poems *Persiskiy Motiv*

(Persian Motifs). The reason for the motifs of gardens and flowers repeating in Persian carpets might be related to the story of the Persian king and his garden. Old Persian *pairi daeza* has in English, French and some other European languages become *paradise*. The word *paradise* in Arabic has become *firdaws/ firdows* فردوس and it is used in Persian as a reborrowed word. *Perdi:s* پردیس or *perdes* پردسه meaning 'rose garden' are forgotten words in Persian.

From these examples one may recognise things that are round in shape. The word *gird* گرد meaning 'round in shape' in Persian also means 'town'. This might have to do with the fact that in ancient times fortified cities were built inside round walls. In the centre of such a fortification was the administrative headquarters equidistant from the city walls on all sides. We notice this name today in the names of towns like *Destgird* and *Su:sengird* in Iran. *Gird* in Arabic has become *cird/jird* جرد . Old *Gurga:ngird* (in the north of Turkmenistan) after becoming *Gurga:ncird* in Arabic has shortened to become *Gurga:nc* which has turned to *Urgenc* and eventually *Ürgenç* in Turkmen. The word *gradu* means 'town, castle' in Old Slavonic (Collins, 1992: 1778). This word has become *grad* and just like *gird* in Persian follows certain names such as *Leningrad*, *Stalingrad* and *Volgograd*. In Albanian, *gardh* means 'hedge, fence, wattle' which is a round enclosure (Dişçi, R, 1994: 211).

In Old Turkish, the word for "town" was *balık*. This word has three meanings in *Divanü Lugat-it-Türk*: 1. mud (Atalay, 1999: Vol. I, 248 and 379) 2. castle, town (Atalay, 1999: Vol. I, 379) 3. fish (Atalay, 1999: Vol. I, 73 and 379, Vol. II, 216, 231 and 349). In DLT, Mahmud Kaşgari explains the word *balık* meaning 'town' as follows: *Long before Islam, in Turkish castle meant 'town'. In the Uygur language too it is the same. One of the largest towns of Uygurs is called "Biş Balık بيش بلق". This place is one of the largest towns of the Uygurs. Another of their towns is called "Yengi Balık" ينگى بلق ; this means 'New Town' (Atalay, 1999: Vol. I, 379).*

From these explanations we understand that in Old Turkish the concept of "roundness" is noticeable in the word *castle* used for *town*. Talking about the etymology of the word *balık* meaning 'fish', Ord. Prof. Dr. Reşit Rahmeti Arat in one of his classroom lectures said that this word came about in Uygurs' fish farms, where they bred fish in pools surrounded with a wall built from mud (1964).

The *Göl* Motif in Turkmen Carpets

The most important motif in Turkmen rugs and carpets today is called the *göl*. The shape of the *göl* was originally octagonal. It has changed lately. Today the *göl* is divided into four parts. In every part there are pictures of three birds. Each part symbolises a season and the birds resemble the three months of a season. Today, Western carpet experts call this motif *gul*, meaning flower in Persian. They write the name of a special type of *göl* called *güllü göl* meaning 'flower decorated with flowers', as *güllü gul* which means 'flowery flower!'. In fact, *göl* in Turkmen means 'lake,' and it seems to be related to the cult of water in Shamanism which will be discussed below.

Soren Neergaard, a Swedish carpet specialist, has found a similarity between the *göl* of Turkmen rugs and carpets and a pattern in a Mayan carpet. When the weaver was asked about this pattern, she explained that it was a picture of the dream world or heaven where old Mayan gods lived. Neergaard later explains that corresponding with a Shamanist world outlook, the surface of the Turkmen carpet is divided into three parts - upper world, middle world and lower world. These could also be interpreted as *upper life*, *middle life* and *lower life* (Neergaard, 2001: 232).

