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## WOVEN STRUCTURES UPDATE - Part 7 (continued)

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### 7.D - Offset Knotting: Feedback

A September 23/October 6, 2001, *Turkotek.com* discussion was devoted to offset knotting, with fourteen people posting photos and comments on where and why these techniques have been used by tribal weavers. To read the discussion and also see larger photos and details, go to [\*Turkotek.com/Salon 73. Offset Knotting: Where and Why?\*](#)

Kenneth Thompson posted photos of an intriguing knotted-pile saddlebag face that combined offset hooked figures with regularly knotted Turkmen guls. The piece is most likely Kurdish, from Khorasan in northeastern Persia. An unusual Yomut bag face belonging to Allan Arthur shows the same figure in field compartments executed with offset knotting. The figures in this weaving were flattened because of an unbalanced weave--a much higher vertical than horizontal knot count.



Above: Kurdish Khorasan knotted-pile bag face. Kenneth Thompson.



Left: Detail, Yomut knotted-pile mafrash. Allan Arthur.

An exceptional Turkmen torba from Steve Price's collection displays a border like that in the Yomut bag above, but with potential distortions avoided by offset knotting. No offsets appear in the field.

**Turkmen  
trapping.  
Steve Price.**



**Patrick Weiler posted an unusual Baluch balisht with offset knotting used throughout the field to shape small, irregular bothe motifs. Pat noted that this piece was symmetrically knotted. Kurdish perhaps? No one else could find offset knotting in their Baluch rugs and bags.**

**Baluch balisht. Patrick Weiler.**

**Daniel Deschuyteneer showed us more rugs and small weavings with offset knotting in hooked hexagon designs from Anatolia and Western Persia. He also posted a group of Anatolian rugs and yastiks with offset "baklava" designs from Anatolia.**



**Yastik, Eastern Anatolia. Plate 116, Brian Morehouse, *Yastiks*, 1996.**



**Yastik, Eastern Anatolia. Plate 113, Brian Morehouse, *Yastiks*, 1996.**

Steve Price and John Howe posted photos of Turkmen asmalyks--a Yomut piece with a "bird and pole" border with offset knotting, and an asmalyk attributed by M. Craycraft to the Ata. This second piece shows offset knotting used extensively throughout. Examples from the Rickmers Collection were contrasted, as the discussion turned to speculations on reasons for field-pattern breakdowns near the side borders.



Yomut asmalyk. Steve Price



Turkmen (Ata ?) asmalyk.

A lengthy discussion ensued over the relationship between craftsmanship and offset knotting. Using unworked macramé elements for comparison, John Howe suggested that erratic or disguised transitional elements in offset knotting might be viewed as a similar sign of poor craftsmanship. Others disagreed, stressing that by doubling the number of warp pairs available, creativity was encouraged, the medium was stretched, and positive results were achieved.

Related offset flatwoven structures were illustrated. Daniel Deschuyteneer posted a Khorasan reverse soumak saddlebag with small offset areas. John Howe posted another Khorasan bag face, but with offset reverse soumak throughout. Design idiosyncrasies in the field/side border areas were discussed, along with those in West Persian Jaf knotted-pile bags. Filiberto Boncompagni posted details of a Caucasian reverse soumak saddlebag -- the same basic structure, but with the faces reversed.



Detail, Khorasan saddlebag with reverse soumak and reverse offset soumak. Daniel Deschuyteneer.



Detail, Khorasan bag face with reverse offset soumak (?) or reciprocal brocading. John Howe.



Offset soumak saddlebag panel, reverse side. Filiberto Boncompagni.

Christoph Huber posted a detail of an astonishing Ersari carpet with no offset knotting, but with design features that may have been copied from a rug with all-over offset knotting. Small diagonal details throughout are smooth-edged, while heavy, large verticals have ragged edges, as when knots are offset. Intriguing speculation.



Detail, Ersari Beshir carpet, Plate 299, Uwe Jourdan, *Turkoman*, 1989.

Vincent Keers posted photos of a Chinese carpet and saddle rug with offset knotting used to articulate design details. Both borders and gently inclining diagonals shaping the saddle rug itself were formed with periodic offsets.



Detail, reverse, Chinese saddle rug. Vincent Keers.



Above, Detail, Turkmen ak chuval, Sophia Gates.

Right, Detail, Turkmen ak chuval, Christoph Huber.



Turkmen *ak chuval* details were posted by Sophia Gates and Christoph Huber, prompting a detailed discussion of the varying uses of offset knotting in the unique narrow bands and skirt designs. Christoph hypothesized that brocade motifs in the bands were most likely first copied in pile on a flatweave ground, as that approach most naturally approximated the approach of overlay-underlay brocade weavers. In such instances, knot transitions would be rarely needed, and with no background filling of knots, no problems of transitions or irregularities would occur in awkward areas between the figures.

Of all of the issues raised in the discussion, this area offers perhaps the most fertile ground for more study.

Several related issues were discussed and many more photos were posted. To read the commentaries, go to:

[Turkotek Salon 73. Discussion of Offset Knotting](#)

**Return to:**

**[7.A - Offset Knotting: Where and Why?](#)**

**[7.B - Turkmen Offset Knotting](#)**

**[7.C - Early Examples of Offset Knotting](#)**

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