Some carpet specialists believe that *göl* depicts the reflection of the stars on earth. It is possible to think that a *göl* might have come about from the shape of a pattern similar to a star. This Turkmen carpet pattern was originally octagonal. The shape of a symbol used by the Oguz people, the ancestors of the Turkmens was a star with eight wings. Star patterns on a 2500-year-old Pazyryk carpet also have eight wings. When the tips of the wings of stars are connected to each other, an octagon in the shape of a *göl* comes about. The shape of a star has always been used in various forms of art as an element of decoration. In *Kutadgu Bilig*, an XI century book of didactic poetry, there is a verse about the ornamental aspect of stars: *Bu kökteki yıldız bir ança bezek* 'Those stars in the sky are (valuable) ornaments' (Arat, R.R, 1979: line 128).

With time the pattern of the star in Turkmen carpets must have changed to become a *göl*. As mentioned above, *göl* meaning 'lake' is related to the cult of water in Shamanism. *Toprak* 'earth, soil' and *göl* remind us of *yir sub* in Old Turkish which identifies the cult of water and soil in Shamanism. In relation to ideas about *toprak*, the mountain - *dağ* - is also very important. For this reason in Turkmen carpets there is a pattern that resembles a mountain. This pattern is shown in the form of the letter *᠘* used in the Kök Türk runic alphabet.

Mountains in Shamanistic culture and Altay mythology are reckoned to be the place where light, which is a symbol of the power of God's creation, reaches first. That is why in Old Turkish names like *Dağ Baba*, *Dağ Ata* 'Mountain Father' and *Dağ Tanrı* 'Mountain God' are given to mountains. Prof. Dr. B. Ögel has given the following explanation:

"Hazar Baba" is the name of a mountain near a small lake in Elazığ. In Anatolia too there are many mountains which bear the names of *awliyas* (saints) and sages. This belief is also widespread in Central Asia and the Altay region. However, in Central Asia the word "Ata" is used instead of Baba, for example *Buz tağ- Ata* literally meaning 'Ice Mountain Father' (Ögel, B.,2002:437-438).

Since mountains are regarded as sacred places, some animals living in the mountains are believed to be saints in Shamanism. One of these animals is a mountain ram called *konurbaş*. A mode of old Turkmen music is called *Gonurbaş mukamy*. Ögel writes on this subject as follows:

From the prayers of half-muslim Kyrgyz "baksis" (folk singers) we learn about examples of these mountain awliyas (saints) and their musical modes:... *Kız Awliya at the top of Kızıl Dağ; Öküz (Ox) Awliya at the top of Öküz Dağ, Konurbaş (Ram) Awliya at the top of Koçkar Dağ (koç also means 'ram')...* (Ögel, B.,2002: 438).

The eagle as a mountain bird may also be an *awliya*. The coat of arms of the Seljuk dynasty (XI-XIII century) was a two-headed eagle. This pattern is seen in the *Älem/æ:lem* aspect of the Yomut Turkmen carpets, which will be discussed later.

The shape of the horn of the mountain ram *konurbaş* is a widely used pattern in carpets and felts as well as other works of art. The shape of the old Turkic saddles and bows resemble the shape of a ram's horn. Even nowadays one can see remnants of Shamanism, the shape of a ram's horn, in Turkmen mosques.



Ram's horn pattern on a column and wall of a Turkmen mosque (Kasraian, 1994: 101)

In Old Turkish this motif was called *ümziik* (Clauson, 1972: 165). Today the name of the pattern of two-sided ram's horn in Turkmen felts has phonetically changed and is called *emzik* which means 'pacifier'. The surface of a felt is divided into square-shaped panels and there is an *emzik* in each square. The number of the *emziks* in the lengths of the felt determines how long it is – three *emzik*, four *emzik* ... The longest felt is usually five *emzik* long.

A pattern in the woven materials of the indigenous people of the Central and South America resembles the *göl* of Turkmen carpets. This pattern is called *Keno-Mayo* and *koha* and can be interpreted in a number of ways. For example, *keno* means 'very old', 'sacred' or 'astonishing'. *Keno-Mayo* pattern which means 'a meandering river' results in the depiction of a place decorated with flowers. The centre of the pattern depicts a lake, spring or the eye of the spring. The springs, in connection with the cult of water, are regarded as "the eye of Mother Earth". In the Sacred Water Festival held every year in September near the eye of a spring by a mountain, the local people sacrifice an animal and, bathing in the water, they clean their body and purify their soul (Owsu, 2004: 27).

The sacred property of the water explained above is noticeable on the surface of the carpet in a pattern called *göl* meaning 'lake'. As is known, every Turkmen tribe has its own *göl*. Five of them are shown on the flag of Turkmenistan today. All through history Turkmen tribes have accepted their *göls* as their tribal coat of arms. According to some stories, when Turkmen tribes clashed, the winner used to force the loser to change their *göls* to their own pattern. In a way the *göl* in the carpets of Turkmen tribes was also tantamount to their flag.



The octagon-shaped *göl* of an XVIII Century Turkmen carpet



The eight-winged stars on 2500 year old Pazyryk carpet

Old Turkic Alphabets and Letters That Have Turned into Carpet Patterns

Like many other carpet-weaving peoples, the Turkmens have tried to reflect their favourite subjects in their carpets. Above we discussed the Kök Türk runic letter 𐰇 that symbolised the mountain. This confirms the importance of the mountain being sacred in the life of Shamanist Turks in ancient times. The sacred entity of the human being and the sacred atmosphere a home provides for us, are also reflected in the carpet in the shape of letters 𐰇 and 𐰈 in the Turkish runic alphabet. The word *er* in Old Turkish means 'human being, man' and *eb* means 'home, house'. The shape of the letter 𐰇 has changed in the carpets woven in the Caspian region to symbolise the flow of water and in the figurative sense it depicts the continuity of life. The letter *k* in the shape of a bow is also used as a pattern. Here we assume that the letters are used as patterns, it could be the opposite; the letters might have been taken from carpet patterns. However, it is not possible to establish which one came about first. There are innumerable ornaments in Turkmen carpets that could be letters or Old Turkic tribal signs.

For centuries administrative and legal documents were always written in Arabic script. Even tombstones were written either in Arabic script or in the Arabic language. The education of the Turkmens and other people of Central Asia in madrassas was carried out in the Arabic language. Literary works were written in either Arabic or Persian. Despite this fact, Arabic script with its highly artistic properties were not used in Turkmen carpets.

Only after the XVII century did the Turkmens begin to produce literary works in their own language, because previously the rulers of Turkic origin always attached more importance to the Persian and Arabic languages. The Seljuks especially helped Persian language

<i>Oguz owladyňnyň ruhy-rowany.</i>	And embodied the soul of the descendants of Oguz.
<i>Ýaşyň üç müňden aşyp dörtge mindi, Bu ýaşda çekmediň renji, yzany. Oguz owladydan aýryldyň indi, Ke bizlerge goýup matem gazany.</i>	Your age surpassed 3000 and entered 4000, But you never suffered ill-treatment or cruelty. Now you have left the descendants of Oguz, Leaving us with our destiny of mourning.
<i>Seni asman azdarhasy ýuwutdy, Sen anyň karnyda tutdyň mekany. Jemalyňdan jahan köňlün sowutdy, Men oldym Andalyp waspyň ýazany.</i>	The heavenly dragon swallowed you, And you settled in his stomach. The world found peace in your beauty, And I, Andalip, became the recorder of your quality. (Hydyrov, M. N. 1962:16)

In the first stanza of another poem in the form of a puzzle that became a folk song, the poet writes:

<i>Atasy akyl, enesi nakyl, Bir gyz dogulmuş yigirmi dört şekil. Şu ýahlyg gözəl milletin yary, Bul bizden owal bolsa-da zary.</i>	Her father is wisdom and her mother is a proverb, A girl is born in twenty four shapes. She is so beautiful, the beloved of the nation, Although she had suffered cruelly before us.
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In this poem “the girl with twenty four shapes” seems to define 24 letters.

The XVIII century Turkmen classical poet Şeydaýi not only protested against the Arabic alphabet and language, he also wrote an elegy to the “twenty-five” which is obviously the name of 25 letters that had disappeared. Like Şakendi, Şeydaýi too wrote this poem in the form of a *Chista:n* or riddle as the Arabic alphabet was sacred to the Turkmen community at that time. Here we present parts of this poem that are more expressive:

<i>Şeýle gulaga ýakymly, Sözledim gözəl yigrim baş. Niçe owazy çekimli, Yzladym gözəl yigrim baş.</i>	It was so pleasant to my ear, I enjoyed uttering it, O beautiful Twenty Five, So harmonious they sound, I followed (you) O beautiful Twenty Five.
<i>Ýedisinden owaz çykar, On sekizin tartar çekip, Üç müň ýaşda ömrün ýakyp, Bozladym gözəl yigrim baş</i>	Seven of them produced a voice, Pulling along the remaining eighteen, When your life ended after three thousand years I cried as loudly as a camel, O beautiful Twenty Five
<i>Matem, mersiýe Şakendi, Ýazyp geçmiş niçe bendi, Okyp ýad ederler şindi, Özledim, gözəl yigrim baş.</i>	Şakendi left behind a few stanzas of lamentation and mourning he had written. Now people read them and remember you, And I miss you, O beautiful Twenty Five. (Aşyrpur Meredov, N., 1978: 12)

In another poem the poet writes about the tragedy of the Turkmen language, blames the Persian and Arabic languages for interfering in other languages and explains that his language, which had been harmonious and pleasantly in tune, had turned into a perplexed and dumb entity in the house of religion. He also expresses his anger, saying:

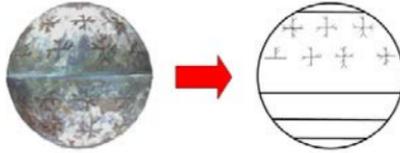
Arap dili boldy sözler giyësi. Arabic became the moth of words. (ibid: 13)

The Arabic language is compared to a moth that eats up the words of other languages.

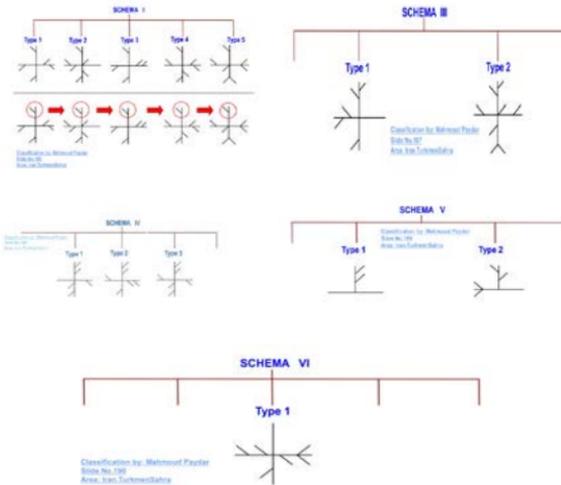
From these poems we understand that the Turkmen/Turkic people had an alphabet before Muslims conquered Central Asia. It had seven vowels and 18 consonants. Şeydayi believed that this alphabet was three thousand years old and Andalip says that it had existed for more than three thousand years. Both poets write that Arabic had played an important role in the disappearance of that alphabet. Some Turkmen scholars believe that the alphabet these poets describe might be related to the symbols of the 24 Oguz tribes. The pre-Islamic tomb stones in Central Asia should be studied. There is no text extant in the alphabet that the Turkmen poets mention. Broken pieces of old tomb stones have been found in northern Iran where Turkmens live. Symbols on these stones perhaps signify the tribe of the deceased. Some of the symbols on the broken tomb stones resemble some of the runic characters of the Kök Türk alphabet.



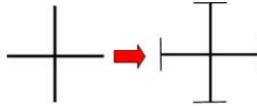
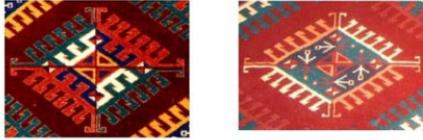
In the Turkmen Sahra region in northern Iran at the foot of the mountain called Gökce Dağ, near the tomb of Halid Nebi, there were water melon-shaped tombstones with various patterns or symbols on them. These stones have either been destroyed or have completely disappeared. Mahmud Paydar, an Iranian Turkmen, has been carrying out extensive research on such tombstones both in Iran and other places. The result of his studies was published in the journal *Yaprak* in Turkmen Sahra, Iran (Paydar, M., 2001: 11-16). Paydar has seen water melon-shaped stones in Mangistau, Kazakistan similar to those in Gökce Dağ. However, there were no patterns on them; they might have been erased.



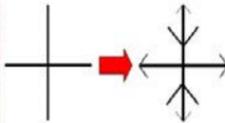
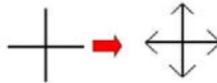
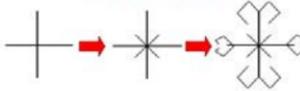
When Paydar received information about the existence of a complete melon-shaped stone, he went to see the owner of this stone. The owner, thinking that there might be treasure inside, had cut the stone into two. He could not find anything in it and stuck the two pieces back together. It is not known if he stuck them correctly. When Paydar classified the pictures on this ball according to the properties of their shapes, six groups came about. The second group consisted of seven pictures. This reminds us of Şeydayı's poem where the poet says "Seven of them are voiced".

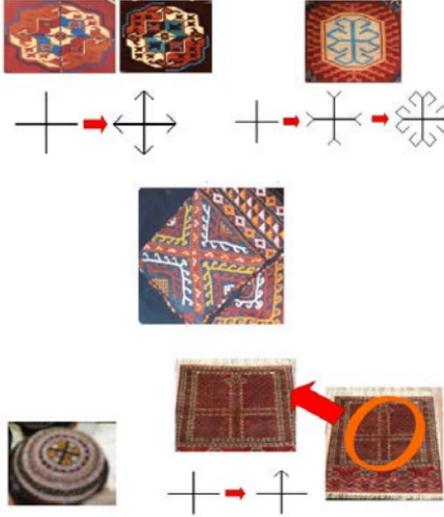


These symbols (or characters) are also seen in Turkmen carpets:



Inside the pattern on the right above, on the two dark-blue backgrounds, there are four white patterns that represent the letter \oint in the Kök Türk runic alphabet.





In Shamanism the plus sign symbolises God. In the Turkmen art of knitting and embroidery the plus symbol is frequently used. This symbol can be seen on a Koran cover (above centre), on the top of a scull-cap (above left) and on two prayer rugs (above right). In mosques too this symbol and the symbol of ram's horn are still used. Below, the plus sign symbolising God can be seen in the middle of a Shaman's drum.



As mentioned before, some of the characters in Kök Türk runic scripts are used as patterns in Turkmen rugs and carpets. Some of these, for example the letter ↓ ‘arrow’ shows an arrow in the Kök Türk runic scripts; this pattern also exists in the Oguz tribal symbols. These patterns usually represent sacred values. One of these letters is ⚡ in Kök Türk scripts. As was mentioned before, this letter represents a mountain, which is sacred in Shamanism. The symbol of a bow and arrow seen on the front part of the Karatay Mosque in Konya has been used for centuries as a symbol of the Oguz Turks.



On the Yomut carpet above, inside the pattern called *Gabsa göl*, ten Turkish runic letters called *ğ* are visible. Inside the white part – the *toprak* – at the end of the Turkmen carpet coloured threads called *alaca yüp* ‘the colourful thread’ are placed to protect the owner from the evil eye. In the *älem/æ:lem* part of the carpet above or below the *toprak* there is the pattern of the *two-headed eagle* which was the coat of arms of the Seljuks. The symbol of the *two-headed eagle* is used as the *Tuğra* (the state monogram) of Turkmenistan today.



There are *bow and arrow* patterns at the very left edge of the carpet above at the perpendicular position. Between the two lines next to those patterns, directed towards the left edge, there are patterns resembling the Kök Türk *ğ* which symbolise human beings. These patterns are also seen between the two lines surrounding the main *göl*.

The Relationship between Carpets and Music

Carpet experts frequently write about the relationship between carpet and music by stressing the harmony of colour and ornaments in carpets. They believe that carpets should not be separated from music. Dr. J. Thompson, the distinguished carpet expert, expresses his view on this subject as follows:

In trying to think and talk about carpets I find myself constantly comparing them with music. The warp and weft of their underlying structure are, like the musical stave, the vehicle for the

pattern and impose upon it a basic order. The visible surface is covered with thousands, sometimes millions, of tufts of wool and the resulting minute points of colour are arranged like the individual notes of a melody into motifs and patterns. There is a musical quality in the combination, inversion, repetition and rhythm of their patterns, and in their colour harmony and texture (Thompson, J., 1993: 16).

Dr. Thompson quotes A. U. Pope, one of the greatest scholars in the field of Persian art, who wrote the following comment in 1926:

The elements of the design are like notes in a melody or words of a poem. Rhythmical repetition, inversion and the varying combination of patterns give carpets a quality akin to that of music (ibid.).

In fact, knots that resemble notes create through the interpretation of the carpet weaver an order peculiar to itself. This order, just like folk music, changes from region to region. Because, carpet-weaving, like music, is an art that relies on interpretation.

An article published about the relationship between carpets and music stresses the fact that there is a physical relationship between carpets and the Azerbaijani musical mode called *mugam*, and compares the Şahnazar carpet of Azerbaijan with the Azerbaijani folk-music *mugam* called *Rast*. The author explains that in *mugam* and in carpets there are parallel repetitions, inversions, symmetry and asymmetry, but the *mugam* is performed by men and the carpet is woven by women (Naroditskaya, 2005: 25-57).

From these explanations we understand that there are certain parallelisms between carpets and music, but there is no concrete proof for both being the same thing. Therefore, we will study this subject in old and contemporary Turkic languages and will try to prove linguistically that the word for carpet in Turkish was originally the same as the name of the oldest Turkic musical instrument called *kopuz*.

The oldest word for carpet is mentioned in two places in *Divanü Lugat-it-Türk*. One of them is *kiwiz* and means 'carpet or kilim' (Atalay, 1999: Vol. I, 366), the other is *küwüz* and means 'something spread out as a mattress on the floor' (Atalay, 1999: Vol. III, 164). Clauson writes that this word is used in the *Codex Cumanicus*, the XIV century Kipchak dictionary, as *köwüz* meaning 'a large carpet or an ordinary mattress' and says that this word in Houtsma's Turkish-Arabic dictionary too should have been *köwüz*, but it has been written *kö:r* (Clauson, 1972: 692). I believe this word

should be read as *köwür* which means carpet. In accordance with the process of *rotatism*, in Turkish, /z/ has changed to /r/ and *köwüz* has become *köwür*. This word has become *kovyor* in Russian meaning ‘carpet’. Şipova (1976:189), on the basis of information she had acquired from Sreznevskiy, writes that this word entered the Russian language as *kovor* and *kovr* in 977 (I. I. Sreznevskiy, *Materialy dlya Slovarya Drevnerusskogo Yazyka, Sankt- Peterburg, 1893-1921, Vol. I, pp 1242-1244*). The Russian contemporary linguist Fasmer believes that this word may have come from *kaver* which is derived from Donau Bulgarian or Old Chuvash *kebir*; Fasmer also points out that the Mongolian *kebis* too means ‘carpet’ (Fasmer, 2009: Vol. II, 270).

The word *kigiz* meaning ‘felt’, which is related to Old Turkish *kiwiz/köwüz*, has become *kiyiz* in Kyrgyz (Yudahin, 1945: 467) and *ki:z* in Kazakh. The word *ke:z* or *ki:z* كيز in Moin’s Persian dictionary is defined as ‘a type of felt made from wool’ and it is shown as a Persian word (Moin, 1381: Vol. 3, 3150). There is the word *ki:s* كيس in Arabic which means ‘a (felt) bag for money and grain-shaped edibles’ (*El-Muncid*, 1908: 751). The fact that this word has no derivatives in Arabic shows that it is a foreign word, because another Arabic word with the same spelling pronounced *keys* has more than ten derivatives. It seems that the word *ki:s* that resembles Turkic *ki:z* has become *ki:se* or *ke:se*. In Persian this word means ‘a small money bag’ and figuratively it defines ‘pocket’. *Ki:se-bur* in Persian means pick pocket. The equivalent of *ki:se/ke:se* in Middle Persian is *henba:n* (Mckenzie, 2009: 290). This word later has become *enba:n* in Modern Persian. In Modern Turkish too *kese* means both ‘bag’ and ‘pocket’. The root of the word *keçe* meaning ‘felt’ is not known (Eren, 1999: 225). This word might have come about after being assimilated with *ke:se*, derived from *kigiz* meaning ‘felt’ following the phonetic process as *kigiz* > *ki:z* > *ki:s* > *ki:se/ke:se*. In other words *ke:se* by analogy has become *keçe*. In *Lûgat-i Çağatay*, a Chagatay dictionary, both *kiz* and *kigiz* are defined by meanings like ‘felt, kilim and hair-cloth or horse-cloth’ (Şeyh Süleyman Efendi, R. 1298: 265 and 267). In Turkmen for felt and similar objects the compound noun *keçe-ki:z* is used (*Türkmen Diliniň Düşündirişli Sözlügi, Vol. II, 2016: 18*). Makhdumkuli, the Turkmen classical poet, has used the word *ki:z* meaning ‘felt’: *Adam bar per düşek yanyn agyrdar Adam bardyr ak ki:z dyzyna degmez* (There are people who feel feather mattresses hurt their body And there are people whose knees never touch (even) a white felt) (*Magtymguly Diwany, 2008:330*).

The Chuvash word *kebir* and Mongolian *kebis* both meaning ‘carpet’ are phonetically changed forms of *köwüz*, *kiwiz* and *köwür* all

meaning 'carpet'. In Turkish /z/ can change to /r/ due to rotatism as explained above. Also /b/ may change to /g/ and /b/ and /g/ can change to become /b/ and /w/. Taking these phonetic changes into account, the word *kopuz*, which is the name of the oldest Turkic musical instrument, may change to *kobuz* > *kowuz* (the word *ğowuz* in Turkmen means 'jaw's harp'). Also *kobuz* becomes *kobur* and *kobur* > *kowur* or *kogur* > *koguz*. Words used for *carpet* in Old Turkish and some Turkic languages like *köwüz*, *köwür*, *kebir* and Mongolian *kebis* are all derived from *kopuz* and they are the softer versions of this word. The Russian linguist Fasmer, on the basis of information he had acquired from Mikkola (*Memoires de la Société Néophilologique à Helsingfors*, Helsinki 1893, Vol. I, p. 389), writes that the oldest form of the Russian word *kovyor* meaning 'carpet' was *kogurr* which meant 'carpet and blanket' (Fasmer, 2009: Vol. II, 270-271).

The word *kogurr* above resembles the Mongolian *kugur* > *hugur* (pronounced *hu'ur*) which means 'kopuz, a musical instrument' (Lessing, 2003: Vol. II, 1515). It seems that the Old Turkish words *kögür* or *köwür* which are derived from *kopuz* have become in Old Mongolian *kugur/ ku'ur* meaning 'kopuz'. A kopuz player in Old Mongolian was called *ku'urçin* (Haenisch, 1949: 177). This word has entered the Persian language as *kuhu:rçi*: meaning 'lute player or kopuz player' (Doerfer, 1963: Vol. I, 443). The word *köwürge* meaning 'drum' in Mongolian and Chagatay is also related to *kopuz*. *Köwürge* in Persian has, because of mispronunciation, become *geverge* گورگه (Amid, 1343: Vol. II, 886).

As mentioned before, many carpet experts believe that there is a relationship between music and carpets, but they cannot reach a concrete conclusion. This paper studies this subject from linguistic point of view and concludes that the oldest name of the carpet has derived from *kopuz* which is a musical instrument. Here, it must be pointed out that the names of Turkish musical instruments *çöğür*, *cura* and *sipsi* as well as the Kyrgyz musical instrument *sıbzga*, although they look completely different, all have derived from *kopuz*. This, in fact, could be studied separately.

In Old Turkish the same word was used for both a carpet and a musical instrument, but it is not possible to establish to which one the name was given to first – to the carpet or the *kopuz*, the musical instrument. In fact there are similarities between a musical instrument and a carpet loom. The warp of the carpet is similar to the strings of a musical instrument; in Persian both are called *ta:r* as in *dutar* 'two-stringed', *sitar* 'three-stringed'. Every stringed musical instrument has a *bridge* and the rod holding the heddles in a carpet loom resembles

for *weft* in Old Turkish is *arkağ*. In *Divanü Lugat-it-Türk*, *arış arkağ* means ‘warp and weft’ (Atalay, 1999: Vol. I, 61). *Argaç* is another version of *arkağ* and is preserved in Turkmen and Turkish. The root of both *arış* and *argaç* is the verb *ar-* (*armak*) meaning to be tired. *Argın* coming from the same root in Turkish means ‘tired’ and in Turkmen when someone is working, a passer by may say *arma* which means ‘may you not get tired’. We notice that the verb *ar-* perhaps means ‘to be tired (of carrying weight)’. *Arış* meaning ‘warp’ carries the knots or weft and *argaç* or weft puts its weight on the warp. A large woven Turkmen pile sack with special patterns on it is called *a:rtmak*. This word too is related to carrying weight. In Mongolian the verb *tohu-* means to ‘weave’ and ‘to put weight on something’ (Lessing, 2003: Vol. II, 1279). Its equivalent in Old Turkish and Modern Turkish and Turkmen are *toku-* and *doku-* respectively and they mean ‘to weave’. These verbs explain the act of carrying weight. The word *tokum* that derives from the same root means ‘a donkey’s pack-saddle’ in Chagatay (Şeyh Suleyman: R. 1297: 122). This word too shows the act of carrying weight in connection with the verb *toku-*. From these examples we realise that a carpet is a thickness that has come about after the weight of knots is placed on the warp.

When people greet each other and inquire after their health, they usually make reference to important subjects in their lives. For example, to say “good morning” the Chinese in Taiwan say “have you eaten your rice?”, because the first thing they do in the morning is eat rice. The Turkmens say “Kökmi? Gurgunmy?” which means “Are you in tune (like a musical instrument)?”, or “Are you set up like a carpet loom?”

Weaving or knitting is an art that occupies an important place in the life of Turkic peoples as well as many other people of the world. Perhaps most Turkic peoples in different parts of the world are not aware of the fact that they are using the terminology of this art as important values of their lives. For example in the language of the Turkic people of the Oguz group, the word *tikmek/dikmek* in compound phrases such as *ağaç dikmek* ‘to plant a tree’, *bina dikmek* ‘to erect a building’, *gömlek dikmek* ‘to sew a shirt’ all denote putting something in right order or position. In Turkish and Turkmen *örmek* and in Azerbaijani *hörmek* means ‘to knit’. However, when *duvar* or *diwar* (in Turkmen) meaning ‘wall’ is used with *örmek*, it means ‘to build a wall’.

In Turkish verbs like *etmek* and *yapmak* ‘to do’, *işlemek* ‘to work on something, to process or treat something’ and *örmek* ‘to knit’ and *yapmak* ‘(today) to do, (originally) to stick to something’

originally explain the activities of certain professions. *Etmek*/ (in Turkmen) *eylemek* means ‘to make leather from hide’. In Arabic the processed hide is called *edi:m* (Moin, 1381: Vol. I, 183). The root of this word is not Arabic and it has derived from Turkish *etmek* as *et-i-m* > *edim*. *İşlemek* in Turkish is used for embroidery or production of olive oil, cotton, pestachio and other products. Gaziantep in Turkey is famous for its embroidery and production of the afore-mentioned items. That is why in Gaziantep region to say “How are you?” people say *n’işli:ñ < ne işliyorsun?* ‘What are you producing?’ Kilis, another town in Turkey was famous for its tanners. For this reason, in Kilis to greet, someone people say *ne’doñ < ne ediyorsun?* ‘How is your tanning?’ People of Kayseri are distinguished by their knitting and embroidery and people inquire after their friends’ health saying *n’öryoñ < ne öriyorsun?* ‘What are you knitting?’ *Yapmak* denotes either sticking the bricks to each other or sticking the dough to the wall of an oven in a hole in the ground, to cook bread. Therefore, the relevant job might have to do with either a baker or a brick-layer and I do not know why the Turkish Cypriots say *n’apañ < ne yapıyorsun?* ‘What are you doing?’



Portrait of the author on a Turkmen Yomut rug.

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